

WP 4 PROVIDING LANGUAGE SUPPORT

WP4 leader University of Nis

Activity WP4.1 Establishing cooperation networks among all language professionals at partner Serbian universities so as to promote, enhance and organize various language support services

Activity WP4.2 Developing and adopting guidelines for providing language support to teaching staff

NEEDS ANALYSIS FOR IMPROVING INTERNATIONALIZATION IN THE FIELD OF ACADEMIC AND STUDENT MOBILITY AT THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN SERBIA

This analysis is intended for the management of the several higher educational institutions: the University of Belgrade, the University of Novi Sad, the University of Niš, the University of Kragujevac, the University of Novi Pazar and the College of Tourism in Belgrade. This is the reason why the appendix is written in Serbian language, whereas the English version of the document for the international project partners will be available soon.

In order to maximize efficiency, an integrated analysis including three questionnaires is presented as follows:

- 1) Needs analysis of improving language support to teaching staff
- 2) Needs analysis of improving language support to administrative and non-teaching staff
- 3) Needs analysis of improving language support to international students

The text of the questionnaire can be found at: <http://www.fuse.ni.ac.rs/workpackage-4>
(Needs Analysis)

The questionnaires were completed by the several faculty vice-deans in charge of education or international cooperation of the above stated universities and one college of vocational studies, and there is a universal recommendation following the analysis of conditions at each institution.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BELGRADE

From the University of Belgrade the completed questionnaires from 48 foreign language teachers as well as from 26 vice deans out of the total of 31 faculties were sent until the due time.

According to the obtained data, most of the language teachers (39 out of 48) are engaged in the process of internationalization at their faculties, predominantly through translation of technical and scientific papers, through language assessment of students and preparation of students for postgraduate studies abroad.

At 12 faculties (out of a total of 26 faculties) there are courses taught in English, which are mostly dedicated to foreign students during a full study programme in Belgrade, as well as to the students in Erasmus programmes. At other faculties these programmes are undergoing preparation and implementation during the next accreditation period or even earlier. Although most of the faculties do not possess official information with regards to English language competence of the teaching staff, a general impression of the vice deans is that teachers are competent enough to teach foreign students, however additional support in terms of English language courses from language professionals would be welcome.

At the majority of faculties contact personnel for foreign students are usually vice deans for Academic and International affairs, as well as the Student services personnel, because there is not a specialized office responsible for foreign students. Faculties mostly do not plan to open specialized offices for foreign students due to a low influx and interest of these students for study programmes in English or due to the fact that administration personnel already possess adequate English language competence. However, a great number of vice deans believe that additional support in terms of English language courses would be useful for administration personnel, regardless of the fact that those employees are not dedicated solely to foreign students cooperation. In those terms teachers, Master students and the Phd students would be able to provide assistance in two ways: by organizing workshops and courses and by translating the necessary documentation.

Very few faculties are inclined to believe that the existing language assistance, as well as the foreign student assistance, is efficient enough. With regards to the Serbian language course for foreign students, faculties are usually assisted by the Serbian language center affiliated to the Faculty of Philology at the University of Belgrade, whereas there are rare cases when faculties organize these courses by themselves. Other faculties predominantly do not plan suchlike courses in the future, and only a marginal number of faculties would consider organizing these courses if there would be a sufficient number of foreign students in need of these services.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI SAD

Thirty five foreign language teachers as well as vice-deans at 10 out of 14 faculties of the University of Novi Sad sent completed questionnaires.

Most of the language teachers (32 out of 35) are involved in the internationalization process at their faculties, and mostly through translating documentation of professional and academic papers, through mobility support (filling in the questionnaires etc.) as well as testing the language competence of incoming international and outgoing domestic students.

In four, out of ten faculties, there are programs taught in English language, and these are mostly intended for the international students at the entire study program (4), or short-term exchange students (3) as well as Erasmus exchange students (3). The Faculty of Technical Sciences was accredited for all study programs (73 in total) in English language. Introducing similar study programs is expected at other faculties of the university as well (4) or in the next accreditation cycle or whenever the necessary requirements are met. Although, most of the faculties do not operate with the exact data on the level of English language competence of their employees, the general impression of the vice-deans is that the teachers have adequate competences in English language in order to teach international students, but they also require additional training and assistance of language professionals.

At most faculties, student administrative secretaries are in charge of the international students. Nevertheless, at some faculties (the Faculty of Philosophy and the Academy of Arts), a special unit caters for the international students. Furthermore, a half of the total number of vice-deans (5) believes that it is not necessary to improve the work of the administrative staff through attending English language courses since the current staff is considered to have sufficient language competence for the work they perform.

At most of the faculties, the existing ways of providing language services and assistance to the international students are thought to be efficient enough (8), and the only recommendation stated for improving these services are better marketing strategy and provision of information. As for providing Serbian language courses for international students, the faculties mostly rely on the assistance of the Language Centre at the Faculty of Philosophy in Novi Sad or the Serbian language elementary course organized by the University of Novi Sad. None of the stated faculties organize such courses independently.

THE UNIVERSITY OF NIŠ

Completed questionnaires from 25 foreign language teachers as well as from 11 vice deans out of the total of 12 faculties from the University of Niš were sent until the due date.

According to the first part of the conducted survey (Needs analysis for improving language support system for the teaching staff) it can be noticed that at 11 faculties of the University of Niš there are 6 accredited ESP courses, but only 3 faculties out of them have full study programmes that are conducted in English (Faculty of Medicine, Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture, and Faculty of Technology in Leskovac). At the Faculty of

Medicine these study programmes are: *Integrated academic studies in Medicine (level II)*; *Integrated academic studies in Oral medicine (level II)*; *Integrated academic studies in Pharmacy (II level)*, while at the Faculty of Civil Engineering and Architecture there is an accredited Doctoral study programme called *Hydroinformatics*. At the Faculty of Technology in Leskovac, within the TEMPUS IV project (No. 544634-TEMPUS-1-2013-1-DE-TEMPUS-JPHES), a new Masters study programme has been developed. It is a “double-degree” international study programme called “*Material and Energy Flow*”. At the Faculty of Sports and Physical Education there are specialized study programmes that will be conducted in English, however these studies have still not been implemented. At the remaining faculties of the University of Niš suchlike study programmes are being planned, while at the Faculty of Economics there is a plan to organize a collaborative Master programme with the Russian Customs Academy from Moscow, beginning with the school year of 2016. At the same time, Faculty of Occupational Safety and Faculty of Law generally do not plan to include suchlike study programmes. Vice deans from 9 out of 12 faculties in total responded that at their institutions there is a possibility that some of their study programmes could be conducted in English, while the remaining 3 faculties did not indicate this as a possibility.

None of the faculties has ever conducted a poll about the English language competence (in terms of English language knowledge and use) of their teaching staff, therefore the faculties do not have an insight into this information, only suppositions on this issue. As far as the language support for the teaching staff is concerned all of the faculties responded that there is a need for organizing English language courses for teachers who wish to teach their courses in English. Also there is the proposal that English language teachers could be employed in providing additional teaching support for the teaching staff, as well as the proposal of creating the grounds for language learning abroad.

In terms of providing language support for the administration and non-teaching staff, at 9 out of 11 faculties there is not a designated administration staff for collaboration with foreign students, although, based on the same number of responses, it was evident that there is a need for suchlike services and at the same time there is a need special English language courses. Only one faculty – Faculty of Fine Arts indicated to have had a course of that kind. Regarding the idea of officially establishing the Center for translation of administrative documents within the domain of internationalization (technical and scientific texts, resumes etc.), 7 faculties responded affirmatively to this question, whereas other faculties responded that they either had suchlike centers or they did not provide an answer to this question. On the issue of organizing some sort of language support for the administration and non-teaching staff, the Faculty of Occupational Safety indicated a possibility of collaborating with other faculties whose staff has been instructed to cooperate with foreign students, whereas Faculty of Science and Mathematics insisted on the need of staff taking courses at a domestic faculties that use English language in study programmes.

In terms of improving language support for foreign students the results indicate that none of the faculties at the University of Niš possess mechanisms for providing language

services/support for foreign students, nor have faculties organized suchlike courses until now due to the relatively low influx of foreign students. Although there is a positive response in terms of organizing these courses should there be a need for them.

THE UNIVERSITY OF KRAGUJEVAC

Completed questionnaires from 31 foreign language teachers as well as from 12 vice deans out of the total of 12 faculties from the University of Kragujevac were sent.

Most of the language teachers (26 out of 31) are engaged in the process of internationalization at the faculty, mostly through translation of technical and scientific papers, through language assessment of students and preparation of student mobility.

At the University of Kragujevac there are accredited English language courses at 8 faculties, but only one fully accredited study programme at the Faculty of Engineering (*Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management*, accredited in 2015) at the level of Doctoral studies. Also, there are plans for introducing and attending English language courses and/or programmes (mostly within the ERAZMUS+ programmes).

Faculties at the University of Kragujevac do not possess the exact information with regards to English language competence of their teaching staff (in terms of English language knowledge and use). However, based on the conducted survey, there is a mutual agreement of the existing need for language support for these teaching staff members. Most believe that introducing suchlike English language courses would enhance international cooperation and mobility of teaching staff and students. In the responses from most faculties there were no specified suggestions for this kind of language support except for the Teacher Training Faculty (English language courses for teaching staff at different levels) and Faculty of Philology and Arts (in the process of two developing centers – Center for Serbian as a foreign language and Center for ESP).

At the faculties of the University of Kragujevac there is no administration staff equipped to work with foreign students. Responses were various in terms of suchlike needs, as well as for introducing special courses for the administration and non-teaching staff, due to the fact that these services are predominantly provided by the employees from the Student services who have English language competence. In terms of language support from the Faculty of Philology and Arts there was also not a firm need and the main reason lies in the fact that there is a low influx of foreign students. Some faculties with regards to this issue seek additional and closer collaboration with the University itself.

Mechanisms for language support/services are mostly not present at the faculties of the University of Kragujevac. Due to the few visiting foreign students, which has been repeatedly indicated in the responses, the existing mechanisms are sufficient. Serbian language courses for foreign students are present only at the Teacher Training Faculty in Jagodina. However, there is an interest in organizing suchlike courses in the future should the influx of foreign students increase. Also, there was a suggestion that these courses should be organized by the University.

The overall impression of the responses is that there is a need of the faculties and of the University of Kragujevac itself to welcome more foreign students and to increase teaching staff and student mobility so that the mentioned services, courses and activities would be relevant and necessary. There is an affirmative response from most of the faculties to progress in the process of internationalization.

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NOVI PAZAR

Eleven English language teachers sent completed questionnaires, and since it is an integrated university, one of the submitted questionnaires included the questions related to the needs of internationalization in the field of academic and student mobility. There are accredited English language courses at this University as ESP courses, but there is no accredited study program taught in English language, even though the management is willing to support the idea provided that the real need for internationalization arises. In addition, there is a positive opinion on providing English language courses especially tailored for the needs of teachers who would be willing to teach their subject matter in English language. Accordingly, at this University, it is believed that courses in English language would make the University more visible and acceptable to the international students, whereas domestic students would acquire language competence and experience necessary for further student exchange or professional self-improvement in a foreign company.

As for the administrative staff in charge of working with international students, although envisaged, it has not been established yet at this University. Thus, it is necessary to organize language courses in order to facilitate communication between the administrative staff and international students as well as to prepare the necessary documentation for the exchange of domestic students. It is emphasized that once the accreditation is completed, the administrative staff needs assistance in publishing catalogues of English language courses should there be any changes as well as in issuing certificates on completed examinations, filling in the necessary forms for the students interested in spending a semester or an academic year abroad, nostrification of international diplomas and the like. As for the provision of language services/assistance to the international students, the support has so far been based on the assistance of the fellow students due to the insufficient number of international students at the University (a couple of individual cases). However, it is pointed out that it is necessary to tailor and organize Serbian language courses for domestic students before the start of the academic year, summer schools of Serbian language and culture together with the entire set of preparatory courses. It has not been the case up to now, but depending on the number of students, the content and the ways of organizing Serbian language courses could be created.

THE COLLEGE OF TOURISM IN BELGRADE

Completed questionnaires were sent by three language teachers, and given the fact that the College of vocational studies is in question, in one of the questionnaires there were

responses referring to the requirements of internationalization in the fields of academic and student mobility.

There is no administrative staff in charge of working with international students at the College of Tourism. However, it might be possible to set up a special department for this purpose should the occasion arise, i.e. depending on the numbers of prospective international students who would attend the courses at this College. Additionally, it is believed that it is necessary to organize language courses to facilitate communication between the administrative staff and international students. It is suggested to organize paid language courses taught by the English language teachers in an adequate period of time. As to providing language services/assistance to the international students, it is emphasized that since no international students have attended the courses at the College of Tourism up to now, there has not been a real need to organize them, but should it become necessary, these students will be advised to take up some of the already existing Serbian language courses at the University of Belgrade.