

Fit for the Future: A needs analysis of language offer in higher education - a case study

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We work for
tomorrow



Research question

→ **What languages should a university offer from a local and economic perspective?**

- **Location** – migrant and traditional languages; international students
- **Economy** – communication in business settings
- **Needs based analysis** → **based on what needs?**

Of the **individual** → job prospects, and of the **society** → social cohesion, cultural heritage, language rights, economic prosperity.

Methodology - Tradition

Areas

- **Language degree programmes and language courses**
- **English-medium instruction (or other language)**
- **University profile, languages needs of departments (survey)**

Research Results -Tradition

- **Degree programmes**

at philological departments: English/American Studies, Slavic Studies, Romance Studies = **9 languages**

at Department of Translation Studies = **10 languages**

- **Language learning courses:**

Centre for Language, Pluril.& Did. and other univ. centres/inst./dpts = **20 languages**

- Approx. 10% of all university courses are in English.

Results – Tradition (continued)

20 modern languages in total:

- **Arabic, BCS, Czech, Dutch, English, French, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin Chinese, Modern Hebrew, Persian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovene, Spanish, Swedish, Turkish.**

Methodology - Location

Migrant languages

- **Primary sources:** official statistics on population by nationality, on mother tongue education, population census; surveys; net migration
- **Secondary sources:** Local studies, research papers etc.

Results - Location

Foreign population of Graz in 2019

1. Romania
2. Croatia
3. Bosnia and Herzegovina
4. Germany
5. Turkey
6. Hungary
7. Afghanistan
8. Syria
9. Slovenia
10. Russia
11. Kosovo
12. Serbia
13. Italy
14. Nigeria
15. Bulgaria



Pexels: anthony beck

Source: City of Graz

Results - Location (continued I)

Most widely spoken migrant languages

1. BCS	9. Albanian
2. Hungarian	10. Kurdish
3. Slovene	11. Romani
4. Romanian	12. English
5. Arabic	13. Dari/Farsi
6. Russian	14. Pashto
7. Turkish	15. Chechnyan
8. Italian	

Results - Location (continued II)

Most important languages for location

Autochthonous	Allochthonous	Int. students
Burgenland Croatian	BCS	BCS
Slovene	Slovene	Slovene
Hungarian	Hungarian	Hungarian
Romani	Romani	
Slovak		
Czech		
	Italian	Italian
	Russian	Russian
	Romanian, Arabic	
	Turkish, Albanian, Kurdish	

Methodology - Economy

Indicators

- **Primary sources:** official statistics on most important countries for (export) trade and (inward) tourism; growth rates, foreign direct investments, export market shares.
- **Secondary sources:** survey results on language needs of businesses.
- Trade priorities and projections; emerging economies; government strategies, expert studies.

Results - Economy

Austria's most important export trade partners 2018

1.	Germany
2.	USA
3.	Italy
4.	Switzerland
5.	France
6.	Czech Republic
7.	Hungary
8.	Poland
9.	UK
10.	China



Results – Economy (continued I)

Survey results among 2,000 company representatives 2005 about the needs of their company for foreign languages (cf. Archan/Dornmayr 2006)

What languages are needed by your company and to which extent?			
	Languages	Percentage of companies requiring it from the majority of staff in %	Percentage of companies requiring it from few staff members in %
1	English	45	36
2.	Italian	4	26
3.	French	3	23
4.	Hungarian	1	9
5.	Spanish	1	9
6.	Slovene	1	8
7.	Russian	1	8
8.	BCS	1	8
9.	Czech		9
10.	Slovak		8
11.	Turkish		4
12.	Chinese		4
13.	Portuguese		3
14.	Other languages		3

Results – Economy (continued II)

Most important languages for the economy

1. English	7. Chinese	13. Turkish
2. Italian	8. Russian	14. Hindi and other Indian languages
3. French	9. Slovene	15. Portuguese
4. Czech/Slovak	10. Spanish	16. Arabic
5. Hungarian	11. BCS	17. Korean
6. Polish	12. Dutch/ Flemish/Afrikaans	18. Malay/Bahasa

Conclusions

- Strong regional ties: Central and Eastern Europe
- Overwhelming match of 9 languages in all three categories: **Arabic, BCS, Czech, English, Hungarian, Italian, Russian, Slovene and Turkish.**
- 7 additional important languages for the economy are offered: Chinese, Dutch, **French**, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, and **Spanish**, and one important one for the location: Persian.
- Making use of the potential!

Publication

Forschende Fachdidaktik III

Prozessveränderungen in der universitären Sprachenlehre

Daniela Unger-Ullmann / Christian Hofer (eds.)

December 2021

Publisher: Narr Francke Attempto Verlag

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Ačiū! Thank you!

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