



UNIUNEA EUROPEANĂ



GUVERNUL ROMÂNIEI
MINISTERUL MUNCII, FAMILIEI
ȘI PROTECȚIEI SOCIALE
AMPOSURU



Fondul Social European
POSDRU 2007-2013



Instrumente Structurale
2007-2013



OPORURU

MINISTERUL
EDUCAȚIEI
CERCETĂRII
ȘI SPORTULUI



AGENȚIA ROMÂNĂ
DE ASIGURARE A
CALITĂȚII ÎN
ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL SUPERIOR



Quality Assurance Review for Higher Education

Internationalising Romanian Higher Education – Preliminary Findings of the ASIGMA Project Regarding Master’s Level Programmes

Anca Greere, Iulia Bobăilă

Quality Assurance Review, Vol. 3, Nr. 2, Septembrie 2011, p. 101 – 116

Publicat de: Consiliul Agenției Române de Asigurare a Calității în Învățământul Superior - ARACIS

Locul publicării: București, România

Tipul publicației: tipărit, online

Quality Assurance Review este editată în cadrul proiectului „Asigurarea calității în învățământul superior din România în context european. Dezvoltarea managementului calității academice la nivel de sistem și instituțional”, Contract POSDRU/2/1.2/S/1, cod proiect 3933.

Pentru a reproduce un text din revistă este necesar acordul scris al colegiului de redacție al revistei Quality Assurance Review.

Răspunderea pentru textele scrise aparține autorilor.

Conținutul acestui material nu reprezintă în mod obligatoriu poziția oficială a Uniunii Europene sau a Guvernului României.

FONDUL SOCIAL EUROPEAN

Investește în
OAMENI

Internationalising Romanian Higher Education – Preliminary Findings of the ASIGMA Project Regarding Master’s Level Programmes

Anca Greere *Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania*
anca.greere@lett.ubbcluj.ro

Iulia Bobăilă *Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania*
iuliabobaila@yahoo.fr

Abstract: *Currently, Romanian higher education strives to meet Bologna requirements of comparability and compatibility of degrees. Many universities associate the Bologna reform with the process of internationalisation and have taken measures to ensure internationalisation objectives. The ASIGMA project proposes to focus on quality assurance and quality enhancement for internationalised/international master’s level programmes. The paper provides a synthesis with the preliminary findings of the ASIGMA project analysis of the current situation regarding the process of internationalisation in Romanian higher education, with specific emphasis on master level education mediated through a foreign language.*

Keywords: *internationalisation, foreign-language medium programmes, master level education, Bologna reform.*

Rezumat: *În prezent, învățământul universitar românesc depune toate eforturile pentru a se alinia la demersurile Bologna, în mod deosebit în ceea ce privește compatibilizarea și echivalarea specializărilor. Un număr mare de instituții de învățământ superior asociază reforma Bologna cu procesul de internaționalizare și ia măsuri în vederea atingerii obiectivelor acestui proces. Proiectul ASIGMA își propune ca obiective asigurarea și îmbunătățirea calității programelor de master internaționalizate/internaționalizabile. Lucrarea oferă o sinteză a rezultatelor preliminare ale analizei procesului de internaționalizare din învățământul superior românesc, obținute în cadrul proiectului ASIGMA, acordând o atenție deosebită studiilor la nivel masteral desfășurate într-o limbă străină.*

Cuvinte cheie: *internaționalizare, programe masterale cu predare în limbă străină, reforma Bologna.*

1. Introduction

At European level, there is constant drive to internationalise through foreign language-mediated programmes in order to attract international candidates to real or virtual campuses. The European research network LANQUA www.lanqua.eu, Language Network for Quality Assurance, through the subproject group *Content and Language Integrated Learning*, mapped the situation of European higher education vis-à-vis the internationalisation process; the findings indicate that, more often than not, the introduction and development of such programmes does not follow a common series of steps leading to quality assurance and enhancement, all the more since the procedures of internal and external assessment and accreditation do not have specific requirements for this type of education in many European contexts.

At the level of Romanian higher education, there are few explicit quality assurance stipulations in what regards foreign language-mediated programmes; hence, the Romanian context is lacking a specific framework of reference for actions and the development of master-level foreign-language mediated programmes is quite often based on quality requirements imported from or proposed by foreign partners.

The ASIGMA project builds on the experience of LANQUA and proposes to analyse the Romanian context in order to develop and enhance quality assurance mechanisms for the internationalisation of the Romanian Higher Education Area in terms compatible and comparable to the integrated European Higher Education Area, in line with the Bologna reform.

In the first year of implementation, a number of activities within the ASIGMA project have contributed to the mapping of foreign-language master-level education in Romania. Currently, we can synthesise the preliminary findings of the research conducted and anticipate some of the conclusions of the full (quantitative and) qualitative study to be presented as one of the outcomes, i.e. “deliverables”, of the project.

The paper firstly provides a background for the analysis by detailing the conclusions of the LANQUA project, CLIL subproject working group, secondly, describes the objectives of the ASIGMA project mapping them on internationalisation requirements in the Romanian context, thirdly, details the methodology of data collection, the data collection tools and presents the results of the data analysis regarding the internationalisation of Romanian higher education, and fourthly, highlights projected further developments in the ASIGMA project which will contribute to quality assurance and quality enhancement of foreign language medium master’s programmes specifically on partner institutions and on a national level.

2. Providing the Background for the Analysis of Internationalisation Practices – LANQUA Experience

The Language Network for Quality Assurance (LANQUA) was a three-year project funded by the Commission of the European Communities Lifelong Learning Erasmus Network programme involving 60 partners from 29 countries across Europe, coordinated by the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, hosted by the University of Southampton in the UK. The network produced a Toolkit to enable institutions and stakeholders to assure and enhance the quality of provision in higher education in the area of languages. Working group 3 tackled the issues in *Content and Language Integrated Learning*, by mapping the context in Europe and producing specific benchmark statements to inform quality assurance processes and enhance the quality of teaching and learning experiences in foreign-language medium programmes.

Content and language integrated learning (CLIL) was originally defined as a pedagogical approach with a dual focus, involving the integration of (second/foreign/target) language study with the study of a subject domain instructed in that language...[In LANQUA CLIL] the term will be used as an umbrella term for all those HE approaches in which some form of specific and academic language support is offered to students in order to facilitate their learning of the content through that language. These approaches vary on a continuum of discipline-specific and pre-content support to full integration of language and content.¹

In light of this umbrella coverage, the LANQUA subproject working group on CLIL ascertained that the Bologna reform and its objectives of consolidating an integrated European Higher Education Area triggered the necessity of higher education institutions to present on offer foreign-language medium programmes. According to LANQUA CLIL instruction in a foreign language is justified by a number of reasons² listed below:

- To attract national and international students, i.e. positioning of higher education institution within the national and international context;
- To enhance the institutional profile;
- To promote plurilingualism: social, citizenship, intercultural competence, employability;
- To develop in graduates the necessary competitive edge;

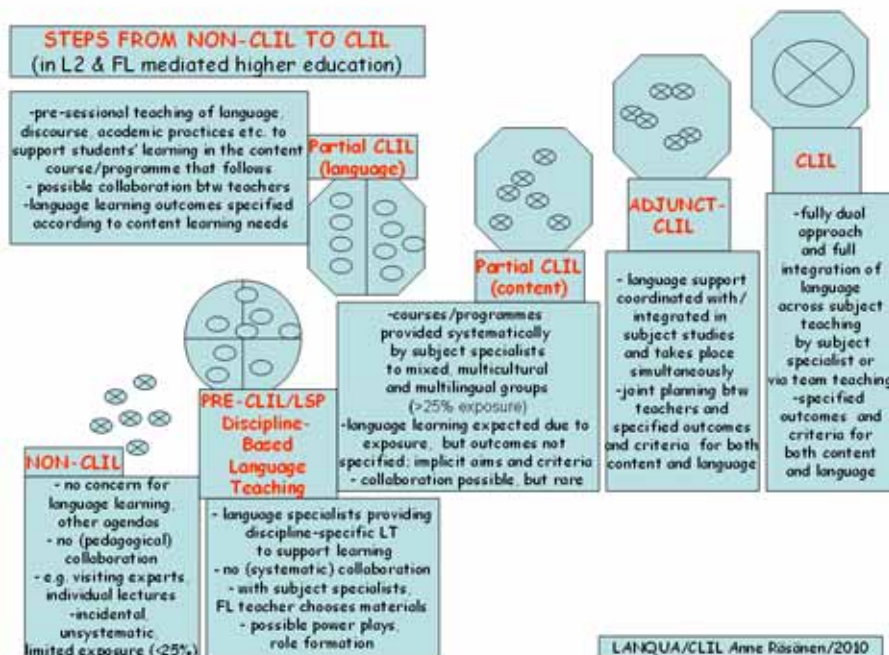
¹ <http://www.lanqua.eu/theme/content-language-integrated-learning-clil>, last date of access 27 September 2011

² LANQUA CLIL Year One Report, 2008, p.8–9, retrieved from <http://www.lanqua.eu/theme/content-language-integrated-learning-clil>, last accessed on 27 September 2011

- To open new possibilities on the job market, i.e. enhance employability;
- To raise money, i.e. financial issues;
- To develop economic and cultural collaboration with other countries through Governmental Agreements;
- To promote future academic/ research/ professional networking;
- To develop intercultural expertise;
- To develop the European dimension.

As quoted above, LANQUA CLIL acknowledged that there are currently many ways of providing instruction in foreign languages, with different degrees of content and language integration; some of these approaches have been planned out and invested in for many years already, whereas others indicate a spontaneous reaction with institutions pushing students and staff into a speedy process of internationalisation by skipping a number of quality sustaining steps. The former results in positive teaching and learning experiences, whereas the latter determines increased pressure being put on students and staff, it results in dissatisfaction and ultimately, unfulfilled aims³. This being the situation, if quality assurance measures are to be effective, such measures need to consider all stages of CLIL implementation and all forms of instruction through a foreign language, in order to support an effective step-by-step quality enhancement approach. Institutions must relevantly identify where they stand on the CLIL continuum (as presented below in Table 1) and decide on effective measures compatible with institutional aims and opportunities as well as national quality frameworks.

Table 1. Foreign Language Mediated Higher Education Instruction: Content and Language Integrated Learning Continuum⁴



³ LANQUA CLIL Year One Report, 2008, p.8-9, retrieved from <http://www.lanqua.eu/theme/content-language-integrated-learning-clil>, last accessed on 27 September 2011

⁴ Rasanen A., Greere A, 'Lost in CLIL? Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) across Europe: approaches and quality issues in higher education' presentation delivered at the Language in Higher Education 2010 Conference: Raising the standards for languages, 1-2 July 2010, <http://conf2010.llas.ac.uk/> last accessed on 27 September 2011

The approach that an institution will take on applying one CLIL type as opposed to another depends highly on the reasons it prioritizes for internationalization and, especially, on the institutional and national constraints and requirements. According to LANQUA findings, the following conclusions may be drawn to portray different characteristics of applying CLIL-type approaches as practiced throughout Europe:

Language for specific purposes (LSP) / language for academic purposes (LAP) practices are more common than fully integrated approaches. The ‘content’ courses are usually taught by either a native or non-native speaker of the target language, and collaboration between the ‘content’ teacher and the language teacher is quite rare. Some institutions have developed CLIL practices whereby specific LSP/LAP courses are offered as pre-sessional modules to students before they enrol in their subject studies. Closer content and language integration, with the language support coinciding with what is required in the subject studies is also practised successfully. These models involve full collaboration between language specialists and subject specialists, either in the form of joint planning or team teaching.⁵

Regardless of the type of CLIL approach identified at the current moment in given institutions, programmes where content is being delivered through a foreign language should strive to address learning outcomes which relevantly integrate the content, subject-related, profession-oriented aspect with issues of language, communication, negotiation. LANQUA CLIL formulated learning outcomes expressed as competences (knowledge, understanding and skills) which students should be able to demonstrate on graduation. These learning outcomes, as listed below, could be exploited by programme management, teaching staff and students as a yardstick to measure their performance against in order to support quality assurance and design strategies of development for quality enhancement.

Table 2. Learning outcomes in CLIL contexts⁶

<p>Having completed a higher education programme (first or second cycle) in a CLIL context, STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE ACQUIRED:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multilingual competence in the field-specific and professional domain to include knowledge and understanding of how information is managed, conceptualised, and communicated in the target languages/L2s in the field-specific academic and professional domain and the role of research in contributing to the body of knowledge in the field; • understanding of the national and international dimension of the professions in the field, including cultural differences and their own cultural, academic and professional presuppositions and representations, not least how these are manifested in the target languages/L2s; • knowledge and understanding of how multilingual and multicultural professional teams, networks and communities operate in both face-to-face and virtual contexts and which interpersonal and intercultural skills, linguistic and non-linguistic, are required; • awareness, knowledge and understanding of communication conventions in the field and profession in the target languages/L2s, e.g. genre, discourse and register conventions, as well as sensitivity to appropriate language use in academic, professional and social contexts • understanding of the importance of continuously developing one’s own professional expertise through multilingual and multicultural sources and experiences, including ICT-enhanced environments;
--	--

⁵ <http://www.lanqua.eu/theme/content-language-integrated-learning-clil>, last date of access 27 September 2011

⁶ <http://www.lanqua.eu/theme/content-language-integrated-learning-clil>, last date of access 27 September 2011

<p>Having acquired such knowledge and understanding, STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO DEMONSTRATE:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • receptive and productive skills necessary to access, process and critically evaluate information in the field of study, to share information, and to identify, analyse and solve problems in multiprofessional settings of the field; • mediation between languages and cultures in social and in professional settings, including effective translanguaging (code-switching, intercomprehension strategies, mediation), intercultural awareness and negotiation of meaning needed in domain-specific professional multilingual and multicultural environments (multiliteracy) • professional and interpersonal communication in the target languages/L2s in order to function and interact in specific and interdisciplinary contexts, teams, networks and communities, as well as in social contexts • using oral and written communication in target languages/L2s appropriately in the specific academic field and in professional and social contexts, including communicating their expertise to different audiences • awareness and ability to apply appropriate metacognitive skills and strategies needed for self-directed and integrated content and language learning on a lifelong basis
---	--

Having detailed the reference pylons for CLIL in higher education, it what follows we will present to what extent this information is considered by Romanian universities in their strategies for internationalisation.

3. Pinpointing the Requirements for Internationalisation at Romanian National Level –ASIGMA Objectives

The project POSDRU/86/1.2/S/59367“Quality Assurance in International Master’s Level Education: Developing the Romanian National Framework for Compatibility with the European Higher Education Area”, acronym ASIGMA, is a project co-financed by the European Social Fund to be implemented in Romania over a period of three years (2010-2013) by nine partner institutions: the Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca, as coordinating partner, Transilvania University Brașov (partner 1), “Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați (partner 2), Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies (partner 3), “Politehnica” University of Timișoara (partner 4); Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași (partner 5), West University of Timișoara (partner 6), Ovidius University of Constanța (partner 7), and the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS) (partner 8).

Targeting evaluation and accreditation experts working within Romanian national committees for quality assurance in higher education, members of quality assurance committees at university/faculty level, staff involved in the development of university master’s programmes and students of foreign-language mediated master’s programmes, the project seeks to enhance the quality and relevance of international master’s level education to meet the requirements of the Bologna process and to create a framework that is coherent, consistent and comparable with the quality assurance policies applied within the European Higher Education Area. In order to attain these objectives the following quality assurance/enhancement measures are supported by the project having been mapped on requirements identified in the Romanian national context:

1. Improvement of university management and increase in the capacity of higher education institutions to offer high-quality international master’s level programmes adapted to the requirements of the global market – The managerial staff within higher education institutions

and the academic and administrative staff involved in developing foreign language-mediated master’s programmes will benefit from extended opportunities to develop managerial and pedagogical competences through the exchange of good practices.

2. Improvement of Romanian foreign language-mediated master’s programmes in accordance with the quality standards of the European Higher Education Area – The teaching staff and the students involved in international master’s programmes will benefit from a innovative educational framework of a higher quality, centred on relevant learning outcomes, by involving all the participants in the teaching and learning process, in order to better develop the skills and competences required by the global market.
3. Development and implementation of internal quality assessment tools in accordance with European standards, for institutions offering international master’s programmes – The benefits target primarily the staff responsible for quality assurance at institutional level. The quality assessment tools to be developed will also contribute to awareness raising with regard to international education among the key-actors involved in master-level education: staff in charge of curriculum development, content teachers, language teachers and students.
4. Development and implementation of a methodology of quality assurance for international master’s level programmes – The methodology will provide a quality reference framework to ensure the continued development/update/consolidation of quality assurance policies for higher education both at legislative and institutional levels.

ASIGMA activities are undertaken by four working groups bringing together members with comparable profiles from the partner institutions to focus explicitly on the specificities of their potential input in the internationalisation process. Working group 1 looks at aspects pertinent for master’s programme coordinators/directors involved in management and curriculum development activities. Working group 2 members are teaching staff specialised in the specific field of the master’s programme who teach in a foreign language. Working group 3 members are teaching staff specialised in foreign languages and in the teaching of languages for special purposes (LSP) who collaborate in international programmes, and working group 4 brings together students enrolled in international master’s programmes. This distribution allows for working groups to bring to light aspects specific for each profile and urges participants to share their experience and express their points of views in order to develop a coherent framework of analyses geared on quality assurance issues to support internationalisation.

4. Mapping the Romanian Context of Internationalisation – ASIGMA Findings

Before any measures may be recommended for quality assurance for programmes with an international profile or programmes mediated in a foreign language offered by Romanian higher education institutions, the ASIGMA project proposed a mapping exercise to observe the current situation and to provide a starting-point for any enhancements triggering quality assurance. In light of this objective a number of steps were undertaken for the identification of generically relevant issues for internationalization and the exchange of (good/best) practice enabling a comparative and reflexive approach amongst ASIGMA partner institutions and, also between ASIGMA partner institutions and European higher education institutions engaged in the process of internationalization.

This section will examine the methodology for data collection, describe the data collection tools and present the preliminary results stemming from the data analysis. These results will be detailed in the ASIGMA Quality Study on Internationalisation of Romanian Higher Education, forthcoming.

4.1. Methodology for Data Collection

The first step proposed the compilation of an analysis grid consisting of issues and support questions that would serve the purpose of guiding the presentation/observation of the current status of internationalisation in partner institutions. On the basis of these aspects identified, a report template was designed to be used in presenting the situation in the partner's own institution and to be used in observing the situation in the institution visited by the partners. Visits were conducted and hosted by partner institutions in the period of April – June 2011 according to a rota that allowed for more detailed interaction between institutions with similar/different profiles and members of staff involved in the process of internationalization at institutional level and also at programme level. Hence, each partner visited a partner institution and hosted a visit by a partner institution (according to Table 3 below).

Table 3. Rota of exchange visits

	Partner institution making the visit	Partner institution hosting the visit
Coordinating Partner	Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca	Transilvania University Braşov
Partner 1	Transilvania University Braşov	Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iaşi
Partner 2	„Dunărea de Jos“ University of Galaţi	Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca
Partner 3	Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies	„Politehnica“ University of Timișoara
Partner 4	„Politehnica“ University of Timișoara	„Dunărea de Jos“ University of Galaţi
Partner 5	Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iaşi	Ovidius University of Constanța
Partner 6	West University of Timișoara	Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies
Partner 7	Ovidius University of Constanța	West University of Timișoara
Partner 8	Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education	Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca

The visits focussed on interaction (through guided interviews) with university management staff in charge with the process of internationalization and involved in designing and implementing institutional internationalization policies, as well as master's programme management staff, content teaching staff, language teaching staff and students for a number of three master's programmes proposed by each partner institution (as indicated in Table 4 below).

Table 4. Foreign-language mediated master's programmes analysed at partner institutions

	Partner institution	Master's level programmes analysed	Language of teaching	Faculty
Coordinating Partner	Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca	<i>Etudes politiques européennes comparées</i>	French	Faculty of European Studies
		<i>Advanced Process Engineering</i>	English	Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Engineering
		<i>European Master's in Translation Studies and Terminology</i>	Romanian, English, French, German, Spanish	Faculty of Letters

Partner 1	Transilvania University Braşov	<i>Language Studies for Intercultural Communication</i>	English	Faculty of Letters
		<i>Internet Technologies</i>	English	Faculty of Mathematics and Informatics
		<i>Advanced Electrical Systems</i>	English	Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
Partner 2	„Dunărea de Jos“ University of Galaţi	<i>Naval Architecture</i>	English	Faculty of Naval Architecture
		<i>Advanced Technologies in Shipbuilding</i>	English	Faculty of Naval Architecture
		<i>Advanced Methods for Signal Processing</i>	English	Faculty of Electric and Electronic Engineering
Partner 3	Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies	<i>Management of International Projects</i>	English	Faculty of International Relations
		<i>Communication in English for Economic Research and Teaching</i>	English	Faculty of International Relations
		<i>Entrepreneurial Management</i>	German	Faculty of Business Administration
Partner 4	„Politehnica“ University of Timișoara	<i>Traitement du signal</i>	French	Faculty of Electronics and Telecommunications Engineering
		<i>Automotive Embedded Software</i>	English	Faculty of Automatic Control and Computer Science
		<i>Advanced Design of Steel and Composite Structures</i>	English	Faculty of Constructions
Partner 5	Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași	<i>Finance and Risk Management</i>	English	Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
		<i>Statistique et Actuariat en Assurances et Santé</i>	French	Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
		<i>Acquisitions, distribution, logistique</i>	French	Faculty of Economics and Business Administration
Partner 6	West University of Timișoara	<i>Artificial Intelligence and Distributed Computing</i>	English	Faculty of Mathematics and Computer Science
		<i>Physics of Crystalline Materials</i>	English	Faculty of Physics
		<i>Smart nano-microsystems for environmental and nano-micro technologies</i>	English	Faculty of Physics
Partner 7	Ovidius University of Constanța	<i>Action Publique, Gouvernance et Administration Europeene</i>	French	Faculty of Law and Administrative Sciences
		<i>Droit Maritime</i>	French	Faculty of Law and Administrative Sciences
		<i>Anglo-American Studies</i>	English	Faculty of Letters

As a result of the visits three types of reports were produced: (1) an institutional report presenting the current situation regarding the process of internationalization in each partner institution and analysing internationalization criteria present in particular master's programmes; (2) a visit report observing the current situation regarding the process of internationalization in each partner institution and analysing internationalization criteria present in particular master's programmes; (3) an exchange of good practice report analysing comparatively the situation in one's own institution with that of the partner institution visited. These reports stand basis for the preliminary findings and will serve the purpose of detailed data analysis to be conducted by the working groups according to the specificity of each working group profile. Additionally, working groups will design questionnaires, will conduct further interviews and/or will set-up focus groups to support the qualitative component of the study.

Exchanging internationalisation practices at national level is a first step towards understanding the different approaches to internationalisation and towards developing a reflexive attitude; the second mandatory step is to contextualize the Romanian internationalisation scene by comparison with the European higher education area. In order to facilitate this process ASIGMA partners are scheduled to visit European institutions as noted in the Table 5 below. This exchange of practice at European level will enable partner institutions to situate their practices in a European context and to relevantly analyse their approach for internationalisation.

Table 5. ASIGMA visits to European higher education institutions

	Partner institution making the visit	European institution hosting the visit
Coordinating Partner	Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca	Freie Universität Berlin, Germany
Partner 1	Transilvania University Braşov	Università degli Studi di Trento, Italy
Partner 2	„Dunărea de Jos“ University of Galați	Université de Lausanne, Switzerland
Partner 3	Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies	University of Southern Denmark, Denmark
Partner 4	„Politehnica“ University of Timișoara	University of Oslo, Norway
Partner 5	Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași	Université Libre de Bruxelles, Belgium
Partner 6	West University of Timișoara	University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg
Partner 7	Ovidius University of Constanța	Université Toulouse 1, France
Partner 8	Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education	Jyväskylän Yliopisto, Finland

4.2 Data Collection Tools⁷

For the purpose of identifying the characteristics presented by the context of internationalisation at higher education level of Romanian national institutions, particular tools for data collection were developed. Firstly, the criteria for analysis were decided upon and included in an analysis grid. Secondly, the analysis criteria were broken down into relevant, detailed questions that would serve the purpose of supporting the guided interviews that were to be conducted during the exchange visits amongst partners; these questions were incorporated in the analysis grid. Thirdly, on the basis of the analysis criteria three report templates were designed for the purpose of providing a uniform approach in the reporting exercise to enable relevant item-based data analysis. The report templates have two major sections focussing on institutional aspects and, respectively, programme-related specific aspects, describing the international dimension of the partner institutions and programmes as listed under Table 4 above. These templates support the presentation of the situation in the partner's own institution, i.e. institutional report, the observation of the situation in the host institution, i.e. visit reports, as well

⁷ These tools will be made available through the ASIGMA project website (asigma.lett.ubbcluj.ro).

as a reflexive exercise comparing the internationalization experience in one's own institution with that in the visited partner's institution, i.e. exchange of good practice report. The same templates are also to be used in reporting on visits to European universities, scheduled for the end of Year 1 of the project.

4.3 Data Analysis

4.3.1 Analysis Criteria for the Process of Internationalization at Institutional/Programme Level

In endeavouring to scrutinize the situation regarding the process of internationalization, the ASIGMA project proposes a number of elements that require special attention.

At institutional level the following elements are deemed relevant in a given analysis:

- Internationalisation policies, objectives stipulated and procedures implemented;
- Language policies containing elements of specificity regarding the internationalisation process;
- Staff and student recruitment policies with criteria specific for internationalisation, i.e. considering the performance necessary for quality teaching and learning as part of foreign-language mediated programmes;
- Promotion policies including the advertising of international programmes for increased visibility;
- Measurement tools used to indicate/evaluate the degree of internationalisation;
- Support mechanisms offered to staff and students involved in international/foreign-language mediated programmes;
- Quality assurance mechanisms for international/foreign-language mediated programmes.

At programme level the analysis will be rendered more detailed focussing on aspects referring to the way the programme is organized and the way it functions, the profile of the content and language teaching staff and the profile of the students. In what regards aspects that have to do with the management and design of the programme, the following elements are valued relevant for the evaluation:

- Programme objectives, and the way the programme objectives meet international educational and/or market requirements;
- Academic and professional competences envisaged coherently related to programme learning outcomes expressed as knowledge, skill, abilities and values to be demonstrated on programme exit;
- Collaborations with international partners of similar and/or different profiles
- Infrastructure, and the way the learning environment (equipment, hardware, software, bibliography, etc.) meets the requirements of the programme and is comparable to programmes of similar objectives as identified on the international scene;
- Level of accessibility and availability of teaching, learning and research materials in the languages used in the programme and other international languages specific for research in the field;
- Specificity of recruitment criteria compatible with the specificity of the programmes; consideration and evaluation of language competences on entry; consideration and evaluation of previous foreign-language mediated experiences relevant to the subject field/s;
- Graduate traceability and employability on the basis of competences developed, with analysis criteria specifically designed to give insight on programme-related issue;
- Programme-specific quality assurance procedures and tools.

Teaching staff involved in foreign-language medium programmes require specific competences, which are more or less considered on recruitment or in other quality assurance procedures. A foreign-language medium programme will have to consider both content and language teaching staff competences in conjunction with the role and tasks that are attributed to these two

profiles. The ASIGMA analysis grid focuses on the competences identified for teaching staff involved in an international/foreign-language medium programme and listed below. Given the assumed objective of content and language integration for foreign-language medium programmes, ASIGMA makes a distinction between the requirements for content staff and those for language staff. In such programmes the focus is evidently on content development, however integrated or adjunct language support cannot be disregarded if the programme is to be deemed successful. The way the competences are required/exhibited depends primarily on the type of programme and its learning outcomes.

Table 6. *Competences of teaching staff involved in international/foreign-language medium programmes*

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content teachers are expected to demonstrate advanced content knowledge and experience in the specialized domain. According to the evaluation methodology⁸ of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, staff teaching at master's level are expected to have conducted PhD research and been awarded the PhD title in the domain of the teaching disciplines; • Language teachers are expected to have sufficient content knowledge in the domain of the programme to be able to appropriately filter and work with domain-specific linguistic features (text production language conventions, terminology usage, etc.) in order to provide students with relevant language insight.
MULTILINGUAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content teachers are expected to demonstrate sufficient foreign-language/multilingual communication competences for professional purposes; i.e. the ability to use language effectively for communicate and negotiation of specialized content. In quality evaluation practice, the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education it is accepted for such competences to be demonstrated by presentation of valid language certificates or proofs of (lengthy) collaborations with foreign institutions (as mobilities, exchanges, publications, conferences, etc.); • Language teachers are expected to have advanced language competence in the foreign language and must be able to operate linguistically with specialized content, i.e. the ability to use content information effectively to highlight domain-specific linguistic phenomena;
INTERCULTURAL NEGOTIATION COMPETENCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content and language teachers are expected to have intercultural competences, i.e. the ability to handle a multicultural and/or multilingual classroom. This is necessary even in contexts where students are natives of the national/local language and the programme is delivered in a foreign language; and even more so, when the teacher or the students have different cultural/linguistic backgrounds.
PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content and language teachers are expected to have pedagogical competences adaptable for the foreign-language medium programme environment by proposing adequate and effective documentation/teaching/learning/assessment mechanisms specific to accommodate the objectives and the practices specific to the profile of the international master's programme;

⁸ Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2006) 'Methodology for external evaluation, standards, standards of reference, and list of performance indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education'. Retrieved at http://www.aracis.ro/fileadmin/ARACIS/Proceduri/Methodology_for_External_Evaluation.pdf, Accessed 27 September 2011.

The profile of the students in foreign-language medium programmes is extremely relevant. The expected/targeted student profile can have a great impact on programme management decisions involving recruitment policies, curriculum design, materials development, learning outcomes descriptors, etc. In regarding the student profile, ASIGMA highlights the following aspects to be taken into consideration by designers/coordinators of foreign-language medium programmes:

- Demonstrable domain-related knowledge and skills;
- Demonstrable language and communication competences for domain-specific professional purposes;
- Demonstrable intercultural competences; i.e. the ability to interact in multicultural educational and social settings;
- Quantifiable effects of mobilities and exchanges with international institutions;
- Quantifiable supervision and monitoring of student progress, with focus on communication skills as well as content-related knowledge.

4.3.2 Preliminary Analysis Results

Before an in-depth analysis by the working groups was proposed, the reports produced by partner institutions as a result of the national exchange of good practice were scanned for information that could assist the specific distribution of analysis tasks within the working groups. In what follow, we propose to detail the results of this preliminary analysis exercise, which, in our view, already gives sufficient insight into the mentalities and attitudes fostered on the Romanian education scene regarding the internationalization process.

In detailing these results, we will touch on the following aspects:

- Underlying principles for internationalization, i.e. what is understood by the process of internationalisation;
- Policy for internationalization (objectives), i.e. what internationalization objectives do individual institutions have and how are these expressed in policies;
- Linguistic policy, i.e. if language issues are dealt with at policy level and how is internationalisation dealt with from the point of view of language policies;
- Benefits and difficulties, i.e. what are the benefits of internationalisation as rendered by the institutional management team and what difficulties have already come to light or are anticipated for the future;
- Recruitment practices (staff and students), i.e. if recruitment practices/policies consider the internationalisation process and how are they adapted to the requirements of international programmes;
- Quality Assurance Mechanisms, i.e. what quality assurance mechanisms are in place and how do these consider the specificity of international/foreign-language medium programmes, if at all.

For ASIGMA partners, internationalization often translates into the existence of and/or increase in:

- Institutional relations with international/foreign partners;
- Affiliation to academic associations and networks;
- Internationally compatible curriculum and/or double degree;
- Staff and student mobility;
- Communication, research and dissemination on an international scale;
- Variety of languages on offer.

Internationalisation policies indicate a number of short-term or long-term objectives to be supported also by specific departments of the university. Institutional policies frequently bring in the foreground objectives which have a quantitative potential, hence are measurable and reportable in numbers, and tend to refer more vaguely to less measurable objectives, which may be equally important markers of quality.

Table 7. Internationalisation objectives

Measurable Internationalisation Objectives	(Less measurable) Internationalisation Objectives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. more international students; 2. more compatible curricula potentially leading to more joint-degrees; 3. more staff and student mobilities; 4. more international events to be organized or to be participated to; 5. more high-quality research to be publicised on an international level; 6. more partnership agreements to be signed; 7. more cooperation agreements with university associations; 8. more Honoris Causa titles awarded. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. fulfilment of learning outcomes; 2. proof of competence development; 3. recognition of qualifications on the job market; 4. involvement of the job market in programme management and development;

Internationalisation at institutional level will have to rely on specific support structures. ASIGMA partner institutions have noted some of these structures. Departments for International Relations, Departments for Communication and Languages (also Language Centres), Departments for Image will contribute to developing cooperation, exchanges and visibility on an international level, through specific actions such as: promoting and advertising for foreign-language medium programmes, offering facilities for foreign lecturers and foreign students to integrate in the university, delivering language support courses to content specialists as well as students enrolled in international/foreign-language medium programmes, etc.

Institutional language policies in ASIGMA partner institutions rarely focus directly on the process of internationalisation, however stipulations in place contribute to the promotion of internationalisation at institutional level and provide language support mechanisms for foreign-language medium programmes. Such stipulations include:

- Provision of continuity of language studies from bachelor to master's level;
- Promotion of the 1 + 2 language formula for students;
- Testing of language competences for content staff and students;
- Language support for staff as Life Long Learning in Continuous Professional Development schemes;
- Language support for students;
- Standardisation of language testing;
- Promotion of Content and Language Integrated Learning;
- Enhancement of visibility for the Europass language passport (portofolio);
- Organisation of summer courses of Romanian language and culture.

Institutional opinions regarding the benefits and difficulties related to the process of internationalisation identify the following aspects as being beneficial or difficult in the current context. It must be noted that internationalisation is perceived as both a development tool and a measurement tool enabling institutions to situate themselves the larger European context. It is unanimously recognised by ASIGMA partners that difficulties must be addressed in the near future, whereas the benefits must be capitalised on. For now, it is apparent that difficulties outnumber benefits and it depends on national, institutional and programme policies to address them in a prioritized order.

Table 8. Benefits and difficulties of internationalisation

Benefits of internationalisation	Difficulties in internationalisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates university image • Enhances program quality through compatibility with European programs • Provides opportunity for staff development • Provides higher-quality learning experiences for staff and students (smaller sized classes, intercultural exchanges, diversified knowledge flow) • Provides tools for staff and students to access the globalized world (European Union) • Ensures competitiveness and increases motivation for staff and students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romanian legislation or lack thereof to support internationalisation (issues with Diploma recognition) • Romanian Quality Assurance provisions insufficiently compatible with European practices, this reflects on the possibility of setting-up joint programs • Appropriate level of language competence for staff and students • Appropriate/sufficiently strict testing procedures for staff and students • Insufficient interest of multinational companies to engage in such programs • High costs, little support for advertising • No extra remuneration for staff involved in foreign-language medium programmes • Insufficient equipment/insufficiently renewed • Language policies rarely cover relevantly the situation of FL medium programmes • No specific standards to follow in implementing foreign-language medium programmes • Constraints in setting up academic-professional collaborations, involving the professionals on the market • Little accountability for the programs, no alumni tracking

However long the list of difficulties, it can be positively said that in ASIGMA partner institutions there are quality assurance mechanisms in place working at institutional and programme level to meet the requirements of the European scene in what regards internationalisation. As an example, in many partner institutions, recruitment procedures of both staff and students consider the necessity of demonstrating language competence through recognised language certificates and of evaluating language performance through specific testing procedures designed for the programme, additional to content-focussed specialized evaluations. Additionally, learning outcomes are increasingly focussing on communication issues for specialized professional purposes.

At this stage, it is important for institutions to share their individual experience and determine change on a national level by raising the quality standards of Romanian internationalized higher education and thus. If today Romanian legislation does not specifically address the issue of internationalisation and if the national quality assurance methodology does not emphasize the requirements of foreign-language medium programmes, in the near future this will have to change if Romanian education is to become even more competitive on the European educational market.

5. Preparing the Future – ASIGMA Projected Outcomes

Throughout the lifespan of the project, ASIGMA strives to impact especially at national level, but also at European level by filling a gap in the area of higher education quality assurance policies, not yet fine-tuned for internationalised education. Currently, the national higher education evaluation and accreditation methodology stipulates few specific elements required for the necessary and essential analysis of quality standards in programmes delivered in foreign languages. The project will help pinpoint additional specific elements, which may then be transposed into the methodologies of the agencies for higher education quality assurance all over Europe.

ASIGMA will make every effort to contribute to a better understanding of specific issues related to international master's education for all target groups, including the staff involved in the activities listed and other persons who take part in specific dissemination events and who refer to the electronic documents made available. Specifically, the project supports: (a) the development of a European standard-based evaluation and accreditation structure for the higher education system for the target group consisting of evaluation and accreditation experts working within the national committees for quality assurance in higher education, (b) the development of managerial abilities of administrative staff and of personnel involved in the development of curricula for international university programmes, (c) the development of pedagogical competences for staff involved in the methodological and didactical development of international programmes and (d) the development of a high-quality student-oriented learning environment in which the student understands the functionality of internationalised structures, knows the quality assurance mechanisms which ensure that appropriate standards be met and benefits from assistance and support in order to ensure an education that complies with quality expectations.

At partnership level, the project enables partner institutions to harmonise the implementation of international master's programmes with appropriate quality standards for the European market; offers the possibility to correctly and timely identify less efficient education situations; and recommends viable solutions that lead to an immediate qualitative improvement.

In order to pursue its main goal, that of contributing to the augmentation of the current quality assurance context in Romania the following results are envisaged:

- a report on the quality assurance mechanisms of international master's programmes in Romania in comparison with the European situation;
- 4 internal quality assessment tools specific to the working groups profile: (1) master's programme coordinators/directors involved in management and curriculum development activities, (2) teaching staff specialised in the specific field of the master's programme who teach in a foreign language, (3) teaching staff specialised in foreign languages and in the teaching of languages for special purposes (LSP) who collaborate in international programmes, and (4) students enrolled in international master's programmes;
- 24 enhanced master's programmes at the partner universities by improving curriculum development competences, enhancing didactic approaches and teaching and learning practices, improving collaboration between faculties, fine-tuning learning outcomes to market requirements; integrating content and language components and promoting collaboration between content and language teachers in order to ensure a positive learning experience for students; modernizing equipment, etc.
- a quality assurance methodology for international master's programmes including: quality assurance principles for the process of internationalisation of higher education, standards, reference standards, performance indicators, differential applications based on given situations (recommendations) and case studies illustrating the use of the methodology in practice;
- a position/recommendation document for enhancing the national quality assurance and accreditation methodology for specific internationalisation contexts;

This collective effort is to be streamlined into a quality assurance methodology tailored to the requirements of internationalised education to benefit quality assurance structures and the development of international programmes in the Romanian higher education system and beyond its borders.

Conclusions

As shown, for now, ASIGMA project results focus on principles/policies/practices for internationalisation of the Romanian educational scene, indicating the current situation and designing quality enhancement strategies. We note that one of the major points of focus refers to the way the process of internationalization is understood and reacted to by different institutions. The aspects

highlighted under the LANQUA project concerning internationalisation of European institutions are compatible with the situation as perceived in Romanian higher education. The second very important aspect encountered in the analysis and the description of partner exchange interactions refers to the definition that could be attached to internationalized programmes and the criteria a programme should fulfil in order to be labelled international/internationalised.

As a process, internationalization occurs differently at institutional level and at programme level having different measurable (quantitative) or less measurable (qualitative) criteria for assessment. Internationalization is first and foremost an institutional endeavour building on and safeguarding Bologna principles. At programme level, internationalisation may be viewed as a transfer, a shift from national to international; this shift may involve a change in language of delivery, but not exclusively. For now, let us expand our view as much as possible and relate to the following working definition: An international programme is one that gains international interest, be that from international students or the international job market.

Under the ASIGMA project a further in-depth analysis is deemed advisable, in order to describe exact partner practices and to deepen the understanding of the aspects systemized as part of this preliminary endeavour.

Acknowledgements

The authors would like to acknowledge the involvement of all ASIGMA experts in the data collection process, and especially the institutional coordinators of partner institutions who have coordinated and contributed to the reporting process. These are: Prof. Univ. dr. Paul Șerban Agachi for Babeș-Bolyai University, Prof. Univ. dr. Dana Mihaela Gheorghe for Transilvania University Brașov, Prof. Univ. dr. Adrian Lungu for “Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați, Prof. univ. dr. Alexandra Horobe? for Bucharest Academy of Economic Studies, Prof. univ. dr. Dan Stoiciu for “Politehnica” University of Timișoara, Prof. univ. dr. Marin Fotache for Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Prof. Univ. dr. Liliana Donath for West University of Timișoara, Prof. Univ. dr. Adina CIUGUREANU for Ovidius University of Constanța, Prof. univ. dr. Ioan CURTU for the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ARACIS). The complete list of experts involved in this activity may be consulted on the ASIGMA website:

asigma.lett.ubbcluj.ro/echipa

References

ASIGMA 2010 reports, unpublicized at the time of publication

LANQUA CLIL Year One Report, 2008. Retrieved at <http://www.lanqua.eu/theme/content-language-integrated-learning-clil>. Last accessed on 27 September 2011

Rasanen A., Greere A, ‘**Lost in CLIL? Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) across Europe: approaches and quality issues in higher education’ presentation delivered at the Language in Higher Education 2010 Conference: Raising the standards for languages, 1-2 July 2010.** Retrieved at <http://conf2010.llas.ac.uk/>Last accessed on 27 September 2011

Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (2006) ‘Methodology for external evaluation, standards, standards of reference, and list of performance indicators of the Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education’. Retrieved at http://www.aracis.ro/fileadmin/ARACIS/Proceduri/Methodology_for_External_Evaluation.pdf. Last accessed on 29 August 2011