

Benchmarking Report

within the framework of the DigiFLEd project

*Modernisation of University Education Programmes
in Foreign Languages by Integrating Information
Technologies*

Erasmus+ Programme (ERASMUS)

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Contents

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
 - 2.1 Project Description
 - 2.2 Project objectives
 - 2.3 Financial contribution
 - 2.4 Planned Outcomes



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3. Analysis of Benchmarking Visits
 - 3.1. Methodology and Benchmarking Approach
 - 3.1.1 Data Collection Method
 - 3.1.2 Criteria for Comparison
4. Institutional Profiles of the DigiFLEd Partners
 - 4.1 European Partners
 - 4.1.1 Tampere University
 - 4.1.2 Maynooth University
 - 4.1.3 University of Western Macedonia of Greece (Kastoria)
 - 4.2 Digital Teaching Environments for Foreign Language Programmes: Ukrainian Partners' Practices
 - 4.2.1 V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University
 - 4.2.2. Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University
 - 4.2.3. Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University
 - 4.2.4. V.O. Sukhomlinsky National University of Mykolaiv
 - 4.2.5. Horlivka Institute for Foreign Languages of Donbas State Pedagogical University
 - 4.2.6. Oles Honchar Dnipro National University
 - 4.2.7. Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University
 - 4.3 Digital Transformation Challenges for Ukrainian Universities: Common and Specific Obstacles
 - 4.3.1. Common challenges
 - 4.3.2. Specific challenges
- 5 Benchmarking Visits
 - 5.1. Objectives
 - 5.2 Benchmarking Visits Overview
 - 5.2.1 Study Visit 1 (Ireland)
 - 5.2.2 Study Visit 2 (Greece)
 - 5.2.3 Study Visit 3 (Finland)
6. Summary of the Best Practices of Using ICT Tools in FL Teaching
 - 6.1 Ireland: Effective Use of Moodle and Writing-Enriched Curriculum
 - 6.2 Greece: Immersive Multimedia Content and AI Tools in Language Education
 - 6.3 Finland: Translation Technologies and Digital Tools for Academic Writing
7. Recommendations for Developing New DigiFLEd Courses and Updating FL Curricula
 - 7.1 Guidelines for Developing New DigiFLEd Courses
 - 7.2 Tools for developing ICT-based learning materials
 - 7.3 Guidelines for updating FL Curricula in UA partner universities
8. Conclusion
 - 8.1 Key Insights from the Study Visits
 - 8.2 Areas for further study



Benchmarking Report

1. Executive Summary

This report has been prepared within the framework of the three-year Erasmus+ Capacity Building project, “**Modernisation of University Education Programmes in Foreign Languages by Integrating Information Technologies**” (Project No. 101128713 – DigiFLEd – ERASMUS-EDU-2023-CBHE), funded by the European Commission.

The primary objective is to analyze and compare practices in digital tool use for foreign language (hereafter FL) teaching observed during Study Visits at three European universities. This analysis aims to serve as the guidelines for updating foreign language curricula at Ukrainian partner institutions. The visits took place at Tampere University (Finland), University of Western Macedonia (Greece), and National University of Ireland Maynooth (Ireland) to gain first-hand knowledge of the educational environment in Europe, exchange the best practices for enhancing graduate employability and to benchmark the innovative approaches to ICT-enriched FL instruction.

This document sets up the background for improving the educational environment in Ukraine and developing cross-border cooperation among the countries in professional, methodological, research and cultural spheres. The findings which are going to be shared in this report, will be useful to a broad range of HEIs and professional audiences of FL philologists, teachers and translators.

Key Findings: The study visits to Ireland, Greece, and Finland highlighted the transformative impact of ICT tools in foreign language education. In Ireland, the effective use of Moodle and the Writing-Enriched Curriculum (WEC) emphasised interactive learning and the development of critical thinking skills, particularly for non-native English speakers. Greece showcased the potential of immersive multimedia and AI tools, such as AR/VR technologies and personalised feedback, to enhance student engagement and practical language proficiency. Finland focused on integrating translation technologies such as Trados and vocabulary development tools to improve translation quality, digital feedback on writing assignments as well as the key skills in developing academic writing to enhance publication possibilities. Collectively, these insights underscore the importance of adopting innovative, student-centred approaches to improve foreign language curricula, prepare students for the modern workforce, and foster resilience through international collaboration.

Recommendations: In response to challenges and best practices, guidelines have been developed to advance DigiFLEd courses and update foreign language (FL) curricula in Ukrainian universities using ICT. Key recommendations include securing access to learning resources, enhancing digital literacy for both students and staff, and strengthening e-learning infrastructure. Accessible, inclusive materials are vital for equity, alongside interactive tools and multimedia resources to enrich the educational experience. Building a culture of digital innovation within universities and fostering knowledge exchange across partner communities is crucial. Emphasis on Virtual Learning



Environments, digital content creation, and AI tools will create dynamic, engaging FL education, preparing students for a modern, digital landscape.

2. Introduction

2.1. The DigiFLEd project objectives

The strategic objective is to enhance the quality of higher education in Ukraine by integrating Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) into foreign language-related curricula.

More specific objectives include to:

- address mismatches between the requirements of the labour market and the offer of HEIs;
- provide FL professionals with the necessary training in ICTs;
- foster cooperation between partner universities;
- strengthen the relationships between HEIs, schools and other stakeholders;
- enhance the international visibility of the Ukrainian language and culture.

2.2 Financial contribution

Total budget: 798 815.00 euros

EU funding: 718 932.00 euros

2.3 Planned Outcomes

- narrowed gap between the requirements of the labour market and the offer of HEIs;
- innovated FL curricula in 24 universities;
- modernised e-learning equipment in 7 UA HEIs;
- improved quality of the FL education;
- trained students and teaching staff in ICT;
- strengthened international links;
- created new placement opportunities;
- enhanced skills in international project management skills;
- promoted Ukrainian language and culture internationally

3. Analysis of Benchmarking Visits

The primary objective of this report is to provide a comprehensive analysis and comparison of the various practices and experiences in using digital tools for foreign language teaching observed during the Study Visits at three European partner universities, with the aim of developing guidelines for updating foreign language curricula at the departments of the Ukrainian partner universities

3.1. Methodology and Benchmarking Approach



The methodology employed during the benchmarking visits was designed to help partner universities identify key challenges, overcome barriers, and access support tools while learning from the best practices of EU partner universities. This structured approach enabled participants to acquire approaches to innovative digital teaching methods and strategies for integrating these into their own institutions. The study visit methodology highlighted theoretical approaches and practical applications, ensuring participants received hands-on experience with digital tools and teaching methods.

3.1.1 Data Collection Methods

Survey. To evaluate the success of each study visit and ensure consistency across all visits, a standardised approach was used for data collection. Onsite and online participants (103 people in total) completed an online evaluation questionnaire at the end of each visit. These questionnaires employed a scale, where responses ranged from 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree), allowing to receive clear and measurable feedback. Additionally, five open-ended questions were included to gather qualitative insights. The questionnaire focused on two main areas: *Content* (the relevance and usefulness of the material presented) and *Organisation* (the effectiveness of the session structure and logistics). The survey's design was approved by the Quality Assurance Board during the Project Management Board meeting held on 18 June 2024. The survey results were approved by the Quality Assurance Board during the meeting of 18 October 2024. The survey was supplemented by observational analysis, interviews with host university teams, and focus groups involving both European and Ukrainian partners. These methods provided valuable data on professional training, course development priorities, and collaboration opportunities.

Observational Analysis. Throughout the workshops and seminars, the participants were engaged in observational analysis to deepen their understanding of theoretical and practical knowledge that was shared. The workshops provided opportunities to acquire new digital skills, take part in team-building activities, and apply digital teaching methods in a collaborative environment. The insights gained from these sessions were shared with the broader teaching staff and educational community at each partner university. This knowledge was vital for spreading best practices and ensuring that the entire educational environment of UA partner HEIs benefited from the study visits.

Interviews. At the end of each study visit, members of the organisational team at the host university, along with educators and IT specialists, were interviewed to obtain information on the practicalities of professional training at each European University. These interviews provided valuable information for designing future DigiFLEd courses and enabled the partner teams to understand the local context of the university.

Focus Groups. The participants, representing European and Ukrainian partner universities, comprised administrative and academic staff for better understanding the aims and objectives of new developed online courses. The discussions within these focus groups helped to clarify the key priorities for course development and motivated collaboration on innovative solutions that would benefit all the institutions involved.

3.1.2 Criteria for Comparison



The comparative analysis supported the development of online courses at Ukrainian universities and was based on the following criteria:

Integration and Adaptability of Digital Tools. During the Benchmarking visits the participants explored how the presented digital tools can be tailored to the specific needs in Ukrainian partner universities. Participants explored both theoretical and practical applications of these tools and their potential to enhance students' achievements. .

Innovativeness. The training sessions highlighted a variety of innovative practices that align with the current trends in digital FL teaching. The following practices were analysed, including multimedia learning, AI tools, digital games, and storytelling to engage students.

Effectiveness. The effectiveness of the training sessions was thoroughly assessed through the careful analysis of three study visit evaluation questionnaires.

Support. Throughout the training, the participants were offered continuous assistance, ensuring they had the resources and guidance needed to practice digital tools and methodologies presented.

4. Institutional Profiles of the DigiFLEd Partners

4.1 European Partners

4.1.1 Tampere University

Tampere University, located in the second-largest city of Tampere (Finland), is a multidisciplinary institution created by the merger of Tampere University of Technology and the University of Tampere in 2019. With over 22,000 students and a staff of 4,200 from more than 80 countries, Tampere University is one of the most accomplished research and higher education institutions in Finland.

The *mission* of Tampere University is to promote free research, scientific and artistic education as well as to provide higher education based on research. In accordance with its strategy, the University is building a distinctive international reputation in its scientific and artistic fields. The University is known for its excellence in teaching and research, maintaining close collaboration with the local community as well as with national and global partnerships. The university promotes inclusivity, sustainability, the societal impact of research results and artistic activities, and fosters life-long learning.

Tampere University is one of the most multidisciplinary universities in Finland. The University has seven faculties: the Faculty of Built Environment, the Faculty of Education and Culture, the Faculty of Engineering and Natural Sciences, the Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences, the Faculty of Management and Business, the Faculty of Medicine and Health Technology, and the Faculty of Social Sciences.



Tampere University offers a range of interdisciplinary and technology-driven educational programmes, including ICT-based curricula in various fields. Within the internationally acclaimed Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences, the Master's Programme in Multilingual Communication and Translation Studies at Tampere University emphasises ICT-based foreign-language curricula by integrating technology in translation and interpreting training. Students develop advanced communication skills in both Finnish and another elective language, while specialising in areas such as translation technology and creative industries. They learn to utilise various digital tools essential for modern translation and interpreting practices, preparing them for diverse professional roles in multilingual environments. This programme also successfully trains translators for the European Union.

4.1.2 Maynooth University

The National University of Ireland, Maynooth, commonly known as Maynooth University, is one of the four constituent universities of the National University of Ireland. Located in County Kildare, it is renowned for its dynamic academic community with over 15,000 students from more than 100 countries. The university employs approximately 1,000 staff members in both academic and professional capacities, establishing it as a prominent centre for higher education in Ireland.

Maynooth University's *mission* is centred around providing an outstanding education, fostering research and scholarship, and engaging with the wider community. They aim to nurture critical thinking, creativity, and leadership skills among their students while contributing to knowledge creation through innovative research. The university places a strong emphasis on inclusivity, sustainability, and social responsibility, aiming to make a positive impact locally, nationally, and globally.

The university's academic structure is organised across three main faculties: the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, the Faculty of Science and Engineering, and the Faculty of Social Sciences, which offer educational programmes at undergraduate, Master's and PhD level. Maynooth University also includes various research institutes, such as the Innovation Value Institute and the National Institute for Regional and Spatial Analysis, enhancing its reputation in research and innovation.

Maynooth University offers a variety of interdisciplinary and technology-enhanced educational programmes, including ICT-based curricula across multiple disciplines. The Bachelor's and Master's programmes within the School of Modern Languages, Literatures, and Cultures emphasise ICT integration into language and translation studies, where technology-driven methods enhance language acquisition, translation practices, and cultural studies. Students develop advanced skills in English, Irish, or other languages, focusing on areas such as translation technology and digital communication. They engage with a variety of digital tools essential for modern translation and multilingual communication, preparing them for dynamic roles in global, multilingual environments.

4.1.3 University of Western Macedonia of Greece (Kastoria)



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The University of Western Macedonia, established in 2003 in Kozani, Greece, is a multi-campus institution serving the Western Macedonia region. It achieved self-governing status in 2015 and underwent significant expansion in 2019 following a merger with the Technological Educational Institute of Western Macedonia. UoWM now comprises 7 schools – the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, the School of Engineering, the School of Health Sciences, the School of Science, the School of Agriculture, the School of Economics, and the School of Fine Arts with 21 departments, spanning five cities – Kozani, Florina, Kastoria, Ptolemaida, and Grevena – with its main campus situated in Kozani.

The university supports a diverse academic community of 18,061 undergraduate students, 2,900 postgraduate students, and 400 PhD candidates, with a workforce of 520 academic staff and 200 administrative and technical personnel.

The University of Western Macedonia's *mission* aims to promote and consolidate knowledge and progress through its dynamic, reliable and modern functions, both for the benefit of its academic community and society. Its mission focuses on three key areas: fostering sustainable education through research and innovation, addressing local economic challenges while promoting entrepreneurship and lifelong learning, and building a just, responsible society by encouraging citizenship, scientific thinking, and environmental awareness, grounded in democratic values and tolerance.

ICT is a core element in the curricula of the University of Western Macedonia, integrated across its various schools and departments. The Department of Communication and Digital Media in Kastoria exemplifies this approach by equipping students with advanced digital skills tailored for careers in modern communication. It emphasises an interdisciplinary approach, blending journalism, public relations, advertising, and market research with the latest digital media trends. While courses such as human-machine communication, internet technologies, mobile media, and multimedia production are designed to support careers in fields such as digital journalism, e-government, and online marketing, they also provide valuable tools for creating engaging language learning content, including interactive lessons and language apps. The department's labs and research groups, such as the Digital Media and Strategic Communication Lab, allow students and researchers to apply ICT in real-world contexts like crisis communication and digital advertising. These units also can help to explore digital strategies for language instruction, enhancing the integration of technology in Foreign Language Teaching and making it more effective and relevant to today's educational needs.

4.2 Digital Teaching Environments for FL Programmes: Ukrainian Partners' Practices

4.2.1 V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University

The School of Foreign Languages, comprising six departments, offers a diverse selection of programmes, including 1 PhD programme, 6 BA and 5 MA programmes, covering English Language, Literature, Translation, and additional languages such as German, French, Spanish, Chinese, and Arabic. With a faculty of 181, including 18 DScs and 85 PhDs, the School caters to 1250 Foreign



Language majors and extends its expertise by offering language instruction to over 8000 students across various university departments.

Karazin University's distance learning system is managed by two main units: the Institute of Postgraduate Education and Part-Time (Distance) Learning, which provides advanced training and re-training for professionals across all accredited specialties, and the Center for E-Learning, which oversees Moodle, university video channels, open courses, and quality assurance for e-learning. The Web Communications Center supports Google services, including corporate email, Cloud storage, Google Classroom, and Zoom.

Distance learning began in 2012 as a Moodle pilot for part-time students in Economics and Sociology, gradually expanding across all programmes. The university's established digital foundation enabled a swift transition to fully online education during the COVID-19 pandemic and under martial law. Currently, all education is conducted online using Moodle and Google Classroom, supported by Google Meet and Zoom for video conferencing. Since the 2023-24 academic year, control of final exams has been conducted exclusively on the Moodle platform.

By fostering the digital competencies of educators, the Institute ensures they are well-prepared to navigate the evolving landscape of higher education and deliver quality education in a distance learning environment, promoting a culture of continuous professional development and innovation in teaching practices.

4.2.2. Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University

The Educational and Research Institute of Foreign Philology of Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University is the university's largest structural section, focusing on foreign languages, literature, translation, and foreign language instruction. The Institute has five departments that teach 645 students, including 424 bachelor, 173 master and five doctoral students in four BA, five MA, and one PhD programmes.

Since 2019, the University has made digitalisation a central part of its current educational strategy by introducing a range of digital tools and platforms aimed at improving educational processes and administrative activities. Notable digital initiatives include E-Portfolio, a multifunctional platform for administrative tasks ("Enter", "Dean's Office", "Experience", "E-hostel", "Educational Programmes"), and ZDU PROJECT, an educational platform that promotes interactive collaboration between educators and students. This platform allows educators to upload teaching material for lectures, seminars, and individual assessments, as well as to create and manage module and exam assessments.

Moreover, the academic staff at the Educational and Research Institute of Foreign Philology actively integrate digital resources into their foreign language teaching practices. Faculty members combine traditional classroom instruction with multimedia tools and online platforms to enhance students' language skills and facilitate effective communication. Interactive platforms such as Kahoot and Wordwall engage students in vocabulary and grammar practice through quizzes and games; Quizlet supports vocabulary acquisition. To develop listening and comprehension skills, TED Talks and Edpuzzle are used. For collaboration and creative projects, such tools as Padlet and Canva are utilised, while Zoom and Google Meet, along with social media, are used for individual consultations and remote learning. Trados and MemoQ software is incorporated into the training of translation students.



4.2.3. Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University

The Faculty of Foreign Languages at Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University comprises five departments, offering a robust selection of undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programmes. With three BA and four MA programmes, as well as a PhD programme, the Faculty delivers specialised education in language teaching, literature, and translation studies. Supported by 85 faculty members, the Faculty currently educates 810 students, including 608 BA and 202 MA students, in an academic environment focused on language and intercultural competencies.

In 2021, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University established SMART-TNPU, a comprehensive IT infrastructure designed to create a digital learning environment through modern IT solutions and digital technologies. To support this transformation, the university created the Centre for Learning Environment Digital Transformation, which focuses on enhancing the digital competence of teachers and students and integrating digital technologies into the educational process.

The university's digital learning environment is built on principles of digital integration, feedback, and openness. Using Moodle, the university offers courses enriched with digital content like video lectures and interactive tasks. Virtual classrooms on platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet facilitate live, collaborative learning, building a sense of community.

Through the corporate Google email system and G Suite for Education, students and teachers access collaborative tools like Google Drive and Google Classroom. Microsoft Office Web Apps also supports online document editing. This digital setup aligns the university with global education standards, enhancing resource accessibility and student competitiveness internationally.

4.2.4. V.O. Sukhomlinsky National University of Mykolaiv

Since 1994, the Faculty of Philology at V.O. Sukhomlinsky National University of Mykolaiv has trained future English and German language specialists. In the 2023-2024 academic year, the faculty enrolled 302 students across its BA and MA programmes. Its curriculum emphasises modernised training for prospective foreign language teachers, translators, and Ukrainian and English language and literature specialists, consistently enhancing its offerings through participation in various European educational projects.

Since 2016, the university has implemented a 'hybrid learning' model within its professional training programmes, combining online and in-person lessons with a strong emphasis on independent study. Courses are designed and accessible through Moodle, which serves as a central hub for classroom, online, and self-paced learning. This blended approach provides students with hands-on experience in using digital resources and modern technology. To support Moodle's integration, the university has established an IT support department, underscoring the importance of digital proficiency for enhancing students' skills and improving the learning experience.

In addition to Moodle, virtual classrooms such as Zoom and Google Meet are regularly used for distance learning, facilitating both individual and group interactions. These platforms enable effective communication, guide students through assignments, and foster teamwork in an online environment. The university also integrates multimedia resources – including e-textbooks, dictionaries, and audiovisual content – to support a well-rounded and engaging distance learning experience.



To further spark curiosity and promote digital engagement, the faculty employ various online tools that cater to individual and collaborative learning needs. Canva and Genial.ly allow students to create visually appealing content with a wide selection of templates and graphics. Interactive platforms like WordWall, MindMap, and Kahoot make for dynamic, collaborative activities, while Quizlet supports memorisation and learning of new material. Padlet, a versatile virtual board, is widely used for online lessons, offering numerous functions that enrich the distance learning environment and foster deeper engagement.

4.2.5. Horlivka Institute for Foreign Languages of Donbas State Pedagogical University

Horlivka Institute for Foreign Languages of Donbas State Pedagogical University has a 75-year tradition of training language teachers, translators, and humanities educators, known for upholding European educational standards. Today, its two departments – Romance and Germanic Languages and Social and Language Communication – support 71 faculty members, including 8 D.Sc. and 43 PhD holders, delivering 12 Bachelor's, 7 Master's, and 1 PhD programme.

Due to Russia's aggression, HIFL has faced two relocations: first from occupied Horlivka to Bakhmut in 2014 and then in April 2022, when bombings in Bakhmut forced a second relocation to Dnipro. The institute now operates fully online, a transition aided by the pandemic-driven experience in digital education.

Horlivka Institute for Foreign Languages leverages digital tools to enhance learning outcomes in foreign language and translation studies. Key platforms include Moodle, H5P, Padlet, Wordwall, Kahoot, Quizlet, MindMap, and specialised software like Trados Studio and memoQ.

Moodle serves as the primary learning management system, facilitating blended learning with accessible course materials, assignments, and interactive forums. H5P enriches this setup by adding interactive content options. Tools like Padlet, WordWall, and Quizlet support collaborative activities, vocabulary practice, and gamified assessments, while MindMap aids in visualising complex literary concepts. For translation studies, Trados and memoQ offer students hands-on experience with industry-standard computer-assisted translation tools, preparing them for professional workflows.

4.2.6. Oles Honchar Dnipro National University

Oles Honchar Dnipro National University, founded in 1918 as Katerynoslavskyi University, is now a prominent classical university in Ukraine. It comprises 14 faculties, 64 departments, 3 research institutes, and 4 vocational colleges, serving 10,000 students across 87 specialities.

The School of Ukrainian and Foreign Philology and Arts of Oles Honchar Dnipro National University consists of 10 departments offering BA, MA, and PhD programmes in Modern and Slavic languages, Literature, Art History, and Computer Graphics. Graduates can pursue careers in educational institutions, media outlets, tourist and translation agencies.

Distance learning began in 2015 on platform Office 365. The university established online teaching and studying enabled a transition to fully online classes during the COVID-19 pandemic and later under martial law. Since September 2020 all teaching is conducted online using Microsoft Teams. University academic staff actively use various digital resources when teaching foreign languages.



Among them there are such tools as Padlet, WordWall, and Quizlet which support collaborative activities, listening, vocabulary and grammar practice. With the planned introduction of Moodle, the School aims to further enrich the digital learning environment, providing a structured, accessible platform for course delivery and resource management.

4.2.7. Vasyl' Stus Donetsk National University

Founded in 1937, Vasyl Stus Donetsk National University is a leading educational institution in Ukraine and the Vinnytsia region. Relocated to Vinnytsia in 2014 due to the conflict in Donbas, the university has maintained its mission as a central educational and research hub. Today, the university consists of six faculties, offering a range of BA, MA and PhD programmes, including 26 academic tracks and Dual Degree Programmes with international institutions.

The Schools of Foreign and Slavic Philology is particularly notable for its expertise in Ukrainian and Foreign languages, Literature and Linguistics. It offers a range of programmes in Ukrainian language and Literature, Linguistics, and foreign languages, fostering linguistic proficiency and cultural insight. With five departments staffed by a dedicated team of experts, the School of Philology remains committed to advancing research, critical inquiry, and high standards in language education.

The University integrates a range of digital tools to enhance its foreign language and translation courses. Microsoft Teams and Moodle serve as primary platforms for blended and distance learning, enabling student interaction, multimedia content sharing, and feedback. Such widely-used tools as Coursera, TED, Quizlet, and Kahoot add engaging multimedia and gamified assessments to course delivery. In Literature courses, LearningApps and Prezi help assess comprehension, while collaborative tools like Miro, Conceptboard facilitate teamwork and creative projects. For translation studies, Trados Studio, accessible through the Trados Academic Partnership, provides essential training in computer-assisted translation.

The digital teaching environments for Foreign Language (FL) programmes in seven Ukrainian universities reflect a wide range of technological integration, demonstrating unique adaptations to online and blended learning needs. Each institution leverages digital platforms and tools tailored to their academic goals and regional contexts, with some deploying full-scale digital systems in response to recent challenges.

4.3 Digital Transformation Challenges for Ukrainian Universities: Common and Specific Obstacles

The urgent need for accessible digital environments in Ukrainian universities has been underscored by two major crises: the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing war in Ukraine. This pressing demand has become even more acute as institutions face displacement, power outages, and security threats.



4.3.1. Common challenges

Ukrainian partner institutions face *common* challenges in creating accessible digital learning environments amid ongoing adversity, including war-related displacements, power cuts, and military threats. Digital learning remains essential for preserving intellectual resources, with an intensified need for resilient online education tools.

For relocated institutions like Horlivka Institute for Foreign Languages of Donbas State Pedagogical University and Vasyly' Stus Donetsk National University, digitalisation offers a path to stability and growth in their new regions. Meanwhile, V.N. Karazin Kharkiv National University, which continues to operate in Kharkiv despite ongoing shelling, views digitalisation as essential to retaining its student and faculty bodies under difficult conditions. All courses are currently conducted online using Moodle and Google Classroom, with Google Meet and Zoom for video conferencing; since the 2023-24 academic year, final exams have been held exclusively on Moodle.

For institutions where in-person learning remains feasible, a hybrid model with robust digital integration is prioritised. For example, V.O. Sukhomlynskyi National University of Mykolaiv combines online and in-person lessons, leveraging interactive technologies and Moodle to support independent study. Similarly, Ternopil Volodymyr Hnatiuk National Pedagogical University has established a comprehensive digital ecosystem, SMART-TNPU, to support learning based on principles of technology integration, feedback, and openness.

At Oles Honchar Dnipro National University, classes are currently held on the Teams platform, which supports effective communication and student engagement. However, to align more closely with the project's objectives and improve course delivery, the university plans to transition to Moodle.

Zhytomyr Ivan Franko State University, which currently offers in-person classes, uses its proprietary platform, ZDU PROJECT, to distribute course materials and support independent student work. The integration of Moodle will enhance course management by centralising content, assessments, and communication, resulting in a more cohesive learning experience. With Moodle's analytics and collaboration tools, faculty will be able to improve student engagement, track performance effectively, and foster stronger interactions.

Together, these initiatives are creating a unified, interactive learning environment across institutions, elevating the quality and accessibility of education. To further support these digital learning environments, Ukrainian HEIs have established administrative centers dedicated to distance education. These centers not only oversee distance learning but also address the needs of students and faculty, provide teacher training in platform management, assist in developing new digital content, and ensure adherence to educational standards.

4.3.2. Specific challenges



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In response to these shared challenges, the partners also identified *specific* obstacles related to foreign language teaching and learning, providing a strong basis for advancing the digitalisation of university education. Key needs were identified, including:

- ensuring secure and reliable access to learning resources;
- expanding the diversity of student placements to better equip graduates for the demands of a globalised job market;
- improving the digital literacy of both students and staff;
- creating accessible materials to promote equality and inclusion across academic life, helping to prevent discrimination based on gender and disability;
- enhancing the teaching and learning experience for students and staff;
- fostering a culture of digital innovation throughout all areas of university operations;
- engaging partner university communities to develop a shared digital culture and facilitate knowledge exchange.
- supporting a research environment that is underpinned by a culture of integrity.

The project objectives are closely aligned with these needs, aiming to modernise 24 BA and MA programmes with technology-enabled learning, train 105 foreign language instructors in digital tools, create four new ICT-based courses, develop two online courses for partner platforms, and establish a network of Virtual Centers.

5 Benchmarking Visits

5.1. Objectives

Each Benchmarking Visit enabled representatives from the seven Ukrainian partner universities to explore the digital educational environments of three European partner institutions in Ireland, Greece, and Finland, gaining insights into their innovative approaches and practices. More specific goals were as follows:

- to establish the Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences, communication and exchange of know-how between partner universities at the personal and institutional levels;
- to introduce EU practices in FL teaching and learning to UA partner universities;
- to summarise current challenges, potential and capacity of the UA universities for digitalisation and internationalisation;
- to learn the differences between the educational systems of Ukraine and the EU countries.

The main objectives of the Benchmarking visits are aligned with the main project goal to build the capacity of Ukrainian universities by modernising their foreign language curricula and incorporate the digital component. This innovation is meant to bridge the gap between the needs of the labour market and the professional skills of university graduates as well as increase FL graduates' employability.

5.2 Benchmarking Visits Overview



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5.2.1 Study Visit 1 (Ireland)

Study Visit 1 took place at Maynooth University (Ireland) from May 27 to 31, 2024 and was organised by the School of Business and the Centre for Teaching and Learning. 25 onsite and 14 online participants attended 15 hours of training on the Essentials of Moodle, Digital Games & Gamification in FL Teaching as well as on the Foundations of Effective Online Teaching and Learning.

More specifically, the Benchmarking Visit programme covered the following topics: Moodle Course Page Design Essentials, Moodle Course Page Design Essentials, Gamification Essentials in Moodle, Foundations Effective Online Teaching and Learning, Writing Enriched Curriculum (WEC) – Embedding Writing in Online Courses, Introduction to Open Educational Resources, Certificate in Teaching Irish to Irish Adults – Exploring how digital tools are used to support T&L, using social media to support the teaching of Grammar GenZ and Digital Transformation in Higher Education.

5.2.2 Study Visit 2 (Greece)

Study Visit 2 took place from June 24 to 28, 2024. It was organised by the Department of Communication and Digital Media of the University of Western Macedonia of Greece (Kastoria). 24 onsite and 29 online participants attended 15 hours of training on Multimedia Content Creation for Education and Theories & Principles of Multimedia Learning, Virtual and Augmented Reality, Digital storytelling, Digital Applications in Language and Literature Studies, Communication and Digital Media, Supporting University Virtual Centers, and digital tools for creation, communication, and collaboration.

The training programme was held at the laboratories of the Department of Communication and Digital Media, including an introduction to Virtual and Augmented Reality experience at the Immersive Lab. Additionally, 9 hours of training were conducted through fieldwork activities using various apps at locations including the traditional part of the town of Kastoria, the Aquarium, the Dragon's Cave, and the Limnaion prehistoric settlement. In this way, the team of the host University, managed to integrate cultural aspects into the study programme, so as to create an immersive effect with the hands-on experience and practical focus of the conducted sessions.

5.2.3 Study Visit 3 (Finland)

The Study Visit 3 took place at Tampere University from August 19 to 23, 2024. The five-day training programme focused on exploring the nuances of computer-assisted translation, academic writing for scientific publications and its ethical considerations, as well as the principles of using gamification and digital tools in foreign language teaching and learning.

26 onsite and 40 online participants were highly engaged throughout the sessions, collaborating to explore the process of using Trados, a prominent computer-assisted translation tool employed by professional translators. They also examined machine translation functionalities and literacies, experimented with digital tools to analyze and enhance students' vocabulary usage in written texts,



and used screencast software to provide combined visual and audio feedback on written assignments. Additionally, the team delved into the unique characteristics of formal and informal academic writing styles and discussed the strategies for improving writing for academic publishing.

6. Summary of the Best Practices of Using ICT Tools in FL Teaching

Study visits to Ireland, Greece, and Finland provided Ukrainian partner universities with new insights into integrating ICT tools in foreign language (FL) education. These visits showcased best practices in leveraging digital tools for course design, enhancing student engagement, and improving language acquisition through a blend of interactive media, gamification, and advanced translation technologies.

6.1 Ireland: Effective Use of Moodle and Writing-Enriched Curriculum

In Ireland, participants observed advanced applications of Moodle at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, including workshops on Moodle Course Page Design Essentials, Gamification Essentials, and effective online teaching and learning strategies. These sessions provided a thorough understanding of the DigCompEdu Framework and blended learning models, which can effectively enhance course engagement and accessibility. They emphasised clear course navigation, multimedia integration, and gamification techniques in Moodle to significantly boost student motivation and participation.

Case Study: Writing-Enriched Curriculum at Maynooth University

One innovative practice was the Writing-Enriched Curriculum (WEC), which incorporates purposeful writing tasks aligned with course goals. Through sessions on WEC, participants learned strategies for creating assignments that not only reinforce course objectives but also deepen students' critical thinking and communication skills. Integrating writing tasks into Moodle courses enables formative assessment and supports continuous skill-building within digital environments. This approach is particularly beneficial for non-native English speakers in foreign language programmes, who gain structured, constructive feedback.

Impact & Implementation: By embedding WEC and gamified Moodle features into their FL programmes, Ukrainian universities can foster a more interactive, skill-focused approach to language learning, thus improving student retention and engagement.

6.2 Greece: Immersive Multimedia Content and AI Tools in Language Education

At the University of Western Macedonia, Greece, the focus shifted to multimedia content creation, employing Mayer's Multimedia Learning Principles (e.g., Modality, Coherence, Personalisation) to enhance foreign language learning. Tools like PowerPoint, Lumi, and E-me were used to design interactive presentations and resources that integrate seamlessly with digital FL curricula.

Case Study: AR/VR Technologies for Enhanced Engagement

A standout feature of this study visit was the use of AR/VR tools, including Cospaces and TaleBlazer, to create immersive environments for language practice. The Immersive Lab showcased



VR for simulating real-world interactions and AR for engaging virtual tours, enabling contextual learning that enhances memory retention. This approach proves particularly beneficial in allowing students to practice language skills in lifelike situations, from navigating cityscapes to exploring cultural heritage. Additionally, our team gained valuable experience in developing practical skills using H5P and mastering principles of Virtual and Augmented Reality.

The visit also introduced participants to AI tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, and Magic School, which enable lesson customisation and personalised student feedback. Using these tools, educators can quickly generate exercises tailored to students' proficiency levels and interests, thus fostering adaptive learning pathways.

Impact & Implementation: By integrating AR/VR and AI-driven tools, along with the insights from workshops on multimedia content creation, Ukrainian institutions can develop more dynamic FL courses that cater to diverse learning preferences, fostering higher student engagement and a stronger practical grasp of the target language.

6.3 Finland: Translation Technologies and Digital Tools for Academic Writing

At Tampere University, participants focused on ICT tools specific to language and translation studies, where Trados software and Translation Memories were highlighted for their role in streamlining the translation process. Workshops on Machine Translation (MT) Literacy and Post-Editing taught participants how to use Trados and related tools to improve translation quality and productivity.

Case Study: Digital Tools for Vocabulary Development and Translation Training

Practical sessions on digital vocabulary tools, such as VocabProfile, Text Analyzer, and AntWord Profiler, showcased how these can be used to enhance students' vocabulary and text complexity analysis. These tools support vocabulary-building exercises by categorising words by frequency and complexity, providing data-driven feedback, and helping students expand their academic language proficiency. Participants also learned strategies for creating exercises aimed at updating translation memory, enhancing both their theoretical understanding and practical skills in translation technologies.

Impact & Implementation: Integrating translation and vocabulary tools like Trados and AntWord Profiler into language courses allows students to experience real-world applications of their skills, thereby preparing them for professional language roles and advancing their translation accuracy and vocabulary depth.

Besides this, the UA partners became acquainted with the pedagogical principles that guide the activities of the [Teaching and Learning Center \(TLC\)](#) of the Tampere Universities community. TLC's operations are based on joint knowledge formation and sharing, bringing together pedagogical expertise with the information and services that teachers need. Its purpose is to support the teaching staff of the higher education community by promoting the sense of community and offering opportunities for networking.



AI in Education

The role of AI platforms, such as ChatGPT and Copilot, was also discussed for their potential in supporting teachers and students. Tampere University encourages using the secure Copilot AI chatbot, emphasising data privacy (see TAU [Use of AI-based applications](#)). Students are expected to disclose any AI assistance in their work to maintain academic integrity, while teachers are advised to adapt assessments as needed to ensure that learning outcomes genuinely reflect students' comprehension and skills.

To summarise, UA partners obtained a broader vision of educational possibilities and are better equipped now to implement positive changes in their institutions and to foster resilience in their academic environments.

7. Recommendations for Developing New DigiFLEd Courses and Updating FL Curricula

The project's objectives take into account the above needs of Ukrainian partner universities to modernise BA and MA FL curricula, adapting them to address the present-day labour market needs and EU standards; introduce new courses which synergise linguistic disciplines and ICT; introduce new and ICT-relevant methods into FLT; draw on the European expertise in creating e-courses and obtain guidance in their development; get knowledge on digital tools in FL teaching and be coached in using them; get hands-on training on using course management systems; cultivate the skills of innovative thinking, real-life-problem-solving and active learning; foster internationalisation in education practices and academic staff mobility; establish sustainable cooperation among the partner HEIs by creating a network of university virtual centres; procure the IT equipment and software necessary to implement innovative educational practices; and advance the popularity of Ukrainian language and culture beyond the borders of the country.

The Benchmarking visits have been highly beneficial for Ukrainian partners, providing valuable insights into digital pedagogies and curriculum development. Benchmarking visits, including those to Tampere University, offered essential guidance on digitalising teaching practices. Resources such as Tampere University's [Teaching and Learning Center's Digital Pedagogy](#) can provide UA partners with comprehensive [tools and frameworks](#) for planning and implementing effective digital learning environments.

Drawing on Tampere University's Teaching and Learning Center's Digital Pedagogy, *it is essential to recognise that effective virtual teaching goes beyond simply digitising course materials or hosting classes in an online setting.* A well-structured virtual course should thoughtfully design and prioritise the learning process itself. Digital pedagogy emphasises understanding the unique features of digital environments and how they shape teaching strategies and student engagement, ensuring that online and hybrid courses are both purposeful and pedagogically sound.



7.1 Guidelines for Developing New DigiFLEd Courses

Considering the challenges and needs faced by Ukrainian partners, along with best practices identified, we have formulated a set of guidelines to follow in the development of new DigiFLEd courses, the updating of foreign language (FL) curricula with ICTs, and their sustained application beyond the project's lifespan. These guidelines provide a framework for ongoing reference and quality enhancement across *seven key areas*:

1. Ensuring secure and reliable access to learning resources:

- When designing courses, consider access security by using secure links and platforms for distributing resources and assignments;
- Strengthen relevant e-learning infrastructure with new equipment to support uninterrupted access to digital learning resources;
- Contribute new resources and materials relevant to their courses and ensure these are easily accessible to students;
- Use centralised university resources which both students and faculty can easily access and search for the latest materials.

2. Expanding the diversity of student placements to better equip graduates for the demands of a globalised job market:

- Integrate experiential learning components such as service-learning, project-based learning, or study abroad programmes that expose students to diverse environments and challenges;
- Include modules on global competency, cultural awareness, and communication skills necessary for working in a diverse, international context;
- Foster critical thinking and deeper learning among students with elements of virtual and augmented reality (see TAU [Use of AI-based applications](#));
- Enhance the learning experience by aligning educational materials with contemporary trends and challenges.

3. Improving the digital literacy of both students and staff:

- Enhance teacher-student interaction, encourage active learning and teaching, and allow personalised education;
- Embed digital literacy modules within existing courses to ensure students acquire practical skills as part of their education;
- Encourage interdisciplinary courses that teach digital tools relevant to different fields of study;
- Include training on essential software, cybersecurity practices, and emerging technologies;
- Establish forums or online communities where students and faculty can share resources, ask questions, and collaborate on language learning projects;
- Develop and offer workshops and courses focused on building digital skills for students and staff at various proficiency levels.

4. Creating accessible materials to foster equity and prevent gender and disability discrimination:



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- Ensure that all learners, including those with disabilities, have equal access to educational resources by developing learning materials with accessibility in mind, e.g. providing text alternatives for images, using descriptive headings, and including captions and transcripts for audio and video content;
- Ensure that the course content reflects diverse perspectives and experiences, promoting inclusivity and understanding across gender and disability issues;
- Involve students, particularly those with disabilities or from underrepresented groups, in the course development process to gather insights on their needs and preferences.

5. Enhancing the teaching and learning experience for students and staff:

- Use interactive tools such as virtual classrooms and online collaboration platforms to create an engaging and participatory learning environment;
- Introduce a variety of multimedia materials, including videos, podcasts, and digital storytelling, to cater to different learning styles and make language learning more dynamic;
- Incorporate gamification elements, such as quizzes, badges, and leaderboards, to motivate students and enhance their engagement with the course material;
- Promote reflective learning practices by incorporating e-portfolios or blogs where students can document their language learning journeys and receive feedback from peers and instructors;
- Foster collaborative projects that allow students to work together using ICT tools, enhancing their communication skills and promoting peer learning;
- Ensure the delivery of studied material is precise and relevant, aiding in the development of effective assessment programmes to measure student comprehension.

6. Fostering a culture of digital innovation throughout all areas of university operations:

- Develop a comprehensive digital transformation plan that aligns with the university's mission and goals, with measurable objectives for integrating digital tools and processes across departments;
- Establish dedicated teams or centres focused on digital innovation to support staff in implementing new technologies;
- Gather feedback from students, faculty, and staff on the effectiveness of digital initiatives and make necessary adjustments, while regularly evaluating digital processes to identify areas for improvement and adapt to new technological advancements;
- Provide resources and technical support to facilitate the transition to digital practices;
- Offer training programmes and workshops for faculty, staff, and administrators on effectively using digital technologies, while promoting continuous learning and upskilling in emerging digital tools and trends;
- Recognise and reward innovation to motivate faculty and staff to contribute to digital initiatives.

7. Engaging partner university communities to develop a shared digital culture and facilitate knowledge exchange:

- Foster partnerships between different departments to create innovative projects and solutions using digital tools;



- Support joint research and initiatives that leverage technology for educational and operational improvements;
- Promote a culture that embraces change and the adoption of new technologies by sharing success stories and best practices (e.g. TAU [Digital toolkit](#) maintained by the Digimentor network of Tampere University);
- Seek funding opportunities to participate in collaborative projects that focus on enhancing digital capabilities.

7.2 Tools for developing ICT-based learning materials

According to the Ukrainian partners' reports and feedback on the study visits and the initial training obtained there, they got an insightful opportunity to explore various approaches to digital tools in FL higher education. These approaches can help to integrate ICT in foreign language teaching, focusing on engagement, accessibility, and individualised learning experiences. They represent a versatile toolkit for fostering language acquisition in the diverse educational contexts summarised below:

Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs)

Platforms such as Moodle, MS Teams, and Google Classroom are essential tools for facilitating both synchronous and asynchronous learning. These *collaborative platforms* enable easy sharing of resources, support discussion forums, and provide assignment tracking, which enhances student interaction and accountability. In addition to these, various ICT tools – such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Magic School, Quizizz, Vocaroo, Voki, Canva, Miro, Cospaces, and TaleBlazer – offer further interactive and creative options to enrich the learning experience.

Providing resources through Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) also allows students to access materials at their own pace, encouraging independence and supporting diverse learning speeds. Platforms like Moodle, Google Classroom, and MS Teams play a key role in promoting flexible, accessible education.

Digital Content Creation

Partners emphasised the benefits of *integrating multimedia elements* – such as videos, audio, and interactive tools – into language learning to make it more engaging. This multimedia approach accommodates various learning styles, including visual, auditory, and kinesthetic, and helps to bring language into real-world contexts. Key tools supporting this integration include Moodle, PowerPoint, Lumi, E-me, Vocaroo, Voki, Canva, Miro, Magic School, Clip Art, and Pixabay.

The use of language-specific apps, online dictionaries, and digital workbooks was also highlighted as a way to enrich learning by offering immediate feedback and extra practice beyond the classroom. Essential tools in this category include H5P, VocabProfile, AntWordProfiler, MultiLingProfiler, Text Analyzer, WorksheetZone, and ChatGPT. For translation and localisation, software such as Trados, MemoQ, WordFast, Redokun, Smartcat, and OmegaT enhances students' practical language skills.



Blended and Flipped Classroom Models

The *flipped classroom* approach utilises *pre-recorded lectures and tutorials*, allowing students to review topics such as grammar or vocabulary before class. This setup reserves class time for active, interactive learning, maximising the benefits of in-person instruction. Tools such as Moodle, Google Classroom, and YouTube are frequently used for this purpose.

Self-paced learning modules, hosted on online platforms or proprietary university systems, let students learn at their own speed and revisit difficult topics as needed. Moodle and Google Classroom are commonly employed for these modules.

Assessment and Feedback Tools

Automated assessment tools such as Quizlet and Kahoot provide instructors with real-time insights into student understanding, enabling timely adjustments to instruction. These tools also offer immediate feedback, which is essential for reinforcing language learning. Key ICT tools for automated assessments include H5P, Quizlet, Kahoot, Copilot, Gemini, ScreenPal, Microsoft Stream, Moodle, and various screencast applications.

Digital portfolios are another valuable tool, encouraging students to document their work continuously. This approach supports ongoing assessment and reflection, helping both students and teachers track language progress over time. Google Sites is a commonly used ICT tool for creating digital portfolios.

Interactive and Collaborative ICT Tools

Online discussion *forums* and *group work tools*, such as Padlet, *chat rooms*, and other *collaborative platforms*, encourage peer interaction in the target language, allowing students to build conversational skills in an informal, low-pressure setting. Key ICT tools include ChatGPT, Mentimeter, Padlet, TalkPal, Miro, and screencast applications.

Video conferencing is another effective approach, with some partners using platforms like Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet to set up language exchange sessions. These virtual exchanges connect students with native speakers or learners from different regions, enhancing both language skills and cultural awareness.

Gamification in Language Learning

Tools that facilitate self-assessment and reflection, such as digital diaries or reflective journals, promote *self-regulated learning*. Students can track their own progress, helping them identify strengths, and target areas for improvement. Platforms such as Quizlet and Wordwall enhance vocabulary acquisition through gamified activities, while Google Sites is often used to host these reflective tools, providing a comprehensive space for student learning and growth.

Support for Self-Regulated Learning

Providing students with *tracking and reflective tools*, such as digital diaries or journals, encourages self-assessment and progress monitoring. These resources foster self-regulated learning by helping students recognise strengths and areas for improvement. Google Sites is a commonly used ICT tool for creating and managing these reflective learning tools.



In line with the goals of the DigiFLEd project, new courses will be developed with a strong emphasis on multimedia content creation, interactive learning principles, and AI-enhanced educational tools. By integrating cutting-edge technologies such as virtual and augmented reality, digital games, and digital storytelling, these courses will offer dynamic, engaging experiences that deepen student learning and support innovative teaching practices. This approach aims to create a vibrant, technology-enabled learning environment that meets the evolving needs of students and educators alike.

7.3 Guidelines for updating FL Curricula in UA partner universities

Integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into foreign language teaching curriculum is essential for modernising language education and aligning it with current educational needs. As foreign language teaching increasingly leverages digital tools, educators and curriculum developers must recognise the significance of introducing ICT into formal curricula to equip future language teachers with the skills necessary to effectively incorporate technology in their classrooms. ICT integration not only enhances teaching efficiency but also supports an engaging, student-centred approach that aligns with current digital learning trends.

Key strategies for effectively integrating ICT into foreign language curricula include:

1. Introducing specific courses or modules that focus on ICT skills development for language teachers. These modules should cover the use of multimedia resources, language learning software, digital communication tools, and artificial intelligence applications that can enhance language teaching;
2. Using blended learning models, combining face-to-face instruction with online components. This will familiarise future teachers with designing hybrid lessons that incorporate online resources and learning management systems;
3. Introducing into the curricula a comprehensive digital literacy foundation for future educators, ensuring they gain skills in evaluating, selecting, and implementing digital tools in pedagogically sound ways. Include training on online safety, data privacy, and the ethical use of digital resources;
4. Ensuring the curricula offer specialised training on applying gamification techniques and AI tools in language learning to enhance student motivation and provide personalised learning experiences. Focus on designing game-based activities and using AI-driven tools, such as chatbots and pronunciation software, to support skill development;
5. Ensuring the curricula offer specialised training on creating and curating multimedia content (videos, audio clips, simulations) that provide students with authentic language exposure. This skill is crucial for fostering real-world language practice through technology, which can be challenging in non-native environments;
6. Ensuring the curricula offer specialised training on collaborative tools (e.g., Padlet, Flipgrid, and shared documents) that encourage interactive, communicative language learning. These tools not only support language practice but also foster collaborative skills in both teachers and students;



7. Ensuring the curricula offer specialised training on the digital tools that help streamline the translation process (CAT tools like SDL Trados, MemoQ, or Wordfast), allowing users to keep consistency in terminology, improve efficiency and thus prepare future teachers and translators for industry standards in using MT;
8. Introducing mechanisms for teachers to stay updated with the latest technological trends and tools in language education, possibly by integrating continuous professional development activities or resources within the curriculum itself.

Incorporating these guidelines into *additional European languages and other subject areas* will broaden the impact of DigiFLEd by allowing the successful methodologies developed for English instruction to benefit a wider range of language programmes and academic disciplines. By adapting these approaches, educators can foster multilingual competencies, enhance cross-cultural communication skills, and support a more cohesive, versatile learning experience across various subjects. Moreover, applying these best practices across *different languages and disciplines* aligns with European education standards and prepares students for diverse, real-world applications.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Key Insights from the Study Visits

The study visit to Ireland highlighted the effective use of Moodle at the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, particularly through workshops on course design, gamification, and blended learning strategies. Participants gained valuable insights into the [DigCompEdu Framework](#), emphasising the importance of clear course navigation, multimedia integration, and gamification to enhance student motivation and engagement. Additionally, the innovative Writing-Enriched Curriculum (WEC) demonstrated how purposeful writing tasks can reinforce course objectives while developing critical thinking and communication skills, especially for non-native English speakers. By adopting these practices, Ukrainian universities can create more interactive and skill-focused foreign language programmes, leading to improved student retention and engagement.

The study visit to the University of Western Macedonia in Greece emphasised the transformative potential of immersive multimedia content and AI tools in language education. Participants learned to apply Mayer's Multimedia Learning Principles to enhance foreign language learning through interactive presentations created with tools like PowerPoint, Lumi, and E-me. A notable highlight was the use of AR/VR technologies, such as Cospaces and TaleBlazer, which provided immersive environments for contextual language practice, allowing students to engage in realistic scenarios that improve memory retention and skill application. Additionally, the introduction of AI tools like ChatGPT and Gemini demonstrated how personalised feedback and customised lesson plans can foster adaptive learning pathways. By integrating these innovative approaches, Ukrainian institutions can develop dynamic foreign language courses that cater to diverse learning preferences, enhancing student engagement and practical language proficiency.



The study visit to Tampere University in Finland highlighted the importance of integrating translation technologies and digital tools into language and translation studies. Participants explored the use of Trados software and Translation Memories, which streamline the translation process and enhance quality and productivity through effective workshops on Machine Translation Literacy and Post-Editing. Practical sessions focused on digital vocabulary development tools, such as VocabProfile, Text Analyzer, and AntWordProfiler, demonstrated their effectiveness in improving students' vocabulary and text complexity analysis. These tools provide data-driven feedback that supports vocabulary-building exercises and helps students develop academic language proficiency. By incorporating these translation and vocabulary tools into language courses, Ukrainian institutions can prepare students for professional language roles, improving their translation accuracy and enriching their vocabulary depth.

To summarise, the study visits underscored the importance of leveraging ICT tools for a more interactive, adaptive, and professional foreign language education. Observing student-centred, interactive methods inspired a shift towards gamified, collaborative learning, aligning curricula with the market needs and preparing students with professional translation tools.

By adopting these best practices, Ukrainian universities can enhance FL education's effectiveness, promote student engagement, and build practical language and digital skills that prepare students for the modern workforce. Each of the highlighted practices – from Moodle gamification to immersive AR/VR environments and advanced translation technologies – demonstrates the transformative impact of ICT on FL teaching.

The visits also showcased effective internationalisation effort, offering models for building professional networks and strengthening resilience in times of crisis. Seeing the project's positive impact reinforced the value of collaboration and adaptability, positioning UA institutions for sustainable growth and innovation in education.

8.2 Areas for further study

Future collaborations and areas for further study in integrating ICTs into foreign language (FL) curricula within the DigiFLEd project could encompass any of the following initiatives:

- *joint research initiatives* to evaluate the effectiveness of ICT tools in enhancing student engagement, retention, and language proficiency;
- the development and *sharing of open educational resources* (OER) that align with best practices in FL education;
- *cross-cultural language exchange programmes* to foster partnerships with universities worldwide and allow students to practice their language skills with native speakers;
- organising *professional development workshops for educators* focused on innovative ICT integration in teaching practices for online and blended learning;
- exploring *the use of artificial intelligence* in language learning to enhance personalised learning experiences;



- investigating *gamification strategies* to reveal the long-term effects of gamification on student motivation and learning outcomes;
- research into accessibility to examine the impact of accessible digital materials on students with disabilities, informing inclusive practices;
- exploring the use of *digital storytelling as a pedagogical tool* to enhance creativity and language skills development;
- developing monitoring and assessment tools to evaluate student progress in digital environments;
- efforts to influence language policies at national and EU levels to promote the integration of ICTs.

By pursuing these collaborative efforts, stakeholders can enhance the quality of FL education, foster innovation, and create engaging and inclusive FL learning environments.

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