# Translating for the future

## A new call to action for a flourishing translation culture

### 1. Introduction

Ten years ago we argued the case for preserving a flourishing translation culture in the Netherlands and Flanders, in a pamphlet entitled **Great translation by the way*. At the time, our language area was no longer home to a fully fledged university degree programme for literary translators, while a generation of gifted translators were reaching the end of their careers. Both the level of pay and the public appreciation for this vital profession were clearly lagging behind comparable professions, a combination that clearly limited the appeal of translation as a career choice. In the long term, this was bound to result in a steady decline in the opportunities for readers in the Low Countries to engage with work produced by writers, thinkers, scientists and opinion leaders from other parts of the world. And in light of the growing demand for Dutch-language literature abroad, shortages of translators *from* Dutch were also imminent.

The Netherlands and Flanders have always been at the European forefront in their openness and receptiveness to ideas and insights from elsewhere. Cultural, economic and political motives drive this welcoming mindset. The Low Countries have traditionally played an active part on the world stage and have for centuries enjoyed a rich tradition in translation. The attention bestowed on other languages and literatures ensured that our population was generally more aware of developments beyond their borders than people outside the language area. This intercultural consciousness has brought us great benefits in the world and on the global market.

*"I am convinced that literature is a unique form of communication, that literature conveys things in ways that cannot be replaced by any other medium. If we want to understand each other, if we truly want to get to know each other – within Europe and beyond – we also need to have access to each other's literature. This is where translations, professional translations of high quality, have an essential role to play."*

***Jan Willem Bos, translator from Romanian***

*Results of the previous pamphlet*

The previous pamphlet, published ten years ago, received the support of the Dutch and Flemish Ministers of Education and Culture. Among its achievements was the founding of a transnational Master's programme in Literary Translation in 2013: a fruitful collaboration between the universities of Utrecht and Leuven, with the support of the Dutch Language Union and the Dutch Foundation for Literature. In September 2019, this Master's programme will be re-established and its collaborative structure intensified. The programme will be discussed in greater detail in Appendix 2 of this pamphlet.

In the same period, the Centre of Expertise for Literary Translation (ELV)[1] organised a significant number of educational activities. Appendix 1 provides a more detailed account of these activities and goes on to sum up the other initiatives that have been implemented since the publication of the first pamphlet.

*Developments over the last ten years*

Over the past decade, these initiatives have been insufficient to prevent the emergence of multiple threats to a resilient and flourishing translation culture in the Netherlands and Flanders, threats so serious that we are left to wonder whether there will be sufficient numbers of translators in the years ahead. These developments give ample reason for a new pamphlet in which we will once again consider the role, significance and position of translation and the translator. We have noted the following developments:

1 The Centre of Expertise for Literary Translation (ELV) is a partnership involving the Dutch Language Union, KU Leuven and Utrecht University, in collaboration with Flanders Literature and the Dutch Foundation for Literature. The ELV aims to boost the quality of literary translation into and from Dutch through training and the promotion of expertise.

1. Internationalisation and far-reaching globalisation have led to a high degree of English proficiency in our society. However, this has also adversely affected the learning of languages other than English, and even the study of Dutch, prompting a decline in students' interest in languages other than English.

2. As a result of this waning interest, even European languages have been disappearing from our university curriculums. Desirable though it may be in an age of far-reaching globalisation, extending existing translation programmes in Leuven and in Utrecht to include even more languages appears at this time to be practically and financially impossible. The same applies to the expansion of existing translation programmes to include the training of professionals who translate from Dutch into another target language.

3. The Dutch departments at universities outside the Dutch language area are not always equipped with the necessary academic expertise and financial resources to offer translation education at a sufficiently high level, according to a recent report 'De Staat van het Nederlands in de wereld' by the International Association for Dutch Studies (IVN). This has serious consequences for the supply of translators *from* Dutch.

4. The financial remuneration and general appreciation of the profession falls well short of the high academic level at which literary translators work. The level of pay among literary translators in particular is still a serious problem.

These developments mean that fewer translators are being trained in fewer languages. This adversely affects the quantity, pluriformity and diversity of translations, as well as the ability of Flanders and the Netherlands to adequately respond to the current demand for translators in Europe and beyond. Moreover, the lack of attractive prospects in terms of earnings will lead to a decline in the number of students and translators opting for literary translation.
The time is ripe for a new pamphlet to argue the case for the importance of translation and literary translation. The points set out above will be discussed in greater detail below, but we will begin by outlining the importance of translation in the modern world.

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*"What would the world be like without interpreters and translators? Look at all the international organisations that could not exist without you, or my mother sitting at home reading a book that has been translated from Swedish or Dutch or Chinese. That's something she would simply be unable to do."*

***British author David Mitchell, speaking at the presentation of the Dutch Foundation for Literature's Translation Prize (2016) to his Dutch translators Harm Damsma & Niek Miedema***

*The importance of translation*

There are a multitude of reasons to conclude that the role of the translator in our society is a crucial one. Without well-educated, talented translators, we cannot learn what people in other countries are thinking and writing. This applies to cultural, social and political views and ideas whose development we want to understand and whose direction we want to chart. Obtaining knowledge about what is going on in the world is of vital importance to maintaining an imaginative democracy. Not only European unification, but also globalisation is increasing the need to engage with each other's languages, cultures and societies. Translators play a crucial role in that process.

We argue that an education policy geared towards multilingualism still offers the young people of the Netherlands and Flanders the best opportunities to play a meaningful role in the world and to make a contribution to our society. But both multilingualism and high-quality translation begin with an excellent command of one's own language, in our case Dutch. Of course, a good command of English is of great importance in the modern world, but this should be a stepping stone to multilingualism, not a substitute for an excellent command of one's own language. At present the general consensus seems to be that a good command of English makes us 'sufficiently multilingual'. Our culture of openness and curiosity has brought us centuries of success. We therefore have every reason to invest in a translation policy that is geared towards expansion, diversity and quality.

**Isn't translation software enough?**

In recent years, major advances have been made in the field of computer-aided translation. Using *Google Translate* and other software products, it is possible to produce semantically acceptable translations for some language pairs (most notably those in which English is the source or target language). While this can be useful when making a hotel reservation or to quickly grasp the gist of a text, such software is unable to recognise nuances, ambiguities and stylistic peculiarities. In addition, the sources from which this translation software derives its solutions are extremely heterogeneous. The result leaves a lot to be desired in terms of establishing a consistent or very specific register. Translation software is not capable of taking the necessary distance from the source text in order to achieve a satisfactory result. What is more, such software cannot take into account considerations as to whether or not culture-specific concepts should be translated (e.g. currency) or how to handle concepts that only exist in a certain language and culture. In such situations, a translator may well opt for a different choice in a section of dialogue as opposed to a narrative text. The same applies to translation decisions that border on the editorial, such as restructuring information or deviating from the paragraphing conventions of the source text: interventions like these are also beyond the capabilities of translation software.

Computer-Aided Translation tools (CAT) and Machine-Aided Human Translation tools (MAHT) are useful resources that can help translators work more efficiently and perhaps with greater precision, for example by analysing the source and target texts for consistent usage and creating databases with specific jargon. But profound decisions which call for *creativity* – a quality that characterises the literary translator as no other – are for the time being the preserve of the human mind.

## 2. Emerging threats to our translation culture

### 2.1 Development 1: A declining interest in languages other than English

For years, the Netherlands has been experiencing a trend in which many living languages, even those which are widely spoken, are being taught less widely and are disappearing from university curriculums. This applies to European languages such as Romanian, Finnish, Hungarian, and even Portuguese, which can be considered both a European and a world language[2]. Our neighbouring languages French and German are also being adversely affected. Reports of the declining interest in a range of languages have been around for the past thirty years. Falling student numbers play a major role, as faculties struggle to keep language courses alive with sometimes only a handful of students. The figures in the table below speak volumes[3].

Table of first-year students enrolling to study Dutch, English, German, French, Italian and Spanish at Dutch universities in the period 2012-2017[4]

| | **2012** | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Dutch** | 348 | 353 | 302 | 244 | 211 | 227 |
| **English** | 549 | 655 | 600 | 520 | 555 | 533 |
| **German** | 95 | 85 | 83 | 70 | 65 | 54 |
| **French** | 96 | 85 | 89 | 87 | 77 | 76 |
| **Italian** | 51 | 53 | 50 | 42 | 50 | 32 |
| **Spanish** | 125 | 116 | 113 | 90 | 85 | 91 |
| **Romance languages[5]** | 101 | 46 | 41 | 31 | 19 | 19 |

At Flemish universities, the situation is slightly more encouraging and the downward trend seems to have halted to some extent in the academic year 2017-2018. Even so, the figures remain well below those from a few years previously. The enrolment figures for the Flemish Bachelor's programmes in Language and Literature are given below. Appendix 3 also contains the figures for the Flemish Bachelor's programmes in Applied Linguistics.

*Table of first-year students enrolling to study Dutch, German, French, Italian and Spanish at Flemish universities in the period 2013-2017*

| | **2013** | **2014** | **2015** | **2016** | **2017** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Dutch** | 345 | 334 | 286 | 217 | 247 |
| **English** | 492 | 515 | 427 | 408 | 420 |
| **Spanish** | 170 | 125 | 171 | 144 | 153 |

2 Portuguese can only be studied at Bachelor's level at Leiden University.
3 In this overview, we have limited ourselves to a number of Germanic and Romance languages. Many other languages are also taught at Dutch and Flemish universities, including Chinese, Japanese, Korean, Arabic and Turkish.
4 The data in the table are taken from figures collated by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), partly supplemented with information provided by the relevant degree programme.
5 'Romance languages' refers to programmes in which no specific choice to study one of the Romance languages has (yet) been made.

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **French** | 184 | 149 | 164 | 127 | 122 |
| **German** | 105 | 99 | 110 | 85 | 80 |
| **Italian** | 43 | 33 | 39 | 24 | 39 |

A committee of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) recently explored multilingualism in Dutch society and reported on it in the publication *Talen voor Nederland* (Languages for the Netherlands, 2018). It wrote that one objective of an effective language policy should be "to look beyond English, because a multilingually competent population with knowledge of other cultures is equipped for the challenges of the modern world and because sound relations with other language areas can be an engine for innovation." The much vaunted language skills of the Dutch have declined sharply in recent decades and have been narrowed down to Dutch and English.

In the present climate, we see universities often using the term 'internationalisation' as a synonym for offering education in English; this is especially true in the Netherlands. The ability to read (or speak) French or German, until recently a matter of course in university education, is no longer a staple of everyone's academic skills. In combination with the fact that dwindling student numbers are depleting and even jeopardizing a number of university language programmes, this poses a serious threat to the opportunities for the Netherlands and Flanders to fulfil a meaningful role in the world. This is even more of a concern when we consider that both regions have traditionally focused on maintaining a strong international position. Translators could clearly play a significant part in counteracting these worrying developments but given that translators are the product of the very programmes whose future is endangered, they can hardly offer a readymade solution.

Most reports on this subject, such as *Vensters op de wereld* (Windows on the World, 2002), have recommended that universities should seek cooperation to preserve the rich source of tuition in the languages of the world that until relatively recently was still a feature of education in the Netherlands and Flanders. Another recommendation was that efforts should at least be made to consolidate related languages, both European and from other continents, at a single university and maintain them as a series of unique selling points. These reports were often underpinned by sound arguments and emphasised that investing in the knowledge of other languages and cultures does in fact serve national political and economic interests. In the 1990s, the need for language skills became greater with the unification of Europe and the importance of intercultural exchange within our multicultural societies. Furthermore, in-depth knowledge of other languages and cultures can be a key resource in negotiating the increasingly complex terrain of international relations.

These considerations underline the importance of a joint policy in which Dutch and Flemish arts faculties make practical agreements about which languages can be maintained at which university and identify desirable areas for expansion. A comparable sector plan for languages can be found in the approach being taken by the National Platform for Languages, (https://platformtalen.nl) which was established last year and is examining this issue in the Netherlands. However, the platform's focus is primarily on Dutch, English, French and German as taught in schools, while a flourishing translation culture requires a broader vision.

It is vital that this issue remains on the agenda in faculties, at universities and in the political arena so that the decline in language education can be halted. Our underlying assumption is that universities recognise the desirability and necessity of maintaining a wide range of language courses in our language area. Given that assumption, it would be a great pity if the palette of academic programmes was determined solely by student numbers and therefore by the preference of students. A well-founded vision of the importance and value of language teaching in society should form the basis of the decisions taken.

Governments can play a central role in this process by expressing a clear position on the need for a broad range of language studies directly linked to the international position that the Netherlands and Flanders are seeking to occupy in Europe and beyond in terms of their economic, political, social and cultural status. The lack of profitability of these study programmes as defined by the existing university allocation system is no reason to put our internationally leading position at risk. One course of action could be a public information campaign designed to boost the popularity of studying languages, for example along the lines of the campaign run a few decades ago encouraging young people to study science and technology. Such a campaign can also have a positive effect on the status of languages and cultural subjects in secondary education and the status of the teaching profession. After all, secondary schools are where the foundations are laid for knowledge of languages and love of literature. As the interest in languages and literature among students grows, so too will the number of young people who choose to study languages at university.

### 2.2 Development 2: The limited expansion opportunities for language and translation programmes

A flourishing translation culture requires a good education that combines practice and theory and meets the needs of the field. There is a proven demand for both business translation (which covers legal, administrative, medical and technical translation) and literary translation. In addition, a good translation programme should also train future professionals in the use of new technologies. As mentioned above, a renewed version of the university Master’s programme in Literary Translation will start in 2019. This Master’s programme dates from 2013, when it was founded in a very fruitful collaboration between KU Leuven and Utrecht University following the publication of the previous translation pamphlet. Appendices 1 and 2 contain details of the development of this programme and relevant initiatives taken since the previous pamphlet.

*"I feel fortunate that my Master's programme gave me the foundation every translator needs: a thorough knowledge of my source languages, an understanding of how they differ structurally from my own language, and a broader cultural and literary context. But once I started translating, I soon discovered that as a translator you never stop learning. That's why I seize every opportunity for further training: follow-up courses, peer workshops, a mentorship... As a translator, I hope to continue to learn and evolve throughout my life."*

***Lies Lavrijsen, translator from English, French, Italian and Spanish***

The following three factors are crucial to ensuring that the Master's programme thrives and that the envisaged cooperation and network materialises:

- Significant student numbers enrolling in language programmes at Bachelor's level
  Future enrolment in translation programmes at Master's level is almost entirely dependent on students who enrol in language programmes at Bachelor's level. However, as the figures above show and as established in the recently published KNAW report *Talen voor Nederland* (Languages for the Netherlands), these language programmes are struggling to attract students.

- A broad palette of languages
  Translation programmes and, by extension, the culture of translation benefit from a wide range of language programmes and therefore from a good spread of graduates across different languages. In times of dwindling student numbers in Bachelor's language programmes, it is becoming increasingly difficult to make provisions for certain languages or to attract enough students to the programmes on offer. Desirable though it may be in an age of far-reaching globalisation, extending the existing range of language degree programmes appears to be practically and financially impossible at this time. This also applies to the existing programmes in Leuven and Utrecht as regards educating professionals who translate from Dutch into another target language.

- Healthy career prospects
  In order to interest students in translation programmes, it is crucial to offer them the prospect of entering a well-paid and highly regarded profession. Especially in the case of literary translation, however, the current financial prospects are anything but appealing (see Development 4).

The parties united in the ELV see valuable opportunities and possibilities in the further development of a transnational translation network that offers further training and professionalisation initiatives. We are eager to work towards this goal, in cooperation with other parties of course. The VertalersVakschool Academy for Literary Translation is one likely candidate (see Appendix 2), in addition to other translation programmes in the Netherlands and Flanders, translators and publishers and their representative bodies. Cooperation in the fields of legal, technical and political translation (most notably concerning the European Union), non-fiction translation, subtitling and interpreters-translation also forms part of this ambition. These specialisations are of equally great importance to the Netherlands and Flanders. The aim is – and remains – to train a sufficient number of capable translators to a high standard in a wide range of languages, and to offer them continuing support.

*"In the notoriously closed English book market, Dutch literature is punching above its weight. One reason is the quality and professionalism of the translators, and this is partly due to the support, encouragement and further training provided by the literary foundations and the ELV, as well as the subsidy policy that encourages foreign publishers to give assignments to good translators."*

***David Colmer, translator into English***

### 2.3 Development 3: The limited resources of Dutch departments at universities abroad

The supply of new translators from Dutch comes largely from the Dutch departments at universities outside the Dutch language area. Around the world, there are numerous universities where substantial numbers of students study Dutch. Collectively, we refer to these university departments as *international Dutch Studies*. The problem is that many of these departments, which often have a very small teaching staff, are unable to offer a high standard of education in translation. Furthermore, apart from a modest contribution by the Dutch Language Union, the Netherlands and Flanders offer little support for international Dutch Studies. Given the crucial importance of Dutch Studies to translation from Dutch, this is a cause for concern.

*"The Chinese are still as curious about other cultures as Lu Xun was in his day."*

***Jacklyn Jiang, translator into Chinese***

Compared to the sums other countries invest in the international study of their languages, the amount invested by the Netherlands and Flanders is relatively small. Our language area appears to set little store by sharing its own linguistic culture with other countries. The success achieved by Flanders and the Netherlands as joint guest of honour at the 2016 Frankfurter Buchmesse, where a great number of new books translated from Dutch were presented, highlighted a genuine interest among other countries in Dutch-language literary offerings. Moreover, it is evident that Dutch Studies graduates in other countries very often find work as business translators. The Dutch Studies degree programme is very popular in Poland, for example, attracting 660 students in 2017. This is not simply due to the appeal of Dutch as a language in its own right, but also because knowledge of Dutch is a valued skill on the job market. International Dutch Studies not only fulfils an important literary and cultural role, but also has socioeconomic relevance. In the international context too, it is essential that sustained efforts are made to educate translators to a high standard. The Dutch departments at universities abroad are ambassadors and cultural mediators who put the Netherlands and Flanders on the international map.

To ensure that international students of translation and literary translation are educated to a high academic standard where Dutch language and literature are concerned, several conditions need to be met.

- Firstly, the Netherlands and Flanders should increase their investment in international Dutch Studies. The Dutch Language Union has consistently advocated such an increase, as has the International Association for Dutch Studies (IVN), for example in its report *De staat van het Nederlands in de wereld* (The State of Dutch in the World, 2017). Research shows that the sums invested by the Netherlands and Flanders in this respect fall well short of those invested by similar countries such as Sweden and Portugal. Compared to countries such as Germany and France, this shortfall is even greater. Serious investment is needed to bolster the promotion of Dutch-speaking culture in an international context. With additional resources, the Dutch Language Union could work with the ELV to develop or commission targeted programmes to meet not only the specific need for new literary translators but also new technical translators and subtitlers, for example.

- Secondly, translation programmes in the Dutch language area and beyond should be able to extend their remit to academic programmes or training courses for foreign translators looking to translate *from* Dutch. It is essential for these programmes, together with the ELV, to provide a wide range of courses and opportunities for study, to ensure that translation from Dutch remains at a high level. The government can encourage this by making extra funds available to support such programmes.

- Lastly, this is also a task for literary translators themselves. They should work to form an international network of translators from Dutch. By sharing experiences and working together, they can contribute to a continuing supply of Dutch and Flemish literary products translated for an international audience.

### 2.4 Development 4: The vulnerable position of literary translators

Research carried out by the Dutch Foundation for Literature and Flanders Literature has shown that, in general, the income of literary translators is well below average. Literary translators are not well paid for the work that they produce. The Model Contract used in the Netherlands, and the payment and royalties guidelines it contains, offers literary translators a solid basis for receiving fair payment for each book they translate, provided that the amount paid by the publisher is supplemented by a grant from the Dutch Foundation for Literature or Flanders Literature. However, most translators have to work without a grant from the literary foundations and the amount of work available is not evenly distributed across the various languages. Another factor to emerge from the data on applications made to the literary foundations is that the size of individual translation projects is decreasing, due to the fact that publishers in an uncertain market tend to opt for titles that entail less commercial risk. All of these developments adversely affect the earning capacity of translators.

*"Our work is intrinsically very interesting, but very poorly paid. In combination with the lack of acknowledgement for translators, I sometimes find that hard to take. Conditions for translators have not improved. Nowadays, contact with publishers is very business-like; in many cases, they just want to know who can translate fastest and cheapest."*

***Jeanne Holierhoek (Boekblad, 2017), literary translator from French***

Another factor of note is that, when working with novice translators, publishers often negotiate a lower rate per word than the standard rate in the Model Contract. This applies to both literary and non-literary translations. Since the grants offered by the foundations are contingent on the translator being paid the standard rate, translators working for less are also denied this added income from the foundations. In Flanders, meanwhile, there is currently no model contract for literary translators, which in effect means no guarantees exist in terms of securing reasonable terms of payment.

If solutions are not found to ensure that literary translation is reasonably paid, enthusiasm for the profession will decline, reducing opportunities to discover and experience literary products from other languages and cultures. A barren landscape lies ahead. A landscape in which only the most popular and commercially viable literary products, translated from a limited number of

languages, are available in Dutch. An even sadder prospect in light of how interconnected the world has become in recent decades.

It is high time for those involved to take action in order to ensure an appropriate level of payment. Only then can cultural diversity continue to occupy a central position in the literary work on offer in our own language.

First and foremost, we see an important task for publishers in this regard. The rates paid by publishers in the Netherlands and Flanders are on average lower than in other Western European countries[6]. Since the agreed amount per word provides the literary translator with anything but a generous income, it is vital that publishers at least honour the agreed amount and adjust it in line with inflation. Firstly, because deviating from this amount substantially reduces the translator's income, especially as a lower rate rules out any prospect of obtaining a supplementary grant from a literary foundation. Moreover, publishers should not seek to 'buy off' literary translations but instead agree in each literary translation contract that the translator will receive royalties from a certain number of copies sold, as stipulated in the Model Contract. Publishers find themselves confronted with declining sales for translated literature, while they too stand to benefit from a richly varied and high-quality range of available titles. We recommend that publishers, in the interests of a more diverse range of translated literature and higher fees for translators, should make greater use of the funding opportunities offered by the European Union and the various European literary funds.

Secondly, this is a task for the associations which represent the professional interest of translators. It is up to them to ensure that all translators understand the importance of joining their organisation by fighting to protect the minimum rate and by ensuring that publishers keep to the existing agreements. They should also work to improve the income of translators by continuing to negotiate working conditions with publishers and foundations.

Thirdly, it is more than desirable that discussions between the Group of Flemish Trade Publishers (GAU) and the Flemish Authors' Association (VAV) lead to the drawing up of a Model Contract for translators based on the Dutch model in the near future. Such a widely supported collective agreement can offer a guarantee of respect for the minimum income position of translators in Flanders. While this will not fully resolve the precarious position of Flemish translators, it will at least create a clear framework for translation assignments with Flemish publishers.

Lastly, this is also a task for translators themselves, both literary translators and those working in other sectors. In their own interest and out of a sense of professionalism, they should stick to the agreed minimum word rate. Enthusiasts, hobbyists and others translators who do not need to make a living from translation should also take care not to undercut this standard rate, as this undermines the market for professional literary translators. Out of professionalism, respect and

6 Translators who translate Dutch-language literature into English, German, French and Swedish tend to be paid €0.118, €0.09, €0.11 and €0.083 per word respectively, while translators who translate into Dutch and Flemish are paid €0.066 per word.

solidarity with their fellow translators, they too should respect existing agreements. This is also in their own interest, since working on translations at a lower rate will ultimately result in a further decline in the scope and quality of the market for literary translation.

*"An important, if not decisive reason for wanting to become a literary translator is the love of literature. No one gets as close to the writer as the translator, who in the process becomes something of a writer himself."*

***Maarten Steenmeijer (Schrijven als een ander, 2015), translator from Spanish***

## 3. Recommendations and actions

Several actions and recommendations have been proposed in this pamphlet. It is important to realise that the urgency of our recommendations for both the Netherlands and Flanders applies to a much broader social context than translation and literary translation alone. The declining student numbers in language programmes are an acute threat to the role that the Netherlands and Flanders aspire to fulfil in the international context, whether it be socially, culturally, economically or politically. We have brought these recommendations together as points for action in the list below.

1. It is crucial that we focus on (a) scaling up the cultivation of new talent, i.e. the influx of language students, and (b) formulating a language policy that guarantees a wide range of language programmes. In order to achieve these goals, we support ideas for a public information campaign encouraging secondary school pupils to study languages and other initiatives that raise the status of languages and cultural subjects in secondary education. In addition, we call for a review of a university policy that all too often – sometimes out of necessity – is guided by the financial return generated by programmes. There should be a joint Dutch-Flemish academic language policy that firmly emphasises the value and importance of language education to society, similar to the intended 'Delta Plan for Languages' in the Netherlands, but with a broader focus than the languages taught at school. We envisage a crucial role in this regard for universities and faculties, but also for the Dutch and Flemish governments, which should support the plan with a shared vision of the importance of a diverse range of language programmes.

2. It is of great importance that governments step up their investment in international Dutch Studies: the departments which teach Dutch at universities abroad. These departments are crucial to the training of translators *from* Dutch. Without such investment, translation from Dutch will be in jeopardy and in the long term, Dutch-speaking culture will cease to occupy the place it once had on the international stage.

3. The partners united in the Centre of Expertise for Literary Translation (ELV) are keen to strengthen a transnational network of translation programmes, further training and professionalisation initiatives for translators, in collaboration of course with translators, publishers and other institutions. The aim is to train a sufficient number of translators to a high standard in the various languages, and to offer these translators continuing support. We want to encourage students to opt for the existing range of languages on offer and to at least maintain that range.

4. Lastly, we need to ensure fair payment for literary translators. As mentioned above, various parties have a role to play in this regard: publishers, authors' associations, translators and the bodies that represent them. It is the collective responsibility of translation as a field to work towards diversity and professionalism. In addition to accomplished literary translators who translate into Dutch and from a wide variety of languages, we also need publishers who will continue to publish these translations. Informing Dutch and Flemish publishers about grants provided by international organisations (e.g. literary foundations) could encourage them to take more risks.

The way in which these four recommendations knit together can be expressed in terms of a translator's career (see illustration). At each stage in such a career, there are factors which make it difficult for the prospective translator to advance to the next stage. The ultimate goal is to eliminate (or alleviate) all of these factors, to increase the likelihood that the talented students will eventually enter and continue to work in the translation profession.

We call on the Dutch Language Union's Committee of Ministers to act upon the first two recommendations as a matter of urgency: to launch a public information campaign to encourage secondary school students to learn languages, to formulate a joint vision on the importance of a wide range of languages, and to invite universities and faculties in the Netherlands and Flanders to jointly formulate an academic language policy. It is essential that this policy should guarantee a wide range of language programmes in the Netherlands and Flanders, and that it should adopt a position on the funding system for language programmes. In addition, governments should invest through the Dutch Language Union in high quality translation education in international Dutch Studies. Following from these points, the parties involved in the ELV should seek to collaborate with other parties on the necessary strengthening of a transnational network of translation programmes and professionalisation initiatives, and to achieve better payment for translators.

Translation:

THE FUTURE OF TRANSLATION

## OBSTACLE 1

Students are not likely to opt for language programmes.

### OBSTACLE 2
The number of language programmes available continues to decline, partly due to financial considerations.

### OBSTACLE 3
The Dutch departments at universities outside the Dutch language area are not always equipped with the necessary academic expertise and financial resources to offer translation education at a sufficiently high level.

### OBSTACLE 4
Translators are poorly paid.

### OBSTACLE 5
The lack of cultural diversity in the range of literature that can be translated means the number of assignments is limited.

## INTEREST IN LANGUAGE COURSES

## MASTER'S PROGRAMMES AVAILABLE

## PAY AND CONDITIONS

### ACTION 1
// Focus on increasing enrolments in language programmes, for example by launching a public information campaign to encourage secondary school students to learn languages; formulate a joint Dutch-Flemish language policy.

### ACTION 2
// Invest government funds in international Dutch Studies.

### ACTION 3
// Strengthen the transnational network of translation programmes and further training and professionalisation initiatives in the Netherlands and Flanders.

### ACTION 4
// Seek to improve the working conditions and secure fair payment for literary translators; ensure greater diversity in the range of languages on offer.

# Appendix 1. **Great translation by the way*: what did it achieve?

The primary achievement of the 2008 pamphlet **Great translation by the way* was the creation of a new translation degree programme at Utrecht University and the collaboration with KU Leuven on a transnational Master's in Literary Translation (2013). The foundation of the Master's is a response to the proposition that "literary translation requires graduate level skills and intellectual ability". Initially, this Master's at Utrecht University took the form of a two-year research Master's and was categorised under Literature in the Central Register of Higher Education Programmes (CROHO). In 2017, the Utrecht programme in Translation Studies was accredited by the Accreditation Organisation of the Netherlands and Flanders (NVAO) in the new CROHO category of Translation Studies. In September 2019, a renewed programme will be launched in which collaboration with Leuven remains a crucial element. This collaboration involves the exchange of both students and teaching staff and will ensure the optimum deployment of expertise in both literary and professional translation.

In Flanders, the literary translation components will also be embedded in the broad-based Master's in Translation from 2019, and the transnational collaboration with Utrecht University will be further intensified. Both institutions offer not only literary but also business translation, and students can choose to specialise in one area or the other. The Master's at Utrecht focuses on translation from English, French, German, Spanish and Italian with Dutch as the target language. The Master's at KU Leuven focuses on translation from English, French, German, Spanish and Italian with Dutch as the target language, and on Flemish Sign Language. We can therefore conclude that a primary objective of the 2008 translation pamphlet has been achieved: a strong Master's programme in literary translation in Flanders and the Netherlands, with a prominent and valued role for transnational collaboration between Leuven and Utrecht.

In the same period, the Centre of Expertise for Literary Translation (ELV) organised a significant number of further training programmes for translators into and from Dutch. Examples include translation workshops on location, seminars, online and on-site courses, and various forms of individual guidance for both novice and experienced translators. These activities are aimed both at professional translators already active in the field of literary translation and students who have yet to develop an interest in the profession. The ELV also participates in international initiatives and networks in the field of translation, including CELA and PETRA-E, and offers opportunities to translators who want to translate from Dutch into another European or world language.

An important achievement in the international context in recent years has been the development of a European Reference Framework for the Education and Training of Literary Translators, otherwise known as the Learning Line for Literary Translation, developed by Europe's PETRA-E Network. The aim is to give both educators and translators greater insight into the learning and professionalisation process. It also serves to break down the traditional boundaries between academic and non-academic and between theory and practice.

In addition, investments have been made in guidance for new translators through initiatives which also call on the involvement of experienced translators, such as The Chronicles and

Vertalersfabriek. Knowledge is passed on generously and at a high level, enabling young translators to develop more quickly and more effectively. Moreover, it provides experienced translators with appreciation and income. In general, more attention has been dedicated to entrepreneurship among translators, and they themselves are becoming more aware of their role in this area. Other examples are the European Literature Prize and the *Vertalersgeluktournee*, an event organised by the Dutch Foundation for Literature, in which translators go out to bookshops and libraries to talk to audiences about their work and their translations.

# Appendix 2: A list of explanatory descriptions

**Centre of Expertise for Literary Translation (ELV)**
The ELV's aim is to promote the expertise of literary translators into and from Dutch in order to ensure the quality of translations into and from Dutch. The centre gathers, develops and disseminates knowledge and expertise tailored to the market and the demands of society. The ELV is a partnership involving the Dutch Language Union, KU Leuven and Utrecht University, in collaboration with Flanders Literature and the Dutch Foundation for Literature.

**Master's programme in Literary Translation**
Students from Utrecht University and KU Leuven (Antwerp campus) who opt for the literary translation programme within the Master's in Translation receive both general academic training and professional training specifically geared towards literary translation. They can choose from German, English, French, Italian and Spanish. KU Leuven also offers Arabic and Russian. In translation workshops and 'intensive workshops' or 'masterclasses', they learn the finer points of the profession. In addition, a series of lectures aimed at furthering academic and professional expertise, and internships at foundations, publishers, international literary publishing houses and literary festivals equip them with a thorough knowledge of the literary field. The translation project and the Master's thesis enable them to take their first professional steps as a literary translator and position themselves within the field. A number of programme components are jointly organised by Utrecht University and KU Leuven, bringing Flemish and Dutch students of literary translation into contact with each other.

**De VertalersVakschool, Academy for Literary Translation**
Based in Amsterdam, the VertalersVakschool was founded in 2006 by a group of experienced translators, partly thanks to a contribution from the Dutch Language Union, with the aim of passing on their knowledge to a new generation. The target group tends to be a little older than the university cohort, in many cases consisting of people who are looking for a second career or a new and meaningful professional challenge. The VertalersVakschool offers practice-based education that focuses on translation as a craft, working from six source languages: German, English, French, Spanish, Italian and Russian. In the autumn of 2018, the VertalersVakschool also opened its doors in Flanders.

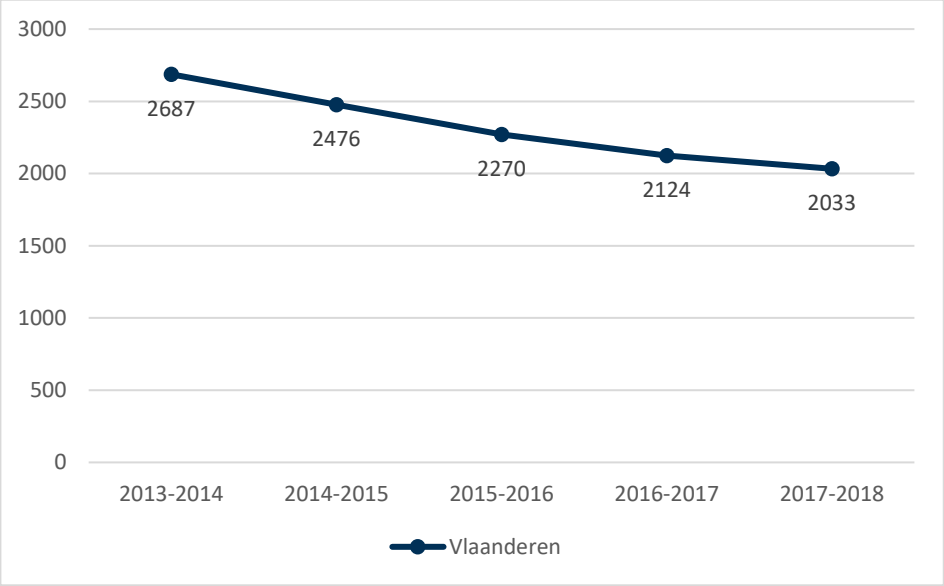
# Appendix 3: Overview of the evolution of language choices in Flanders

Overview of the evolution of language choices on the Language and Literature programme First Bachelor's programme at KU Leuven, Ghent University, University of Antwerp and Vrije Universiteit Brussel, from 2013-2014 up to and including 2017-2018[10]

| Language and Literature[7] | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| English | 492 | 515 | 427 | 408 | 420 |
| Dutch | 345 | 334 | 286 | 217 | 247 |
| Spanish | 170 | 125 | 171 | 144 | 153 |
| French | 184 | 149 | 164 | 127 | 122 |
| German | 105 | 99 | 110 | 85 | 80 |
| Italian | 43 | 33 | 39 | 24 | 39 |
| Swedish | 43 | 46 | 32 | 32 | 35 |
| Latin | 47 | 70 | 51 | 42 | 45 |
| Greek | 28 | 30 | 23 | 26 | 22 |
| Hebrew | / | / | / | 1 | 1 |
| Total number of students[8] | 692 | 667 | 630 | 526 | 560 |
| Total number of languages taken[9] | 1457 | 1401 | 1303 | 1106 | 1164 |

7 Swedish is only taught at Ghent University. Latin and Greek at KU Leuven and Ghent University. Italian is taught at KU Leuven, Ghent University and Vrije Universiteit Brussel. Hebrew is only taught at KU Leuven.
8 Including students who opted for Theatre, Film and Literature Studies (TFL) at the University of Antwerp instead of a second language.
9 Excluding those who opted for TFL at the University of Antwerp, but including students who took only one language at KU Leuven as part of an abridged Bachelor's in Language and Literature.
10 This represents the figures for KU Leuven, Ghent University, University of Antwerp and Vrije Universiteit Brussel added together. For KU Leuven, the figures used were for all new students in the programme (both those entering higher education for the first time and those who were not) at its campuses in Leuven, Brussels and Kortrijk; for the University of Antwerp, the figures for students entering higher education for the first time were used; Ghent University's figures show the "number of new enrolments in BA1: new in the programme + credits from the first model year of the BA"; Vrije Universiteit Brussel's figures show "new students with an active status".

Overview of the evolution of all Bachelor's students of Language and Literature KU Leuven, Ghent University, University of Antwerp and Vrije Universiteit Brussel, from 2013-2014 up to and including 2017-2018



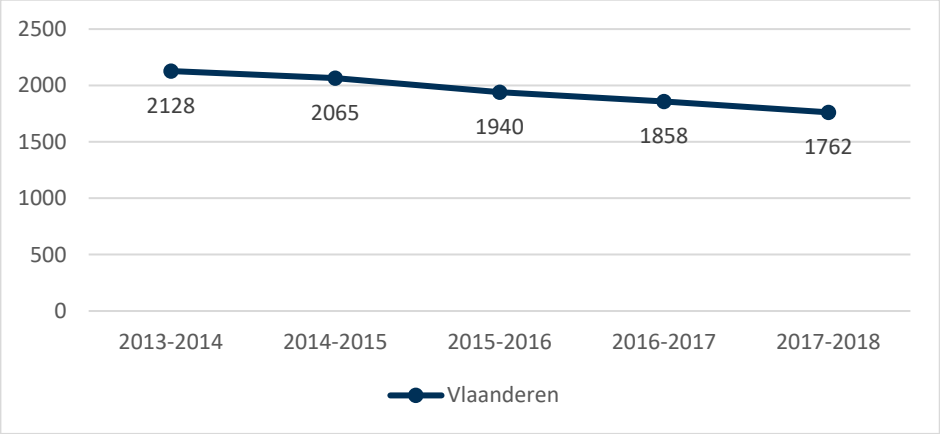

| Bachelor's programme in Language and Literature | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| KU Leuven | 843 | 777 | 709 | 650 | 632 |
| University of Antwerp | 712 | 629 | 567 | 563 | 571 |
| Ghent University | 929 | 900 | 847 | 778 | 720 |
| Vrije Universiteit Brussel | 203 | 170 | 147 | 133 | 110 |
| Flanders | 2687 | 2476 | 2270 | 2124 | 2033 |

Overview of the evolution of language choices on the Language and Literature programme, first Bachelor's programme at KU Leuven, Ghent University, University of Antwerp and Vrije Universiteit Brussel, from 2013-2014 up to and including 2017-2018

| Applied Linguistics[11] | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| English | Language choices cannot be specified for all universities. | | 379 | 350 | 339 |
| Dutch | | | 9 | 13 | 11 |
| Spanish | | | 230 | 244 | 253 |
| French | | | 258 | 247 | 226 |
| German | | | 157 | 134 | 108 |
| Italian | | | 77 | 36 | 55 |
| Arabic | | | 14 | 26 | 16 |
| Russian | | | 29 | 39 | 29 |
| Chinese | | | 22 | 11 | 22 |
| Portuguese | | | 7 | 5 | 7 |
| Turkish | | | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Polish | | | 11 | 6 | 11 |
| Flemish Sign Language | | | 12 | 11 | 15 |
| Total number of students | 775 | 672 | 605 | 563 | 549 |
| Total number of languages taken | 1550 | 1344 | 1210 | 1126 | 1098 |

11 Vrije Universiteit Brussel offers students of Applied Linguistics the opportunity to include Dutch as their main language, in combination with another language. On the Applied Linguistics programmes at KU Leuven, Ghent University and the University of Antwerp, Dutch is a supporting language. The table only includes the figures for students who take Dutch as their main language as part of Applied Linguistics. Portuguese and Chinese are only taught at the University of Antwerp; Turkish is only taught at Ghent University; Flemish Sign Language, Arabic and Polish are only taught at KU Leuven; Russian is taught at Ghent University and KU Leuven.

Overview of the evolution of all Bachelor's students of Applied Linguistics KU Leuven, Ghent University, University of Antwerp and Vrije Universiteit Brussel, from 2013-2014 up to and including 2017-2018




| Bachelor's in Applied Linguistics | 2013-2014 | 2014-2015 | 2015-2016 | 2016-2017 | 2017-2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| KU Leuven | 763 | 706 | 643 | 579 | 563 |
| University of Antwerp | 422 | 437 | 458 | 456 | 454 |
| Ghent University | 691 | 673 | 610 | 581 | 525 |
| Vrije Universiteit Brussel | 252 | 249 | 229 | 242 | 220 |
| Flanders | 2128 | 2065 | 1940 | 1858 | 1762 |

# Appendix 4: Overview of the evolution of language choices in the Netherlands

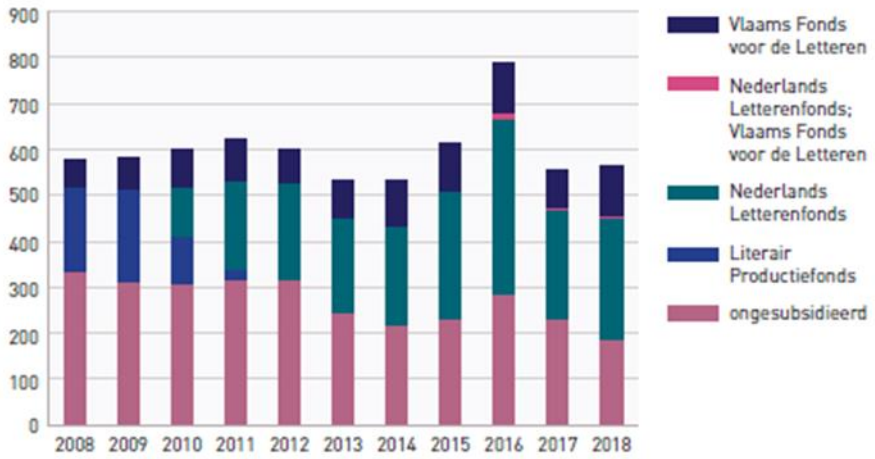
New enrolments* on various language programmes
Enrolments as main and additional subjects** as of 1 October

| Instelling | Opleiding | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LEI | B Duitse taal en cultuur | 15 | 14 | 24 | 17 | 21 | 9 | 15 |
| LEI | B Engelse taal en cultuur | 101 | 143 | 119 | 123 | 137 | 128 | 117 |
| LEI | B Franse taal en cultuur | 18 | 37 | 31 | 23 | 28 | 22 | 25 |
| LEI | B Italiaanse taal en cultuur | 8 | 17 | 20 | 17 | 9 | 13 | 11 |
| LEI | B Nederlandkunde / dutch studies | 19 | 16 | 9 | 16 | 18 | 20 | 8 |
| LEI | B Nederlandse taal en cultuur | 48 | 46 | 48 | 47 | 35 | 56 | 58 |
| LEI | B Talen en culturen van Latijns-Amerika / Spaans | 38 | 43 | 39 | 38 | 27 | 20 | 21 |
| UU | B Duitse taal en cultuur | 22 | 22 | 14 | 22 | 22 | 10 | 14 |
| UU | B Engelse taal en cultuur | 128 | 135 | 125 | 116 | 89 | 106 | 97 |
| UU | B Franse taal en cultuur | 35 | 26 | 27 | 40 | 30 | 26 | 22 |
| UU | B Italiaanse taal en cultuur | 18 | 8 | 11 | 10 | 17 | <5 | 8 |
| UU | B Literatuurwetenschap | 26 | 32 | 26 | 30 | 20 | 25 | 47 |
| UU | B Nederlandse taal en cultuur | 104 | 67 | 62 | 52 | 46 | 43 | 34 |
| UU | B Portugese taal en cultuur | 10 | | | | | | |
| UU | B Spaanse taal en cultuur | 38 | 22 | 43 | 20 | 25 | 23 | 27 |
| UU | B Taal- en cultuurstudies | 154 | 264 | 210 | 182 | 183 | 192 | 197 |
| RUG | B Duitse taal en cultuur | 21 | | | | | | |
| RUG | B Engelse taal en cultuur | 107 | | | | | | |
| RUG | B English Language and Culture | | 109 | 123 | 98 | 103 | 93 | 91 |
| RUG | B Europese Talen en Culturen | | 132 | 115 | 175 | 151 | 153 | 155 |
| RUG | B Nederlandse taal en cultuur | 40 | 68 | 47 | 43 | 35 | 41 | 23 |
| RUG | B Romaanse talen en culturen | 71 | | | | | | |
| UVA | B Duitse taal en cultuur | 18 | 19 | 21 | 18 | 17 | 8 | 15 |
| UVA | B Engelse taal en cultuur | 75 | 125 | 115 | 86 | 89 | 76 | 71 |
| UVA | B Franse taal en cultuur | 39 | 22 | 31 | 24 | 19 | 28 | 15 |
| UVA | B Italiaanse taal en cultuur | 25 | 28 | 19 | 15 | 24 | 15 | 16 |

Source: The data in the table are taken from figures collated by the Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU)
*New enrolments include both students who enrol directly on one of the above programmes in their first year of university and students who join the programme in a later year
**If a student is enrolled in more than one programme at the same time, one enrolment counts as the main subject and the other enrolments as additional.

| Instelling | Opleiding | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UVA | B Nederlandse taal en cultuur | 109 | 113 | 98 | 76 | 59 | 63 | 58 |
| UVA | B Spaanse taal en cultuur | 49 | 51 | 31 | 32 | 33 | 48 | 47 |
| VU | B Duitse taal en cultuur | | | | | | | |
| VU | B Engelse taal en cultuur | 35 | | | | | | |
| VU | B Franse taal en cultuur | <5 | | | | | | |
| VU | B Literatuur en Samenleving | | 20 | 23 | 16 | 66 | 51 | 60 |
| VU | B Literatuurwetenschap | 9 | | <5 | | | | |
| VU | B Nederlandse taal en cultuur | 12 | | | | | | |
| RU | B Duitse taal en cultuur | 19 | 30 | 24 | 13 | 15 | 27 | 22 |
| RU | B Engelse taal en cultuur | 103 | 136 | 110 | 90 | 89 | 85 | 89 |
| RU | B Nederlandse taal en cultuur | 35 | 53 | 44 | 22 | 29 | 19 | 28 |
| RU | B Romaanse talen en culturen | 30 | 46 | 41 | 31 | 19 | 19 | 28 |

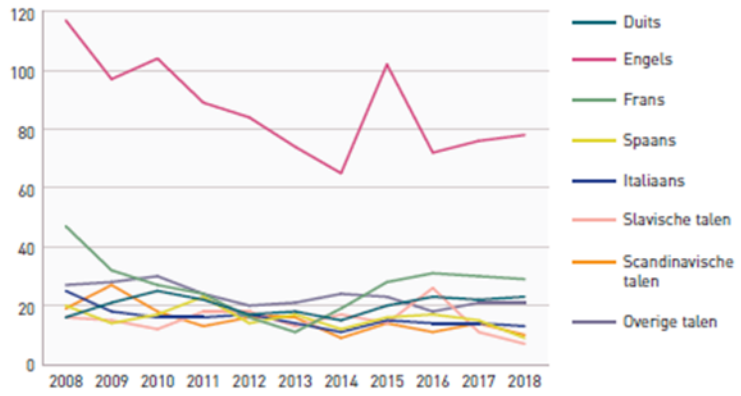
# Appendix 5: Number of translations from Dutch and their grant providers[12]




| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ongesubsidieerd | 330 | 307 | 304 | 313 | 314 | 239 | 213 | 226 | 283 | 225 | 184 |
| Literair Productiefonds | 185 | 203 | 101 | 20 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Nederlands Letterenfonds | 0 | 1 | 110 | 197 | 210 | 207 | 215 | 279 | 378 | 240 | 265 |
| Nederlands Letterenfonds; Vlaams Fonds voor de Letteren | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 15 | 4 | 3 |
| Vlaams Fonds voor de Letteren | 61 | 72 | 82 | 91 | 76 | 84 | 100 | 108 | 112 | 85 | 112 |
| **Eindtotaal** | **576** | **583** | **598** | **621** | **600** | **532** | **531** | **614** | **788** | **554** | **564** |

12 Source: Dutch Foundation for Literature

# Appendix 6A: Number of grants approved for translations into Dutch – Dutch Foundation of Literature




| | Taalgebied | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fiscaal jaar | Duits | Engels | Frans | Spaans | Italiaans | Slavische talen | Scandi-navische talen | Overige talen | Eind-totaal |
| 2008 | 16 | 117 | 47 | 20 | 25 | 16 | 19 | 27 | 287 |
| 2009 | 21 | 97 | 32 | 14 | 18 | 15 | 27 | 28 | 252 |
| 2010 | 25 | 104 | 27 | 17 | 16 | 12 | 18 | 30 | 249 |
| 2011 | 22 | 89 | 24 | 23 | 16 | 18 | 13 | 24 | 229 |
| 2012 | 17 | 84 | 16 | 14 | 17 | 18 | 16 | 20 | 202 |
| 2013 | 18 | 74 | 11 | 17 | 14 | 13 | 16 | 21 | 184 |
| 2014 | 15 | 65 | 19 | 12 | 11 | 17 | 9 | 24 | 172 |
| 2015 | 20 | 102 | 28 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 23 | 232 |
| 2016 | 23 | 72 | 31 | 17 | 14 | 26 | 11 | 18 | 212 |
| 2017 | 22 | 76 | 30 | 15 | 14 | 11 | 14 | 21 | 203 |
| 2018 | 23 | 78 | 29 | 9 | 13 | 7 | 10 | 21 | 190 |
| Eindtotaal | 121 | 467 | 148 | 86 | 81 | 88 | 74 | 128 | 1193 |

# Appendix 6B: Number of grants approved for translations into Dutch – Flanders Literature

| | Taalgebied | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Duits | Engels | Frans | Spaans | Italiaans | Slavische talen | Scandi-navische talen | Overige talen | Eind-totaal |
| 2008 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 29 |
| 2009 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 | 21 |
| 2010 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 6 | 15 |
| 2011 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 13 |
| 2012 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 13 |
| 2013 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 16 |
| 2014 | 5 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 19 |
| 2015 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 12 |
| 2016 | 4 | 1 | 12 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 19 |
| 2017 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 23 |
| 2018 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 21 |
| Eindtotaal | 29 | 25 | 71 | 16 | 3 | 7 | 9 | 41 | 201 |

# Appendix 7: Share of source languages in total translation production

Totale markt A+O (Algemene en Overige boeken)

| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A+O - Totaal Productie Eerste druk/ Nieuw werk | 13004 | 13271 | 14086 | 12782 | 12277 | 11215 | 11439 | 11657 | 11326 | 11385 |
| A+O - Oorspronkelijk Nederlands | 8473 | 8733 | 9549 | 8361 | 8065 | 7292 | 7529 | 7542 | 7362 | 7177 |
| A+O - Vertaald Nederlands | 4531 | 4538 | 4537 | 4421 | 4212 | 3923 | 3910 | 4115 | 3964 | 4208 |

Literaire en culturele markt A+O

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A+O - Totaal Productie Eerste druk/ Nieuw werk | 7361 | 7490 | 7884 | 6950 | 6642 | 6285 | 6286 | 6619 | 6709 | 6489 |
| A+O - Oorspronkelijk Nederlands | 4797 | 4951 | 5389 | 4602 | 4312 | 4125 | 4146 | 4350 | 4413 | 4120 |
| A+O - Vertaald Nederlands | 2564 | 2539 | 2495 | 2348 | 2330 | 2160 | 2140 | 2269 | 2296 | 2369 |

| A+O | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Engels | 1795 | 1741 | 1681 | 1590 | 1594 | 1449 | 1469 | 1540 | 1501 | 1539 |
| Duits | 218 | 257 | 236 | 222 | 207 | 188 | 203 | 203 | 250 | 247 |
| Frans | 170 | 164 | 162 | 158 | 145 | 122 | 122 | 160 | 166 | 162 |
| Italiaans | 80 | 69 | 89 | 91 | 84 | 80 | 65 | 57 | 62 | 93 |
| Zweeds | 45 | 60 | 46 | 46 | 56 | 60 | 51 | 66 | 57 | 40 |
| Spaans | 42 | 47 | 60 | 57 | 47 | 43 | 36 | 39 | 48 | 47 |
| Noors | 21 | 21 | 19 | 22 | 15 | 10 | 26 | 17 | 29 | 28 |
| Deens | 12 | 14 | 20 | 12 | 22 | 13 | 10 | 21 | 18 | 9 |
| Russisch | 24 | 13 | 16 | 21 | 14 | 32 | 18 | 21 | 21 | 23 |
| Overige talen | 157 | 153 | 166 | 129 | 146 | 163 | 140 | 145 | 144 | 181 |

Bron: KVB Boekwerk

**Recommendations**

1. Focus on increasing enrolments in language progrrammes, for example by launching a public information campaign to encourage secondary schoolstudents to learn languages; formulate a joint Dutch-Flemish language policy.

2. Invest government funds in international Dutch Studies.

3. Strengthen the transnational network of translation programmes and further training and professionalization initiatives in the Netherlands and Flanders.

4. Seek to improve the working conditions and secure fair payment for literary translators; ensure greater diversity in the range of languages on offer.

This is a publication by The Centre of Expertise for Literary Translation (ELV). The Centre of Expertise for Literary Translation is a partnership involving the Dutch Language Union, KU Leuven and Utrecht University, in collaboration with Flanders Literature and the Dutch Foundation for Literature.

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