



University of  
Zurich <sup>UZH</sup>

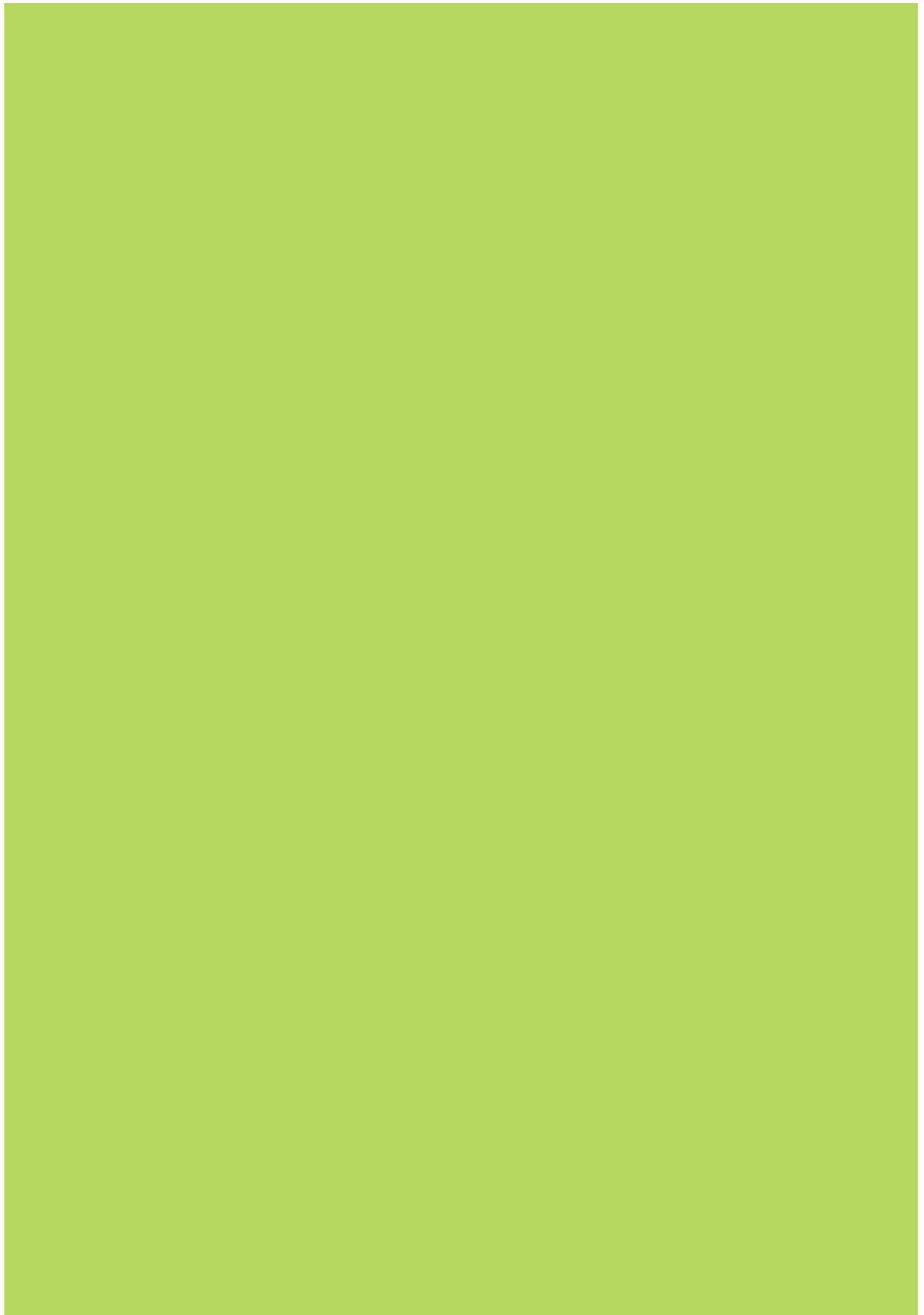
**ETH** zürich

Language Center

Annual report



2020



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# Language teaching between distance and closeness

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Prof. Dr. Johannes Kabatek  
Institute of Romance Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, UZH

We are looking back at a crazy year: In the middle of the spring semester, the Language Center (and the whole university) was forced to switch first in part, and later completely, to digital teaching. Our lives were completely changed by Zoom and Teams and other online tools; our everyday life and vocabulary became determined by lockdowns, incidence numbers, and distancing rules. The good thing about this: we discovered opportunities in this second, digital world, which was available to us as an alternative and, like a phoenix rising from the ashes, and was suddenly present everywhere where presence was not possible. This world had been systematically built up in the previous few years of rapid technical development, driven by streamers, gamers, YouTubers and avid Netflix viewers. Their pressures on the market and transmission rates to offer digital teaching options often faded into nothingness and were comparatively marginal on the Internet. Now, however, digital teaching was no longer an option but a necessity, and the net – actually by a miracle – held its own as a refuge for the masses and opened up incredible new avenues.

In this process, we have also learned this year that the use of language sometimes deceives us and that new ways of speaking in times of a pandemic may be inaccurate – who even knew a year ago what a pandemic really was? When we now meet “virtually,” we are in fact meeting in real life, and we remain people made of flesh and blood; when we hold “distance meetings,” we are at the same time closer than we are accustomed

to. I therefore recommend that – in addition to looking at the figures in this annual report, which impressively show how the Language Center has defied the pandemic – you read the reports of four of the eight (!) Teachers of the Hour from the Language Center nominated last year. To all eight nominees I offer again my congratulations! The reports describe what it was like teaching in times of Corona. Victoria Ruiz speaks of “enabling a new informality via Zoom” and Christian Utzinger and Eva Youssef highlight the closeness of mutual peer support: “We’re doing it together, let’s get on with it!”

The new media that have burst into our lives have created new forms of communication and have led not only to distancing, but often at the same time to the opposite. As Anna Ekert aptly points out, “On Zoom, we’re all equal.” The need to deal with these new forms of teaching is a massive challenge, and many of the techniques that we now use as a matter of course, such as breakout rooms, surveys and parallel chats, arrived in our lives out of nowhere. This is due to everyone’s commitment and flexibility, and it was sometimes exhausting for teachers (and of course also for learners) who had to reconcile their private and professional lives, which now often occur within the same four walls.

I can only say to Sabina Schaffner and her team of lecturers at the Language Center: Chapeau!

Prof. Dr. Johannes Kabatek  
President of the Board of Trustees

# Flexibly on the move



**Dr. Sabina Schaffner**  
Director of the Language Center

In the reporting year, which was characterized by Covid 19, the Language Center of UZH and ETH Zurich developed a broad range of services and implemented these in a variety of ways for both universities in 13 modern languages and in Latin and Ancient Greek.

Despite the switch to distance teaching in FS20 and the need to provide online and hybrid courses in HS20 as a complement to the established face-to-face courses, the number of participants in UZH and ETH program, in the UZH program, and in the program for the UZH Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences actually increased compared to the previous year. Thanks to the Language Center staff's motivation, mutual support, sustained teaching performance, and commitment to their students, we dealt with the pandemic-related change exceptionally well, albeit with a huge increase in workload. This was also reflected in the fact that eight Language Center lecturers were nominated by their students as Teachers of the Hour, an award in which the University of Zurich honored the special achievements of lecturers who creatively mastered the digital change in FS20.

In the year under review, the Language Center was once again able to implement a varied language learning program in various formats and increasingly in remote mode. Around 9,500 course participants – a record figure – took advantage of this, and 1,500 visitors took part in learning consultations, tailor-made courses, workshops, game evenings, and tutorials at our Self-

Access Centers. These recorded almost 3,300 visits – a lower number than in previous years due to the pandemic. The Language Center also arranged approximately 1,000 tandem learning partnerships for autonomous learners.

In the reporting period, the Language Center's range of participants also expanded. For example, since fall semester 2020, on the basis of new agreements, all members of our two partner universities – PHZH and ZHdK – can now enroll in almost all of the courses offered in the UZH and ETH program. In addition, in 2020 we were able, for the first time, to offer intensive German language courses for refugees as part of the UZH Discovery Program for refugees in cooperation with the UZH International Relations Office and financed by arcas foundation. In addition to many insights into our broad and varied program, this report will also give you an idea of the development of the number of participants from 2016 to 2020.

In addition, you will learn how four Language Center lecturers dealt with the special challenges posed by the pandemic, what they experienced, and what they learned. You will find a summary of their interviews on pages 27-29.

With my colleagues, I would like to thank UZH and ETH – our sponsoring universities – for their trust in our services and wish all those interested in the Language Center a stimulating read!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Schaffner', written in a cursive style.

**Dr. Sabina Schaffner**  
Director, Language Center

# Strategic plan and goals 2020

**The following goals were reached and relevant measures implemented in 2020:**

## **Resources**

The proportional distribution of the compulsory and elective modules in Latin and the elective modern languages modules in the new Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences program has been analyzed and serves as a basis for planning FS21 and HS21.

## **6 Processes**

Language Center course results will be exported electronically to ETH departments from HS20 on.

The SUEZ database architecture is now better adapted to the main processes (part 1)

## **Services**

A Writing Center is launched in HS20 as a pilot project at both Self-Access Centers.<sup>1</sup>

## **Communication**

The SUEZ website has been optimized in the following areas: User-friendly access regarding navigation / improved visual communication / simplification by avoiding unnecessary redundancy / standardization of terminology (part 1)

Information on modern language and ancient language modules has been successfully included into the communication channels of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (UZH PhF).

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<sup>1</sup> Due to Covid 19, this was offered online



# The Language Center course program

The Language Center of UZH and ETH Zurich offers services to members of both universities and selected partner universities.

The largest area of service is the course program funded by UZH and ETH (see pages 12-19), plus the various services offered in the areas of consultations, coaching, and – at the Self-Access Center Zentrum – autonomous and cooperative learning (see pages 32-39).

The Language Center also runs an additional course program funded exclusively by UZH for UZH members (see pages 20-21).

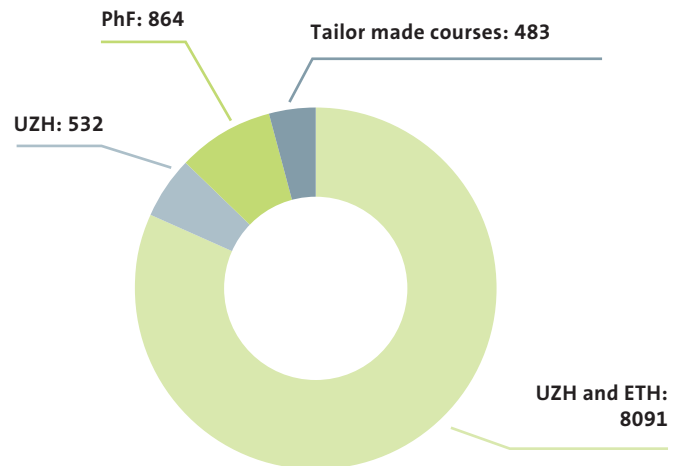
For the first time, the Language Center was able to contribute to the Discovery program for refugees offered by UZH (see page 26)

A third area of service consists of ancient and modern language modules also funded by UZH and offered specifically for selected study programs of the UZH Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (see pages 22-23).

Finally, the SUEZ also runs tailor-made courses; these are provided to and funded by various UZH and ETH institutes and units for whom these courses are specifically developed (see pages 30-31).

ETH funds the Self-Access Center at Höggerberg (see pages 35-38).

The following chart shows course participant and tailor-made participant figures.



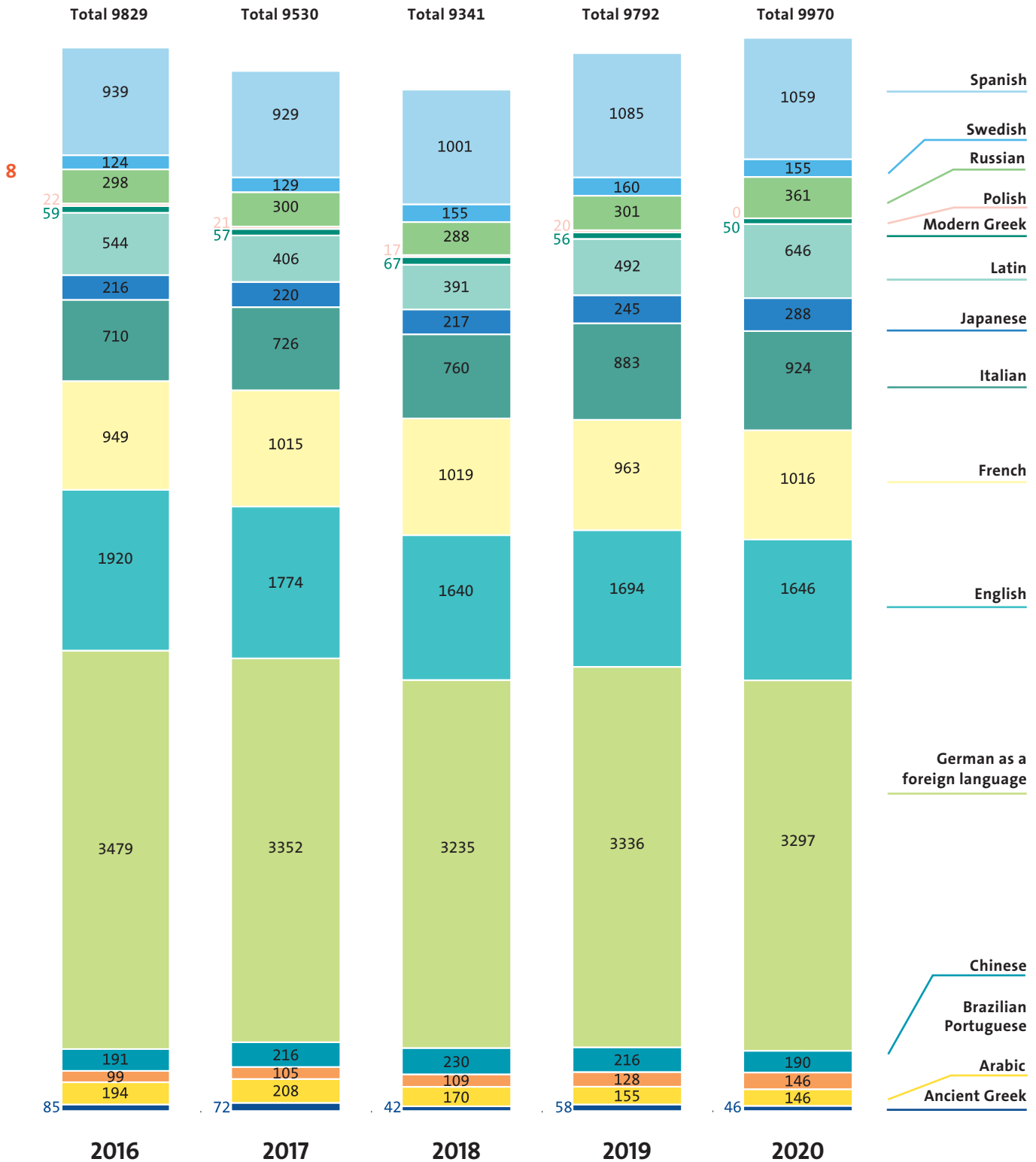
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The course program consists of the following areas:

- Ancient languages:  
Ancient Greek, Latin
- German as a foreign language
- Other languages:  
Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Modern Greek, Russian, Swedish
- English
- Romance languages:  
Brazilian Portuguese, French, Italian, Spanish

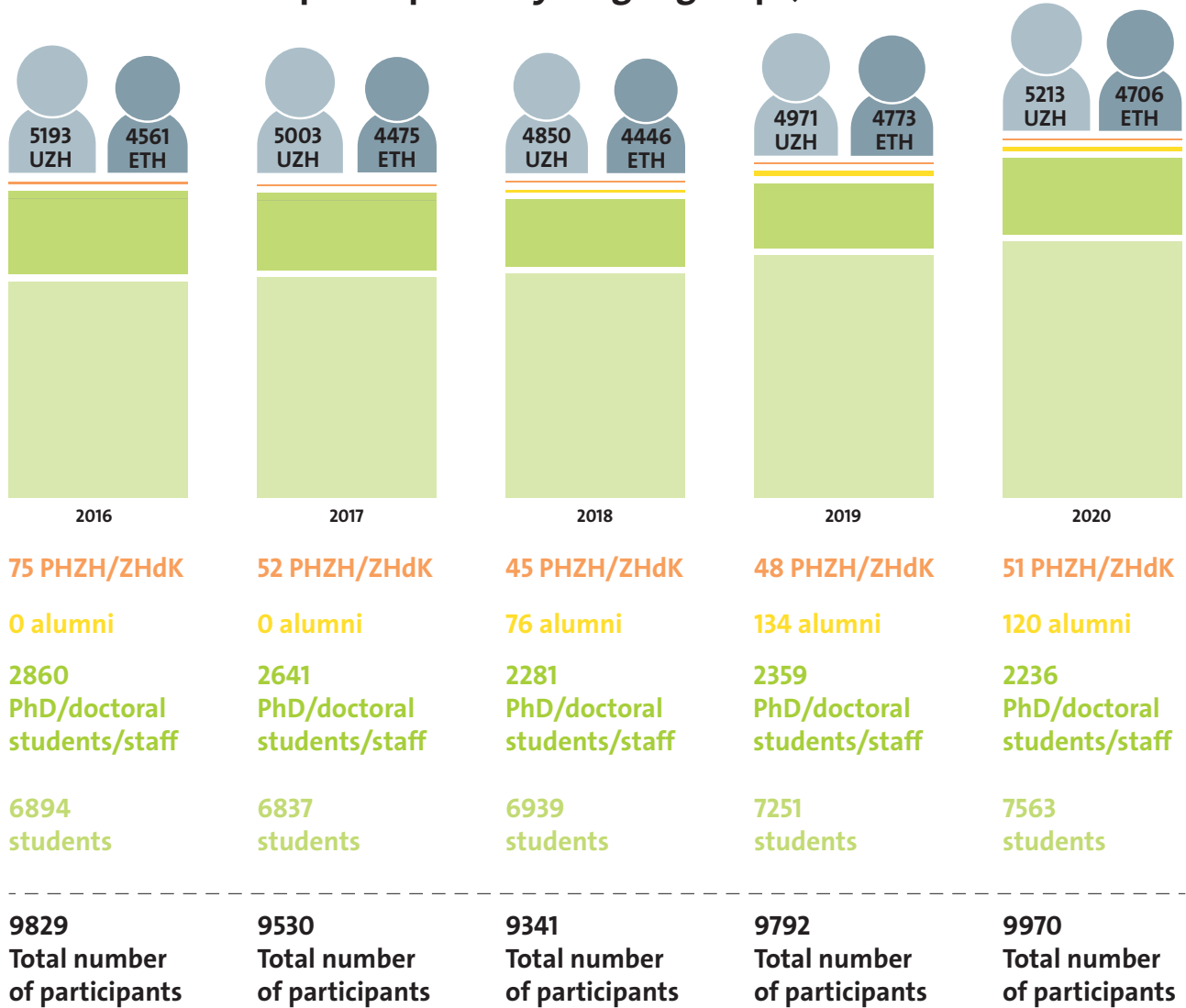
The figures on pages 8-11 relate to the entire teaching and training program offered by the Language Center, as described above.

## Number of course participants by language, 2016 – 2020





## Number of course participants by target groups, 2016 – 2020



## Partner universities: PHZH and ZHdK, 2016-2020

From 2016 to 2019, Bachelor's and Master's students of our two partner universities, the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK) and the Zurich University of Teacher Education (PHZH), had access to available places on our courses. This was based on our 2007 agreements with the two universities. These agreements were replaced on 1 August 2020 with new agreements, in which our enrollment policy and fees were re-defined. From HS20, all members of our two partner universities have access to almost all of the courses that are funded equally by UZH and ETH Zurich. The fees for these target groups are the same as those for UZH and ETH staff members. We assume that the significant expansion of the program now offered to PHZH and ZHdK members will reverse the reduction in numbers observed over the past few years.

## Number of course participants by university, 2020 und 2019

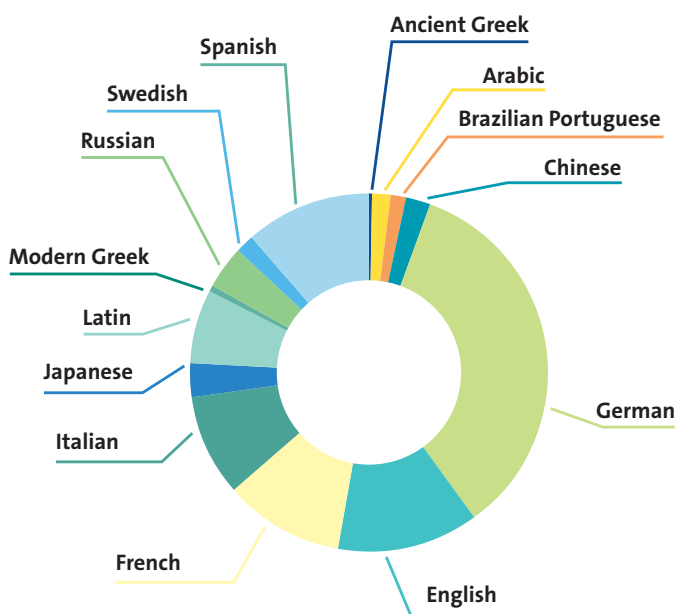
| Course participants                                | Course participants<br>2020 | Percentage<br>2020 | Course participants<br>2019 | Percentage<br>2019 | Balance    |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| UZH students                                       | 3469                        | 34.8%              | 3458                        | 35.3%              | 11         |
| UZH PhF students                                   | 788                         | 7.9%               | 357                         | 3.7%               | 217        |
| Ancient languages (till FS19/before Bologna 2020)* |                             |                    | 214                         | 2.2%               |            |
| UZH MAS students                                   | 9                           | 0.1%               | 12                          | 0.1%               | -3         |
| UZH PhD students                                   | 369                         | 3.7%               | 322                         | 3.3%               | 47         |
| UZH academic staff                                 | 236                         | 2.4%               | 240                         | 2.5%               | -4         |
| UZH administrative staff                           | 72                          | 0.7%               | 104                         | 1.1%               | -32        |
| Tailor-mades for UZH students                      | 34                          | 0.3%               | 14                          | 0.1%               | 20         |
| Tailor-mades for PhDs and staff                    | 162                         | 1.6%               | 179                         | 1.8%               | -17        |
| UZH alumni with membership                         | 34                          | 0.3%               | 39                          | 0.4%               | -5         |
| UZH alumni without membership                      | 40                          | 0.4%               | 32                          | 0.3%               | 8          |
| <b>Total UZH</b>                                   | <b>5213</b>                 | <b>52.3%</b>       | <b>4971</b>                 | <b>50.8%</b>       | <b>242</b> |
| ETH students                                       | 3141                        | 31.5%              | 3109                        | 31.8%              | 32         |
| ETH MAS students                                   | 24                          | 0.2%               | 39                          | 0.4%               | -15        |
| ETH doctoral students                              | 816                         | 8.2%               | 739                         | 7.6%               | 77         |
| ETH academic staff                                 | 334                         | 3.3%               | 394                         | 4%                 | -60        |
| ETH administrative staff                           | 58                          | 0.6%               | 68                          | 0.7%               | -10        |
| Tailor-mades for ETH students                      | 131                         | 1.3%               | 99                          | 1%                 | 32         |
| Tailor-mades for doctoral students and staff       | 156                         | 1.6%               | 262                         | 2.7%               | -106       |
| ETH alumni with membership                         | 33                          | 0.3%               | 49                          | 0.5%               | -16        |
| ETH alumni without membership                      | 13                          | 0.1%               | 14                          | 0.1%               | -1         |
| <b>Total ETH</b>                                   | <b>4706</b>                 | <b>47.2%</b>       | <b>4773</b>                 | <b>48.7%</b>       | <b>-67</b> |
| <b>PHZH members</b>                                | <b>13</b>                   | <b>0.1%</b>        | <b>20</b>                   | <b>0.2%</b>        | <b>-7</b>  |
| <b>ZHdK members</b>                                | <b>38</b>                   | <b>0.4%</b>        | <b>28</b>                   | <b>0.3%</b>        | <b>10</b>  |
| <b>Total course program</b>                        | <b>9970</b>                 | <b>100%</b>        | <b>9792</b>                 | <b>100%</b>        | <b>178</b> |

\*all target groups and universities

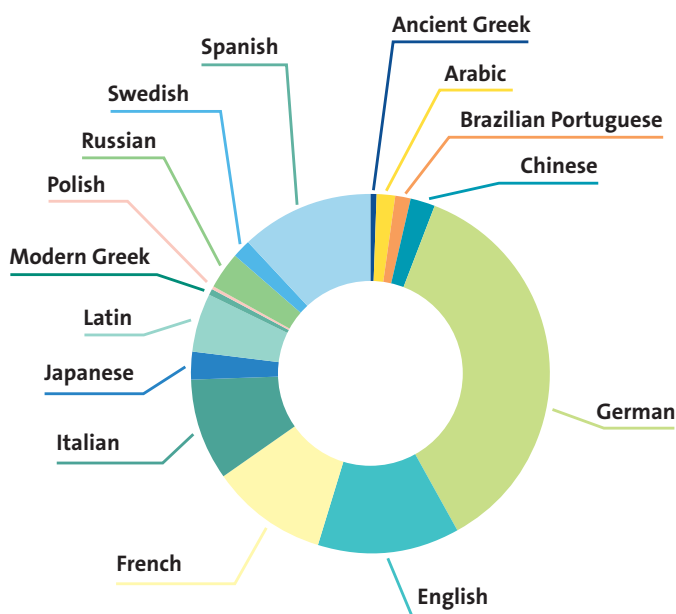
## Total number of courses and participants by language, 2020 and 2019

| Languages                          | Courses 2020 | Courses 2019 | Participants 2020 | Participants 2019 | Participants 2020 in % | Participants 2019 in % |
|------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Ancient Greek                      | 2            | 3            | 46                | 58                | 0.5%                   | 0.6%                   |
| Arabic                             | 7            | 7            | 146               | 155               | 1.5%                   | 1.6%                   |
| Brazilian Portuguese               | 8            | 7            | 146               | 128               | 1.5%                   | 1.3%                   |
| Chinese                            | 9            | 10           | 190               | 216               | 1.9%                   | 2.2%                   |
| German as a foreign language (DaF) | 171          | 167          | 3297              | 3336              | 33.1%                  | 34.1%                  |
| English                            | 123          | 139          | 1646              | 1694              | 16.5%                  | 17.3%                  |
| French                             | 57           | 55           | 1016              | 963               | 10.2%                  | 9.8%                   |
| Italian                            | 46           | 48           | 924               | 883               | 9.3%                   | 9.0%                   |
| Japanese                           | 12           | 10           | 288               | 245               | 2.9%                   | 2.5%                   |
| Latin (incl. Heureka)              | 13           | 12           | 646               | 492               | 6.5%                   | 5.0%                   |
| Modern Greek                       | 4            | 4            | 50                | 56                | 0.5%                   | 0.6%                   |
| Polish                             | 0            | 2            | 0                 | 20                | 0.0%                   | 0.2%                   |
| Russian                            | 14           | 12           | 361               | 301               | 3.6%                   | 3.1%                   |
| Swedish                            | 7            | 7            | 155               | 160               | 1.6%                   | 1.6%                   |
| Spanish                            | 57           | 57           | 1059              | 1085              | 10.6%                  | 11.1%                  |
| <b>Total course program</b>        | <b>530</b>   | <b>540</b>   | <b>9970</b>       | <b>9792</b>       | <b>100%</b>            | <b>100%</b>            |

Number of participants by language 2020



Number of participants by language 2019

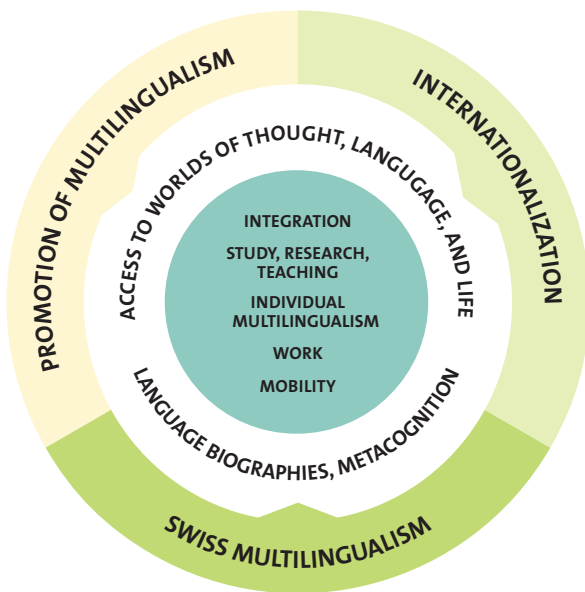


# UZH and ETH course program

The UZH and ETH program is funded in equal parts by UZH and ETH, plus course fees.

The Language Center bases its course program on the following program development principles, as agreed by the Board of Trustees in 2010.

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The concrete planning of our program takes into account, both strategically and according to demand, the contribution of individual languages and corresponding linguistic levels to the following areas of interest: integration; study, research, and teaching; individual multilingualism; profession; and mobility.

## The influence of Covid 19 on Language Center services

### Spring semester 2020

The Language Center switched to online teaching on 13 March 2020 as a result of the Switzerland-wide lockdown. Thanks to various internal measures, the switch was successful. This is reflected in the fact that as a result of the switch to online teaching, only 143 people – 3% of all participants enrolled in fee-based courses – withdrew from their course and from access to course materials. In consultation with UZH and ETH, we agreed to refund half of those participants’ course fees.

From the start of the lockdown, SUEZ lecturers supported each other with, among other tools, the SUEZ distance teaching community tool on the UZH Connect platform and also through cooperation within the language units. Management informed all staff on a regular basis via email and in a special newsletter about developments within UZH and ETH regarding the guidelines on teaching and assessment of courses. We were able to maintain contact with lecturers and ensure the flow of information throughout the Language Center at all times.

The change to online teaching involved a considerable increase in workload, as many teachers faced the additional challenges of home-schooling and childcare. The heads of unit supported the lecturers via one-to-one contact and team meetings on Zoom. Support from staff responsible for the administration of courses was also a huge help. Feedback from course participants in FS20 was very positive, as a result. Participants valued: how quickly the Language Center had moved to distance teaching, communication with the lecturers, and the lecturers’ social commitment to course participants.

This became particularly apparent in the large number of nominations by students of their lecturers for the [Teacher of the Hour award](#). Of the 53 Language Center lecturers, eight (15%) were nominated. With this award, the UZH Office of the Vice President Education and Student Affairs aimed to acknowledge the special achievement in FS20 performed by lecturers who were able to

transfer their teaching to a digital context particularly successfully, who found particularly creative ways to interact with their students despite the distance, and/or who demonstrated a particular commitment to their students. Those nominated were honored on the “Tag der Lehre” on 4 November 2020 by Prof. Dr. Gabriele Siegert.

**Fall semester 2020**

In HS20, Language Center lecturers were able to choose between face-to-face teaching (under the condition that they observed the relevant distance and hygiene rules, incl. the wearing of masks), online teaching, and a hybrid form (half-class teaching with asynchronous self-study):

| Number of courses            | Face-to-face | Hybrid | Online* | Total |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------|---------|-------|
| Ancient languages            | 1            | 5      | 2       | 8     |
| German as a foreign language | 46           |        | 27      | 73    |
| Other languages              | 20           | 2      | 7       | 29    |
| English                      | 26           |        | 18      | 44    |
| Romance languages            | 65           |        | 11      | 76    |
| Percentage                   | 69%          | 3%     | 28%     | 100%  |

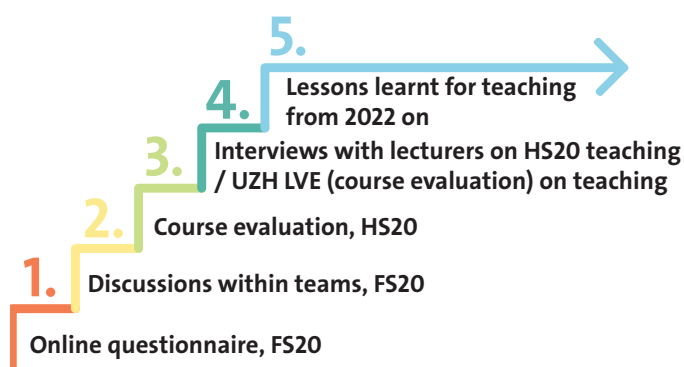
\*Online courses, incl. some with face-to-face exams

There was no significant reduction in enrollment numbers in HS20 compared to previous semesters. While the online courses filled well, the face-to-face lessons continued to be valued by participants and teachers.

On 2 November 2020, face-to-face lessons had to be moved online as a result of the Swiss Federal Government directive for Swiss tertiary institutes. This move was less of a burden to lecturers than the online shift had been in FS20, thanks to the digital teaching skills they had already acquired the previous semester.

## Evaluation of teaching under Covid 19

The Language Center undertook and participated in various surveys in FS20 and HS20 in order to evaluate teaching under Covid 19 conditions.



The most important findings from teaching in FS20 according to lecturers and management included the following points: Of particular significance for a successful change to online teaching were people’s self-steering skills, peer support, and new skills learnt in the use of tools and in a new educational setting; also vital was a management that communicated immediately and clearly and that showed appreciation and support. At the same time, the increased workload and additional burden for teachers was significant in FS20 and HS20.

Our initial analysis shows that the skills acquired in FS20 and HS20 and the newly acquired educational skills will be valuable for course program planning at the Language Center level and will contribute to the future planning and design of our courses and teaching. A more detailed analysis of the various survey results is planned for the first half of 2021.

## German as a foreign language

Due to limited funds, in FS20, we were able to offer only seven A-level Intensive courses and two B-level Intensive courses. The relatively large classes allowed us to meet the demand.

14 In HS20, the Intensive courses were affected by Covid 19. Many exchange programs came to a standstill, and many first-year students from abroad did not or could not come to Switzerland. At the same time, we had to limit class sizes to 24 participants and find rooms that allowed us to meet the Covid 19 restrictions. As a consequence, the reduced number of places we were able to offer met the reduced demand. Teachers and participants found that despite the Covid 19 protection measures, the face-to-face classes were a pleasant experience.

The 39 semester courses for students that started in FS20 as face-to-face classes were converted to distance teaching within a week and carried through to successful completion. This made extreme demands of the teachers in terms of flexibility and effort. No all participants went along with the change, and a few – 97 of 2,832 enrolled students – made use of our offer to refund half of their course fee.

In HS20, we ran 41 semester courses; 14 of these were published as online courses. Our courses filled well, regardless of the mode of delivery.

Of the 38 courses for PhD/doctoral students and staff that were planned in FS20, 37 actually took place, of which 23 were fully booked.

Of the 965 enrolled participants, 45 applied for a partial refund after the change to distance teaching. In HS20, we planned and ran 39 courses, 17 of which were fully booked. Fourteen courses had been planned as online courses, and 25 had to be moved online in the middle of the semester.

We were able to run the new five-day Intensive course for PhD/doctoral students and staff at two levels in the summer break of 2020. Once again, the Hi-speed courses were in particularly high demand, and we were able to run some of these twice.

## Other languages

In the reporting period, the course program for **Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, Modern Greek, Russian, and Swedish** was particularly popular among both UZH and ETH members. In some cases, enrollment numbers of PhD/doctoral students, staff, and alumni were higher than in the previous year. We were able to offer more places in Japanese and Russian courses by running additional courses. The strategy that has been in place since HS19 regarding the mixing of target groups in most courses seems to have proven valid.

ECTS points that participants receive from A1 level upwards can be accredited towards the ETH Zurich's D-GESS Science in Perspective requirements.

We were pleased to see that the demand for all types of courses was high, and online courses could also be filled.

The most popular courses – as in previous years – were A1-level courses, and the number of students who decided to continue on to A2 level increased somewhat, as it had in previous years. We have agreements with the Institute of Asian and Oriental Studies (AOI) and the Department of Slavonic Studies regarding Arabic, Chinese, Japanese, and Russian. These agreements allow advanced Language Center students to take advanced courses in those units and to gain admission to study trips and language tests.

In FS20 and HS20, Language Center Arabic lecturers offered lecture series entitled “Grundwissen arabische Welt / Background Knowledge Arabic World” and “Interkulturelle Kompetenzen arabische Welt” (Cross-cultural competences Arab world) on behalf of the D-GESS Science in Perspective program.



## English

Of the 90 courses offered by the English unit in 2020, only 10 were included in the ETH Zurich's D-GESS Science in Perspective program. This is due to the admission criteria set by the D-GESS. The central course program meets the needs of all target groups (students, academic and administrative staff, PhD/doctoral students, postdocs, and administrative-technical staff).

Overall, there was a small increase in participant numbers compared to 2019, from 1189 to 1206. HS20 saw particularly good numbers, with 635 course participants taking 44 courses, compared to 571 in FS20 in 46 courses. In Fall semester 2020, the waiting lists for our most popular English courses were significantly higher than we've ever seen before, and our courses filled up much more quickly than usual. Two courses were cancelled in FS20 due to low demand, but these courses were easily replaced with tailor-made courses. By comparison, in 2019, three courses were cancelled. The reduction in cancellations in 2020 was due to an ongoing strategic reorientation of the English course program in order to better meet the demands of our target groups.

In HS20, two staff members reduced their teaching and coordination workload by a combined total of 10% in order to offer writing consultations as part of our Writing Center pilot project.

In 2020, we ran the following test preparation courses for a total of 249 PhD/doctoral students, students, MAS students, staff, and alumni: Eight TOEFL test preparation courses with a total of 99 participants, two IELTS test preparation courses with 29 participants, and the GRE test preparation course with 14 participants. In addition, we ran three Cambridge C1 Advanced test preparation course (49 participants) and four Cambridge C2 Proficiency test preparation courses (58 participants) in our program. The course program in English appears to meet the current demand for UZH and ETH.

## Brazilian Portuguese

All Brazilian Portuguese courses are included in the ETH Zurich D-GESS Science in Perspective program of study. Brazilian Portuguese courses are taught exclusively at the Zentrum location.

The regular course program consists of one course each at levels A1, A2, and B1. The income generated by the course fees allowed us to introduce an additional A1-level course in spring semester 2019, and this course has now become a permanent element of the program.

In addition, we introduced a new course entitled "Português brasileiro A2-B2: Música popular urbana," which should find favor with our participants. The course follows the requirements of the ETH Zurich D-GESS Science in Perspective program, with its desired cultural approach; it also allows participants to expand on their communicative skills.

We would also like to offer continuation courses beyond B1 level, as we repeatedly receive requests in this area.

## French

Of the 57 courses we offer, 11 met the criteria and were part of the ETH Zurich D-GESS Science in Perspective program of study.

We run French courses at ETH Höggerberg campus and UZH Irchel campus, and courses at these locations are well received. Each semester, our French program includes courses from A1 to B2.2-C1 level. From B2 level on, we rotate our modules as a means of offering a wider range of course.

The wide differentiation of our program was made financially possible thanks to the fact that some of our courses are offered in semi-autonomous or in reduced formats.

Demand has risen at the beginner A1 and at A2-B2 levels due to the growing number of international students and researchers at both universities and the tendentially reduced French skills among students with a Swiss Matura (university entrance qualification). We were just able to meet the demand with our current program.

16 The area of certification to promote mobility was expanded during the reporting period. Each semester, we offer one exam preparation course in DELF and one in DALF. These courses and an additional information event complement our French program. In addition, we increased the number of and further differentiated the courses taught between the semesters. To meet demand, we could increase the number of B1 courses.

## Italian

Of the 42 courses we offer, four met the criteria and were part of the ETH Zurich D-GESS Science in Perspective program of study. We run Italian courses at UZH Zentrum and ETH Höggerberg locations.

Each semester, we offer courses from A1 level to B2-C1 level. From B2 level on, we rotate the modules in order to offer a wider range of courses.

Demand at the beginner A1 level could just be met with the current program. The number of courses at A2-B1 level on was appropriate. Fortunately, the number of learners who take the full curriculum in Italian program is increasing.

The project for students at ETH Zurich D-HEST entitled “Italiano per medici” is well established (see Tailor made, page 30).

Due to financial restrictions, we were unable to offer any courses in between semesters. A reintroduction of such courses is desirable in order to meet the demand.

## Spanish

Of the 51 courses we offer in Spanish, six met the criteria and were part of the ETH Zurich D-GESS Science in Perspective program of study. We run Spanish courses at UZH Zentrum and ETH Höggerberg campus.

Each semester, we offer courses from A1 level to B2-C1 level. From B2 level on, we rotate the modules in order to offer a bigger diversity of courses.

The demand at A1 level was so large that – as usual – all courses were fully booked minutes after enrollments opened. According to the demand, ideally, we would offer a more differentiated program at B1 level and would complement our program with courses between the semesters.

To promote mobility, we introduced the course entitled “Español B1-B2: Intercambio y prácticas en un país hispano-hablante.” This course aims to prepare learners for an internship or study trip to a Spanish-speaking country.

In addition, the course entitled “Español B1: Para hablantes de herencia,” which was introduced in HS20, was aimed at people who have acquired Spanish spontaneously within their family setting – so-called heritage language speakers. The focus of this course is on strengthening language skills and cultural identity.

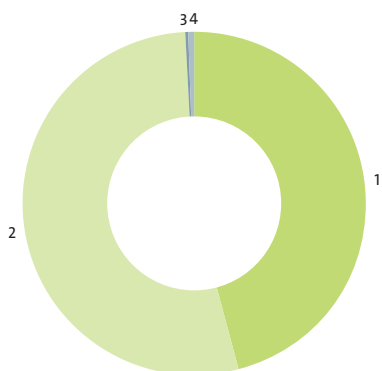
The demand for the DELE exam preparation course at level B1-B2 and C1-C2 remained constant compared to the previous year.

## Ancient languages

In FS20, Language Center lecturers ran the lecture series entitled “Heureka V: Staatsformen in der gesellschaftlichen Debatte in der Antike und heute” (Heureka V:

Forms of government in public debate in antiquity and today) as part of the ETH Zurich’s D-GESS Science in Perspective program. The Heureka lecture series was introduced in the summer semester of 2007, and the topic offered in 2020 was the fifth in the series. Up to FS19, the course was financed by the Language Center. Since FS20, it has been financed by the D-GESS. For years, many ETH students have attended this course.

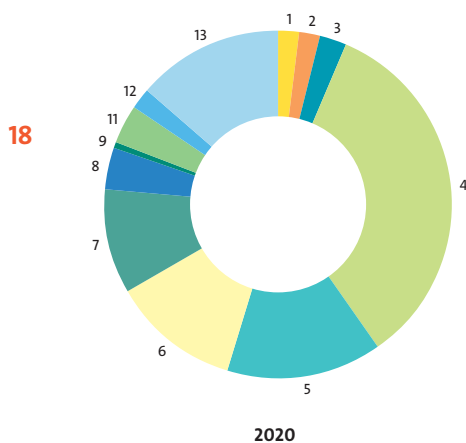
## Number of UZH and ETH course participants by university, 2020



| 2020   | Participants | Percentage   |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| UZH students                                     | 2943         | 36.4%        |
| UZH MAS students                                 | 8            | 0.1%         |
| UZH PhD students                                 | 347          | 4.3%         |
| UZH academic staff                               | 232          | 2.9%         |
| UZH administrative staff                         | 68           | 0.8%         |
| UZH alumni with membership                       | 31           | 0.4%         |
| UZH alumni without membership                    | 37           | 0.5%         |
| <b>1 Total UZH</b>                               | <b>3666</b>  | <b>45.3%</b> |
| ETH students                                     | 3103         | 38.4%        |
| ETH MAS students                                 | 24           | 0.3%         |
| ETH doctoral students                            | 811          | 10.0%        |
| ETH academic staff                               | 334          | 4.1%         |
| ETH administrative staff                         | 58           | 0.7%         |
| ETH alumni with membership                       | 32           | 0.4%         |
| ETH alumni without membership                    | 13           | 0.2%         |
| <b>2 Total ETH</b>                               | <b>4375</b>  | <b>54.1%</b> |
| <b>3 PHZH students</b>                           | <b>13</b>    | <b>0.2%</b>  |
| <b>4 ZHdK students</b>                           | <b>37</b>    | <b>0.5%</b>  |
| <b>Total by university (UZH and ETH program)</b> | <b>8091</b>  | <b>100%</b>  |

## Course participants by language and target group

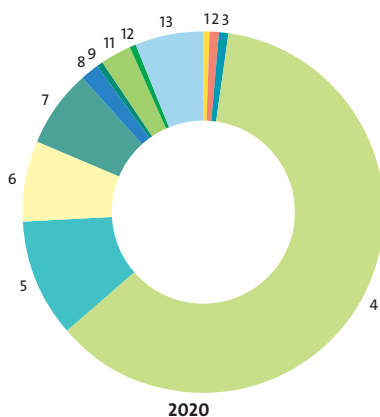
### Bachelor's and Master's students



| Languages                                    | 2020        | 2019        |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| 1 Arabic                                     | 125         | 138         |
| 2 Brazilian Portuguese                       | 126         | 113         |
| 3 Chinese                                    | 149         | 169         |
| 4 German as a foreign language               | 2051        | 2170        |
| 5 English                                    | 861         | 800         |
| 6 French                                     | 722         | 676         |
| 7 Italian                                    | 601         | 611         |
| 8 Japanese                                   | 220         | 193         |
| 9 Modern Greek                               | 33          | 38          |
| 10 Polish                                    | 0           | 17          |
| 11 Russian                                   | 225         | 214         |
| 12 Swedish                                   | 121         | 130         |
| 13 Spanish                                   | 812         | 838         |
| <b>Total students* (UZH and ETH program)</b> | <b>6046</b> | <b>6107</b> |

\*incl. PHZH and ZHdK students up to FS20

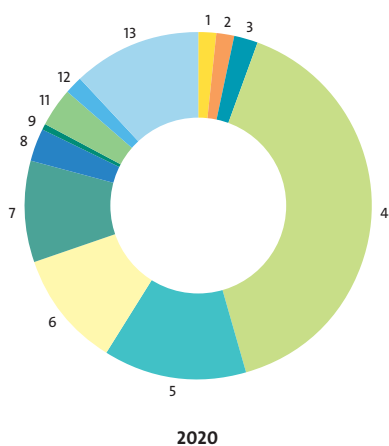
### PhD/doctoral students, MAS students, academic and administrative staff, alumni



| Sprachen   | 2020        | 2019        |
|--|-------------|-------------|
| 1 Arabic   | 14          | 9           |
| 2 Brazilian Portuguese   | 13          | 13          |
| 3 Chinese  | 15          | 13          |
| 4 German as a foreign language                                   | 1159        | 1111        |
| 5 English  | 196         | 253         |
| 6 French   | 137         | 148         |
| 7 Italian  | 132         | 134         |
| 8 Japanese   | 29          | 28          |
| 9 Modern Greek   | 13          | 14          |
| 10 Polish  | 0           | 3           |
| 11 Russian   | 50          | 38          |
| 12 Swedish   | 9           | 5           |
| 13 Spanish   | 115         | 116         |
| <b>Total number of other participants* (UZH and ETH program)</b> | <b>1882</b> | <b>1885</b> |

\*incl. PHZH and ZHdK members from HS20

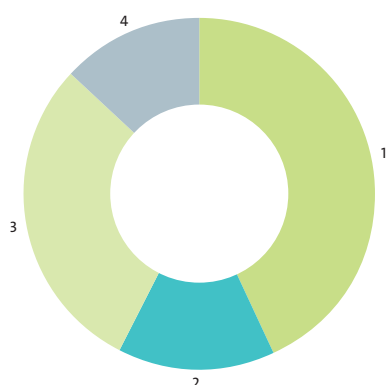
### Total number of participants in the UZH and ETH course program (all target groups)



| Languages  | 2020        | 2020 in %   | 2019        | Balance between 2020 and previous year |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| 1 Arabic   | 146         | 1.8%        | 155         | -9                                     |
| 2 Brazilian Portuguese                               | 146         | 1.8%        | 127         | 19                                     |
| 3 Chinese  | 169         | 2.1%        | 185         | -16                                    |
| 4 German as a foreign language                       | 3236        | 40.0%       | 3291        | -55                                    |
| 5 English  | 1076        | 13.3%       | 1067        | 9                                      |
| 6 French   | 880         | 10.9%       | 848         | 32                                     |
| 7 Italian  | 753         | 9.3%        | 759         | -6                                     |
| 8 Japanese   | 259         | 3.2%        | 229         | 30                                     |
| 9 Modern Greek                                       | 50          | 0.6%        | 55          | -5                                     |
| 10 Polish  | 0           | 0.0%        | 20          | -20                                    |
| 11 Russian   | 290         | 3.6%        | 261         | 29                                     |
| 12 Swedish   | 131         | 1.6%        | 135         | -4                                     |
| 13 Spanish   | 955         | 11.8%       | 984         | -29                                    |
| <b>Total all target groups (UZH and ETH program)</b> | <b>8091</b> | <b>100%</b> | <b>8116</b> | <b>-25</b>                             |

19

### UZH and ETH financial resources



| Unit   | 2020 in %   |
|--|-------------|
| 1 German as a foreign language                 | 43.25%      |
| 2 English                                      | 14.29%      |
| 3 Romance languages                            | 29.56%      |
| 4 Other languages                              | 12.90%      |
| <b>Total cost (UZH and ETH course program)</b> | <b>100%</b> |

For Romance languages and other languages, the resources used are roughly the same as in the previous year. For German as a foreign language, the program could not be expanded in 2020 due to budget constraints. However, the third-party funds acquired from UZH International Relations allowed us to design and run a course in German as a foreign language as part of Discovery program for refugees. This could well increase in the next few years (see page 26).

# UZH course program

The course program run for the UZH is fully funded through UZH funds and course fees.

## German as a foreign language

20 A German course for advanced learners was specifically designed for UZH students. The course is entitled “Lesen und Schreiben für Studierende der UZH; B2 (Deutsch)” (Reading and writing for UZH students; B2 (German)). This course complements the “Lesen und Schreiben im Studium; B2 (Deutsch)” (Reading and writing for study; B2 (German)), which is open to ETH and UZH students. The former course meets the specific needs of humanities students. It was also an important course for, and it was in demand among, students doing the Discovery program for refugees at UZH.

## Other languages

In 2020, we ran a beginner A1.1 Russian course and a beginner A1.1 Swedish course for UZH students. For staffing reasons, the beginner Chinese course was not offered in the reporting period.

## English

The following academic and discipline-specific courses were offered each semester to UZH students:

- Basic academic writing skills: Humanities, social science B2 (1x in FS)
- Writing your master's thesis: Humanities, social science C1-C2 (1x in FS)
- Academic writing for UZH B2 (1x in HS)
- Cambridge C2 Proficiency test preparation for UZH C1-C2 (1x in HS)
- English for law B2 (1x FS und 1x HS)
- English for law C1-C2 (1x FS und 1x HS)
- Academic English foundation for UZH: B1 (1x FS und 1x HS)

## Romance languages

The selection of courses offered to UZH students in Romance languages takes various qualitative and quantitative criteria into consideration. The differences between spring semester and fall semester, however, are based on the internal allocation of resources and not on demand.

In FS20, two beginner Italian and three beginner Spanish courses were provided to UZH members.

For students of the Institute of Law we provided the discipline-specific “Français juridique B1-C1: Introduction” and “Français juridique B2-C1: Approches des arrêts du Tribunal fédéral” courses. For medical students, we ran the course entitled “Français des médecins B1-C1.”

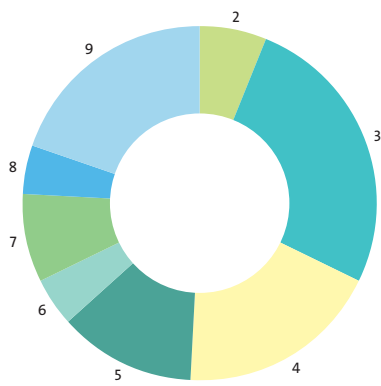
In HS20, we offered one B1-level French course, one beginner Italian course, and two beginner Spanish courses, as well as the law courses for the Institute of Law mentioned above.

## Ancient languages

In the reporting period, we offered two reading courses: “Politik und Satire. Senecas Apolocyntosis oder Die Veräppelung des Kaisers Claudius” in FS20, and “Mensch und Natur: Petrarca's Besteigung des Mont Ventoux und Naturschilderungen in der klassischen lateinischen Literatur” in HS20.



## Course participants UZH

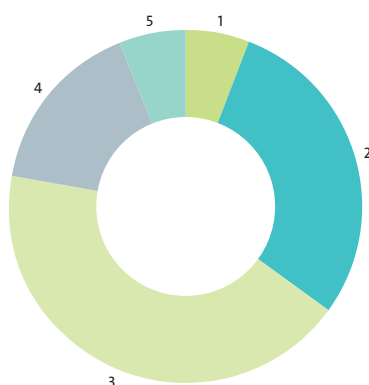


2020

| UZH members                             | 2020       | 2019       |
|---|------------|------------|
| 1 Chinese                               | 0          | 25         |
| 2 German as a foreign language (DaF)    | 33         | 17         |
| 3 English                               | 139        | 101        |
| 4 French                                | 99         | 101        |
| 5 Italian                               | 66         | 66         |
| 6 Latin (reading course)                | 24         | 10         |
| 7 Russian                               | 43         | 33         |
| 8 Swedish                               | 24         | 24         |
| 9 Spanish                               | 104        | 89         |
| <b>Total participants (UZH program)</b> | <b>532</b> | <b>466</b> |

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## UZH financial resources



| Unit                            | 2020 in %   |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| 1 German                        | 6.43%       |
| 2 English                       | 28.82%      |
| 3 Romance languages             | 42.59%      |
| 4 Other languages               | 15.82%      |
| 5 Latin                         | 6.34%       |
| <b>Total cost (UZH program)</b> | <b>100%</b> |

The distribution of resources across languages was strategically tailored to the (discipline-specific) needs of UZH students in various languages. The proportion of German and English courses dropped off slightly, to the advantage of the Romance and other languages.

# UZH Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences course program

The course program run for the UZH Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is fully funded by UZH.

## Language acquisition modules

### Language acquisition modules for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

22 As we had in HS19, in 2020 we ran a range of courses for Bachelor's and Master's students of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. These courses are integrated into their curriculum and are therefore free of charge. Each module consists of four lessons a week during the semester. The following courses are offered by the Language Center: Basic Latin (due to the high demand, we offered four iterations, compared to three in HS19), Basic Greek, Basic Chinese A1, Academic English C1, French B2-C1, Italian A2-B1, Basic Japanese A1, and Basic Russian A1-A2

In Latin, we also offered a more intensive version of the Basic Latin course (Basic Latin Express) at seven lessons a week.

In most of the study programs with a language acquisition requirement, Latin was compulsory, so that modern language modules could only be selected if a student had already completed the Latin requirement (Matura-level Latin or equivalent) at high school.

The high participant number that we experienced in HS19 was repeated in HS20. Apparently, the number of entry-level students who do not have Latin at Matura level remains higher than anticipated during the initial planning of the Basic Latin module.

#### Ancient Greek and Latin

In Ancient Greek, the basic module runs for one semester (six lessons a week) and is offered in fall semesters. Greek II (Graecum) is offered in the spring semester, also at six lessons a week.

In Latin, the basic module is a one-semester module (Basic Latin Express of seven lessons a week) or two-semester module (2 semesters of 4 lessons a week). The basic module equates more or less to part 1 of the old

elementary course. Latin II (Latinum) is offered in spring semesters, at five lessons a week.

### Modern languages

Chinese, French, Italian, Russian, and Academic English modules are one-semester modules, but each complete module consists of two parts, with part 1 running in fall semesters and part 2 running in spring semesters. While attendance of part 1 is recommended to students who wish to take part 2, part 1 is not a prerequisite of part 2.

- FS20: "Français B2 (part II)," "Italiano B1 (part II)," "Chinesisch (part II: A1.2)," "Grundlagen Japanisch (part II: A1.2)," "Grundlagen Russisch (part II: A 2.2)," "Academic English C1 (part II)"
- HS20: "Français C1 (part I)," "Italiano A2 (part I)," "Chinesisch (part I: A1.1)," "Grundlagen Japanisch (part I: A1.1)," "Grundlagen Russisch (part I: A1.2)," "Academic English C1 (part I)"

The demand for modern languages was higher in HS20 than in the previous two semesters.

#### Italian and French

In FS20, the modules filled up as a result of the loyalty of participants who had taken the Basic Module I in HS19 and thanks to some newcomers. In HS20, interest in these courses exploded, so that the maximum of 30 participants were admitted to the French and Italian modules.

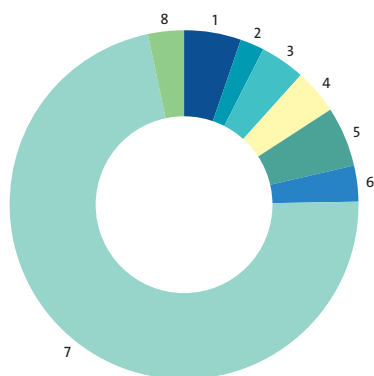
#### Chinese, Japanese, Russian

In FS20, most participants who had taken the first part of the basic module also booked the second part. In HS20, all three modules were in high demand.

#### Academic English

In HS20, the module was full at 16 participants. Taking the waiting list into consideration, we could have offered two courses, as we had in HS19. Unfortunately, we were unable offer two parallel courses in HS20 due to budget constraints.

## Course participants UZH Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences UZH

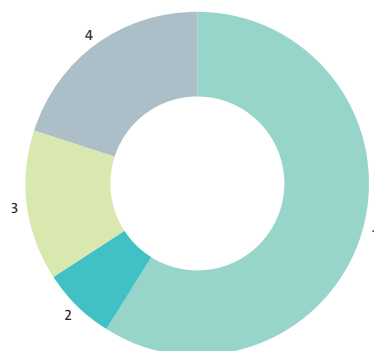


| Course participants 2020   | Students with language acquisition requirements | Other target groups* | Total      |
|--|---|----------------------|------------|
| 1 Ancient Greek  | 31  | 15                   | 46         |
| 2 Chinese  | 21  |                      | 21         |
| 3 English  | 34  |                      | 34         |
| 4 French   | 37  |                      | 37         |
| 5 Italian  | 47  |                      | 47         |
| 6 Japanese   | 29  |                      | 29         |
| 7 Latin  | 561   | 61                   | 622        |
| 8 Russian  | 28  |                      | 28         |
| <b>Total course participants (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences program)</b> | <b>788</b>                                      | <b>76</b>            | <b>864</b> |

23

\*All target groups are permitted to take Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences courses in Ancient Greek and Latin

## Financial resources UZH Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences



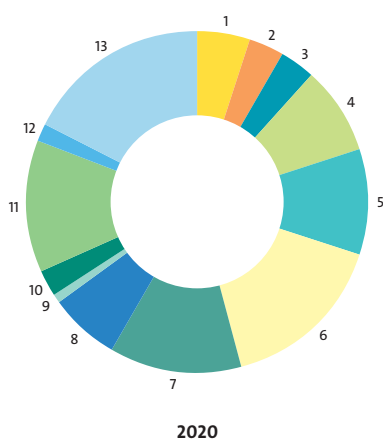
| Unit   | 2020 in %   |
|--|-------------|
| 1 Ancient languages  | 59.08%      |
| 2 English  | 6.75%       |
| 3 Romance languages  | 13.73%      |
| 4 Other languages  | 20.44%      |
| <b>Total financial resources (Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences program)</b> | <b>100%</b> |



Ai-Linh Achermann, Lecturer in Chinese at the Language Center, with course participants

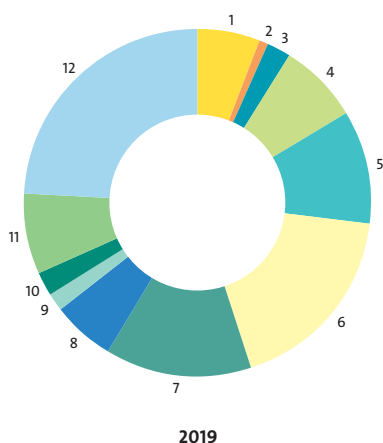
# UZH and ETH alumni at the Language Center

The number of ETH alumni participating in Language Center courses decreased slightly, in comparison to last year. This is most likely connected to the changes to the course formats that we had to make as a result of Covid 19.



| Alumni 2020       |                                    | UZH       | ETH       | Total      |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 1                 | Arabic                             | 5         | 1         | 6          |
| 2                 | Brazilian Portuguese               | 1         | 3         | 4          |
| 3                 | Chinese                            | 3         | 1         | 4          |
| 4                 | German as a foreign language (DaF) | 2         | 8         | 10         |
| 5                 | English                            | 10        | 2         | 12         |
| 6                 | French                             | 14        | 5         | 19         |
| 7                 | Italian                            | 8         | 7         | 15         |
| 8                 | Japanese                           | 3         | 5         | 8          |
| 9                 | Latin                              | 1         | 0         | 1          |
| 10                | Modern Greek                       | 3         | 0         | 3          |
| 11                | Russian                            | 9         | 6         | 15         |
| 12                | Swedish                            | 1         | 1         | 2          |
| 13                | Spanish                            | 14        | 7         | 21         |
| <b>Total 2020</b> |                                    | <b>74</b> | <b>46</b> | <b>120</b> |

25



| Alumni 2019       |                                    | UZH       | ETH       | Total      |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| 1                 | Arabic                             | 5         | 3         | 8          |
| 2                 | Brazilian Portuguese               | 0         | 1         | 1          |
| 3                 | Chinese                            | 1         | 2         | 3          |
| 4                 | German as a foreign language (DaF) | 4         | 6         | 10         |
| 5                 | English                            | 10        | 4         | 14         |
| 6                 | French                             | 14        | 10        | 24         |
| 7                 | Italian                            | 6         | 12        | 18         |
| 8                 | Japanese                           | 2         | 6         | 8          |
| 9                 | Latin                              | 2         | 0         | 2          |
| 10                | Modern Greek                       | 3         | 0         | 3          |
| 11                | Russian                            | 4         | 6         | 10         |
| 12                | Spanish                            | 19        | 13        | 32         |
| <b>Total 2019</b> |                                    | <b>70</b> | <b>63</b> | <b>133</b> |

## UZH Discovery program for refugees

In 2020, we were able to offer an intensive course in German as a foreign language (two weeks before the student intensive courses took place) for those participating in the university Discovery program for refugees, in collaboration with UZH International Relations Office and the arcas foundation; 13 people participated in the course in HS20.

The arcas foundation's aim is to promote (re)integration into society at various levels. Everyone should have a chance to participate in society, the foundation, founded in 2005, says.

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The group of refugees also has access to the German (DaF) semester courses. From HS20 on, we are able to offer an additional semester course, funded by arcas foundation. In FS20, 13 places in this course were filled by participants from this target group; in HS20, there were 31.

## UZH English for work program

In 2020, Language Center lecturers offered a range of English for work courses for UZH staff as part of the program offered by UZH Continuing Education. This program is funded from UZH strategic reserves and is conceived of as a language-policy measure. The current program will run from 2020 to 2023 and is designed to promote staff's workplace communication skills.

In 2020, the following courses were offered:

- Three 1-day courses for 20 participants on everyday office texts in English ("Englischsprachige Texte im Büroalltag")
- Five courses with a total of 39 participants on communicating in English on a daily basis ("Im Arbeitsalltag auf Englisch kommunizieren")
- Nine courses on writing emails in English, with 68 participants ("E-Mails auf Englisch verfassen")

Overall, 127 people from institutes, dean's offices, and Central Services took part in 17 courses, far more than had originally been planned.

The courses were mostly offered online. They were highly valued and received excellent feedback. The courses offered in 2021 are already fully booked. From 2024, the program is to be permanently offered as part of the university's sustainable promotion of its staff's bilingual skills.

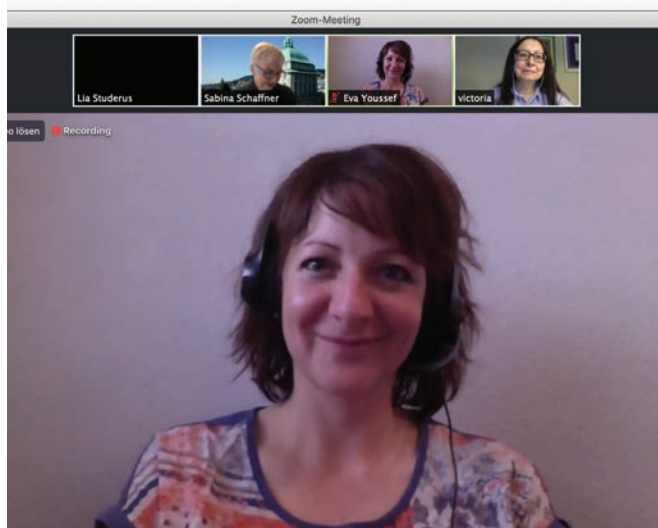


# Teaching under Covid conditions

## “The successful switch was definitely a team effort” Interviews with four Teachers of the Hour at the Language Center

In spring semester 2020, eight Language Center lecturers were nominated as [Teachers of the Hour](#) (see page 13). Sabina Schaffner spoke to four of them. She wanted to know how they had experienced the change to distance teaching. The lecturers, Anna Ekert, Victoria Ruiz, Christian Utzinger, and Eva Youssef tell their story.

Anna Ekert teaches academic English, Victoria Ruiz Spanish, Christian Utzinger Latin, and Eva Youssef Arabic.



Eva Youssef, Lecturer in Arabic

All were positively surprised and relieved to find out about the nomination. After challenging weeks of uncertainty about how effectively their face-to-face teaching could be transferred to distance learning, they experienced the award as balm for the soul and were delighted to hear that their efforts had been worthwhile.

Of the three criteria on which the nominations were based, all those interviewed considered the transfer of their teaching to the digital context as the most fitting criterion. All attributed the fact that they had succeeded in doing this relatively quickly and well – despite technical challenges and an enormous additional workload – to the support they received from their Language Center colleagues.

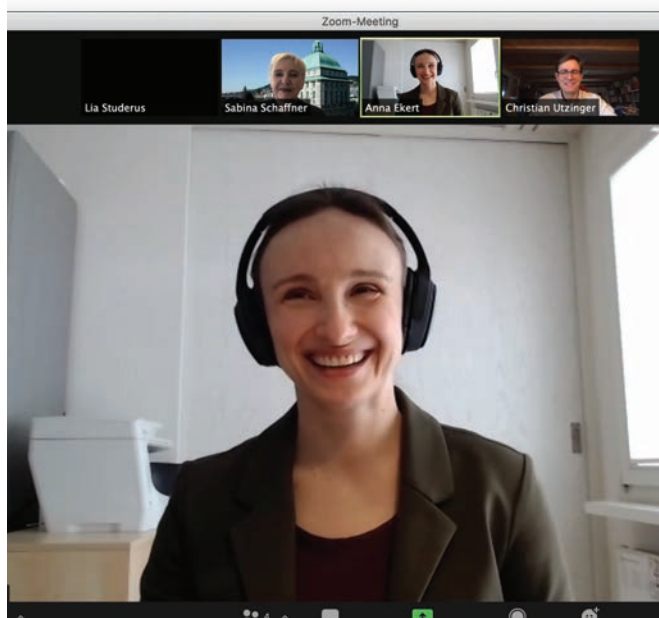
Another criterion was their ability to develop creative ways to maintain interaction despite the distance. Victoria Ruiz and Eva Youssef ascribed this to the use of humor in their classes. In addition, Eva Youssef found that using current, authentic media from the Arabic-speaking world and social media was valuable and educational, as this allowed for moments of relaxation and for a united sensory experience.

The third criterion that the nomination addressed was the exceptional commitment to students. All four lecturers felt that this was reflected in their successful creation of closeness to their course participants. It appeared that it was important to students to experience that the switch was fast and involved a huge commitment and that for this reason, Language Center classes – even at a distance – remained for many a site of social encounters. Victoria Ruiz experienced a new, confidential intimacy in which students revealed more about their social reality and in which many were able to speak about current challenges – in the target language. For Eva Youssef, in addition to the challenge of creating lively lessons in light of the new reality, access to a new informality via Zoom was a key desire. And for Christian Utzinger, the feedback that he had succeeded in designing an end-of-module exam that made sense to students was a satisfying experience.



Victoria Ruiz, Lecturer in Spanish

There were differences in the ways the four experienced the specific challenges during the change to distance teaching. All felt that the adaptation – i.e. the creation of suitable and attractive (!) educational material – was demanding and extremely time-consuming. Equally demanding was the search for new educational settings: They had to find new ways to keep students on track through a faster pace. At the same time, they had to develop a classroom discourse in which more explicit feedback and assessment could be included.



Anna Ekert, Lecturer in English

They also needed to find a replacement for the group experience and spontaneous feedback which en passant in face-to-face teaching, as online interaction is less spontaneous and more technical, and as students appeared to be more inhibited on camera than in on-site teaching. Additional challenges included family responsibilities and the demands of teaching from home.

All were helped by the support from their peers, their heads of unit, and their partners – as well as by the “let’s do it together; let’s get on with it” attitude, as Eva Youssef put it. Prior experience with online learning management systems and access to digital learning material was found to be useful. This saved a lot of work and made it

easier to concentrate on re-designing teaching processes, according to Christian Utzinger. And Victoria Ruiz is convinced that her previous skills in digital learning and the flipped-classroom approach helped her enormously during the change.

The experiences of FS20 had a lasting impact on attitudes towards the interviewees’ own teaching. Victoria Ruiz and Eva Youssef experienced the didactic necessity of clearly moderating lessons and forcefully implementing restrictions in performance assessments as challenging but sustainable interventions that fostered commitment and trust.

For Anna Ekert, the new learning situation challenged the well-established division of roles between teachers and learners in a new way – with a positive effect. “On Zoom, we’re all equal,” she says. Lecturers and students had to reinvent themselves in the way they interact. Christian Utzinger can only agree: “After decades of teaching experience, you have to reinvent yourself, especially because until now, you have experienced face-to-face encounters as an essential part of your own professional identity and its quality.”

All four interviewees hope to retain their newly acquired teaching skills. These range from basic didactic approaches such as the flipped-classroom approach (which will continue to characterize lessons after Corona) to various design elements such as visualization techniques and the use of music. It became clear to Christian Utzinger that he would like to stay true to his expectations towards students that they should work on more content autonomously once we return to face-to-face teaching, even though this is a huge challenge for many students in compulsory modules leading to higher dropout rates than in face-to-face teaching. Anna Ekert, however, had the opposite experience: She was surprised by how well her participants were able to master autonomous learning tasks. She found that the students took on more responsibility when it was handed over to them. This led her to change her approach and to give more space to self-study as a means of encouraging a more dynamic teaching process that is more strongly oriented toward individual interests.



Christian Utzinger, Lecturer in Latin

In FS20, the Language Center was positively overrepresented in the number of Teacher of the Hour nominations it received from UZH. Those interviewed believed this was due to the course content and associated socialization of language teachers. Language teachers are more focused on communication and interaction than on knowledge transfer and generally choose their teaching profession out of a passion and understand this – unlike other colleagues at the university – as their prime identity. For Victoria Ruiz, some students stayed on track because of their language learning experience. They looked forward to their Spanish class with eager anticipation.

Another reason, says Christian Utzinger, is the well-established culture of exchange and collegial support at the Language Center, which practically and emotionally facilitated the change for lecturers and allowed them to master it quickly and successfully.

The interviewees were also interested in issues relating to the Language Center's program strategy beyond their own teaching. Victoria Ruiz and Eva Youssef thought it made sense to consider a complementary model of offering language classes in face-to-face and parallel online modes. Even though face-to-face teaching is irre-

placeable, online lessons allowed people to participate despite time restrictions. Teaching online would also allow us to expand our target groups and increase the number of participants. Didactically, online teaching might allow us to integrate discussion partners from countries where the target language is spoken as a valuable addition to conventional teaching. All agreed that the main point now is to continue to explore and define the quality of various modes of delivery and to use these judiciously in future.

The interviewer would like to add that it is in the Language Center's interest with regard to both modes to retain and defend the efficacy and value of direct interaction between professional teachers and interested students as members of an academic discussion community. And she is confident that this will also succeed as a team effort.

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The following eight Language Center lecturers were nominated by their students as Teachers of the hour:

- M.A. Ai-Linh Achermann
- Dr. Anna Ekert
- PD Dr. Daniel Henseler
- Dr. Michelle Norgate
- M.A. Nicoletta Rivetto
- M.A. Maria Victoria Ruiz Lozano Haenni
- Dr. Christian Utzinger
- Dr. Eva Mira Youssef-Grob

# Tailor-made program

| Tailor made                  | Program 2020 | Participants 2020 | Program 2019 | Participants 2019 |
|------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| German as a foreign language | 2            | 28                | 1            | 14                |
| English                      | 36           | 313               | 48           | 452               |
| Italian                      | 4            | 58                | 4            | 40                |

## German as a foreign language

**30** In 2020, we once again ran a beginner German course for students of the European and Chinese Business Management MAS. Fifteen participants enrolled.

In cooperation with the UZH International Relations Office, we designed an intensive course for participants in the Discovery program for refugees – people planning to study at UZH. This tailor-made course ran before the fall semester, and 13 people participated (see page 26).

## Italian

In HS18, by request from the ETH D-HEST department, we launched our “Italiano per medici” course. This course is now well established and is offered at levels A1, A2, and A2-B1. The course is also open to UZH members, although by financially supporting the course, D-HEST secures two-thirds of places on the course. The goal of the program is to build up basic Italian skills in the medical field, with a particular focus on doctor-patient communication.

## English

The Language Center once again ran two courses in Medical English at the B2 and C1-C2 level as part of the Faculty of Medicine’s core elective 2 module (Wahlpflicht-Modul 2) of its specialized study program (Mantelstudium: Specialized study in biomedical sciences. Foundations II).

The following tailor-made language courses were run for UZH and ETH Zurich Master’s students, PhD/doctoral students, and postdocs. These courses are highly valued, in particular, for their discipline-specific content and for the opportunities they offer to participants to analyze texts and gain teacher and peer feedback on their writing (see tables below).

The English unit employs a freelance teacher who teaches tailor-made courses as required.

| UZH Unit                              | Title  | Number of courses | Total number of lessons   | Target group(s)           |
|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| UZH Department of Psychology          | Writing Research Articles in Psychology                              | 2                 | 40 plus individ. coaching | PhD students              |
| Department of Economics               | Writing (in) Economics   | 1                 | 20                        | PhD students              |
| UZH Neuroscience Center Zurich        | Neuroscience Writing Course  | 1                 | 24                        | PhD students              |
| University Children’s Hospital Zurich | Writing for publication at the University Children’s Hospital Zurich | 1                 | 20                        | Researchers               |
| Department of Economics               | Writing an MA thesis in economics                                    | 1                 | 20                        | Master’s students         |
| UZH Computer Science (IFI)            | Scientific Writing for PhD Students                                  | 1                 | 20                        | PhD students              |
| Institute of Education                | Writing for publication in education                                 | 1                 | 20                        | PhD students and postdocs |

The total of 164 lessons provided to UZH is 20 fewer than the total for 2019, as the demand was somewhat lower than in the previous year.

| ETH Unit  | Titel   | Number of courses | Total number of lessons              | Target group(s)   |
|---|---|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| D-BAUG  | Scientific Writing in Earthquake Engineering and Dynamics | 1                 | 2                                    | Doctoral students |
| D-INFK  | Writing for Publication in Computer Science (WPCS)        | 3                 | 60                                   | Doctoral students |
| D-MATL  | Writing for Publication in Materials Science              | 1                 | 20                                   | Doctoral students |
| D-HEST (Consumer Behaviour)                         | How to organize your paper                                | 1                 | 4                                    | Doctoral students |
| D-HEST (Toxicology Lab)                             | Writing for publication in molecular sciences             | 1                 | 18                                   | Doctoral students |
| D-HEST (Movement Neuroscience)                      | Writing for publication in Movement Neuroscience          | 1                 | 18                                   | Doctoral students |
| D-MTEC  | Academic Writing Course for D-MTEC MSc students           | 4                 | 56 plus 2 units for initial lectures | MSc               |
| D-MAVT  | Scientific Writing for Publication in Engineering         | 1                 | 20                                   | Doctoral students |
| D-GESS, Institute of Science, Technology and Policy | Reading in English Workshop (ISTP)                        | 1                 | 8                                    | MSc               |
| Doctoral Administration                             | Developing Scientific Writing Skills at Doctoral Level    | 1                 | 2                                    | Doctoral students |

The total of 210 lessons for ETH is 12 fewer than the total for 2019, as the demand was somewhat lower than in the previous year.

The following training courses were offered to UZH and ETH staff:

| UZH unit                             | Titel  | Number of courses | Total number of lessons |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------|-------------------------|
| UZH Safety, Security and Environment | English Follow-up Training for Safety and Security | 1                 | 4                       |
| Career Services                      | Job Applications in English (lecture)              | 1                 | 2                       |
|                                      | Writing Cover Letters in English (workshop)        | 1                 | 4                       |

The 10 lessons for UZH staff are 22 fewer than those offered in 2019 as a result of Covid 19.

| ETH unit   | Titel                             | Number of courses | Total number of lessons |
|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|
| ETH Betrieb (Facility management)                | English for Technical Staff A1-A2 | 2                 | 70.                     |
| ETH Safety, Security, Health, Environment (SSHE) | Workplace Communication A1        | 2                 | 56                      |
|  | Workplace Communication A2        | 2                 | 56                      |
|  | Workplace Communication B1        | 2                 | 56                      |
|  | Workplace Communication B2        | 2                 | 56                      |
|  | Workplace Communication C1        | 1                 | 14                      |

The 308 lessons for ETH staff are 26 fewer than the total for 2019, as the demand was somewhat lower than in the previous year.



# Coaching

## German as a foreign language

Individual writing consultations for students consist of several meetings in which the student works on texts and is trained in academic writing skills. In 2020, four such consultations were offered in the spring semester and five in the fall semester.

In 2020, one writing coaching was booked.

- 32** The new coaching service for job applications and interviews in German was used by three people. In addition, a DaF lecturer was commissioned as a private teacher for three learners.

## English

The following individual and group coaching formats were offered in 2020: TOEFL/IELTS intensive training for academic mobility (one iteration of IELTS training), Email writing for university staff (one course with four participants in FS20 and one with five participants in HS20), academic writing coaching – all target groups (two iterations), and speaking/pronunciation coaching (one iteration). In addition, 16 coaching sessions were provided as part of the Language Center's contract with the UZH Department of Psychology.

Coaching sessions remain attractive to students and staff who see these as an alternative to attending a course and who are seeking individual support in specific areas of language use.

## French

One individual coaching unit was offered in French on demand (in preparation of a job application).

## Italian

On request from the ETH Board, Italian coaching is available from September 2020 to 2021 for ETH Board staff members as a means of strengthening their communicative competency for work purposes and communication within Switzerland.



## Language consultations

| Language consultations 2020  | 2020 | 2019 |
|------------------------------|------|------|
| German as a foreign language | 13   | 16   |
| English                      | 8    | 1    |
| Romance languages            | 65   | 60   |

In connection with **German** language learning, 13 consultations were offered in 2020 (16 in 2019) to PhD/doctoral students and students. These consultations with the head of unit typically take around 30-45 minutes and provide advice on individual ways in which people can work on specific areas of their language learning separately from a language course and beyond our course program.

In connection with **English** language learning, eight consultations were offered in 2020 (one in 2019). In general, consultations are open to UZH/ETH staff, PhD/doctoral students, and Bachelor's and Master's students. These consultations with the head of unit take around 60 minutes and highlight individual ways in which people can work on specific areas of their English language skills. The number of consultations rose in 2020 to the levels before 2019, as the consultations were easier to access on the website than they had been in the previous year. All consultations in 2020 were held on Zoom.

Sixty-five language learners contacted the **Romance languages** unit for learning consultations in order to evaluate their language skills, to assess their learning needs and goals, to check the validity of their learning intentions and plans, and to get information about our course program. The initial contact for learning consultations in Romance languages is via the head of unit. If relevant, the consultation is sometimes done by a lecturer.

## Certification of language levels

For mobility purposes, we offer certifications of language levels for students of German as a foreign language (DaF) and all Romance languages, often at very short notice. This fee-based service consists of an initial self-assessment using the Dialang test or the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) grids. Following this, students are interviewed, and their language level is assessed. The demand for this service remained constant for Romance languages, at 2-3 each semester. For German as a foreign language, the demand for certifications also remained small, at six. In most cases, certification was required for residence permits or naturalization purposes.

For those requiring confirmation of their English language skills, we offer a fee-based internal test. We also offer students who have completed one of our courses a free confirmation of their language skills. These confirmations are done by the lecturer who taught the course that the student attended.

## Tests

Four people took the English Assessment Test in the reporting period compared to six in the previous year.

The Latin and Ancient Greek tests were last run in HS19. Since HS19 and FS20, respectively, the Latin and Ancient Greek tests (Basic and Latinum; Graecum) have become part of the modules. The former Latinum and Graecum tests are thus no longer offered.

The TEF exam ("Test d'évaluation de français") was stopped in HS19 for strategic reasons. It was replaced by test preparation courses for the "Diplôme d'Etudes en Langue Française" (DELFL) and the "Diplôme Approfondi de Langue Française" (DALF).

# Self-Access Centers (SACs)

## SAC Zentrum

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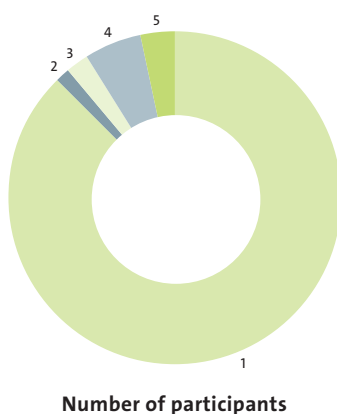
The Corona pandemic had a huge effect on the use of the Self-Access Center services. This already became evident in February. Fortunately, the move online in March of our cooperative learning program was quick and successful. The new format allowed us to reach new participant groups, although only some of the participants who were used to face-to-face events found the online version attractive, and as a consequence, the final number of participants was almost the same as before.

With the distancing rules, the space in the Self-Access Center was significantly reduced, so the online format was retained for the whole year. Introductory events for exchange students, first-year students, and participants in intensive courses were also offered online. This is not, however, reflected in the user figures. Game events were cancelled from mid-March 2020 on in favor of events that involved several successive meetings.

Most events in 2020 were for learners of German as a foreign language. For the first time we were able to offer a language meet-up for learners of German, which was designed specifically for absolute beginners. We also offered events for the following languages (in alphabetical order): Arabic, Chinese, French, English, Italian, Japanese, Russian, Swiss-German, and Spanish.

As the SAC Zentrum runs its own library services, and the participants of learning events cannot react as autonomously online as when they can be present, the switch online meant a significant reduction of the opening hours (15 hours a week instead of the usual 30 during semester breaks, and 30 hours a week compared to 50 during the semester). The distancing rules also led to a significant reduction in workspaces. Thanks to the Booked booking system, we were able to offer a few workspaces in HS20. This allowed us to conduct repeat exams, and it gave tandem partners an opportunity to meet personally within the given restrictions. Nevertheless, a large number of autonomous learners stayed away as a result of these restrictions, and the lending of media was also reduced.

As the Self-Access Center is unable to offer a postal service and access to the libraries was not possible, users had no access to media – and the SAC was closed – from mid-March to mid-June. The time gained was used to train staff. In the area of cataloguing, the main focus was in working through the backlog, so that all SAC games are now available for lending. We are also pleased that we were able to extend lending periods to two weeks as of December 2020, when we changed to the ALMA library system.



Tutored events and services at the SAC Zentrum

| Events                                | Number of events | Number of participants |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Language meet-ups                   | 44               | 484                    |
| 2 Book clubs                          | 5                | 8                      |
| 3 Games events                        | 5                | 12                     |
| 4 Tandem information events           | 2                | 31                     |
| 5 Introduction to autonomous learning | 2                | 18                     |
| <b>Total</b>                          | <b>58</b>        | <b>553</b>             |

## SAC Höggerberg

2020 was an exceptional year for the SAC Höggerberg also. In March we had only a few days to decide how to maintain our service.

The decision to switch all services to an online mode was a very good one, also thanks to the flexibility, commitment, and enthusiasm of the student assistants. They managed, week by week, for the whole year, including the summer holidays, to develop interesting online content and motivating language learning opportunities for our visitors.

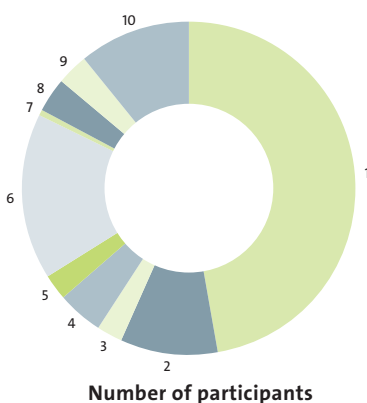
The number of participants consequently doubled on the previous year to 798 (from 396). Feedback in the past months and in a survey undertaken in November confirmed that SAC visitors valued the opportunity – despite restrictions and lockdown – to meet other people from home, practice their language skills, and learn new things. To ensure that the meetings stayed exciting throughout the year, we endeavored to provide a variety of events, including general language meet-ups, book and film clubs, games evenings, and writing workshops. The highlight for those with the travel bug was our series of virtual tours in summer to famous

museums (French at the Louvre, Spanish at the Prado, Italian at the Uffizi, English at the British Museum, German on the Museum Island) and to various countries (Giro d’Italia, Un viaje por Argentina, Tour de France, and Grand Tour of the British Isles). These events produced much exciting and educational material for discussion at our meetings.

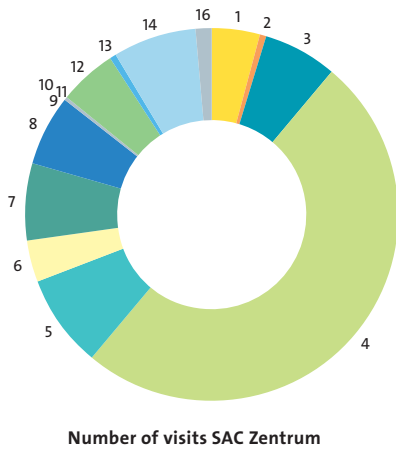
Learning consultations were also offered continuously online and adapted to the new demands the learners were facing.

What suffered most in 2020 was the use of the SAC room at the Architecture and Civil Engineering Library. After the first few months of complete lockdown, the room continued to be unusable as a reading and work room. Only two visitors were allowed in there at one time. Users continued to borrow media, but naturally much less than in previous years.

### Tutored events and services at the SLZ Höggerberg



| Events  | Number of participants |
|---|------------------------|
| 1 Language meet-ups                                   | 378                    |
| 2 Book clubs  | 76                     |
| 3 Games events / Learning languages playfully         | 19                     |
| 4 Writing workshops                                   | 36                     |
| 5 Language-fit for an exchange                        | 20                     |
| 6 AUSSErordentlich! Learning a language at the museum | 128                    |
| 7 Approfondimento delle competenze di italiano        | 4                      |
| 8 Film clubs  | 27                     |
| 9 Learning workshops                                  | 25                     |
| 10 Grand tours  | 85                     |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>798</b>             |



### Number of SAC visits in 2020 by language

| Language                             | SAC Zentrum | SAC Höggerberg |
|--------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1 Arabic                             | 104         |                |
| 2 Brazilian Portuguese               | 14          |                |
| 3 Chinese                            | 158         |                |
| 4 German as a foreign language (DaF) | 1214        |                |
| 5 English                            | 202         |                |
| 6 French                             | 89          |                |
| 7 Italian                            | 158         |                |
| 8 Japanese                           | 148         |                |
| 9 Latin                              | 4           |                |
| 10 Modern Greek                      | 5           |                |
| 11 Polish                            | 3           |                |
| 12 Russian                           | 118         |                |
| 13 Swedish                           | 15          |                |
| 14 Spanish                           | 174         |                |
| 15 Hungarian                         | 1           |                |
| 16 No details                        | 31          |                |
| <b>Total 2020</b>                    | <b>2438</b> | *              |

### Number of issued media, 2018 bis 2020

| Year | SAC Zentrum | SAC Höggerberg |
|------|-------------|----------------|
| 2018 | 2687        | 1675           |
| 2019 | 2699        | 2569           |
| 2020 | 1491        | 1634           |

\*SAC Höggerberg: The number of visitors could not be recorded in 2020, as SAC staff was only allowed to work on site occasionally, according to Corona restrictions. Mostly, they provided tutored events remotely (see page 35)

**SAC visits since 2008 and 2017**

| Year | SAC Zentrum | SAC Hönggerberg |
|------|-------------|-----------------|
| 2008 | 1060        |                 |
| 2009 | 1892        |                 |
| 2010 | 3542        |                 |
| 2011 | 4174        |                 |
| 2012 | 4101        |                 |
| 2013 | 5062        |                 |
| 2014 | 5379        |                 |
| 2015 | 5542        |                 |
| 2016 | 4742        |                 |
| 2017 | 4689        | 2265            |
| 2018 | 5316        | 2908            |
| 2019 | 4736        | 3442            |
| 2020 | 2438        | *               |

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**Information about SAC users**

|  | SAC Zentrum | SAC Hönggerberg |
|--|-------------|-----------------|
| As a complement to a language course           | 1249        |                 |
| Independent, i.e., not doing a language course | 782         |                 |
| Tutored events                                 | 402         |                 |
| No details                                     | 5           | *               |

**University affiliation of users**

| University         | SAC Zentrum | SAC Hönggerberg |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|
| UZH                | 1323        |                 |
| ETH                | 982         |                 |
| Other / no details | 133         | *               |

\*SAC Hönggerberg: The number of visitors could not be recorded in 2020, as SAC staff was only allowed to work on site occasionally, according to Corona restrictions. Mostly, they provided tutored events remotely (see page 35)

## Self-Access Centers Höggerberg and Zentrum survey

In HS20, we ran a short survey on the events offered by the Self-Access Centers. Our goal was to gather the opinions of our visitors and feed these into our program for 2021. The visitors were asked the following three questions:

1. What kind of offer would you prefer to attend next year, if we do not have any Covid limitations? (an online offer/ an onsite offer/ I don't mind).
2. If you don't participate regularly, why? (I have less time than I expected/ I don't like learning languages online/ The offer does not meet my expectations/ other).
3. If you participate regularly: what do you like the most in the workshop?

With regard to the first question, half of the users of SAC Zentrum and two-thirds of users of SAC Höggerberg preferred the online format. Regarding the second question, lack of time was given as the most common reason for irregular attendance. The third question resulted in much positive feedback: In general, our users seem to value the opportunity to meet other people informally, to speak a lot, and to learn new things despite having to do so from home and despite restrictions and lockdown.

«« *Dass wir nicht ein Pflichtprogramm haben, sondern jeder seinem Niveau entsprechend arbeiten kann* »»

«« *To exercise the talking together, talk about topics I love it I wanna keep going!* »»

«« *Experience the language in another context* »»

«« *Lernen from each other* »»

«« *I attend the Sprachtreff, and I like that we can get a lot of practice with speaking.* »»

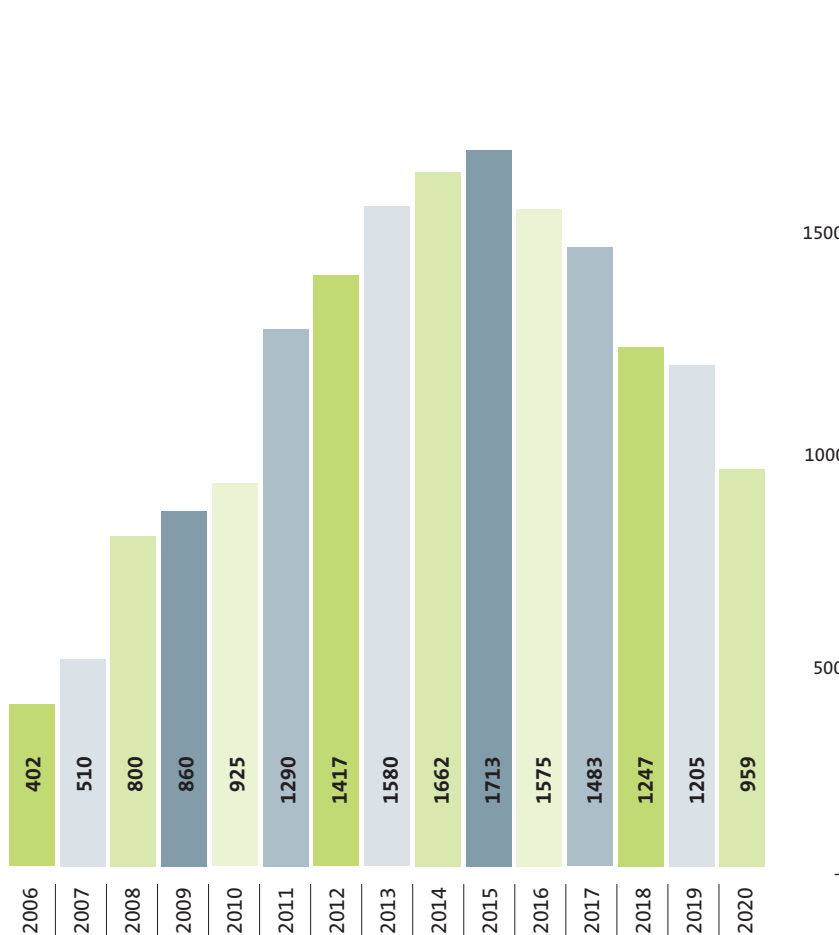
«« *die unkomplizierte Art eine Sprache zu lernen* »»

«« *Interessante Themen, viel sprechen, interaktiv* »»

«« *I was very hesitant to speak the language but this course offers a pleasant environment for conversations.* »»

# Tandem placements

Placements from 2006 to 2020



After an annual increase in the number of placements from 2006 to 2015, the demand for – and consequently the number of – tandem placements has been dropping since 2016. In 2020, the year of Corona, there was another clear reduction in the number of placements: At 959 placements, it dropped to the level of 2010. The lower number of exchange students also had an effect on tandem placements during the reporting period.

During the pandemic, the demand for additional new contacts is understandably low, but despite Corona, almost 1000 people sought and found a tandem partner.

Placements 2020

| Language being learnt | Number of placements |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Arabic                | 13                   |
| Brazilian Portuguese  | 8                    |
| Chinese               | 60                   |
| German                | 397                  |
| English               | 76                   |
| Farsi                 | 6                    |
| Finnish               | 4                    |
| French                | 138                  |
| Hebrew                | 2                    |
| Hindi                 | 3                    |
| Indonesian            | 1                    |
| Italian               | 63                   |
| Japanese              | 24                   |
| Korean                | 15                   |
| Lithuanian            | 1                    |
| Modern Greek          | 4                    |
| Dutch                 | 6                    |
| Polish                | 1                    |
| Portuguese            | 6                    |
| Romanian              | 1                    |
| Russian               | 26                   |
| Swedish               | 6                    |
| Swiss-German          | 23                   |
| Spanish               | 70                   |
| Tamil                 | 1                    |
| Thai                  | 1                    |
| Czech                 | 1                    |
| Turkish               | 1                    |
| Hungarian             | 1                    |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>959</b>           |



# Events

## Cancellation of the planned Center Conference of 5 June 2020

The Center Conference that had been planned for 5 June 2020 was cancelled due to Covid 19. Given the circumstances, it was replaced with an intensive peer training session (in the units) that was designed to support distance teaching.

## 40 Development and training in the units

In the **German as a foreign language unit**, training in 2020 focused on the change from face-to-face to online teaching. In no time, and in particular through discussion and individual assistance in the unit, all team members felt that they were able to cope with the challenge and became familiar with – and learnt to use – a range of new didactic concepts and tools, despite an almost unreasonable workload and extreme time pressure.

In addition, the **annual symposium of LEDAFIDS** (Ver- ein der Lehrenden für Deutsch als Fremd- und Zweit- sprache an Hochschulen in der Schweiz – Association of teachers of German as a foreign and second language at Swiss tertiary institutes), which affords an excellent opportunity for professional development and for national collaboration, had to be cancelled due to Covid 19.

The lecturers in the **Other languages unit** focused their internal discussions on the demands of teaching under Covid 19. In so doing, the peer support with the use of various tools, the design of assessments, and the co-supervision of oral exams were a success. Regular meetings and informal Zoom sessions, in addition to specialist support, provided a welcome opportunity to socialize. In addition, lecturers individually attended training sessions offered by the SSH-CHES.

The professional exchange also dealt with the didactic challenges relating to the new modules offered for the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (UZH PhF) and the new mixed target-group courses starting in HS19. A joint workshop on the use of flipped-classroom elements in our language courses is planned for 2021.

Online and blended learning and teaching was the main topic for 2020 in the **English unit** as a result of the shift to online teaching as of 13 March 2020 due to Covid 19. The unit transferred its courses to the online modus with ease, working within and beyond the unit over the weekend of 14-15 March, so that we were able to continue all courses without interruption on 16 March. The result of our efforts was rewarded by students, who voted two English unit staff members “Teachers of the Hour”. Online and blended learning was discussed throughout the year in online team meetings and in one in-person meeting (August 2020), both as a group and among individuals. Several team members gave presentations to the group on technical and didactic considerations related to online and blended learning and teaching, and several teachers were involved in observations of online classes for quality management purposes.

In early 2020, two English unit staff members organized a pilot project to test Edword – an online tool for giving feedback on written student work – in our academic English writing courses in collaboration with ETH LET (Educational Development and Technology). Edword was developed and is run by the external company EasyCorrect. Five English unit staff members took part in the trial. Two others decided to defer the trial till later due to the increased workload associated with Covid 19. A preliminary report was presented in July 2020. The lecturers found the tool to be easy to use and efficient after the preliminary work in setting it up and despite minor technical issues. Students who completed a questionnaire at the end of FS20 said they found the tool easy to use, and they found the standardized feedback with explanations useful; 87% said they would prefer to get feedback through Edword than through conventional means in future. The tool remains available to all Language Center staff until June 2021, when we hope that our access will again be renewed.

HS20 also saw the launch of the Writing Center – a service in which UZH and ETH students and staff can sign up (initially via Doodle) for an individual 45-minute writing consultation with one of two Language Center writing lecturers. Each lecturer was able to offer

18 consultations, and these were booked well before the end of the semester. Another 36 sessions will be made available from January 2021. The long-term plan is to gain funding in order to expand the service so that the two Writing Center experts can train writing fellows and offer a much expanded service. Advertising the service will also require additional resources. We are very pleased with the feedback received from the participants so far, and a report will be issued with preliminary results in early 2021.

The lecturers in the **Romance languages unit** exchanged ideas and reflected on their work in 2020 both internally and at the level of the whole of the Romania team, in their individual language teams and in overarching focus groups, including, for example, via the SUEZ internal UZH Connect platform maintained by Martin Amann and Cornelia Steinmann on issues relating to online teaching.

Under the heading “Einblicke und Ausblicke” (insights and outlook), the Romania team meetings regularly discussed best practices on teaching tools and didactic settings, with a particular focus on the change to online teaching and remote assessment.

The heads of unit and lecturers of the **Ancient languages unit** were still preoccupied with the adaptation of the course structure. The new mode had started well in HS19, and at the end of FS20, the first iteration with the new course book had been completed.

Changes brought about by Covid 19 were a big challenge, in particular, the running of a large number of semester and end-of-module exams. This required a great deal of creativity and cost a huge amount of time. In FS20, many exams were conducted orally, which always required a co-supervisor to be present, in addition to the examiner.

In HS20, most courses were conducted as half-class lessons, so that as many students as possible could participate. However, the Latin program, which ran several parallel courses, also offered students one purely online course. The change from half classes to

distance learning worked very well in the unit, as all team members had started the semester with this scenario in mind.

In HS20, the big challenge were the exams, which, however, could partly be carried out face-to-face.

## Lecturer Forum (Dozierendenforum)

In the reporting period, the Lecturer Forum, which in previous years had run twice a year as a platform for information and discussion, was held only once. The forum planned for 27 March 2020 was cancelled due to the lockdown. Communication with lecturers was ensured with regular emails on teaching under Covid 19 conditions and a special Easter newsletter.

The forum that was held via Zoom on 23 October 2020 consisted of an informative section and a discussion in breakout rooms on teaching in HS20. Then, heads of unit and lecturers gave two examples of course developments (“Italiano per medici” and “Deutsch für Flüchtlinge”).

After a personal report by the lecturer representative in the Board of Trustees, the goals and challenges for 2021 and information about future events were presented, including the UZH “Tag der Lehre” (4 November 2020), the Lecturer Forum (19 March 2021), and the Language Center Day (11 June 2021). Participation at this extraordinary Lecturer Forum was marked by a feeling of commitment and unity, which is particularly important in times of crisis.

# Collaborations

## Collaboration with the UZH Career Services

One lecture entitled Job applications in English and a workshop entitled Writing cover letters in English were held as part of the UZH Career Services event program. The two events in FS20 were cancelled due to Covid 19, and the two events in HS20 were held online.

## 42 Staff exchanges with partner institutes at European universities

The promotion of benchmarking, organizational development, and training through staff exchange projects, which had been introduced in 2011 could not be continued due to Covid 19. The trip to Leipzig University, which had been approved and planned with a focus on a discussion about the Romance languages program and assessment tests for mobility purposes had to be cancelled. Instead of the planned visit, a virtual discussion was held as a workshop on learning and teaching experience gained during Covid 19 in FS20 and HS20.

## Association of Language Centres at Swiss Higher Education Institutions (SSH-CHES)

<https://ssh-ches.ch>

General meetings were held on 28 February 2020 at the Language Center of St Gallen University and on 20 October 2020 via Zoom. Due to Covid 19, there were also meetings on 27 March and 15 September 2020 (Zoom) on dealing with pandemic related challenges.

The fifth continuing education conference for lecturers from member institutions entitled *The individual language learner* held at UZH on 31 January 2020 was, as in previous years, a great success. The keynotes by Cornelia Steinmann (Language Center of UZH and ETH Zurich) entitled *Learner autonomy as a contribution to individualization and internal differentiation* and by Katia Carraro (Language Center of the University of Fribourg) entitled *Ways of supporting and validating personalized*

*language learning beyond the classroom* were met with great interest, as were the discussion groups and best-practice workshops.

## CercleS (European Confederation of Language Centres in Higher Education) [www.cercles.org](http://www.cercles.org)

CercleS is involved in the areas of language policy and training. As an umbrella association of 13 national and 23 affiliated associations, it runs international conferences and is involved in international projects in applied research on language acquisition and academic communication.

On 4 September 2020, the annual general meeting, held as a webinar, approved the new statutes. On this basis, a new executive committee was elected by the board of directors on 9 September 2020 and confirmed by the annual general meeting on 9 September, as follows:

President: Sabina Schaffner (SSH-CHES)

Vice-President: Carmen Argondizo (AICLU)

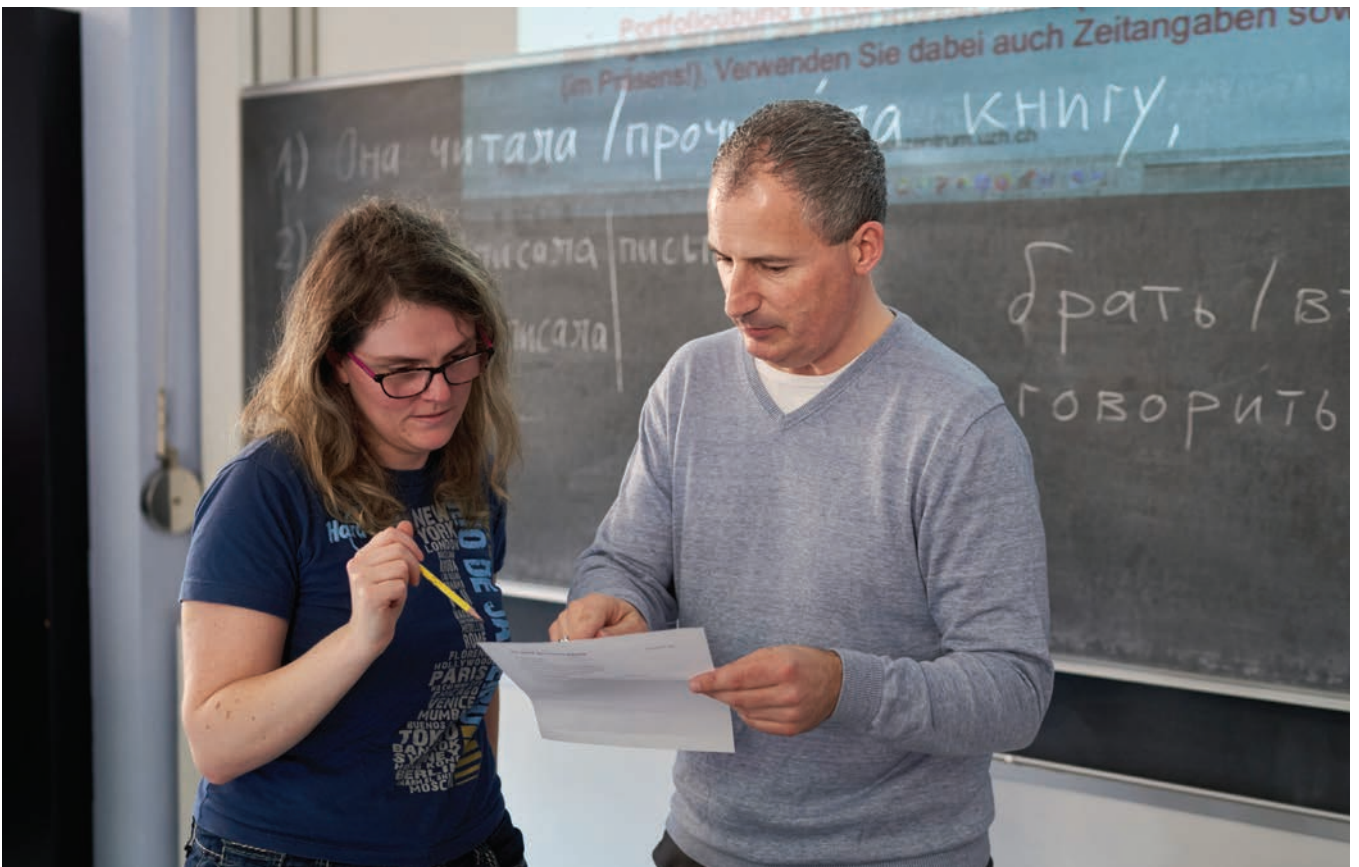
General Secretary: Anne Chateau (RANACLES)

Deputy General Secretary: Mia Panisse (FINELC)

Treasurer: Marta Estella Clota (ACLES)

Deputy Treasurer: Tom Grainger (RANACLES)

The CercleS conference Language Centres at a Crossroads. Open Directions for New Generations of Learners of 10-12 September 2020 was hosted by the Czech organization CASALC at Masaryk University in Brno. It was held in a dual mode, both on site and via Zoom, with regard to presentations and conference participants. It was a success despite the challenges. In consultation with the board of directors, in the second half of the year, CercleS organized digital meetings on didactics and leadership topics as a means of maintaining networks and encouraging the exchange of experience in light of the fact that on-site conferences and workshops were not possible.



Daniel Henseler, lecturer in Russian at the Language Center, with a course participant

# Staff

## Permanent employment

Most of the courses and services offered by the Language Center are delivered by permanent lecturers. Additional casual teaching assignments are remunerated on an hourly basis.

The teaching component of the total workload of the heads of unit and of the director are accounted for under Management and admin staff below.

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| Permanent employment expressed as full-time equivalents | Management and admin staff | Lecturers |                |             |
|---|----------------------------|-----------|----------------|-------------|
|   |                            | Total     | Monthly salary | Hourly wage |
| Modern languages  | 7.69                       | 23.51     | 20.60          | 2.92        |
| Ancient languages                                       | 1.90                       | 0.70      | 0.61           | 0.09        |

## Service contracts and services provided by third parties

In addition to remuneration on the basis of services rendered, in 2020, some individual services were once again remunerated on the basis of substitute employment (illness and maternity substitutions) and 8 flat-rate payments. Some of the Ancient Greek courses were taught by lecturers who are employed by a Cantonal high school. Library work was undertaken by a librarian employed by a different UZH unit.

## Student assistants and tutors

|                                 | Number of staff | Number of hours per person | Total number of hours |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| DaF Intensive Course assistants | 24              | 60                         | 1440                  |
| Self-Access Center Zentrum      | 12              | various                    | 2433                  |
| Self-Access Center Höggerberg*  | 5               | various                    | 1412                  |
| Student assistants, Secretariat | 2               | various                    | 12                    |
| Latinum tutors                  | 1               | various                    | 28                    |

\*Salaries of assistants at the Self-Access Center Höggerberg were paid directly by ETH Zurich.



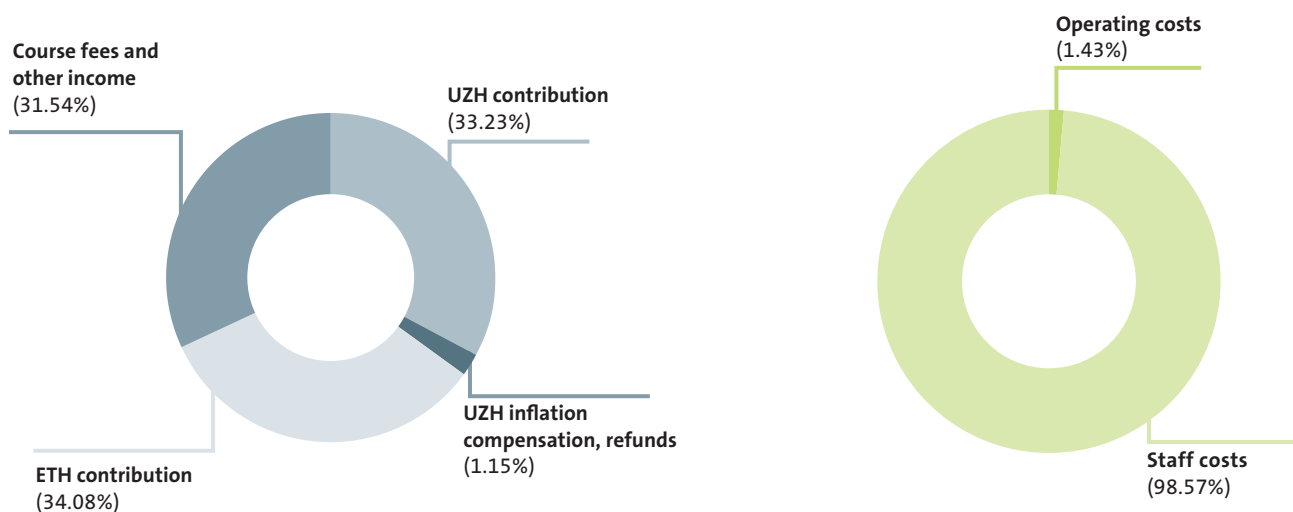
# Budget and financial statement

## UZH and ETH Zurich program

| Source of funds 2020  | Budget 2020       | Financial statement 2020 | Balance        |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| UZH contribution  | -1,500,000        | -1,500,000               |                |
| UZH inflation compensation and refund for substitute teachers | -55,000           | -51,990                  | 3,010          |
| ETH contribution  | -1,538,400        | -1,538,554               | -154           |
| Language Center funds (service fees and other income)         | -1,383,700        | -1,423,853               | -40,153        |
| <b>Total (in CHF)</b>   | <b>-4,477,100</b> | <b>-4,514,397</b>        | <b>-37,297</b> |

| Resources 2020        | Budget 2020      | Financial statement 2020 | Balance    |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| Operating costs       | 116,600          | 64,102                   | -52,498    |
| Staff costs           | 4,360,500        | 4,413,938                | 53,438     |
| <b>Total (in CHF)</b> | <b>4,477,100</b> | <b>4,478,040</b>         | <b>940</b> |

|                                    |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Final balance 2020 (in CHF)</b> | <b>-36,357</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|



On the basis of the new financial model defined in the agreement on the Language Center between UZH and ETH Zurich and signed on 30 November 2017, since 2018, both universities contribute a fixed amount for the Language Center's common core program. Additional funds can be made available on agreement for separate services offered solely to UZH members or solely to ETH Zurich members. Despite the extraordinary circumstances due to Covid 19, the final balance almost breaks even.

The small increase in staff costs was almost completely offset by a reduction in operating expenses. Income from course fees exceeded the budget, despite switch to online teaching in FS20. If the partial reimbursements from FS20 (CHF 15,000) agreed upon with the two universities' administrations are added, the account would have a surplus of CHF 14,000.

## UZH program

The UZH invested additional funds in 2020 for language courses for UZH participants.

| Source of funds       | Budget 2020    | Financial statement 2020 | Balance        |
|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| UZH contribution      | 198,600        | 180,176                  | -18,424        |
| Course fees           | 54,800         | 50,123                   | -4,677         |
| <b>Total (in CHF)</b> | <b>253,400</b> | <b>230,299</b>           | <b>-23,101</b> |

| Recourses 2019 | Budget 2020 | Financial statement 2020 | Balance |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Staff costs    | 253,400     | 230,299                  | -23,101 |

|                                    |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Final balance 2020 (in CHF)</b> | <b>-23,101</b> |
|------------------------------------|----------------|

The decrease in costs is due to the fact that a course was cancelled, resulting in lower teacher-salary costs while revenue stayed the same.

## UZH Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences program

| Source of funds  | Budget 2020 | Financial statement 2020 | Balance |
|------------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------|
| UZH contribution | 589,400     | 626,078                  | 36,678  |

The additional expense is due to the fact that higher demand resulted in the need to run an additional basic Latin course that had not been budgeted for.



## Tailor-made program

| Revenue 2020  | Budget 2020 | Financial statement 2020 | Balance |
|---|-------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Contribution from UZH and ETH institutes and programs | 262,300     | 251,101                  | 11,199  |

| Resources 2020 | Budget 2020 | Financial statement 2020 | Balance |
|----------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------|
| Staff costs    | 262,500     | 242,794                  | -19,706 |

|                                    |  |  |               |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---------------|
| <b>Final balance 2020 (in CHF)</b> |  |  | <b>-8,307</b> |
|------------------------------------|--|--|---------------|

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The lower costs are a result of the reduced number of freelancers employed.

## ETH program

ETH invested additional funds for services offered by the Self-Access Center Höggerberg in the reporting period.

| Mittelherkunft                 | Budget 2020    | Financial statement 2020 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| ETH contribution Staff         | 45,000         | 42,939                   |
| Operations and infrastructure* | 55,000         | 43,280                   |
| <b>Total (in CHF)</b>          | <b>100,000</b> | <b>86,219</b>            |

\*Excluding real estate, rent, IT, and building maintenance costs. These are covered by the relevant ETH unit.

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Director, Language Center of UZH and ETH Zurich

# Presentations and publications

Information about the Language Center team: [Link](#)



The Language Center staff team in the Wölfflin-Zimmer, the Language Center's staff room

From left to right: Andrea Suter, Ueli Bachmann, Sandra Lazzeri, Veronika Heinz, Michelle Norgate, Martin Amann, Cornelia Steinmann, Sabina Schaffner, Christian Utzinger, Aleksandar Četković, Anna Dal Negro, Caroline Röthlin, Eva Burri, Jérôme Holbein, Nicoletta Rivetto. The following staff members are absent: Paula de Avila, Nathalie Dietrich, Lia Studerus

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