



# **International Federation of Translators**

FIT is an international federation  
of associations of translators,  
interpreters and terminologists  
gathering more than 100 associations  
from all over the world.

# **International Federation of Translators**

FIT is a strictly non-political organization of professional translators. As a non-governmental organization, FIT enjoys Category A status with UNESCO and maintains close contacts with many other international organizations.

# **International Federation of Translators**

Through its special committees, FIT endeavors to meet the needs of members throughout the world by addressing such issues as training, working conditions and recognition of the profession. The UNESCO Recommendation on the Protection and Improvement of the Legal and Social Status of Translations and Translators, adopted in Nairobi in 1976, is a milestone in the history of FIT.

# Legal Translation and Court Interpreting Committee

## **Mandate:**

- To organize international meetings as a platform for legal translators and court interpreters to meet and exchange opinions and experiences;
- To participate in international projects concerning LTCI;
- To assist national associations in implementing their public tasks;
- To contribute to promoting the professional status of legal translators and court interpreters;
- To ensure adequate dissemination of information about legal translation and court interpreting.

# Criteria applied to court interpreters:

- language competencies  
(mother tongue, working language(s))
- interpreting competencies
- translation competencies
- legal and terminological competencies
- cultural competencies
- code of ethics  
(impartiality, confidentiality, complete rendering)

# **EULITA – European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association**

The EULITA-project aims to establish by the end of 2009 an international non-profit **European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association**.

EULITA is committed to promote the quality of justice, ensuring access to justice across languages and cultures and thus, ultimately, guaranteeing the fundamental principles of human rights as enshrined in the European Convention of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

# **EULITA – European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association**

EULITA aims to bring together in its membership as full members the professional associations of legal interpreters and translators in the EU Member States, the general associations that include legal interpreters and translators among their membership, and individual legal interpreters and translators from Member States where such associations have as yet not been established. As associate members EULITA welcomes all interested institutions and individuals that are committed to the improvement of quality in legal interpreting and translation.

# **EULITA – European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association**

EULITA intends to strengthen and to represent the interests and concerns of the associations and their members vis-à-vis national, European and international organisations and institutions, to promote the establishment of national associations in member states where as yet they do not exist, and to encourage the establishment of national and EU-wide registers of qualified legal interpreters and translators, while at all times respecting the diversity of judicial systems and cultures.



# **EULITA – European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association**

EULITA is further committed to promote quality in legal interpreting and translation through the recognition of the professional status of legal interpreters and translators, the exchange of information and best practices in training and continuous professional development and the organization of events on issues such as training, research, professionalism, etc. thus promoting judicial cooperation and mutual trust by the member states in each other's systems of legal interpreting and translation.

# **EULITA – European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association**

EULITA, finally, aims to promote cooperation and best practices in working arrangements with the legal services and other legal professionals.

# **EULITA – European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association**

## **'Aspects of Legal Interpreting and Translation'**

This conference takes place at  
**Lessius University College**  
in Antwerp, Belgium,  
from **26 to 28 November 2009.**

## Definition:

The term “legal interpreter / legal translator” is more inclusive than e.g. “court interpreter” → refers to one setting only, or “sworn interpreter” → refers to a specific stage in the profession, and is not as broad as “public-service interpreter” → also covers other domains as health and social services.

## **Definition:**

### **Legal interpreting / legal translation**

includes all settings in the legal services, from police and customs investigations, pre-trial hearings or lawyer-client meetings, to trials, post-trial procedures, immigration hearings, EAW proceedings, rogatory commissions, etc.

# Draft Proposal: Framework Decision on Translation and Interpretation

- Reference to Reflection Forum on Multilingualism and Interpreter Training
- No mention of legal interpreters and translators
- Article 5: Quality of I & T:  
..... “MS shall offer training to judges, lawyers and other relevant court personnel in order to ensure the suspect’s ability to understand the proceedings.”

# **Draft Proposal: Framework Decision on Translation and Interpretation**

## **- Support of Reflection Forum recommendation:**

“To the benefit of all interested parties, official registration of all qualified legal interpreters is highly recommended. Registration allows the clients to find the interpreter who best corresponds to their needs and gives the legal interpreters an optimal chance to find employment in line with their particular specialisation and location. A well thought out and regularly updated national register, administered by a national body, is the most adequate instrument for a search when the assistance of a legal interpreter is required.

# **Draft Proposal: Framework Decision on Translation and Interpretation**

.....

Admittance to the register, i.e. 'registration', may take place as soon as the legal interpreter has passed the assessment tests and the accredited institute has authorised the result. Registration implies that interpreters have to abide by the Professional Code of Conduct. Member States may consider to limit registration in time, e.g. for periods of five years, making extension of the registration dependent on attested CPD or other quality assurance or monitoring systems.



# **Draft Proposal: Framework Decision on Translation and Interpretation**

It is recommended to make registration mandatory, which means that legal interpreters who are not registered in the national register cannot work for the legal services and that vice versa the legal services are obliged to use only registered legal interpreters.

It is furthermore recommended to consider e-linking all the national registers into a European network. This would be of help when a legal interpreter moves to another country or is needed in another Member State for a rare language or specialisation.”

**Proposal for a Resolution of  
the Council and of the Governments of the  
Member States meeting within the Council  
fostering the implementation by Member States  
of the right to interpretation and to translation  
in criminal proceedings**

- contains these recommendations and will hopefully be adopted and implemented.**

## Conclusions:

- slow process of recognition for court interpreting and legal translation (EU Justice Forum, EU Reflection Forum on Multilingualism and Interpreter Training; gradual improvement of national laws)
- more cooperation with national authorities and other stakeholders needed
- closer contacts of court-interpreters associations necessary to develop synergies

**Thank you for your attention!**

Dipl. Dolm. Liese Katschinka

FIT Committee for Court Interpreting and Legal Translation

liese-katschinka@speed.at

[www.fit-ift.org](http://www.fit-ift.org)