

ENPSIT NEWSLETTER

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR PUBLIC SERVICE INTERPRETING & TRANSLATION

Dear ENPSIT member and sympathiser

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In an autumn meeting in Brussels ten years ago a contagiously enthusiastic coalition of PSIT providers, practitioners, trainers and researchers had started plotting to band together in order to put PSIT concerns on political and societal agendas. In April 2014 this would lead to the inaugural General Assembly of the European Network for Public Service Interpreting and Translation, an association with one of the most challenging acronyms in history.

In these past ten years ENPSIT has become a central actor on the European PSIT scene, engaging with public, private and non-profit stakeholders from all over the continent and at all possible levels of decision-making and practice to listen, learn, teach, convince, support, connect, broker and cement relations... In short, ENPSIT forges, maintains and expands a network of people and organisations working towards one goal: ensure that public services can reach everyone who needs them, regardless of their language or cultural backgrounds.

As political and institutional agendas may be volatile, a strong association with a consistent focus is of vital importance as a constant call to action. At the same time, we have also come to realise over the years that we too can instigate change with our boots on the ground, through projects such as MHealth4All and EU-WEBPSI, which can offer authorities off-the-shelf solutions that require relatively little effort for them to implement but can make a world's difference for everyone involved in daily PSIT practice.

So far, the road we have travelled together has been exciting and fruitful. What about the next ten years? Well, there is only one option: onwards and upwards!

Wishing you all the best, now and in the coming year,

Lieven Buysse
ENPSIT President

IN THIS NEWSLETTER

WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

INDIALOG4 - LOOKING BACK & FORWARD

ENPSIT & PROJECTS

PSIT IN THE NEWS

USEFUL RESOURCES

CALL FOR PAPERS & CONTRIBUTIONS

CONTRIBUTE



InDialog 4: looking back & forward

On 18 and 19 September Ghent University hosted the fourth edition of ENPSIT's InDialog Conference, which aims to bring together academics, practitioners and trainers active in the field of Public Service Interpreting and Translation (PSIT). InDialog 4's central theme was "multiplicity", which was very well reflected in the choice of three keynote speakers, each of whom contributed a unique and intriguing perspective. Ineke Crezee (Auckland University of Technology) kicked off the conference with a keynote on education and training; Hans Verrept (Belgian Federal Health Service) brought in the public health perspective from the practitioners' side of the spectrum, and Laura Smith-Khan (University of Technology Sydney) focused on multilingualism and interpreting in the context of law and migration. InDialog 4 welcomed some 180 participants, who gathered around a total of 59 paper presentations, 5 panels, and a keen selection of posters. Topics ranged from the ethics of machine interpreting, over crisis interpreting in war contexts, to the challenges interpreters and service providers face when working remotely, working with minors, or working in sensitive contexts (such as abortion centres or asylum and reception settings). Also the past, present and future of PSIT agencies were discussed at length, as were the challenges that trainers and agencies are currently facing and – importantly – the solutions they put forward. [See also some pictures and nice memories here!](#)

We are still looking for a partner to host InDialog 5. The InDialog Conference series is a travelling event that can be hosted by ENPSIT member organisations. The next edition is planned in 2026. Expressions of interest can be sent to Lieven.Buysse@kuleuven.be

ENPSIT's involvement in research projects

As you all now probably know, ENPSIT is a partner in two research projects, *MHEALTH4ALL* and *EU-WEBPSI*. Both are now running on full speed. A brief update!

MHEALTH4ALL: update on the fall symposium



As part of the MHealth4All project, the Amsterdam Center for Health Communication (ACHC) hosted its fall symposium, “**Communication for Mental Health(s): Promoting Inclusion and Diversity**” on November 24, 2023. The event, chaired by Barbara Schouten and Gian Hernandez, was a pivotal moment at the intersection of mental health and linguistic and cultural diversity. Central was the presentation of groundbreaking findings from the research project **Mental Health 4 All**, addressing barriers faced by refugees and migrants. Tailored for healthcare professionals and scholars, the symposium aimed to empower mental health professionals with strategies for delivering effective care to individuals from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. The symposium saw a diverse gathering of over sixty in-person attendees, with an additional forty participants joining online. True to its commitment to **accessibility**, the event was free of charge and fully bilingual, welcoming Dutch- and English-speaking attendees. High-quality interpretation services ensured language was not a barrier to accessing invaluable knowledge.

ENPSIT's involvement in research projects

EU-WEBPSI: update



The past year has been a busy one for ENPSIT and partners in the EU-WEBPSI Project. Following the September 2022 kick-off meeting in Brussels, they reconvened in Ghent last September to assess a year of online collaboration and to plan ahead.

The first milestone involved conducting a **baseline study** examining existing PSI standards, training, and provision. The study also addressed challenges in video-remote interpreting and languages of lesser diffusion (LLDs), including language support needs in asylum and reception operations. Based on the study's findings, **minimum standards for PSI professional practice** (covering competence, training, and certification) were developed for public service interpreting, video-mediated interpreting, and LLDs at a European level. The baseline study and the minimum standards are available on the project website.

The partners are moving with the creation of **eight train-the-trainer modules**, guiding users in implementing the standards. Additionally, an **innovative EU-wide portal** will be developed and tested: it will host training materials and facilitate the provision of video-remote interpreting services. Preparations are also underway to **train 60 participants as video-remote interpreters** in asylum settings, further advancing the project's objectives.

For the latest EU-WEBPSI news, please bookmark the project website: <https://www.webpsi.eu/>

PSIT in the news

File on 4: Lost in Translation

On November 21, 2023 the radio programme ‘**Lost in Translation**’ was broadcast in the UK in the current affairs documentary series *File on 4*. This was a rare occasion to put Public Service Interpreting in the public eye; *File on 4* is a mainstream investigative journalism programme broadcast on the national British radio station BBC Radio 4.

The documentary recounts a familiar story of a lack of interpreting provision, low standards and the steady loss of professional interpreters due to low rates of pay. More shocking was the finding that over the past 5 years at least 80 babies died or suffered serious brain injuries in NHS maternity units in England, where interpreting and communication problems due to language difficulties, were a contributing factor.

Generally, PSIT only appears on the news agenda in the UK in terms of the cost it represents to judicial and healthcare budgets. Unlike in other media appearances of PSIT, the focus was not the burden of PSIT on the public purse, but rather the critical role played by PSIT in public services and the dire consequences of failures in its provision. [More info here](#).

PSIT in the news

Bridging Communication Gaps During War: Bar-Ilan University's Remote Interpreting Service

Amidst the turmoil following the terrorist attack on Israel on October 7 and the outbreak of the ensuing war, Bar-Ilan University's Department of Translation and Interpreting Studies launched a voluntary remote interpreting service. Available in 11 languages and staffed by professional interpreters, many of whom are the department's lecturers and graduates, the initiative aimed to address the pressing language barriers faced by many linguistic and ethnic minorities in Israel, including migrant workers and asylum seekers – helping to make information accessible regarding missing people, evacuation and compensation services, legal support, health issues and more. Recognizing the needs of the Thai community whose members were kidnapped, wounded or murdered, the staff involved in the project also conducted intensive training sessions for untrained Hebrew-Thai bilinguals. The efforts went beyond mere provision and also included promoting services to emergency public sectors and contributing to parliamentary discussions on language accessibility in times of war. Operating voluntarily for seven weeks, the demand grew notably, predominantly for interpreting services in Russian. However, it was impossible to sustain the service on a voluntary basis in the long run. Despite attempts to secure funding from the government and philanthropic sources, the service had to be discontinued. Driving forces behind the project, Dr. Michal Schuster, Dr. Tanya Voinova, Dr. Galia Hirsch, Dr. Omri Asscher and Mr. Avishay Gerczuk, hope that authorities will rely on their model for comprehensive language services in the future - in crisis situations and peaceful times alike.

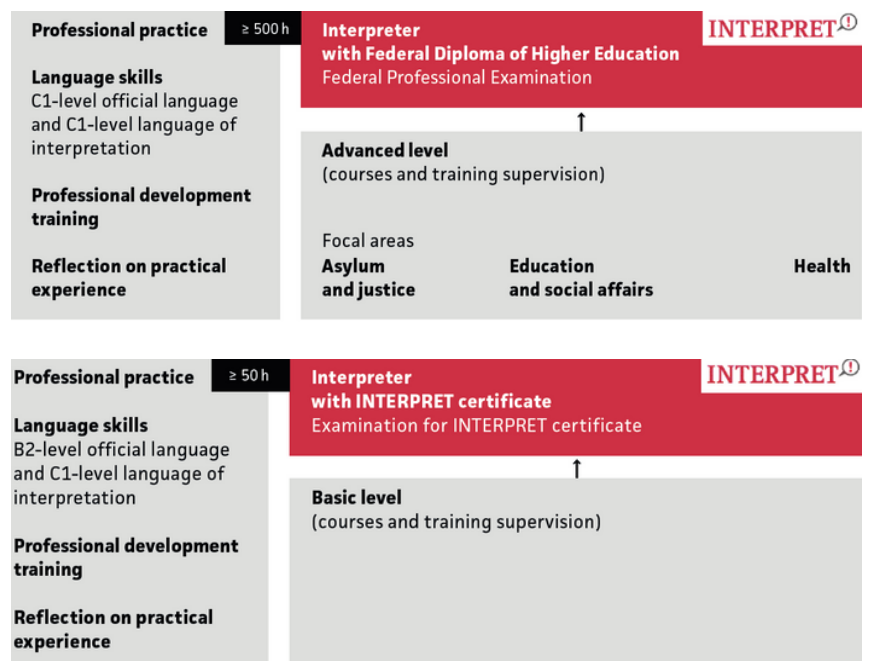
Useful resources

INTERPRET qualification system

Switzerland has a two-tier qualification system for public service interpreters that is recognised by clients and interpreting services alike. It is currently being further developed in order to continue to meet the current needs of society, authorities and the labour market. The qualification system now includes interpreting in the focal areas of health, education and social affairs as well as interpreting in the asylum and justice sectors. In addition, telephone and video interpreting are given greater emphasis. The Swiss Association for Intercultural Interpreting and Facilitation INTERPRET, which is responsible for the qualification system, provides educational institutions wishing to offer interpreting courses with recommendations for the design and organisation of interpreting courses in German, French and Italian, [see here](#).

Anchoring and financing the new system in multilingual, federalist Switzerland remains a challenge. However, the goal remains the same: to guarantee high-quality interpreting services and thus contribute to fair procedures and equal access to public services. For more information, see the INTERPRET homepage or its [newsletter](#).

INTERPRET qualification system



Welcome to new members

We are very happy to welcome 3 new institutional members and 1 individual one!

We asked them to present themselves:

Bhaasha Sàrl is the largest community interpreting platform in Switzerland. It offers community interpreting services along with its partners and cantonal governments to hospitals, asylum centres, schools, and other institutions throughout Switzerland and parts of Germany. Bhaasha technologies include an interpreting platform which allows the booking and the end-to-end management of community interpreting services by video, telephone and face-to-face. Its focus is on improving technologies and IT tools to enable highly efficient access to interpreters and also on the efficient training of interpreters to be highly skilled and capable on the job.

Le Monde des Possibles - The interpreting service offered by Le Monde des Possibles is active in the Belgian city of Liège and the surrounding area. Since 2014, it has been involved in recognising migrants' language skills and developing training courses for future interpreters in public service settings (the Univerbal project). The aim is to enable everyone to express themselves in a language that they know and understand, so that front-line operators and users can communicate as effectively as possible.

INTERPRET is the national association for community interpreting and intercultural facilitation in Switzerland. As such, it brings together and represents the key players in community interpreting and intercultural facilitation: practitioners, regional interpreter agencies, and regional training institutes. The INTERPRET qualification system for interpreters, successfully established more than 15 years ago, is part of the Swiss higher professional education and training system. The INTERPRET Certificate represents the basic qualification for community interpreters and is recognised as such all over Switzerland. As competence centre for community interpreting in Switzerland, INTERPRET also gathers information about movements and trends in the market and supports various players in the fields of social welfare, economics, science, and politics with its expertise.

Jekaterina Maadla holds an MA in Conference Interpreting (with Estonian, Russian and English as working languages), an MA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language from Tallinn University, and is currently preparing a PhD in Studies of Cultures. Her research focuses on sociologically oriented translation studies, specifically interpreter-mediated communication in crisis settings (under the supervision of Dr. Tanya Escudero and Prof. Simo Mättää). She has also been working as an interpreter for various public and private Estonian institutions for more than ten years, and has trained conference and public service interpreters at Tallinn University for four years.

Survey on language services & IA

Language services are undergoing a transformation with the integration of Artificial Intelligence. Your voice – regardless of whether you work with interpreters, utilize their important services, or are an interpreter or translator yourself – is crucial in shaping the safe and fair use of AI in these services. [Fill in the survey here](#) before January 12, 2024.

Call for contributions

The Interpreter's Newsletter - issue 29 (2024)

Editors **Simo Määttä** (University of Helsinki) and **Marc Orlando** (Macquarie University) welcome **submissions** that contribute to describing the interpreting activity in all the situational contexts in which it is required, by using either traditional or innovative analytical methodologies. Deadline for **manuscript submissions** is March 30, 2024. [The call for contributions can be downloaded here.](#)

CIUTI International Conference 2024 - Reshaping the T&I Paradigm: Openness and Integration.

The next **CIUTI International Conference** will take place on 28-29 May, 2024 in Shanghai, China. Shanghai International Studies University (SISU) welcomes your abstracts for papers and also proposals for panels and roundtables. Deadline is January 15, 2024. You can download the [call for abstracts here](#).

Call for proposals for future webinars

Your positive feedback after the first three ENPSIT webinars in 2022 and 2023 was very motivating. Any ideas or proposals? Please contact the ENPSIT President Lieven Buysse at Lieven.Buysse@kuleuven.be. Let's continue building an inspiring series of webinars from and for the ENPSIT community and beyond!

Contribute to the ENPSIT repository

ENPSIT, as a European network, is continuously gathering PSIT-relevant information for every European country. This repository contains documents issued by agencies and governments about interpreting and translation in legal settings, healthcare, welfare, employment, migration, etc. You are welcome to share documents about your country. We hope to include documents from all countries, and specifically welcome documents in less shared languages, about countries such as Hungary, Poland, Latvia, Greece, etc. The website has a contact sheet through which you can obtain a free login. If you have questions, do not hesitate to contact: leodoria@gmail.com

News for us?

Any PSIT-related initiatives, activities, conference announcements, collaboration opportunities, or other relevant information you would like to share with us? Do not hesitate to send in your contributions for the next quarterly newsletter: july.dewilde@ugent.be