Implementation of Euramis in DG TRAD

What is Euramis?

Euramis is a system of databases or memories (and associated tools) fed by the various institutions jointly (Legis-Process) or individually (see pie chart below). It acts as a multilingual, multidirectional repository of clearly labelled equivalent phrases ("segments") belonging to official EU documents allowing their re-use in translation in all European Institutions.

Interinstitutional cooperation

Euramis is a shining example of interinstitutional cooperation. It was created by the Commission in 1995 following a call for tenders. The European Parliament joined the Euramis project in 2006. Physically hosted by the Commission, all Institutions contribute to the central memory and share the maintenance and development costs.

The Euramis central memory reached 176 million segments on 1 June 2010. Despite having only joined the project in 2006, Parliament already accounts for approximately 17% of the total.
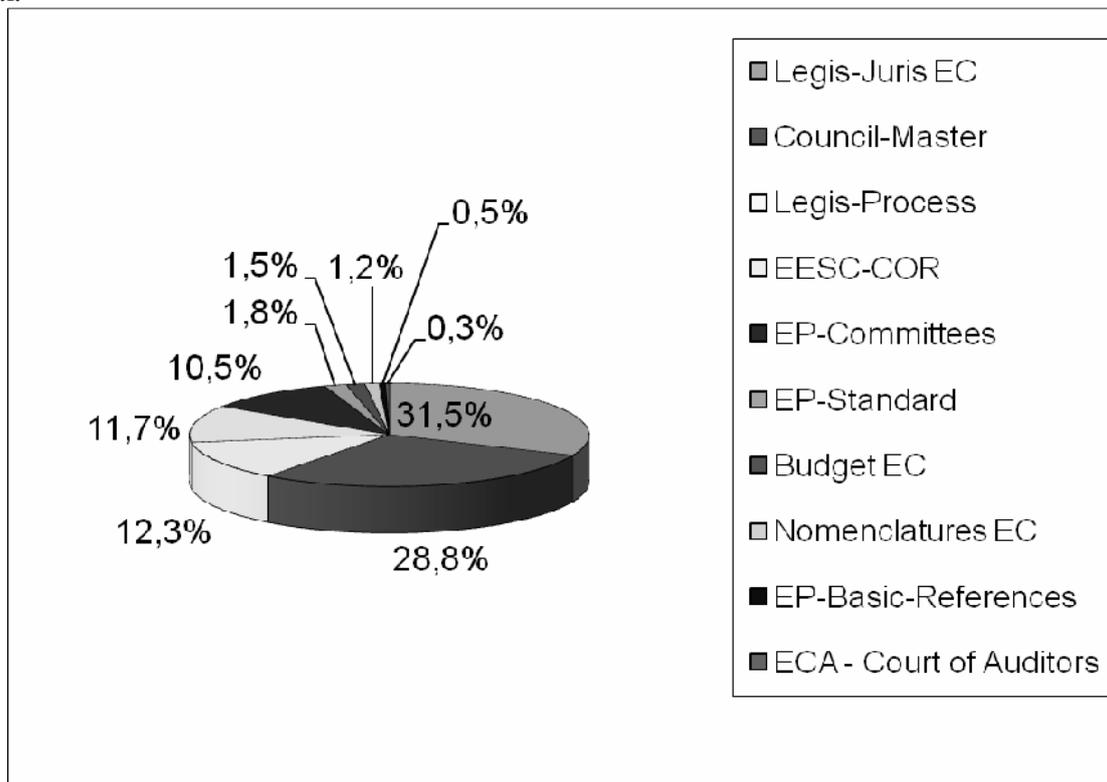
Euramis memories content - Share by June 2010

Why use Euramis?

The systematic use of Euramis in translation allows for
- improved quality and linguistic consistency,
- reliable terminological searches, and
- a highly efficient re-use of already translated sentences (both at institutional and interinstitutional level),

Implementation strategy

The implementation strategy is based on four pillars:
- Provision of training and support to users
- Setting of upload targets
- Establishment of safe working protocols
- Ensuring the automation of as many Euramis-related processes as possible

As far as training is concerned, courses, briefings and presentations organised by DG TRAD have ensured a wide acceptance of Euramis. Training also covered Translators' Workbench, a translation memory application. It must be acknowledged, however, that this effort also has limits insofar as some older translators and assistants have difficulty in acquiring the requisite IT skills and, in the case of translators, typing proficiency (voice recognition not being available/usable in all cases).

The setting of upload targets has proved to be a successful strategy. Two have been achieved so far: all legislative documents (November 2008) and all committee documents (November 2009). Uploads are monitored on a daily basis, and the corresponding monthly scoreboards can be checked online.

The following graph shows the dramatic growth of Parliament's main database since 2006:
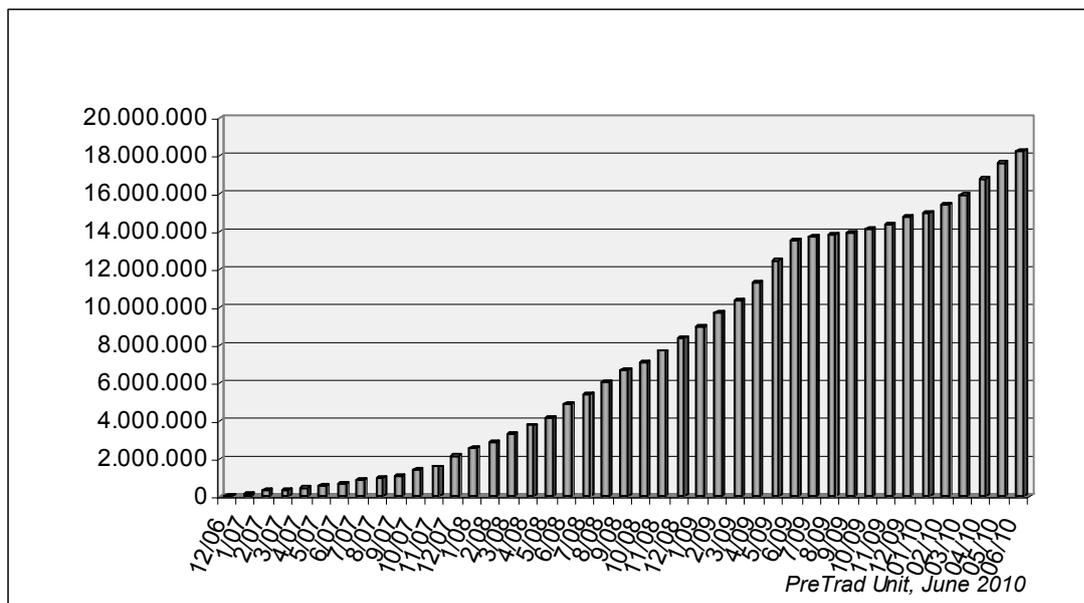
Segments in the EP-Committees database

At an early stage of the implementation process, it became apparent that there was a need for protocols describing all the necessary steps for reliably producing a translation within the Euramis workflow. More than 70 different protocols corresponding to different document types and procedures have been described so far. In the autumn of 2009 they were made mandatory for all committee and session documents translated with the help of Euramis. They also provide the blueprint for the ongoing automation.

Current state of play

In 2009, the importance of Euramis was explicitly recognised in the Secretary-General's Administrative Work Programme.

In May 2010 a pilot project for outsourcing pre-treated texts was launched. For the time being only a very limited number of document types are covered – multilingual documents, written questions, fact sheets and minutes are still excluded. The expected benefits are (a) boosting the quality and consistency of external translations and (b) making economies in the long term.

It is still too early to draw conclusions on savings. Whereas the potential re-use is relatively high for legislative documents, outsourced documents usually belong to categories where re-use is substantially lower.

Automation of the Euramis workflow (SPA) has made impressive progress during 2010 and was instrumental for launching the external translations project.

Obstacles to full automation

In addition to the technical and organisational challenges mentioned in the previous section, automation faces a number of obstacles both at interinstitutional and institutional level such as:
- the complexities of the interinstitutional workflow;
- a normative maze (+- 200 document models) within the EP;
- multilingual originals (huge AM batches which have to be split and reassembled 22 times at every step of the way), imposing enormously complicated working methods on the language units;
- lack of proper metadata on translation requests (poor referencing of originals).

Budgetary aspects

The Euramis budgetary line is 01420-03.

European Parliament contribution

The interinstitutional financial agreement foresees a 20% share for the European Parliament.

Indicators

As of today, statistical data on the savings resulting from the use of Euramis are not yet available for the European institutions. However, the institutions have recently agreed on a number of key indicators and they expect that accurate data will soon be available. Agreement has yet to be reached concerning the precise calculation of retrieval and re-use rates.

Euramis Budget Execution 2006 to 2008

	2006	**2007**	**2008**
TOTAL DEVELOPMENT	143 600	220 000	183 922

Euramis Budget Forecast 2011 to 2014

Items	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**2014**
Servers	267 340,00	287 630,00	307 930,00	328.220,00
Staffing	420 000,00	428 400,00	436 968,00	445 707,36
TOTAL	687 340,00	716 030,00	744 898,00	773 927,36