



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

BRUSSELS, 11/06/2010

GENERAL BUDGET - 2010
SECTION III - COMMISSION TITLE 31

TRANSFER OF APPROPRIATIONS N° **DEC 23/2010**

EUR

FROM

CHAPTER - 40 01 RESERVES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE

ITEM 40 01 40 - 31 01 07 01 Translation expenditure

Non-Diff.

- 775 000

TO

CHAPTER - 3101 Administrative expenditure of 'Language services' policy area

ITEM - 31 01 07 01 Translation expenditure

Non-Diff.

775 000

INTRODUCTION

The budgetary authority created an Institution-wide cross-cutting reserve in the field of translation services. That reserve can be released when the Institutions present a new, improved Code of Conduct, currently purely voluntary, for cooperation that demonstrates tangible efficiency gains and further sharing of free capacities, thus reducing overall costs and dependence on external translations and also ensures that unnecessary (“parallel”) translation work is avoided.

The Institutions asked the Inter-institutional Committee for Translation and Interpretation (ICTI) to assure the necessary coordination works. The attached ICTI document, ECT 10/26 final of 11 May 2010, contains the Institutions' common response to the conditions set by the budgetary authority to get the reserve imposed on each Institution individually lifted.

Based on this document, the Commission considers that it meets the conditions for the release of the reserve and therefore asks the budgetary authority to approve the attached transfer of appropriations.

I. INCREASE

a) Heading

31 01 07 01 – Translation expenditure

b) Figures at 01/06/2010

	Non-Diff.
1A. Appropriation in budget (initial budget + AB)	14 725 000
1B. Appropriation in budget (EFTA)	0
2. Transfers	0
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3. Final appropriation for the year (1A+1B+2)	14 725 000
4. Utilisation of final appropriation	9 236 300
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5. Amount not used/available (3-4)	5 488 700
6. Requirements up to year-end	6 263 700
7. Increase proposed	775 000
8. Increase as percentage of appropriation in budget (7/1A)	5.26%
9. Increase, as a percentage of the final appropriation for the year, in the sum of transfers referred to in Article 23(1)(b) and (c) of the Financial Regulation, calculated in accordance with Article 17a of the implementing rules	n/a

c) Receipts arising from recovery (carried over) (C5)

	Non-Diff.
1. Appropriation available at start of year	2 115 308
2. Appropriation available on the 01/06/2010	0
3. Rate of utilisation [(1-2)/1]	100.00%

d) Detailed grounds for the increase

See introduction.

II. DECREASE

a) Heading

40 01 - RESERVES FOR ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENDITURE - Item 31 01 07 01 – Translation expenditure

b) Figures at 31/05/2010

	Non-Diff.
1A. Appropriation in budget (initial budget + AB)	775 000
1B. Appropriation in budget (EFTA)	0
2. Transfers	0
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3. Final appropriation for the year (1A+1B+2)	775 000
4. Utilisation of final appropriation	0
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5. Amount not used/available (3-4)	775 000
6. Requirements up to year-end (*)	0
7. Proposed decrease	775 000
8. Decrease as percentage of appropriation in budget (7/1A)	100.00%
9. Decrease, as a percentage of the final appropriation for the year, in the sum of transfers referred to in Article 23(1)(b) and (c) of the Financial Regulation, calculated in accordance with Article 17a of the implementing rules	n/a
(*) Not relevant for a provisions line or reserve line	

c) Receipts arising from recovery (carried over) (C5)

	Non-Diff.
1. Appropriation available at start of year	n.a.
2. Appropriation available on the 31/05/2010	0
3. Rate of utilisation [(1-2)/1]	n.a.

d) Detail grounds for the transfer

See introduction.

**Note from the translation services of the EU Institutions in connection
with the cross-cutting reserve for external translation services
established for the financial year 2010**

- In its resolution on the 2010 draft budget (C7-0128/2009) the European Parliament asked that the current arrangements in place for the sharing of internal translation resources between the translation services of the Institutions be re-negotiated, and introduced a cross-cutting reserve of 5% for external translation services to be released on presentation to the budget authority of a concrete proposal for a system of internal resource sharing. Following some further contacts between the translation services and the European Parliament, it has been explained that the request is inspired by the recommendations of the 2006 special report of the Court of Auditors on translation expenditure incurred by the Commission, the Parliament and the Council.
- The present note is a response from the translation services of the European Institutions to this request.
- The EP resolution explicitly refers to inter-institutional workload balancing (WLB) as a tool for cutting outsourcing costs. However it is to be noted that the situation of the translation services of the EU institutions is no longer the same as it was in 2003, when this system of exchanging translation work between institutions on the basis of spare capacity was developed.
- Since then, and in only seven years, two EU enlargements have taken place, the number of official languages has doubled and translation demand has considerably increased in most Institutions (40% on average), while staffing levels have been drastically reduced or kept stable. The number of pages exchanged in the WLB system in the last three years suggests that greater savings and synergies are to be obtained from other instances of inter-institutional cooperation.
- While it is a fact that the Institutions do not currently have the capacity to process large quantities of documents for other Institutions (and the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty is sure to increase internal translation demand further), the ICTI working group on WLB has identified a number of measures that, by addressing weaknesses in the operation of the current system, could increase to a certain extent its efficiency even if the global WLB gain in relation to total production cannot but remain limited. Further details on the current WLB situation and a way forward are explained in Annex II.
- Through the Inter-institutional Committee for Translation and Interpretation (ICTI) the language services have, since the Court of Auditors' report, developed a large number of actions and activities to reinforce their cooperation. The guiding principle of this cooperation has been to concentrate efforts on actions that bring an added value when carried out inter-institutionally.
- These activities currently include:
 - Exchanges of staff
 - Sharing of documentary resources and knowledge through the use of common tools in the areas, i.a., of:
 - terminology (IATE)
 - translation memories (Euramis)
 - document-specific information (ELISE)
 - documentary meta-searching (QUEST)
 - Sharing efforts in the human resources area by:
 - contributing to the work of EPSO
 - cooperating on staff training
 - developing common activities aimed at awareness raising actions among potential candidates to translator posts
 - Actions aiming at optimising:
 - outsourcing
 - ICT development

- ICTI continues to further develop its current activities and scout new areas and cover new needs. For example, new areas for inter-institutional cooperation and resource sharing are being opened up by the Lisbon Treaty: with a significantly higher number of co-decision acts, finding new synergies between the Institutions involved in the co-decision procedure will be an important factor for a cost-efficient use of resources. The ICTI's Executive Committee on Translation has already adopted concrete recommendations aiming to create a more efficient workflow and avoid work duplication. Actions include the use of existing ICT tools to share information between translators across the institutions and extended inter-institutional cooperation in the area of quality by establishing a network of contact points for quality issues.
- A number of accomplished and ongoing cooperation initiatives are mentioned in Annex I.

The translation services of the Institutions would ask the European Parliament to take all the above into consideration with a view to releasing the reserve for external translation services established for the financial year 2010.

Encl. Annex 1: A synthesized inventory of inter-institutional resource-sharing and cooperation
 Annex 2: The workload balancing scheme – current situation and way forward

A SYNTHESIZED INVENTORY OF INTER-INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCE-SHARING AND COOPERATION

The inventory below provides a global and summarized overview of the existing inter-institutional resource-sharing and cooperation activities in the field of translation. In spite of the fact that each language service has to comply with the specific mission of its institution within the inter-institutional legislative sequence in the decision-making process as determined in the Treaties and each service therefore has its own role to play and tasks to fulfil, it must be said that considerable synergies are being achieved thanks to these activities.

AREA: TRANSLATION PROCESS

- **Staff exchanges:** the current system comprises reciprocal exchanges of translators, organised twice a year on the basis of calls for expression of interest, for a period of four months between the European Parliament and the European Commission in Luxembourg and between the Council, the European Commission and the Committees in Brussels. A programme for exchange of staff is currently applied for lawyer linguists from the Court of Justice and the European Central Bank. Sharing of best practices, an insight into the working methods of other services for exchanged staff and increased mutual trust and understanding are the most important benefits from this scheme, which presents very limited administrative costs and allows to accelerate work and to further improve consistency and quality.
- **Sharing know-how and documentation:** Institutions financially contribute, based on a pre-agreed distribution key, to the costs of operating and developing large common databases used in the translation process, thus contributing to greater consistency and improved quality.

IATE terminology database: IATE is an inter-institutional tool designed for the collection, dissemination and shared management of EU-specific terminology. With a view to avoiding duplication of efforts and enhancing harmonisation, all of the previously existing and individually managed terminology databases of the EU's translation services (Euterpe, Eurodicautom, TIS, ...) were merged into this single new, highly interactive and accessible inter-institutional database in which terminology in all languages created by individual Institutions is made available to the other Institutions and to the general public, thus avoiding duplication of both the creation of terminology and terminology research.

In 2009, there were **6.2 million consultations by officials** of the EU Institutions. More than **77 000 terms were added**, leading to a total of more than 9 million terms at the end of the year. IATE was consulted 72.3 million times by the public in general (up from 45.7 million in 2007).

EURAMIS translation memories: EURAMIS is a common translation memory database which is constantly fed with segments of translation memories from the various Institutions. It allows for the best possible re-use of the existing translations across the Institutions, thus avoiding duplication of translation effort, and ensures text concordance.

This means today that **2 301 retrievals** from the translation memories are taking place **every day**. 362.5 million segments are currently stocked in the database. 181 000 documents were added in 2009.

ELISE knowledge-sharing database: developed and fully financed by the European Commission with a view to sharing information linked to specific dossiers with other institutions¹, while ensuring text consistency between participants in the co-decision procedure. It prevents unnecessary and time-consuming research, as well as verification efforts by translators working on the same dossier, be it each in a different stage of the decision-making process. The statistics show an average of **3 000 term entries per year**, with an average of **25 entries per co-decision procedure**. With the increasing number of co-decision procedures resulting from the Lisbon Treaty, efforts will be deployed to ensure more intensive use of ELISE.

QUEST metasearch tool: this tool allows translators to save a substantial amount of time by making the most of their terminology and documentary searches in one go, thus increasing availability for production.

¹ Terminological choices, consultations of experts, reference documents, etc.

Sharing results of internal IT development plus reference material and pre-processing documents: Institutions exchange **daily a large amount of reference documents**, including pre-processed files, alignments, and actual documents among translators to avoid duplicating efforts in other Institutions. The translation services share the results of internal technological innovations such as for instance the EESC-CoR Web extractors, which reduce the time spent for research.

Cooperation linked to outsourcing: An inter-institutional evaluation committee (SEQ) has been jointly created to provide the Institutions' translation services with a second, independent evaluation before taking action if contractors do not comply with the necessary level of quality for translations.

AREA: ICT TOOLS

- **Computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools:** the Translator's Workbench (TWB), also known as Trados (from the name of the external developer and provider, chosen through a joint call for tenders), is the main IT translation tool currently used by all the translation services, drawing from the translation memories stocked in Euramis. The contract with Trados approaching expiry, a new joint call for tenders has been launched. Introduced in 1999-2000, its utilization rate has been constantly growing (to reach soon 100%), thus further rationalizing and modernizing translation proper. Thanks to TWB the consistency of translations has considerably improved.

- **Other cooperation in the field of Technology:**
 - Machine translation (ECMT): developed and financed by the European Commission, this tool is accessible to all the EU Institutions. The Commission and the European Parliament are currently testing more modern machine translation systems that would allow to cover all language combinations.
 - Language Technology Watch network: created by ICTI's Translation Executive Committee at the end of 2009 to further increase cooperation in the field of language technology and share knowledge about new tools, thus allowing economies of scale in the development and procurement of new IT technologies. All translation services participate in the network.

AREA: HUMAN RESOURCES

- **Cooperation in the framework of recruitment (capacity building):**
 - 1) Cooperation with EPSO: It covers the participation of most translation services in:
 - The development of EPSO pre-selection tests and design of new competitions for translators.
 - The Assessment Centre working group preparing the testing in the Assessment Centre.
 - The 23 language committees on the creation of a database with translation tests.
 - The 23 language committees on evaluation of reading comprehension tests for translators.
 - The working group on marking.

While no quantified statistics exist on the number of working days contributed by the Institutions to the abovementioned activities, EPSO has been able to provide data on:

- Participation of officials of the translation services in the EPSO selection panels (juries) as jury members and assessors → In the period 2003-2009, the translators provided by the Institutions for juries in EPSO competitions amounted to a total of **250**, who invested in this a total of **3 250** working days.
- Participation of officials of translation services in the marking/correction of linguistic tests carried out in the framework of linguistic and other competitions. → In the period 2003-2009, the number of written tests corrected amounted to a total of **5 791**, which represented a total of **489** working days.

For the recruitment of lawyer linguists, the translation service of the Court of justice cooperates with the Parliament and the Council for the organization of the next EPSO competitions. An EPSO assessment centre will be organized in Luxembourg on the premises of the Court of justice and three lawyer linguists have been put to the disposal of EPSO for inter-institutional lawyer linguist competitions.

The cooperation with EPSO is essential to ensure that the selection procedures correspond to the needs of the services and that all official languages can be covered without requiring that EPSO is heavily staffed with experienced linguists.

2) Awareness-raising among potential candidates to become translators: The translation services of the different Institutions actively participate in a series of programmes and schemes intended to disseminate information in the academic world and national Institutions on the translator career opportunities in the EU Institutions and to draw the best potential candidates:

- Visiting Translators Scheme (VTS): organized since 2004 by the European Commission.
- The European Master's in Translation (EMT) Network launched in 2009 by the DGT (European Commission) aiming at ensuring high quality university education corresponding to the needs of the institutions, the Member States and their organisations and industry.
- Coordinated participation in language fairs organised in Member States (a working group was set up by ICTI at the end of 2009).
- Visits to Member States or to applicant countries where delegations of the translation services representing all Institutions participate.
- Joint inter-institutional participation in the European Day of Languages.

- **Training and lifelong learning (capacity building):**

- Several Institutions have signed an inter-institutional Memorandum of Understanding governing language learning and participation in the European Commission's language courses. The Parliament and the Council also organise language courses, open to staff of the other Institutions when there are available places. The Court of Justice, the Court of Auditors and the Translation Centre participate in the linguistic programme for the institutions based in Luxembourg and regularly organize courses open to all staff.
- Institutions systematically invite translators from other institutions to their training seminars, thus capitalising on the organisational and financial effort involved.

AREA: PROCUREMENT

- **Outsourcing**: Cooperation in this field is carried out mostly through joint inter-institutional calls for tenders, such as those organised by the European Parliament together with the CoR-EESC and the Court of Auditors, or by the Commission together with the Translation Centre. They enable important economies of scale from which small Institutions do benefit most. Besides this, work has been done by the Institutions to align the tender specifications as well as the contracts to the extent possible.
- **Joint calls for tenders for computer-aided translation tools (CAT)**: the Institutions publish joint calls for tenders for CAT tools. The most important one (currently ongoing) seeks to replace SDL Trados/TWB. A joint call for tenders reduces administrative costs and allows for technical compatibility and alignment of IT skills, and facilitates exchange of documents, translators and technical knowledge.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

- **Inter-institutional language networks**: all translation services take part actively in such networks. They ensure consistency of terminology, exchange of best practices and sharing of knowledge.
- **Cooperation in the framework of IAMLADP**, an international forum grouping international public translation services: all the linguistic services of the EU Institutions are members of IAMLADP and

its sub-bodies, task-forces (TF) and working groups (University contact group, TF on quality management, TF on the status of the Language Professions, TF on performance indicators, working group on terminology and CAT tools - JIAMCATT, etc.). Joint training ventures with the member international organisations are also organised.

It should also be noted that the European Economic and Social Committee and Committee of the Regions have a joint translation service, which is an effective method of workload balancing for two Assemblies that have a similar size and function, and which are able to balance their translation demand through the joint setting of their calendars of meetings. Also, the Council Translation Department is in a similar situation, since it serves both the Council of the EU and the European Council.

INVENTORY OF FUTURE COOPERATION ARRANGEMENTS

- Improved inter-institutional document workflow in legislative procedures: an inter-institutional working group has examined the inter-institutional document workflow in the legislative procedures resulting from the Lisbon Treaty and made recommendations aiming to ensure the high quality of the translations, the avoidance of work duplication in the Institutions and the best use of the IT tools available. These recommendations will in the coming months be implemented by the institutions concerned.
- Improved arrangements for staff exchanges: more flexible arrangements for exchanges of translators, in order to encourage greater participation, are foreseen in a pilot project to be implemented in 2010. Exchanges of non-translating staff (assistants and staff in horizontal services) with a view to exchanging best practices are also foreseen, as well as a programme of seminars/short-term study visits for managers. Sharing best practices can result in efficiency gains.
- Inter-institutional training programme for translators: It will be set up in 2010 at the initiative of the training units of the European Council and the DG Translation (European Commission), comprising all possible cooperation areas on language training and translation training.²
- Enhanced cooperation linked to outsourcing: ways for an increased cooperation between language services in the area of external translation are being explored, with a view to increasing translation quality and cost-efficiency of outsourcing. Possible joint calls for tenders in relation to the coming enlargements, a common approach for non-EU languages, facilitating full use of the early warning system in case of problems encountered with contractors or tenders, are, i.a., measures under discussion.
- Development of common performance indicators: A working group set up by ICTI's Executive Committee on Translation is currently examining the establishment of key performance indicators, common to all the translation services of the Institutions, in the areas of human and financial resources and the translation process and workflow.
- Development of a common approach to human resources needs: a reflection exercise by the translation and interpretation services of the EU Institutions is currently ongoing to address the existing difficulties for the recruitment of linguists and the needs for competence development of staff.

² First concrete steps will be to compare mutual needs and possibilities in the language training area (special language training for translators, lists of good language schools in all Member States, conversation courses, etc). The second step will concentrate on gathering needs and possibilities in the translation training area: joint workshops on revision, editing or terminology, refresher courses in translation theory and joint presentations by thematic experts.

THE WORKLOAD BALANCING SCHEME CURRENT SITUATION AND WAY FORWARD

The overall workload balancing³ between all Institutions amounted to 6 386 pages in 2007, 2 007 pages in 2008 and 7 669 pages in 2009, around 0.001% of total production.

Statistics on workload balancing 2004-2009

WLB pages translated for the other Institutions (in number of pages)							
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	TOTAL
By the E.P.		1250	3958	1894	194	2446	9742
By the Council		2495	1925	1001	677	3423	9521
By the Commission		763	3066	2087	571	1371	7858
By the CoA				896	430	262	1588
By EESC-CoR		230	267	508	135	167	1307
TOTAL		4738	9216	6386	2007	7669	30016

* Exceptional peak due to the translation in all languages of a series of texts for a Commission website on Justice and Home Affairs.

Workload balancing was introduced at a point in time, where the configuration of the different translation services was very different from the current situation. In a transition period after enlargement, the units/departments of EU15 languages were gradually downsized in some institutions and there was a general lack of staff to cope with translation into EU10 languages. Work was reorganised, where needed the size of the units/departments was adapted and some institutions introduced strict translation demand management to be able to function with smaller translation entities per language. This situation created temporary overcapacity which could partially be used in the framework of the WLB system⁴.

Today, where the former relative and structural overcapacity in certain languages no longer exists, the workload balancing can only take place where there is an occasional free capacity in one or several languages or where there is a need to help another institution solve a specific problem. Examples of specific problems could be the coverage of a given language combination, the requirement for specific subject matter knowledge or an exceptional peak. The pages translated by the Council for the Commission in 2009 constitute a good example, where joint occasional spare capacity was used efficiently to cope with an exceptional peak.

The translation services of the different institutions remain committed to using their occasional spare capacity to help other institutions and to facilitate the exchange of information and documents without resorting to major investments in new tools that would not be justified considering the current scope of workload balancing.

NEW PROCEDURES FOR WORKLOAD BALANCING

- The new Workload Balancing (WLB) arrangements are designed to be as simple, flexible and swift as possible, thus fostering and facilitating the exchange of information on translation requests.
- The Planning services of the different Institutions will regularly exchange information on foreseeable demand peaks and troughs within their respective Institutions and on specific needs for assistance.
- Given the tighter capacity and the reinforced knowledge-sharing between the Institutions currently in place, the guiding criteria for WLB should be qualitative rather than quantitative: the Planning/linguistic units should do a qualitative evaluation of the documents that lend themselves to WLB (due to their nature, languages required, etc.).

³ ICTI's Tenth Activity Report to the Secretaries-General and the Heads of Administration 2007 (CITI 2007/160 rev).

⁴ In the Council, the Language Service used its overcapacity not only for WLB but also for translating all documents from the EDPS (European Data Protection Supervisor), since it was created in 2001 until January of this year. The Council was able to offer this service because translation demands mainly concerned units with overcapacity. However, now that most of these units have reached the target staff complements for both AD and AST staff, the Council can no longer take up this extra task. Since February of this year, the EDPS sends its translation work to the CdT in Luxembourg.

POTENTIAL FURTHER FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

- If the quantity of workload balancing in future justified it, a more efficient system for the electronic exchange of documents could be developed.
- The new WLB procedures could be complemented through the improved arrangements for translation staff exchanges currently being set up.