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**‘Translation’ Working Group: Report**

**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Meeting on 12, 13 and 14 April 2016

# Translation WG

## 1. Introduction

At its April 2015 meeting, the Board of Governors decided to mandate a working group charged with reflection on and the drawing up of a proposal on the need to translate into all the languages the syllabuses and the key documents of the European School system. The working group would be expected to present its conclusions at the Board of Governors’ April 2016 meeting.

**Mandate:**

*The Working Group is invited to assess and analyse the need, to prioritise, to reflect on and to produce a proposal for arrangements for translations of the syllabuses and key documents of the European School system, taking into consideration the financial implications.*

The Translation Working Group discussed five main topics at three meetings:

1. Organisation of the general translation service of the Office of the Secretary- General
2. Translation of key documents
3. Translation of syllabuses
4. Creation of a multilingual educational glossary/thesaurus of terms for the European School system
5. Financial implications

## 2. Organisation of the translation service of the Office of the Secretary- General

At present the Office of the Secretary-General is using a platform called TRADEE to dispatch the translations required to the given number of translators. The Oracle-based IT platform is reaching the end of its life cycle, and it needs to be replaced without delay.

The OSG received a recommendation from the auditors that it should issue a call for tenders or sign a service level agreement as a replacement for current translation practices.

The Translation Working Group was informed about the development of the negotiations between the Secretary-General and the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union.

Should the service level agreement be signed, it will have a major impact on the current procedures and practices in many areas:

1. Schedules and deadlines: translation practices would need to be rethought (slow, urgent and very urgent requests) and the deadlines for document delivery for meetings would need to be extended.
2. Organisation of meetings: the timing, especially of the Pedagogical Meetings, would need to be rethought.
3. Layout and practices: standardised templates and formats for various documents would need to be created. If the preparatory committees do not propose any changes to the documents, the opinion of the various committees could be found on the front page of the document, and the document could remain untouched throughout the process.
4. Length of documents: it is recommended that documents and proposals should be short and precise and background information, statistics and other non-priority information could be appended to the document.
5. Financial: the offer received is approximately 30% more expensive than the current situation obtaining.

## 3. Translation of key documents

The working group agreed that a selected number of European School system key documents (see Table 1) should be translated into all the official EU languages. It was also agreed that the legal documents concerning locally recruited teachers and staff should be translated into the official languages of the countries hosting European Schools on their territory.

Table 1

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Document** | **EU languages** | **Host country language** |
| Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools | x |   |
| Regulations for Members of the Seconded Staff of the European Schools | x |   |
| Conditions of Employment for Part-time Teachers recruited after 31.8.2011 |   | x |
|  Service Regulations for the Administrative and Ancillary Staff (AAS) of the European Schools |   | x |
| General Rules of the European Schools | x |   |
| Regulations for the European Baccalaureate | x |   |
| Arrangements for implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate  | x |   |

## 4. Translation of syllabuses

The Translation Working Group proposes the following agreed upon principles for translation of Nursery, Primary and Secondary cycle syllabuses:

1. The new syllabuses designed and written in accordance with the new structure for the syllabuses for all cycles should be translated when finalised.
2. Translations should be produced only into the languages in which they are taught at the request of member states. The original versions exist in the following languages: English, French and German.
3. Translations of the whole syllabus, including the attainment descriptors, should be produced. Annexes should not be translated.
4. The professional translators of the Office of the Secretary-General will translate the syllabuses. The translations requested by the member states should be checked and finalised by national authorities, under the responsibility of the national inspector, prior to publication.

The Joint Teaching Committee recently revised the procedure for the production, management and publication of the syllabuses of the European Schools. These procedures would need to be amended, should the proposals of the Translation Working Group be approved.

It will be important to grant the Pedagogical Development Unit additional human resources to manage the additional workload entailed by the translation of syllabuses processes. The Translation Working Group was of the opinion that this would correspond to a half-post of assistant. The proposal to create this post will appear in the ‘Creation and Discontinuance of AAS posts’ document.

## 5. Creation of a multilingual educational glossary/thesaurus of terms for the European school system

The Translation Working Group was in favour of creating a multilingual educational glossary/thesaurus of terms for the European School system. The objective would be unification and harmonisation of the terminology used in the procedures and practices of the European Schools.

The Working Group explored modern methods to create, with the help of new technology, the thesaurus/glossary from the corpus of the texts of the European School system.

Creation of the thesaurus/glossary could be outsourced on the basis of an open call for tenders procedure. The estimated cost would be approximately €30 000.

## 6. Financial implications

The European Schools have an ongoing negotiation procedure in progress with the Translation Centre. It is therefore impossible at present to provide reliable information about future translation costs.

However, it is estimated that broadly speaking, translation costs will increase at least by 30% in 2017.

The estimates for the cost of translation of key documents and syllabuses are based on the assumption that the Translation Centre will charge us €82 per page (a standard page is defined as 1 500 characters without spaces).

The OSG has a translated copy of all the key documents in all the languages except Croatian. These copies have not been updated since 2011, when the Board of Governors decided to stop translations. Most of these documents have been amended only slightly since 2011, so their updating will not be hugely expensive.

Table 2

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Document** | Translations or updates required\* | Pages | Cost |
| Convention defining the Statute of the European Schools | 0 | 14 | €0 |
| Regulations for Members of the Seconded Staff of the European Schools | 3 | 65 | €15 990  |
| Conditions of Employment for Part-time Teachers recruited after 31.8.2011 | 2 | 4 | € 656  |
| Service Regulations for the Administrative and Ancillary Staff (AAS) of the European Schools | 2 | 21 | € 3 444  |
| General Rules of the European Schools | 4 | 48 | €15 744  |
| Regulations for the European Baccalaureate | 4 | 4 | € 1 312  |
| Arrangements for implementing the Regulations for the European Baccalaureate  | 4 | 39 | €12 792  |
| Total costs |   |   | €49 938  |
| \* All the documents have been translated into all the languages except Croatian, but they have not been updated since 2011. The number in the column reflects an estimated updating requirement counted as complete translations. |

It has been decided to revise all the secondary cycle syllabuses in 2017 on account of implementation of the new attainment descriptors. The estimated cost of translation of syllabuses for the financial year 2017 will therefore be relatively high. The estimated cost will be approximately €623 200.

Table 3

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2017 | Number of syllabuses | Pages on average | Languages\* | Cost |
| Syllabuses to be translated  | 38 | 20 | 10 | €623 200  |
| \* Estimate  |

Broadly speaking, syllabuses are revised every 10 years. The estimated annual syllabus translation cost will be far more moderate (€164 000).

Table 4

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Annual translation of syllabuses | Number of syllabuses | Pages on average | Languages\* | Cost |
| Syllabuses to be translated per year | 10 | 20 | 10 | €164 000  |
| \* Estimate |

The estimated annual cost for a half-post of assistant would be approximately €41 000, including social charges.

## 7. Opinion of the Joint Teaching Committee

The Joint Teaching Committee gave a favorable opinion on the document. An estimation of the costs would be included in the document for the Budgetary Committee.

The Joint Teaching Committee took note of the Joint Board of Inspectors recommendation to delete the sentence “Annexes should not be translated” from point 4.3 of the document.

The document would be sent forward to the Budgetary Committee for its opinion, and then to the Board of Governors for decision-making.

## 8. Opinion of the Budgetary Committee

The Budgetary Committee endorsed the proposal, albeit with some minor amendments to be made to version 3 to be presented to the Board of Governors.

## 9. Proposals

The Board of Governors is requested to approve:

1. The translation of key documents according to the proposal in Table 1.
2. The principles for translation of the Nursery, Primary and Secondary cycle syllabuses as described in section 3.
3. The issuing of a call for tenders in order to create a multilingual educational glossary/thesaurus of terms for the European School system.

## 9. Financial sheet

Based on the proposal presented in the Joint Teaching Committee, it is proposed to divide the cost of the translations between two years.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **OSG BUDGET LINE 601 20 301** | **2017** | **2018** | **Total** |
| Syllabus translation | € 300.000 | € 320.000 | € 620.000 |
| Translation of key documents | € 50.000 |   | € 50.000 |
| Thesaurus/glossary |   | € 30.000 | € 30.000 |
|   |  € 350.000 |  € 350.000 | € 700.000 |

The budgetary impact of the proposals would be € 350.000 for both years.

The creation of the 0,5 assistant post is part of the creation of AAS-post document. The estimated annual cost for a half-post of assistant would be approximately €41 000, including social charges.