



European Commission/European Parliament
Directorates-General for Interpretation



University of Leeds 27 February 2008

Routes into Language Careers

Language careers in the EU

Helen Campbell EC and Alison Graves EP





Multilingualism in the EU and UN – a commitment

In the EU, the first Council Regulation 1-58 states the official and working languages are those of the Member States
Nice Charter of Fundamental Rights 2000 endorses EU's respect for "cultural, religious and linguistic diversity"
Multilingualism in Treaties

The cost of multilingualism



- Cheap at the price
- Before the Enlargement of 2004 it was the price of a cup of coffee **2€ per citizen per year**
- Now it has risen to under **3€**, the price of a cappuccino
- Interpreting costs **½€**



What multilingualism means in practice



EU 23 official and working languages



UN 6 languages EN, FR, CH, RU, ES, AR



What's the difference between conference interpreting and translation?



- Interpreting means rendering the message of the speaker, his/her convictions and ideas faithfully from one language into another
- It is verbal communication
- Translation which is about the written word
- In the EU Institutions and in the UN the two are separate and the professions are too
- On the private market many professionals do both

What you need to be a conference interpreter in an international organisation



- A university degree
- Training in conference interpreting (no other kind) usually post-graduate
- To speak your mother tongue and languages into which you work clearly and fluently
- To comply with current language requirements
- To pass an EU or UN test or Open Competition



EU Interpreters Can Be.....



- **Officials** who have passed the inter-institutional open competition (for European Commission, European Parliament and European Court of Justice)
- **Freelance** - who have passed the inter-institutional accreditation test. 3000 on list, recruited on daily basis



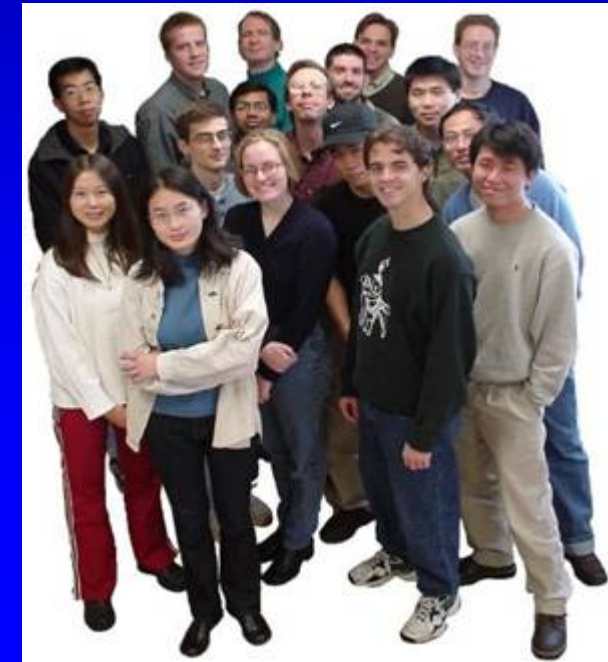
Common myths



- You must have studied languages
- All you need is languages
- You must be bi-lingual, a genius, know 5 languages

Wrong!

- The fact is....
- EU and UN need English mother tongue language staff urgently



What aptitudes do you really really need to be an interpreter?



- **Sound language knowledge**
- **Clarity and fluency in the language into which you interpret (usually mother tongue)**
- **Good general knowledge**
- **Intelligent analysis**
- **Good communication**

How does the EU help train future interpreters?



- **Group study visits to EU Institutions – 600 students per year**
- **EU and UN senior interpreters participate in university exams**
- **Trained professionals teach in universities**
- **student bursaries of up to €3000 – 160 a year for post-graduate studies**

The EU interpreter's week



- **Monday** Meeting on fisheries



- **Tuesday** Press Conference by Commissioner



- **Wednesday** teaching young would-be interpreters to help them pass a freelance accreditation test

- **Wednesday** evening train to London



- **Thursday** EMEA Board Meeting, return to Brussels

- **Friday** morning Czech language course, afternoon to Ljubljana

- **Saturday** Informal meeting Ministers of Environment



Pros and Cons of Interpreting



Pros

- Communicating - helping people with no common language to talk
- Team work
- Travelling
- Being at the heart of the matter
- Variety of subjects
- Chance to learn more



Cons

- Too much variety - no dossier
- Little change in the job
- Can feel uncreative
- Your work depends on the speaker
- Too much travelling
- “I can say that better”



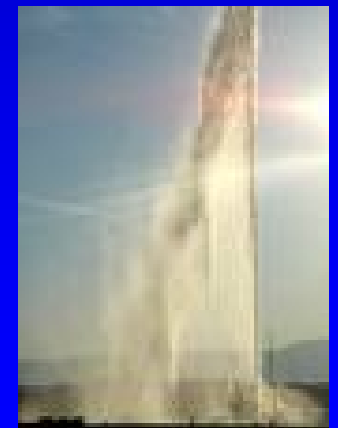
International cooperation



- IAMLADP, a UN initiative
- International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications



- Heads of Language and Conference Services
- 2007 Meeting at United Nations Geneva
- All agree: shortage of recruits! Training!



IAMLADP Working Group on Training



- EC Interpretation (SCIC)
Brian Fox -chairs



Brian FOX



Helen CAMPBELL



Svetlana CARSTEN

WGT has a:

- Universities' Contact Group – co-chairs Helen Campbell – SCIC and Svetlana Carsten - University of Leeds



- www.iamladp.org

Shortages of languages



- English mother tongue
- Arabic



- English with Arabic, Chinese, Russian
- German and Russian passive



Awareness raising



Attend careers events –
talk to students, school
leavers, teachers...



- **A £4.5 million HEFCE funded initiative:**
- to increase and widen participation in language study in higher education
- to support the national role of HE languages as a motor of economic and civic regeneration.

National networks: interpreting led by Leeds University, translation by Salford.



- Developed by the University Council of Modern Languages (UCML), the HE Academy Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies (LLAS) and CILT, the National Centre for Languages.



Conference interpreters are needed in many situations



- Because every subject you can imagine is discussed in every possible place.... among politicians, farmers, entertainers.....



You never know who you may find yourself working for, or where...



- **Nicolas Sarkozy meets Angela Merkel, or another person, for an informal meeting, or a working lunch**

1 interpreter

**French and German
(or French and Italian)**



- **At a Council of Ministers for Foreign Affairs: 27 Ministers :
23 EU languages
70 interpreters**



From Heads of State....



To



The Brethren Court of the
Pirate Lords



European Commission Interpreting and Translation and United Nations internet sites



<http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/index.htm>

<http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/translation>

un.org/employment