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MONTENEGRIN JOURNAL FOR SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Original scientific article

TRANSLATION/INTERPRETING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION AND CANDIDATE COUNTRIES PREPARING FOR MEMBERSHIP: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT:

The aim of this paper is to establish an overview of the challenges and perspectives that arise from a complex multilingual system of the EU that includes 24 official languages. After a brief history of translation, we consider the current practices in the European institutions. In regard to the preparation for accession, we compare the experiences of today's members of the Union with the candidate countries of BCMS languages. Furthermore, we analyse the data provided by the *Directorate-General for Interpretation* concerning the number and linguistic combinations of conference interpreters for Slovenian and Croatian, on the one hand, and Bosnian, Macedonian, Montenegrin and Serbian, on the other hand, which finally leads us to the examination of some educational perspectives.

KEYWORDS:

EU; Multilingualism; Translation; Interpreting; Candidate country;

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SAŽETAK:

Cilj ovog rada je da uspostavi pregled izazova i perspektiva koje proizilaze iz složenog, višejezičnog sistema Evropske unije koji uključuje 24 službena jezika. Nakon kratkog prikaza istorije prevođenja, razmatramo trenutnu praksu u evropskim institucijama. U pogledu priprema za pristupanje, poredimo iskustva današnjih članica Unije sa zemljama kandidatima sa govornog područja BCHS jezika. Nadalje, analiziramo podatke dobijene od *Generalnog direktorata za usmeno prevođenje* koji se tiču broja i jezičkih kombinacija konferencijskih prevodilaca za slovenački i hrvatski jezik, s jedne strane, te bosanski, crnogorski, makedonski i srpski jezik, s druge strane, što nas, konačno, dovodi do razmatranja obrazovnih perspektiva.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI:

EU; Višejezičnost; Pismeno prevođenje; Usmeno prevođenje; Zemlja kandidat;

INTRODUCTION

The multilingualism of the European Union is one of its most important values and symbols that discerns it from any other supranational organisation on a global scale. It is deeply built into its foundations and is often considered as a prerequisite for its democratic legitimacy[1]. Under the motto "United in diversity", the EU merges 24 official languages of different origins: Indo-European (Germanic, Romance and Slavic languages), Finno-Ugric and Semitic (Maltese language). The elevated number of official languages is even more particular when compared to linguistic regime of the other international organisations. For instance, the United Nations have 193 member states and 6 official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). The International Labour Organization has 187 member states and 3 official languages (English, Spanish and French), while the Council of Europe (47 members) and NATO (32 members) use only English and French. However, the majority of the EU legislation is directly and immediately applicable to all citizens of the Members States. Therefore, it is imperative to guarantee the legal certainty, along with the right to access the necessary information and to communicate with the European institutions in their own language. In addition to the specific nature of the European law, the principles of democracy and transparency, as well as respect for national identities are also at the origin of the multilingual regime.

The aim of this article is to examine the challenges and perspectives arising from the EU multilingualism. In the first place, we recall the origins of the EU linguistic regime, establish an overview of the history of translation and

review some of the current practices in the EU institutions. In the second place, we consider the linguistic framework of the European integration, i.e. preparations in the current and former candidate countries in terms of elaboration of various translation and terminological tools. Moreover, considering that conference interpreters also play a vital role in the daily work of the EU institutions, we analyse the data provided by the Directorate-General for Interpretation (DG SCIC) in July 2024, concerning the number and linguistic combinations of conference interpreters for Slovenian and Croatian (official EU languages), on the one hand, and Bosnian, Macedonian, Montenegrin and Serbian (languages of the candidate countries), on the other hand, which finally leads us to the examination of some educational perspectives.

MULTILINGUALISM OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

As Bratanić and Ramljak[2] point out, the principle of linguistic equality of the Member States was not fully adopted at the time of the formation of the European Coal and Steel Community. In fact, at the very beginning, "the only authentic version of the Treaty of Paris on European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), signed in 1951, was in French, as that was the language spoken in most part by the Member States of the ECSC"[3]. Furthermore, after the World War II, France had a significant role in the process of the European integration. On the contrary, political positions of Germany and Italy were weakened and the United Kingdom did not integrate the European Communities at the time[4].

The origin of multilingualism of the EU is related to *Regulation No 1 determining the languages to be used by the European Economic Community*, adopted on April 15th 1958, which established the equality of all the languages of the six founding countries (Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Germany). It stipulates that "the official languages and the working languages of the institutions of the Community shall be Dutch, French, German and Italian"[5]. The intention to maintain this linguistic regime has continued as the EU has enlarged. Through decades, the number of official languages has grown considerably and currently stands at 24:

Official language (year of introduction)	
20th century	21st century
French (1958)	Estonian (2004)
Italian (1958)	Slovenian (2004)
German (1958)	Slovak (2004)
Dutch (1958)	Polish (2004)
	Maltese (2004)
English (1973)	Lithuanian (2004)
Danish (1973)	Latvian (2004)
	Hungarian (2004)
Greek (1981)	Czech (2004)
Spanish (1986)	Romanian (2007)
Portuguese (1986)	Bulgarian (2007)
	Irish (2007)
Finnish (1995)	
Swedish (1995)	Croatian (2013)

Table 1 – Official EU languages and year of introduction[6]
The fact that all language versions of the EU legal acts are equally authentic

reveals "the full dimension of the work of intercultural mediation carried out by the translator"[7]. Accordingly, in order to ensure the functioning of the complex European regime, an important role is played by the linguistic staff, i.e. numerous translators, interpreters, lawyer-linguists and terminologists.

BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

During all these decades, "translation has risen to many challenges by restructuring and becoming ever more innovative"[8]. The first years of translation activity in the European Communities were characterised by fairly modest staff numbers (of translators and revisers) and less developed technological tools.

> *A 1953 document from the High Authority refers to a total of 35 translators and revisers (10 revisers and 25 translators), divided into language sections. Right from the start there was an English section alongside the four official-language sections, since English was the language most widely used at international level by heavy industry, in the scientific and technical literature and in the coal and steel trade, particularly by the major British and American trading partners.*
> *The German section had twelve translators, the French ten, the Dutch six, the Italian five and the English two. The translators of the High Authority's language service were assisted from time to time by external translators[9].*

At the time, the majority of draft versions were written in French. For internal purposes, the High Authority[10] and the Council of Ministers adopt a simplified approach to the language regime and use two working languages: French and German.

The first statistics on translation activity within the High Authority take the following form:

Year	Pages translated
1953	38855
1954	57295
1955	61568

Table 2 – The first statistics on translation activity[11]

One of the major challenges in the daily work of translators is the diversity of terminological fields that have to be addressed, which led to the appearance of the first multilingual glossaries. In the early 1960s, "the language services of the three Communities each had some fifty translators"[12].

> *The increasing need for translation, and thus for translators, generates a corresponding need for terminology in order to facilitate the task of translation. During the 1960s, ever tighter deadlines and the technical nature of the texts, sometimes beyond the capacity of the linguists, prompted translators to entrust part of their research work to other colleagues. This is how the High Authority's first terminologists emerged[13].*

In 1968, the increased need for terminology automation led to the fusion of two existing systems, DICAUTOM of the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) and EUROTERM of the European Economic Community (EEC), and gave birth to the terminology base called EURODICAUTOM, launched in the early 1970s.

During the 1970s and 1980s, as a result of first enlargement and the accession of new Member States, the number of official languages increased. In 1973, with the accession of Ireland, Denmark and the United Kingdom, English and Danish became official languages. This enlargement generated increased terminological activity and creation of concordance lists in six languages[14]. For new member countries, new concepts appear and solutions are not always easy to find.

In 1981, the accession of Greece increased the number of official languages to seven, introduced a second alphabet and posed new challenges for language services. At the time, when the candidate country had to create Community terminology, erroneous solutions were found – such as "rural policy" instead of "agricultural policy" in Greek. Therefore, around 50,000 pages of Community *acquis* had to be reread in order to detect all the erroneous occurrences of the term[15].

In 1986, following the accession of Spain and Portugal, the number of official languages increased from seven to nine. New complications arise at the level of terminology. According to the experience of a Portuguese lawyer-linguist:

> *The work of preparing the accessions of Portugal and Spain carried out at the Commission was a real work of exegesis […]. The translation of each provision was minutely examined […] each word, each sentence that was used in several provisions was studied in the context of the field in question in order to verify whether it was possible to keep the same translation everywhere. […] At a time when computers were not yet available, such an examination required a manual system of cross-references of all sort[16].*

With the addition of new languages, translation services are being reorganised. Staff numbers, as well as translation and interpretation costs are increasing. New enlargements are sparking debate between supporters of integral multilingualism and those in favour of simplifying and rationalising the language regime.

In the early 1990s, during the restructuring of translation services, the position of *language coordinator* was established, with a view to ensuring greater terminological consistency and being able to better resolve disagreements. This task is generally entrusted to experienced and valued linguists.

The contribution of IT changes and facilitates everyday work. Translation memories (Euramis), various terminology tools (IATE) and search engines (SdTVista) are emerging.

In 1995, with the accession of Austria, Finland and Sweden, Finnish and Swedish were added to the official languages. For the first time, a non-Indo-European language (Finnish) has integrated the family of the official EU languages.

> *The Finns have translated the acquis from French, with significant contribution from national jurists, while the Swedes have worked from the English version. However, directly applicable legislation (regulations) is equally authentic in Finland in its Swedish version due to Finnish constitutional bilingualism. When both versions became official in Finland, some inconsistencies appeared without it being possible to really determine whether the inconsistencies were due to the translation or to the English and French reference versions[17].*

In the early 1990s, French lost its predominant status within the Commission. It was the end of an era, due to the fact that the arrival of English speaking generations "accelerated the switch to English, something which had not happened in 1973"[18].

In 2004, the *big bang* enlargement occurred, when Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Malta, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Slovenia joined the EU. The number of official languages increased from eleven to twenty. The important historical and linguistic heterogeneity of the new Member States (Central European countries, countries of the former USSR, former Yugoslavia and Mediterranean islands) has given rise to new challenges. During the pre-accession period, unlike previous enlargements, the candidate countries were responsible for ensuring not only the translation of the *acquis* but also the revision. The final verifications were, however, undertaken by the European services, before the publication in the Official Journal of the EU.

In 2007, Bulgaria and Romania joined the EU. In addition to Bulgarian and Romanian, Irish became the official language, bringing the total number to 23. The last enlargement occurred in 2013, when Croatia joined the EU and the number of official languages increased to 24.

CURRENT PRACTICES IN THE EU INSTITUTIONS

Despite the undeniable cultural richness that the principle of multilingualism brings along, it also represents a challenge with regard to the effectiveness of the communication. This is why it undergoes "multiple adjustments"[19] leading to the implementation of "pragmatic

multilingualism"[20]. In the following lines, we will trace a brief overview of the current practices in three institutions: the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Court of Justice.

While external communication is integrally subject to the principle of multilingualism, internal communication within the European Commission is most often limited to the working languages: English, French and German. According to Fidrmuc et al.[21], these three languages are the pivot languages par excellence from which translations can be made more easily into the other languages. Today, more than 90% of documents are first written in one of these three languages, and therefore do not require any additional translation. Other institutions also rely on a similar system.

The Directorate-General for Translation (DGT) within the European Commission is one of the biggest translation services in the world, generating some 2 million translated pages a year[22].

> *Other EU institutions and bodies (the Parliament, Council, Court of Justice, Central Bank, Court of Auditors, European Economic and Social Committee, Committee of the Regions, etc.) have their own translation departments, whereas the various specialised decentralised EU agencies and bodies send their translation work to the Translation Centre for the Bodies of the European Union. DG Translation is organised according to languages. Each official EU language has its own language department, which is organised in translation units. Translators therefore work in single language units that specialise in particular subjects. They translate out of several languages, but almost always into their mother tongue[23].*

A recent publication[24] resumes some interesting figures about DGT, allowing us to gain insight into this important service:

Total staff	2.000 – 70% translators, language technology experts, quality experts, terminologists and revisers, 30% support staff
Place of work	46% Brussels, 53% Luxembourg, 1% locally in EU member countries
Number of translated pages	Approximately 2 million pages a year (69% in house, 31% outsourced)
Translation costs	349 million EUR per year , 0.2% of EU budget

Table 3 – DG Translation in figures[25]

In order to cope with the increasing workflow, DGT is progressively using external translation and engaging external service providers – translation agencies or freelance translators. As we can see in the table below, the share that external service providers take in the total translation activity is constantly growing:

Year	Number of translated pages	Translated internally	Translated externally
1997	1,1 million pages	83, 6%	16, 4%
2004	1,3 million pages	77 %	23%
2008	1,8 million pages	73, 7 %	26, 3%
2010	1, 86 million pages	72 %	28 %

Table 4 – Trends in translation at the DG Translation[26]

The European Parliament is "often referred to as the most multilingual EU institution"[27]. The equality of official languages in the EU is most visible in the practice of this institution, where every representative has the right to debate in the language of his country. The principle of integral multilingualism is prescribed by the institution's Rules of Procedure:

Rule 174
Languages

1. All documents of Parliament shall be drawn up in the official languages.
2. All Members shall have the right to speak in Parliament in the official language of their choice. Speeches delivered in one of the official languages shall be simultaneously interpreted into the other official languages and into any other language that the Bureau may consider to be necessary.

In order to respond to growing requests in a quality way and to avoid hundreds of possible language combinations, the Parliament has established some pragmatic internal rules:

The European Parliament, which often needs to produce documents rapidly in all official languages, has developed a system of six 'pivot' languages : [...] English, French, German, Italian, Polish and Spanish. A document presented in, say, Slovak or Swedish will not be translated directly into all other [...] languages. Instead it will be translated into the pivot languages and then retranslated from one of them into the others. This removes the need for translators able to work directly from Maltese to Danish or from Estonian to Portuguese, and hundreds of other combinations as well. If texts were translated directly from all official EU languages into all the others, this would give a total of 380 bilateral combinations[28].

For practical reasons, conference interpreters also have a system of relay languages, in order to reduce a very large number of possible language combinations. For example, a Maltese speaker's intervention will be interpreted into a relay language, which will serve as a source for a Slovak interpreter, thus avoiding the need for an interpreter working from Maltese into Slovak.

The Court of Justice, however, has its own particularities. According to its Rules of Procedure (Article 42): "the Court shall set up a language service staffed by experts with adequate legal training and a thorough knowledge of several official languages of the European Union". Pellerin Rugliano[29] explains that, in practice, the Court requires that the applicant has completed five years of law studies carried out in the language for which the competition is organised. Therefore, a translator's diploma is not sufficient[30]. Another particularity of the Court concerns the language of deliberation and internal administration:

> [U]nlike other institutions of the Union which usually use both English and French as their working languages, the Court has consequently maintained the practice of using exclusively French as its internal working language, in which deliberations are held and decisions drafted[31].

Athanassiou points out that this particular choice is "intended to avoid extensive cross-translation" as well to ensure "a consistent use of vocabulary which has overtime acquired its own Community law meaning, thereby also contributing to legal certainty"[32].

PREPARATIONS IN CANDIDATE COUNTRIES

In order to integrate this complex system in the best possible way, a candidate country preparing for membership faces multiple challenges. The totality of the work that constitutes the linguistic framework of the accession is a "herculean" undertaking[33]. During the double translation procedure, on the one hand, it is necessary to translate the *acquis* into the language of the candidate country and, on the other hand, for the purposes of the accession negotiations, it is required to translate national legal acts into one of the official EU languages, in most cases, into English.

We have already reviewed[34] the preparations and implementation of various tools in the countries of former Serbo-Croatian, namely the language framework of their accession to the EU. Within the BCMS languages, a parallel was drawn between Croatia, EU Member State since 2013, with the most developed mechanisms in this area, of the one part, and Montenegro, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, of the other part.

In Croatia, the tools designed to facilitate the work of translators consist of dictionaries, thesauri, glossaries and two translation manuals, all focused on English, with the exception of the *Quadrilingual Dictionary*, which also includes French and German. Croatia has also developed a project of terminology standardisation – the Croatian Special Field Terminology program (known by its Croatian acronym *Struna*), "financed by the Croatian Science Foundation, [...] carried out at the Institute of Croatian Language and Linguistics" and "officially inaugurated on the web in February 2012"[35].

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia have developed similar tools, including dictionaries, glossaries, terminology bases and parallel corpora, also mostly oriented towards English, since it is the language from and into which most translations are made[36].

We share the position of Bratanić[37] who states that the choice of English only as a starting point for translation is not always the best one, given that numerous texts were initially created in French. Ramljak[38] highlights the same problem by recalling that English only became the official language of the EU in 1973 (with the accession of Ireland and the United Kingdom) and that, until the 1990s, the original versions of 80% of EU legal acts were created in French. Therefore, in order to ensure the quality of the translation, it is desirable to turn to the comparison of several language versions.

In the following lines, we will briefly overview the experiences of three Member States from the 2004 enlargement: Latvia, the Czech Republic and Hungary[39]. According to Lejasiasaka, Latvian Translation and Terminology Centre has developed a special translation process in which the terminologists closely cooperated with external translators, editors and experts from various professions, in order to ensure uniformity of Latvian terminology in the translation process. Work on the central terminological database has began in 1998. Only those terms approved by the Terminology Committee of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, the highest authority in the development of the overall Latvian terminology, were included in the database. Within the Academy of Sciences, various subcommittees and working groups were established for specific thematic areas[40].

As Obrová and Pelka point out, in the Czech Republic, Coordination and Editorial Centre was established in 1998 at the Ministry of Justice, and was later moved to the Czech Cabinet Office. It had two initial tasks: first, to collect all translations of the EU legislation and store them into a central database, and second, to develop a methodology for translation and editing, including issues of terminological management. External collaborators were hired for the translation, and all the editors were trained in Brussels and Maastricht. The centre adopts a multilingual approach: the original is submitted to the translator in English, French and German, and the editors evaluate the quality of each translation in all of the languages[41].

At last, when it comes to Hungary, according to Somssich and Varga, Translation Coordination Unit was established under the Ministry of Justice in 1997. Its primary task was to centralise and standardise the Hungarian terminology. The main tasks at the centre were performed by terminologists and jurists, while external agencies were hired for translation. The Terminology Committee, which later became the highest forum for solving terminological issues, was founded in 2000. All translators and editors were obliged to use the terminology available in the terminological database of the Ministry of Justice[42].

We can conclude that all three countries have mobilised multiple state institutions and paid significant attention to the linguistic framework of the EU accession. The case of the Czech Republic, which opted for a multilingual approach to the translation process, seems particularly judicious.

INTERPRETING: CASE OF THE OFFICIAL EU LANGUAGES VS. LANGUAGES OF THE CANDIDATE COUNTRIES FROM THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA

Besides translators, staff and freelance conference interpreters represent another important link in the chain of the European multilingual machinery. While the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) organises competitions for permanent officials, candidates for freelance conference interpreters must succeed in the inter-institutional accreditation test[43]. Eligibility for the test is conditioned with university diploma in conference interpreting or documented evidence of at least 100 days of professional experience.

For the purpose of this research, our intention is to compare the number and linguistic combinations of interpreters for the official EU languages, Slovenian and Croatian, on the one hand, and languages of the candidate countries from the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia), on the other hand. Evidently, the objective is not to predict future EU linguistic regime or the political future of candidate countries and their potential membership, but rather to examine current situation related to interpreting staff in the light of the "readiness" of these languages for a potential EU accession.

According to the data provided by the Directorate-General for Interpretation (DG SCIC)[44] in July 2024, the Croatian unit has 9 staff and 39 accredited conference interpreters working for the EU institutions on a regular basis, i.e. more than 10 days a year.

While 8 staff members work into a B language (English, French), staff is on average predominantly covering English, Italian, German and French, as passive (C) language(s).

In regard to the Slovenian unit, there are 13 staff members and 25 accredited conference interpreters working for the EU institutions on a regular basis. While 11 staff members work into a B language (English, German), staff is on average predominantly covering English, French, German and Italian, as passive (C) language(s).

When it comes to the languages of the candidate countries, overall data for Bosnian, Macedonian, Montenegrin and Serbian are presented in the following table[45]:

A language (number of accredited interpreters)	B language	C language
Bosnian (11)	English, Italian (1), German (1)	English, French
Macedonian (26)	English, French, German (1), Albanian (1), BCMS[46]	English, French, German, Bulgarian (1), BCMS
Montenegrin (9)	English, French (1)	English, Italian (1)
Serbian (39)	English, French, Russian (1)	English, French, German, Russian (1), Slovenian (1), Macedonian (1)

Table 5 – Accredited conference interpreters for Bosnian, Macedonian, Montenegrin and Serbian[47]

As we can see, with the exception of the Serbian language, numbers in the table mostly diverge from the previously mentioned data available for Croatian and Slovenian and indicate a potential deficit of conference interpreters, in terms of their future EU accession, in particular for Montenegrin and Bosnian.

Concerning the language combinations, we can state that English and French are common for all four compared languages of the candidate countries, which is basically expected considering their status in the EU.

The majority of interpreters for Bosnian (9 out of 11), Montenegrin (8 out of 9) and Serbian (24 out of 39), and almost half of interpreters for Macedonian (12 out of 26) are accredited for one EU language (predominantly English), with A-B or A-C combination.

Each language has interpreters with A-B-C combination (only one in the case of Montenegrin). There are also some interpreters accredited for two B, two C, and even one Macedonian interpreter with three C languages.

The aforementioned figures bring us to the final part of our paper where we will consider some educational aspects of the EU integration journey.

EDUCATIONAL ASPECT

An important part of the Slovenian and Croatian preparation for the EU accession was establishing university studies in translation and interpreting, with the aim of quality preparation of future staff for the EU institutions.

The University of Ljubljana recognised the need for education of future translators and interpreters during the Slovenian integration process.

After years of preparations within a Tempus project, the Department of Translation Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy was established in 1997[48]. Today, it is distinguished by a diverse offer: undergraduate and master studies in translation (Slovenian– English, German, French or Italian), as well as a PhD program. They also offer Joint Degree Programme in Translation (Slovenian – English – French) with the INALCO Institute in Paris, along with Joint Degree Programme in Translation (Slovenian – English – German) with the University of Graz. In regard to the conference interpreting, master studies are available for A-B-C and A-C1-C2 language combinations, as well as for Slovenian Sign Language.

> *When it comes to Croatia:*
>
> *[T]here are two speciali[s]ed courses; in Zagreb and Rijeka and Master of Arts in Translation and Interpreting in Osijek. At Zagreb University, a post-graduate conference interpreting course was introduced owing to the greatly increased need for simultaneous interpreters as part of Croatia's accession to the EU. The postgraduate Course in Rijeka is fully compliant with the guidelines of the European Master's in Translation (EMT) in order to enable easier mobility of students and equivalence between course graduates and other graduates on the European job market[49].*

In Zagreb, studies were introduced at the Centre for Postgraduate Studies in the academic year 2005/2006, as a result of the joint efforts of the University of Zagreb, the Directorate-General for Interpretation and the analogous service of the European Parliament[50].

Evidently, both countries have timely developed solid framework for the education of future linguistic staff that later joined the EU institutions. Nevertheless, in our country, the Faculty of Philology of the University of Montenegro currently offers only master studies in translation (Montenegrin-English), while master in conference interpreting is not yet established.

CONCLUSION

As we can conclude from all that precedes, the EU multilingualism remains an inexhaustible topic of inspiration for multidisciplinary research. This study allowed us to gain insight into the complex, multilingual European construction, and some challenges that arise from its unique linguistic regime. Although each new enlargement opposed supporters and opponents of integral multilingualism, abandoning this fundamental principle would be unimaginable, considering that, among other things, recognition of the Member States goes through the respect of their languages, identities and cultures.

As the EU has expanded and the number of official languages has increased, the complexity of the translation activity within the EU has grown considerably. The initial years were characterised by a relatively small number of translators and revisers. The technological tools used on a daily basis were poorly developed. Over time, the automation of work has given rise to the first terminology bases. The expansion of IT has led to the introduction of various translation memories and search engines. Today, considerable numbers of staff, in addition to the difficulties faced by the EU

translators and interpreters in their daily work have made the services of the European institutions among the most impressive in the world.

In terms of interpreting staff, the analysis of the data provided by the Directorate-General for Interpretation (DG SCIC) allowed us to comprehend the approximate number required for an average functioning of an official EU language, on the one hand, and to discern to what extent the candidate languages are currently ready for a potential EU accession with regard to linguistic staff, on the other hand.

In order for a candidate language to join the EU family in the best possible way, first of all, it is important to raise awareness of the need for staff education during the process of the European integration. To that end, it would be beneficial to achieve progress in terms of numbers of interpreting staff. In that sense, a growing need for translators and interpreters should be accompanied by the introduction of adequate university studies and creation of modern study programs for their education, relying on the experience of similar programs across the EU.

This study, oriented towards translation and interpreting, opened up some new perspectives and gave us the impulse to expand our research to another important link in the chain, lawyer-linguists, who play an essential role during drafting and revision of the EU legal texts. According to a recent call for applications within the competition released by EPSO[51], lawyer-linguist must have knowledge of at least three official EU languages: mother tongue + French (minimum C1) + other official EU language (minimum C1). This awareness could initiate improvement of the university offer in the candidate countries, in terms of addition of new courses in language for

specific purposes. For instance, the Faculty of Law at the University of Montenegro currently offers only English. Clearly, in accordance with the growing needs of the EU labour market, it would be worthwhile considering the upgrade of linguistic offer.

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[14] Commission européenne, *La traduction à la Commission: 1958-2010*, 2009.

[15] Commission européenne, *La traduction à la Commission: 1958-2010*, 2009.

[16] « Ce travail de préparation des adhésions du Portugal et de l'Espagne effectué à la Commission a été un vrai travail d'exégèse […]. La traduction de chaque disposition était minutieusement examinée […] chaque mot, chaque phrase qui étaient employés dans plusieurs dispositions étaient étudiés dans le contexte du domaine concerné afin de bien vérifier s'il était possible de garder la même traduction partout. […] À une époque où les ordinateurs n'étaient pas encore disponibles, un tel examen exigeait un système manuel de références croisées de tout genre » (translated by author). In : Commission européenne, *La traduction à la Commission: 1958-2010*, 2009, p. 32.

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[45] For a better understanding of the size of the countries, it is worth mentioning the data on their population in 2023, provided by World Bank (https://data.worldbank.org/) : Bosnia and Herzegovina 3,210,847; North Macedonia 1,811,980; Montenegro 616 177; Serbia 6,618,026.

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