

2018 FIT Europe Annual Meeting in The Hague

FIT Europe held its annual meeting this past 24 November. Representatives of member associations from the four corners of Europe gathered in The Hague for lively discussion and planning.

After presentations by members of the FIT Europe Board and other association representatives, as well as procedural tasks, the meeting moved on to its agenda for the day and the various activities that had been carried out since the last meeting in Barcelona in 2017.

The meeting reviewed the recent survey on *Continuous Professional Development (CPD)*. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about association training practices: whether activities were organised, whether they were compulsory for continued membership, whether credits were recognised and how such credits were counted, etc. Upon analysing the survey, several gaps were found. As the translation profession is not regulated on an international level, the meeting proposed the possibility of establishing a FIT Europe certification for CPD events. To the Board's surprise, the majority of associations were in favour of some form of FIT Europe certification, although they were aware of the requirements in terms



of financial and human resources and recognised that it would be a long-term objective. Meanwhile, some associations suggested that guidelines for best practices be drawn up on this issue and, after a long debate, it seemed that the meeting was in agreement that this would be a good first step. During the debate, some attendees expressed concern that such a certification, designed to give translators

and interpreters status with clients, could cause conflict in countries that already have their own certification. A possible aversion to the word "certification" was also mentioned, and there was a consensus that it could instead be called a "quality mark", "seal of recommendation" or something similar.

FIT Council recently approved purchasing a second account on the Zoom platform,

which until now has been used only internally for FIT Council meetings, so that it could be used at different regional centres for meetings and online talks. It offers the possibility of having 100 people connected at the same time.

The idea of creating a practical guide to the new *European general data protection regulation (GDPR)* for translators and interpreters was announced, and a call was made for associations to share any documents they had on the issue with individual professionals and other associations. Associations that initially missed the call are encouraged to share what they have now.

FIT Europe has been involved in various EU projects over the past year, including *MIME* (Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe), launched in 2014, which this past year focused on the need to have a policy for language specialists and planning bodies. *MIME* has also set up *MIME Vademecum*, a tool to help understand multilingualism so that decisions can be made about language policies. A PDF copy may be obtained for free at this [link](#), or those who wish to obtain a printed version may purchase one.

This year, Annette Schiller, chair of FIT Europe, attended the [Translating Europe Forum](#) (TEF), held by the European Commission in Brussels on 8–9 November 2018. The forum has been broadcast online for free, and FIT members who are interested in attending virtually can look for updates over the coming year.

In addition to the TEF, the European Commission organises the *Translating Europe Workshop*, a set of workshops related to translation and interpreting that take

place in each of the EU Member States. FIT Europe has suggested organising a workshop in Athens in June 2019, also available online, about the migration crisis. Stay tuned to FIT Europe for news and updates. FIT Europe is included in the *Transparency Register*, a database that includes organisations wishing to become involved in the policy creation and implementation process of European institutions, making it possible for the public to monitor and scrutinise the activities of lobbyists.

As part of its lobbying efforts, FIT Europe is currently in contact with translation industry representatives, such as [ELIA](#) and [EUATC](#). The aim is to begin a dialogue that will hopefully result in better understanding and improved collaboration and cooperation between freelancers and industry.

Under French law, FIT Europe is not allowed to hold a bank account. To circumvent this rule, FIT Europe set up FIT Soutien. According to FIT Soutien's statutes, officers have to be confirmed or elected every year. The meeting proposed that Wanda Ruíz-Brunelot, member of SFT and a resident of France, assume the role as president of FIT Soutien so it can operate more easily. The meeting voted on three new officers and the following appointments were approved: Wanda Ruíz-Brunelot, President; Annette Schiller, Vice-President; and Dimitra Stafilia, Treasurer.

The meeting addressed the following questions and comments from the floor:

- Geoffrey Buckingham, vice-chair of EULITA, taking part in the meeting as an observer, expressed the hope that *FIT Europe* and *EULITA* can look at a joint project in the near future as a means

of implementing their jointly signed Memorandum of Understanding.

- Liese Katschinka, also representing EULITA, and member of the *ISO Standard 20228* committee for legal interpreting, called for a vote in favour of the proposed ISO. The ISO Standard 20228 on legal interpreting has since been adopted.
- ALTI will organise the next EULITA conference from 28–29 March 2019.
- The BDÜ conference “Translating and Interpreting 4.0. – New Ways in the Digital Age” will be held in Bonn during the week of 20 November 2019.

The meeting progressed more quickly than expected, so to make a maximum use of time, attendees divided into smaller groups to brainstorm a slogan. The groups were inspired by the video [Translators are a Waste of Space](#), written and performed by Erik Skuggevik for The Norwegian Association of Literary Translators. Each group shared its ideas, which are currently being reviewed by the FIT Europe Board.

For next year's meeting, the Board has received three proposals, which were not announced. Its decision will be made public shortly.

Following closing remarks, the meeting was adjourned.

Interested in staying up to date with the goings on at FIT Europe? Not only will the FIT Europe website be revamped in the coming months, language professionals on Twitter can follow FIT Europe ([@FIT_Europe](#)) and the FIT Europe Chair ([@FIT_EuropeChair](#)) for updates, news and information.