

TRANSLATORS ON THE COVER

Multilingualism & Translation

REPORT OF THE OPEN METHOD OF COORDINATION (OMC)
GROUP OF EU MEMBER STATES' EXPERTS





Introduction

The OMC Group

- Mandate
 - Translation is essential for Europe and its cultural and linguistic diversity
 - How to reinforce the translation sector and improve the circulation of books across Europe
 - Examples of good practices and recommendations
 - Focus on literature in particular from lesser used languages but also theatre and audiovisual
- Working methods
 - A diversity of expertise and background
 - Working in teams and... with TEAMS
 - Broad consultation



How the situation in the translation sector can be improved

How the translator profession can be made
more attractive

Initial education – building cultural and linguistic awareness and widening the opportunities for future literary translators

- **Children should be exposed to other languages**, and the diversity of languages and cultures should be valued and fully exploited in the classroom.
- **The practice of translation should be reintroduced** in language teaching, both for its intrinsic value to language learning, and to promote the practice itself
- The **ongoing decline in the range of languages** on offer at university level across Europe needs to be urgently addressed.
- The **mobility of students and collaboration** between universities should be reinforced. Ex: Erasmus
- **Translators' career opportunities** should be made more visible, and the profession of translator and its multiple domains should be promoted. Ex: Juvenes Translatores by European commission DGT
- Students at MAs level should be exposed to a **variety of disciplines beyond linguistic study**. Ex: entrepreneurship and machine translations



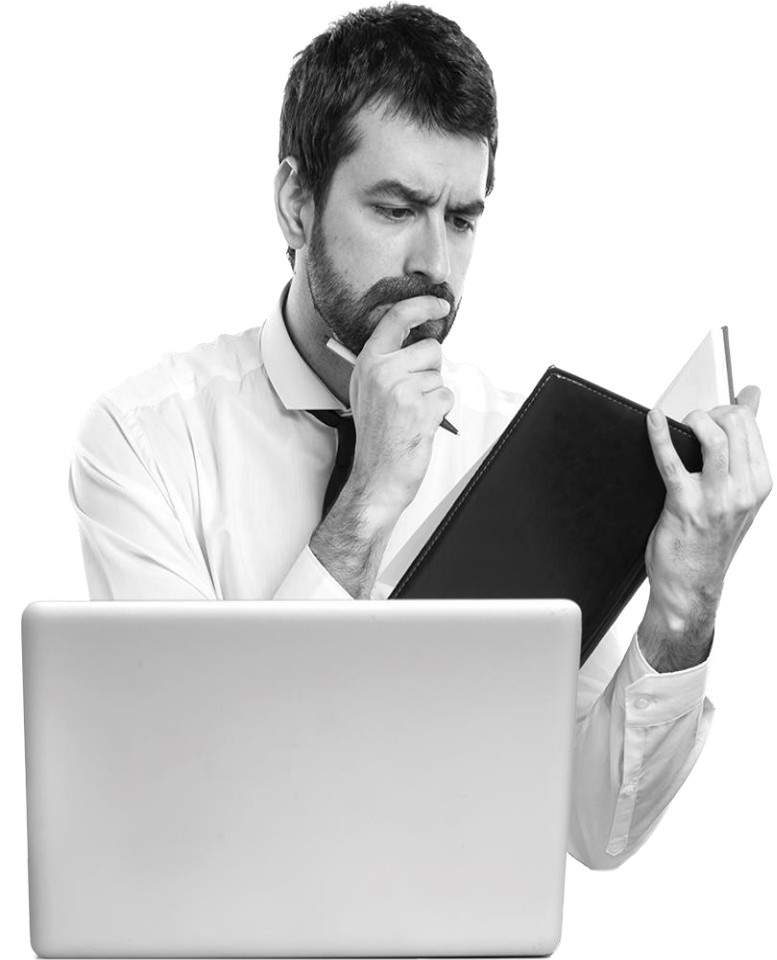
Continuous training – providing emerging and established translators with opportunities to train throughout their careers

- Publishers have limited capacity to train translators
 - ex: pair of translators (rare combination of languages) and feedback by senior editors
- Opportunities and organisations for continuous training should be reinforced with a strong European dimension.
 - Centres of expertise and residencies (RECIT), mentorship (STRADE), mobility grants (I-portunus) and individual scholarships.
- Collaboration between organisations offering continuous training and universities should be encouraged.
 - Summer schools, PETRA-E



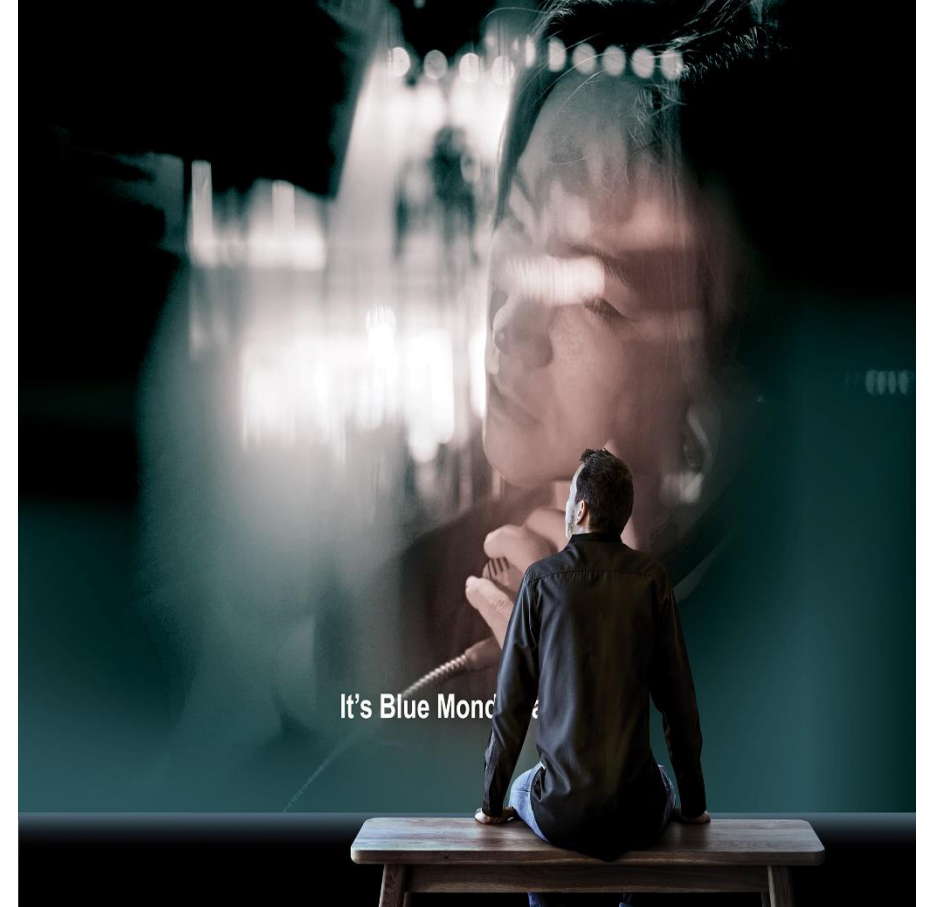
The precarious status of literary translators – a threat to the appeal of the profession and the sustainability of the literary translation sector

- The **DSM** directive should be transposed into law in all EU Member States to improve the situation on fair remuneration and transparency.
- EU and national funding organisations should encourage good practice with regard to remuneration and fair contracts.
- **Collective bargaining** should be allowed and encouraged for literary translators.
- **Translators' associations** should be reinforced. Ex: CEATL, AVTE
- Translators should have access to individual **scholarships/grants** at national and international level.



The specificities of translating for the audio-visual and theatre sector

- The quality of audiovisual translation should be monitored and translators' poor working conditions should be addressed.
 - High-quality audiovisual translation a requirement for all European audiovisual productions
 - professional translators to be associated in the application of crowdsourcing or machine translation
- The sector of translation for the performing arts needs to be better structured.
 - No associations at European level but Maison Antoine Vitez – good example



Machine and relay translation – practices affecting quality of translation

- machine translation still **unsuitable for translating literature**, but progress in technology should be closely monitored.
 - Ex : observatoire de la traduction automatique
- **Relay translation should not be encouraged** as a long-term solution to promote the dissemination of works in lesser-used languages in Europe.
 - A practical solution for rare combination of languages
 - But training translators is a healthier long-term solution



Visibility and inclusion

- Continuous and collective efforts are required in order to **bring more (ethnics, gender, social-economic) diversity** into the profession of literary translation.
 - Ex: every story matters, The tank
- **Databases** of translators should be developed in countries and regions where they do not yet exist, and these should be kept up to date.
 - Ex: Dutch ELV, Gothe's Social Translating project
- **Translators should be acknowledged and promoted** as crucial mediators and ambassadors between cultures and languages.
 - Ex : prizes for translators, translators on the cover page, TOLEDO and Festival VO-VF



How public funding can help to improve the circulation of translated books across Europe

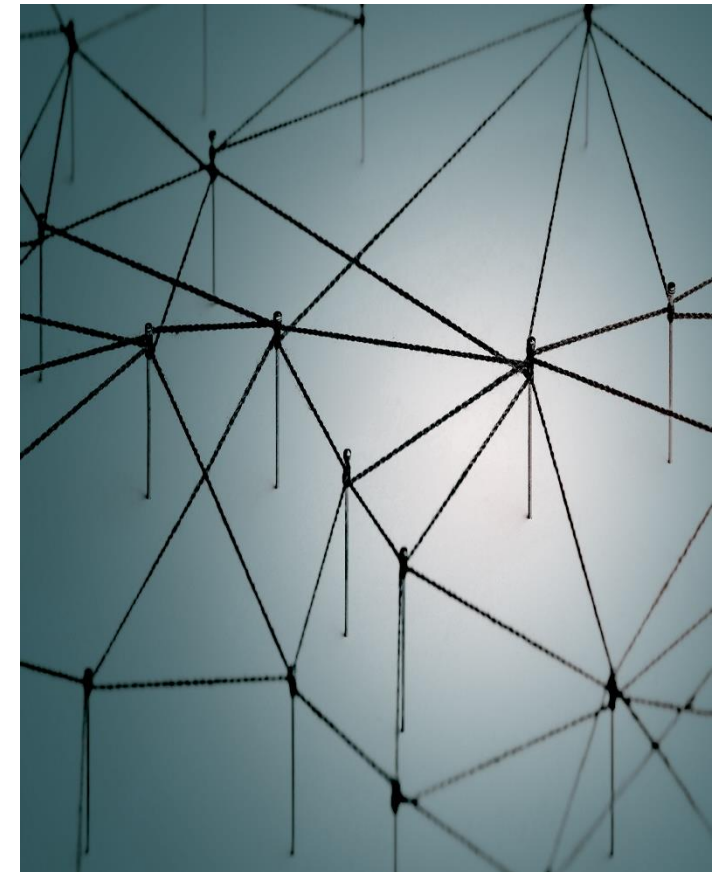
National grant support to publishers – what makes them attractive and efficient?

- National translation foundations/agencies should be established on a **statutory** basis and adequately resourced with permanent expert personnel.
- Grant systems should be transparent, accessible and **non-bureaucratic**.
- The level of **co-funding** awarded should be of sufficient value to achieve meaningful impact.
- Grant systems should be **predictable** and have a long-term perspective.
- Grants should encourage and enable **publishers to provide fair remuneration** for translators in a transparent manner.
- Support to publishers should cover **not only translation but also promotion and production costs**.
- A robust system of data collection and **statistics** on the circulation of books in Europe and the world should be developed and implemented.



Public support for international networking and sales

- Public support should also invest in **networking**, in order to build close relationships and trust between publishers for a more efficient translation market.
 - Ex: multi-country fellowship
- The post-COVID-19 evolution of international book fairs should be accompanied by public support.
 - Ex: ALDUS - European network of book fairs
- Support to agents and foreign rights departments should be increased in order to improve international sales capacity.
 - Ex : training activities or support to sample of translation and travel expenses.
- The role of public agencies in promoting books in international markets should be encouraged, including through multi-country joint approaches.
 - Ex : common stands at book fairs outside Europe or joint Guest of Honour programme



Public support for cultural and linguistic diversity and reciprocity

- National support to **inbound translation** should be encouraged, in addition to the more common support offered to foreign publishers to publish domestic titles abroad.
 - Encourage domestic publishers to be open to diversity and set “fair” rates for translators Ex: CNL support to “in-translation”
- The **European dimension of literacy and reading promotion** policies should be increased.
 - Promoting reading and books from abroad. Ex: EU read, Euregio Reads, Creative Europe Versopolis poetry platform or EUPL
- The **special role of brick-and-mortar bookshops** in promoting diversity should be actively supported to compete with online giants
 - Fiscal and regulatory measures: fixed book price, lower VAT on books or minimum price for book deliveries
 - Ex: RISE project by European and international federation



Regional and European cooperation should be reinforced

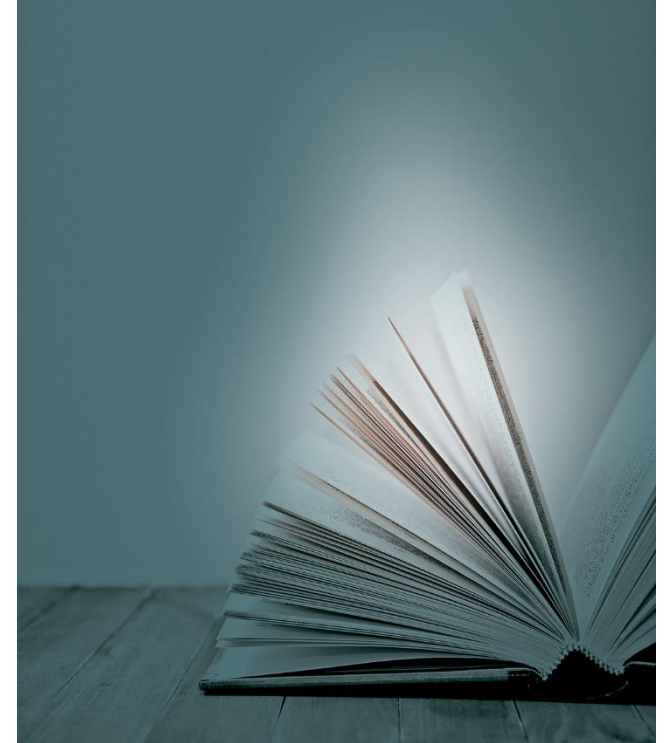
- multi-country translation grant systems ('common pots');
- multi-country collective stands, or joint guests of honour programmes, at book fairs;
- organisation of workshops, networking events and training for authors, translators, editors, foreign rights department staff and agents;
- sharing knowledge and good practices.
 - Ex : Nordlit, Baltic countries, EUNIC, Creative Europe Cooperation projects,
 - Traduki – the most advanced model
 - ENLIT – a promising but informal network including funding institutions from most European countries
 - Inspiration from European Film Promotion umbrella organisation or European music export offices



Overall conclusions

Increasing the circulation of works in Europe – key success factors

- A more attractive translation sector, well organised collectively, and providing training opportunities, good working conditions and visibility to translators
- The transposition of the DSM directive providing a framework for negotiation and transparency on remuneration and working conditions
- A higher level of public funding helping publishers take more translations and provide fair remuneration
- A holistic public support system covering and linking the entire value chain from authors to booksellers
- More cooperation between countries and reciprocity
- Reading promotion actions promoting openness to diversity and books from abroad
- A continuous dialogue on funding practices at European levels beyond this OMC group.



Thank you