



## EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Translation

Directorate S - Translation strategy and Multilingualism  
**S.3 - Multilingualism and translation studies**

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### **European Master's in Translation (EMT) Strategy**

#### **1. Background**

The European Master's in Translation project was born in a period of important changes for the translator's profession. Rapid technological advancement, the globalisation of communication and decisive historical changes in Europe and elsewhere pushed multilingualism to the forefront of international debate and the language industry to the forefront of the global market. In the new environment, the need for highly skilled translators increased at rapid pace, while the shortcomings of the labour market for translators and language services became worrying.

The European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (DGT), by virtue of its size, structure, reliance on state of the art technology and its need for high quality professionals, has a special responsibility to provide leadership in this area and to help the translation profession to meet the challenges posed by the expanding multilingual environment.

In this context, DGT has developed the EMT project as an initiative to stimulate the increase of quality translator education and the availability of translators in the market throughout the European Union. This is achieved by encouraging Master's programmes in translation from European universities to implement commonly accepted and market-oriented professional standards.

The following strategic reasons fuelled the decision to set-up the EMT:

- the rapidly growing need for high-level linguistic services, a booming industry at European and global level;
- the increase in the number of official EU languages from 11 to 23 between 2004 and 2007, which brought to light the vulnerability of the labour market for translators and the short supply of qualified professionals, as well as the DGT's particular interest in the languages that may come on board with further enlargements of the European Union.

Multiple actors have brought their contribution to the success of the EMT project during its phases. DGT tackled this issue by encouraging European universities that offer programmes in translation to cooperate towards the creation of a **quality benchmark**. The EMT Conferences, held regularly since 2006, were designed to bring together the translator community and to brainstorm on the best methods to achieve the project's aims. These efforts culminated with the agreement on the EMT quality standards, the first selection of programmes and the launch of the EMT Network in 2009. Throughout this phase, DGT was

the nexus of the project, using its resources to act as promoter, platform and intermediary between many European universities and other actors from within and outside the Union.

## 2. Objectives

As a unique initiative based on the partnership between DGT and the community of translator programmes in Europe, the EMT's main objective is to encourage the acquisition of specific competences, whilst acknowledging training programmes that meet the commonly agreed **EMT quality standards**.

The following general objectives guide the EMT:

- It sets out to enable students to acquire **high-level competences** and to promote **European values** in programmes and universities in the Union.
- It aims to **attract** more institutions wishing to improve the training of future translators.
- It also tries to **help** institutions wishing to upgrade their programmes, whilst also providing them with an opportunity to gain more local visibility.
- It involves initiating legal proceedings to protect the **name and logo of EMT** as a **registered trademark**.

## 3. EMT Network

### 3.1. Set-up of the Network

As a number of universities propose different programmes, not all of which meet the EMT requirements and standards, **membership** is open to *programmes* rather than to *institutions*. However, as a programme does not usually have legal status/personality, for legal purposes – including the granting of licences to use the future EMT trademark – legal representation of the programme will be held by the institution responsible for running the programme.

Programmes that satisfy the EMT standards qualify as **members** of the Network. For administrative purposes, full membership is granted to all programmes from the European Union, while programmes from other eligible countries<sup>1</sup> may be granted **observer** status. Members and observers carry out operational tasks in the working groups established by the EMT Board. Only members have voting rights.

Programmes that have applied for the Network, but are not yet compliant with the criteria, are granted the status of **applicants**.

Members of the Network may use the designation ‘member of the EMT Network’ in their external relations.

There is no limit as such to the number of members and observers.

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<sup>1</sup> The eligible countries outside the European Union are: EU candidate and potential candidate countries, the countries participating in the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), the countries of the European Economic Area (EEA), Switzerland and Russia. For list of ENP countries see: [http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/partners/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/world/enp/partners/index_en.htm)

Membership is valid for a maximum period of four years. After that period, members may reapply for the EMT Network membership.

### 3.2. Role of the EMT Network and support from DGT

The EMT Network is called upon to be active in promoting translator training all over Europe and beyond; its members are required to plan and carry out specific activities (curriculum development, exchange of students and lecturers, other cooperation activities) in conjunction with other members and applicants, in a bid to enhance the translator profession in the EU. DGT will help the EMT Network to put these activities into practice in the following ways:

- Assisted by academic experts, DGT will continue to fine-tune the proposed list of competences, to adapt them to changes in the professional environment and to establish a corresponding list of learning outcomes. To this end, it will consult the EMT Network and European and international organisations, and take account of market needs.
- The **EMT conference** will continue to provide a forum for networking, reflection and exchange of best practices.
- Additional one-off thematic conferences could be organised either by DGT or by members for other members.
- DGT will provide the secretariat for the Network until it is decided otherwise; this includes **hosting a website** for interested parties with information on available programmes in each country and **facilitating** the exchange of information via a restricted website (Wiki).
- DGT will concentrate its efforts on **disseminating information about EMT** to interested parties, and giving advice on practical matters to universities wishing to improve their programmes, in particular in countries where there is a shortage of qualified translators.
- DGT is currently promoting a programme whereby selected staff pay visits (of 4-6 weeks) to universities/public institutions in the Member States with the aim of improving either their knowledge of a foreign language or their knowledge of a subject in their own language, whilst providing students with first-hand experience of translating at European level (i.e. the **Visiting Translator Scheme**). A separate EMT-VTS strand for the visits of 1-week duration within the EMT Network has been established to take account of the EMT-specific requirements. The benefits for hosting universities include:
  - advising on how best to meet commitments arising out of EMT membership,
  - providing information on the competences required of professional translators in the EU institutions,
  - sharing information on the organisation of a translation service at institutional level,
  - sharing practical experience as a translator by running workshops, etc.
- DGT gives priority to students of programmes that are members of the Network to take part in DGT **unpaid placements**. These are 4 week student traineeships at the participant's expense at the Directorate-General for Translation, in corresponding language departments.

### 3.3. Overview of the advantages and commitments arising from membership of the EMT Network

Advantages	Members	Observers	Applicants
Opportunity to feed into the development of the EMT.	X	X	X
Advance information on the progress of the EMT programme.	X	X	X
Provision of lists of contact persons running programmes in similar fields.	X	X	X
Assistance from members or the Commission to create EMT-compliant programmes.			X
Use of a restricted site to exchange information with other programmes.	X	X	X
Use of the label 'Member/Observer of the EMT Network'	X	X	
EMT membership certificate and use of logo	X		

Commitments	Members	Observers	Applicants
Offering a Master's degree in their universities in line with EMT specifications.	X	X	
Working on developing the spread of the EMT in their respective countries.	X	X	
Acting (whenever possible) as an interface with the national accreditation authorities for study programmes in their respective countries.	X	X	
Encouraging closer cooperation at European level between universities and other higher education establishments offering training for translators.	X		
Undertaking specific cooperation activities inside the Network.	X	X	
Mentoring of applicants and establishing twinning agreements	X	X	
Contributing to the activities of the working groups	X	X	

#### 4. The future of the EMT Network

Over the last three years, the EMT has become a flagship project which is expected to bring benefits to Europe, academia and the translation profession as a whole. Following the successful launch of the first open call to join the EMT Network and the selection of 34 programmes that meet the EMT criteria (the list of successful candidates is published on the EMT website), the EMT Network has become a reality. It is now time to increase collaboration between universities meeting the EMT standards and to enhance the European added value of the project.

As a first practical step towards kicking off the activities of the EMT Network, the DGT organised the **first EMT Network Conference** in Brussels on 8 and 9 December 2009. This conference brought the EMT members together, who adopted the EMT Governance and elected the **EMT Board**.

The annual EMT conference is a major event for Network members, providing them with the opportunity to hold a plenary meeting to discuss the operation and further development of the Network. Given the inclusive nature of the EMT Network, the conference will also be open, subject to budget availability, to applicants and newly interested institutes.

The **second open call to join the EMT Network** was published in September 2010, with the deadline for submission set to 10 December 2010. On this occasion other eligible translation programmes can apply for the membership.

The ultimate goal of the EMT Network is to establish a self-governing European association of excellence in translator training.

#### **EMT Selection - Indicative timetable**

15 September 2010	Launch of the EMT Selection 2010
11-13 October 2010	2010 EMT conference
10 December 2010	Application submission deadline for the EMT Selection 2010
7-11 February 2011	Evaluation of applications
15 May 2011	Communication of the results
2013	EMT Selection