

NEW UPDATES
TRAD19
Translation of European Union documents
Information updates

Repetition of tests

Here is the last information relating to the tests for the open call for tenders, provided by the External Translation Unit. **Please note that the results of the TRAD19 procedure will not be communicated until its completion, not before several months.**

Communication

50. Will we receive new instructions or will they be the same as last time?

You will receive new briefs for the new tests along the following lines. Please note that the relevant links will also be provided.

Reviser's brief

You are being provided with an original text in your source language along with an unrevised translation in your target language. Please revise the entire translation and correct the errors to achieve a final version of the target text that is linguistically fully usable as it stands.

The task must be completed using tracked changes, but no annotations or comments should be inserted in the body of the text. Any such comments or annotations will not be taken into account in the evaluation of the test. In order to keep the name of the document intact thus avoiding any confusion we strongly advise you to work directly in the unrevised translation we have sent to you.

You are encouraged to incorporate any stylistic improvements you deem necessary. Please retain the formatting of the target text in your revised version.

Translator's brief

You are being provided with a source text of approximately one and a half pages. Please produce a final self-revised translation in the target language of this test.

Your translation must be fully usable as it stands. The task must be completed without the use of tracked changes or annotations, and comments must not be inserted in the body of the text. Any such comments will not be taken into account in the evaluation of the test.

Case study brief

The case study scenario is being provided in three language versions: English, French and German. Please read the scenario carefully in your chosen language and then describe how you would proceed, focusing on the following aspects of your workflow:

- project preparation;
- management of terminology (incl. consistency), versions, formatting, other issues;
- quality assurance;

- management of deadline change;
- delivery of final products.

You must present all stages of your workflow, from acceptance to delivery. We recommend that your description does not exceed 3 000 characters excluding spaces (i.e. two standard DGT pages). Your description should be as brief, succinct and to the point as possible, however a longer description would not adversely affect your evaluation.

Please note that for practical reasons, case studies written in English are welcome but you may draft the case study in any other EU official language.

To ensure strictly anonymous evaluation, do not mention your name or the name of the organisation you represent anywhere in the text of your answer.

49. What would be your advice if reference sites like IATE or EUR-lex are down during the Test on the 14th Jan?

<https://publications.europa.eu/code/en/en-000100.htm> was down this morning. Some of the EU reference sites are frequently down (though usually only for a few minutes at the time). Given the very short TAT for test, reference sites being down could negatively impact the results.

With internet there is always a risk. If there are incidents the evaluation committee will examine case by case and take a fair decision.

48. We understand we will receive several files. How will they be named?

Example: You apply for 1 lot (PT>EN). You will receive one mail with the following attachments:

- REV_PT-EN_ORI.docx: this is the original text of the revision
- REV_PT-EN_TRA-CANDIDATE.docx: this is the translation to be revised and where you should work on with track changes
- REV_PT-EN_BRIEF.docx: these are the instructions for your REV test

- TRA_PT-EN_ORI.docx: this is the original text for the translation
- TRA_PT-EN_BRIEF.docx: these are the instructions for your TRA test

- CASE_TRAD19_EN-FR-DE.docx: this is the case study in all 3 languages
- CASE_TRAD19_BRIEF_EN-FR-DE.docx: these are the instructions for the case study

If you apply for more than one lot, you will receive one mail with the case study attachments, and one mail per lot with the attachments for REV and TRA.

Please note that attachments might not be in the same order as in the example above.

47. About the test name changes: could you please confirm that only the TRA test file name needs to be changed (from ORI > TRA) and that the other test file names should not be altered?

Yes.

46. I am writing to you concerning that line "On 14 January: Please make sure that you and your test-takers remain available until 14:00 to respond to potential questions from our side".

Could you please elaborate more on that particular request? Should we all remain in front of the computers or it would be enough just to have the phones by ourselves if something happens, e.g. questions, clarifications that you might ask of, etc.?

This is only a precaution in case there is an incidence with the reception. If that is the case, we will

contact you by email.

45. How should the translator add comments or notes to the proposed translation if required? Will comments be accepted in this test? If those occur, should the PDF file contain those as well?

With the new TRA test you will receive a new brief with the relevant instructions. We can already advance that this brief says: "The task must be completed without the use of tracked changes or annotations, and comments must not be inserted in the body of the text. Any such comments will not be taken into account in the evaluation of the test."

So the answer is no: comments and notes must not be inserted and therefore should not appear in either the Word file or the PDF file (which should be identical).

44. In the REV test, are we supposed to clean the tracked changes before creating the PDF file to be sent along the Word file?

No, do not clean any of the versions. Both the word and the pdf should show the tracked changes and be identical.

43. On 24th October minor layout differences between test original files and final versions were not taken into account in final evaluation. Now that the test will be in a Word file, how strictly will formatting accuracy be checked?

With the new REV test you will receive a new brief with the relevant instructions. We can already advance that this brief says: "Please retain the formatting of the target text in your revised version".

42. We were wondering if you will confirm the receipt of the deliveries per email. Even an auto-confirmation would be better than nothing.

We will send a confirmation email. Note that it might take some time

41. Further to Q&A 25 (New Q&As), I am afraid that the answer is not clear to us. You say that you 'recommend that the case study does not exceed 3 000 characters excluding spaces (i.e. two standard DGT pages)'. This leaves the matter open to interpretation and it does not promote fair competition. What if we restrict our answer to 3 000 characters and another tenderer does not do so but uses 3 500, 4 000 or 5 000 characters. This would obviously give the other tenderer an advantage. There should be a specific and clear character limitation for everyone or the character limitation should be altogether eliminated.

Not having a specific answer to this matter creates confusion: on which basis will the case studies be evaluated? Is the length of the reply to the case study a criterion, e.g. will we receive a bonus if we stick to 3 000 characters or a penalty if we exceed 3 000 characters? Is it better to make our answer more comprehensive and go over the 3 000 character limit or to omit some information in order to keep within the limit.

Please see Q&A 34 below.

The 3000 characters are not a limit but a recommendation. You may understand that reading and evaluating around 180 case studies will take some time. That is why we suggest (= recommend) that you summarise your reply on 2 pages (which corresponds to 3000 characters). Furthermore, experience has shown that it is possible to give a comprehensive reply on 2 pages.

But to make it very clear: The length of the case study is NOT a criterion for the evaluation of your reply. What counts is the content. If you write more that would put you neither in a more

advantageous nor in a disadvantageous position compared to the other tenderers.

40. If we switch a linguist from translator to reviser, or add "reviser" to his/her previous "translator" role, what documents we have to provide? Is it enough if we send a new annex 7.3?

Yes, for change of roles of existing team members just send a new Annex 7.3.

39. Would it be possible to receive Word files instead of PDF?

As stated in our email of 18 December and in new Q&A 30, you will receive the tests in word format.

Please note that, for legal reasons, you should however return the tests in both word and pdf formats.

38. How would you like us to make the delivery, 1 single zip file, 1 delivery with different files, 16 different delivery emails?

The tenderer (and not the test-takers!) will send the exams back to us by language combination by replying directly to the respective mail you got from us, making sure you keep the Subject line the same and the name of the tests we attached. Please note that for legal reasons you have to provide the tests in WORD and PDF format.

Example: In case you apply for 15 lots, you will get 16 mails from us: one per lot with the translation and revision tests and one with the case study. That means that in turn we will receive 16 mails from you.

37. To be sure that all the team involved in the test receive the files at the very first moment, we would like to request you to send the test to an additional email address.

As we said, all tests will be sent to one single address per tenderer.

36. Can we add files commenting on the REV?

No. Only track changes will be considered.

35. Which version will be marked? Do we need to check that the word and pdf versions are identical?

The word version will be marked.

Unless an unexpected IT problem occurs during the conversion, one word document and its pdf will always be identical.

34. Will the length of the case study affect its evaluation in any way?

No, but, as we said, our recommendation is to write about 2 standard pages.

33. You are saying that "you have to provide the tests in WORD and PDF format". Do we have to anonymize the Word and PDF files, i.e. clear all properties from the actual files so they are fully anonymous?

No. Tests will be anonymised by us before the marking.

32. You say "This means that we will not accept any tests that arrive after 13:00." Do you mean that a) we have to send our reply before 13:00 or b) that our reply needs to have been received from your server before 13:00? There is a big difference between these two statements. a) makes much more sense and can be easily proven by checking

the email's properties. Please clarify.

Indeed. All e-mails sent by 13:00 will be accepted.

31. Can we use track-changes in the REV test?

You must use track changes for the REV test. Please note that comments will not be taken into account.

You will receive all relevant instructions in a brief document into the REV file.

30. Could you please confirm that the translation will have to be done directly from the Word files provided? There will be no Translation Memory provided to be used for the translation or revision test?

We confirm that translation memories will not be provided.

Only word documents will be provided.

29. Can you send us a program, with which to create the pdf files for the exam?

You do not need a programme for the conversion. When saving the document you just have to choose from the file menu ".pdf". It works with Microsoft and also with Microsoft for Mac.

28. Further to your request to update the list of test takers, does this mean that we can apply for some lots that we did not apply for before?

No, you cannot add lots that were not in your tender. You can only change the test takers if they are no longer available. If they are subcontractors who were not presented in your tender, you need to send the documents mentioned in old Q&A 106.

27. In the test takers table requested we have included the e-mail address of the test taker. We suppose that we will receive the case study and texts for revision and translation in that address. Our question is if we can use another company's e-mail address to deliver the case study and the translation and revision tests.

Your assumption is wrong. As we said in our previous communications and in NEW Q&A 16 and 23, all tests will be sent to the tenderer. It is up to the tenderer to forward them to the test takers, receive them back from the test takers and return them to us by replying to our email/s. Therefore, for the re-sit, you need to provide one single tenderer's e-mail address, both for receiving all tests and for delivering them back to DGT.

TEST TAKERS SHOULD NOT RETURN THE TESTS TO THE DGT!

26. We have applied for three lots. One revision test taker unfortunately is no longer available. Is it mandatory to have 3 revision test takers?

Yes, it is mandatory to have one revision test taker and one translation test taker for each lot. If you are not able to propose a revision test taker (or a translation test taker) for a certain lot within the deadline, that lot will be rejected.

Any other lots will remain valid.

25. Q&A 246 said that there would not be "a limit of words" for the case study test. To our surprise during the test on 24 October, there was a character limit imposed. Wasn't that a breach of the tender specifications allowing for appeals? Anyway, what will be the case in the re-sit? Is there going to be a word/character limit for the case study or not?

That was linked to the technical specificities of the external service provider's on-line platform.

Indeed, the Tender Specifications do not set a limit of words, but we recommend that the case study does not exceed 3 000 characters excluding spaces (i.e. two standard DGT pages). Your description should be brief, succinct and to the point.

24. We already told you in a previous communication that mid-January would not suit us. Our team will be on leave as there was nothing programmed for this time of the year. Key team members will be absent. Please reconsider the date.

As we said, unfortunately it is not possible to accommodate all situations and the preferences of every single tenderer.

However, in this new round test takers may sit the test anywhere they are, as long as they can receive and send e-mails.

23. Do we understand correctly that all the tests, including those for our translators and revisers will be sent to our e-mail address, in other words: the linguists will not receive them into their private e-mails?

That is correct. Please see previous answers on this.

22. One of our problems with the last test was that we thought we had four hours to do the tests, when in fact it was a four-hour window with just 2.5 hours to actually do the tests. In the re-sit, will the three hours be just a window, within which we'll have 2.5 hours actual test time, or will we have a full three hours to do the tests?

Three hours is the total time to do the tests and to send them back to us.

21. We would like to request that the tests take place after January 23rd. The reason is that since tenderers are not responsible for this mess, and since we have spent so far a lot of resources to organise our participation, we think it's only fair to have enough time in our disposal to organise it again. Your proposed tests date does not take into account that from mid-December to mid-January many people in our industry, translators in particular, take holidays and are not even available by phone.

We are aware of your concerns and the inconveniences resulting from the general resit but we need to ask for your understanding that the date cannot be changed. It has been fixed after thorough reflection taking into account all necessary procedural steps after the re-sits. Furthermore, it will enable DGT to start the new Framework Contracts as planned on 1 July 2020.

20. I am tendering as a single tender for one lot and as a joint tenderer for others. Can I use the same email address?

You have submitted two different tenders in two different compositions. Please provide two different emails for the resit: one per tenderer.

In your case the relevant tests will be sent separately to each tenderer.

See also Q&A 279.

19. Why do we need to provide word and pdf?

For our records, we need supplementary proof of the tests as delivered.

18. We sent back only one test because it was just a mock exercise.

Instructions are for a reason and always need to be followed. The goal of the exercise was to test, among other things, occurrences with the attachments.

Please note that on the 14th of January an incomplete delivery for a certain lot equals rejection of that lot.

17. We did not receive your mail the day of the mock tests. Later we found it in the spam folder.

Please add our e-mail address DGT-FL-TRAD-19@ec.europa.eu to the list of trusted addresses in the security parameter of your mailbox. Also, check the spam/junk e-mail folder if you do not receive them immediately.

16. On the day of the mock tests, our test takers Ms X, Ms Y and Mr W did not receive the files. Please take note of their addresses so that you sent the real tests directly to them.

This was no mistake. As we said, in the new round of tests it is the tenderers who will receive the tests via e-mail and who must send the tests back to DGT once ready.

As in a real contractual situation, DGT will no longer have any direct contact with linguists; only with the tenderer.

In the previous tests on 24 October the service provider needed to deal with every test taker because of the technical specificities of its on-line platform, but this is no longer the case for the general re-sit.

15. With regard to the mock test, for the conversion of pdf files into word files, can we use a simple process of extracting the text automatically and send it back to you without checking the layout or content?

Yes, for the mock test neither the content nor the format matter but please send back both pdf and word files.

14. You say that the new tests will not be taking place in 2019. I assume they will be held early in 2020. Does this mean that the start of the new contracts might have to be postponed? If so, will the existing contracts be extended?

According to the current planning the new contracts will enter into force as foreseen on 1 July 2020. In case this has to be changed, we will inform all tenderers in due time.

13. I was wondering if it would be possible to A) have our 1st test results acknowledged B) retake the test but acknowledge the best result from the 2 tests?

As we said, no tests will be marked for equal treatment reasons.

12. Will the exams taken during the first round of tests be taken into account for the evaluation of the tender?

No, the first round of tests was cancelled owing to the problems encountered by many test takers.

The second round of tests are the only ones which will be marked.

11. Could you confirm that the general resit will not take place before the end of the holiday season, which is the 6th of January?

We confirm.

10. We had to withdraw from one lot as we discovered just before the tests of 24 October that one of our test-takers was committed to another company. Would it be possible to submit another name for this lot for the second round of tests?

Yes. Please see also new Q&A 9.

PLEASE MAKE SURE THIS TIME THAT YOUR TEST TAKER HAS NO PREVIOUS COMMITMENT WITH

ANOTHER TENDERER FOR ANY TEST.

9. Can we add new vendors?

Yes. If they are subcontractors who were not presented in your tender, you need to send the documents mentioned in old Q&A 106.

8. Since it worked for us without any difficulties, how can we know that the technical problems mentioned were not on the part of these test-takers? (Insufficient means, lack of relevant technical knowledge, etc.). All test-takers had the opportunity to test the platform beforehand.

We analysed the evidence and we can assure you that it was not the fault of the test takers. In many cases the platform failed and the on-line help was not available or was inefficient. Therefore, the testing conditions were not the same for all.

7. Given the circumstances, I am not surprised that you need to organise a general resit. I guess, as much as an inconvenience and annoyance it is for us, it must be even more inconvenient and annoying for the EC. I can assure you that I have apologised to everyone involved already, I just hope that it will be enough and that we haven't frightened people off from wanting to be involved in future tests!

DGT could not possibly have foreseen this. We are aware of the inconvenience caused to tenderers who were able to take the tests normally and we sincerely apologize. We hope that the interest of our tenderers and test takers will be maintained.

6. It is unacceptable that a Directorate General of the European Commission, with such a long time to prepare and test your resources and services, makes such mistakes. As regards equality and fairness, we think that now, after having taken this first test and learned how it works, next test-takers will devise strategies to artificially improve their results.

It is true that experience could improve results, but this would also apply to your case. However, as we said, not all test takers could take the tests.

5. We had to pay our linguists for the tests on the 24th of October and now we have to pay them again. You should reimburse this extra cost, as it is not our fault.

Unfortunately DGT cannot reimburse the expenses incurred from the repetition of the tests. The invitation to tender says in this respect: "All costs incurred for the preparation and submission of tenders are to be borne by you and will not be reimbursed."

4. Despite all my team members having followed the instructions to try the platform before the day of the tests, on the 24th of October they could not access the tests at all. We could not even log in. This means that those tenderers who did have access know how the tests look like. Could we also see the tests? That would be equal treatment.

All tests taken on the 24th of October can be [seen on our page](#).

3. We are relieved that new tests will be organised. We had so many problems that we could not really focus. We think it is a fair decision.

We were made aware during the day of the tests that some test takers were facing technical problems to various extent and that many could not be solved on line. Besides, the analysis of the the log book showed that not all test takers had the same time to deliver, which constitutes a breach of equal treatment.

2. We did not have any issues. Why do we need to repeat the tests? We think that only those who experienced problems should re-sit the tests.

Equal treatment is an essential principle of public procurement. In our case, it means that the tests, the tool and the time must be the same for all.

1. For planning reasons (people on holiday, external vendors to be booked for an unknown period of time), could we have an indication as to the timeframe in which the test will be taken and if the tool will be the same as the first one chosen? Also, how will the communication be handled. Will you contact us directly through email?

The tests will not take place in 2019 and the tool will be different.

You will be contacted by e-mail sufficiently in advance in order to confirm the availability of your team once the date has been set. You will then receive all relevant instructions.