SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER FORUM MEETING I

3 June 2015, University of Ljubljana

1. Introduction

FP7 project MIME (*Mobility and Inclusion in Multilingual Europe*) has adopted four principles for understanding European multilingual challenges and coming to terms with them: (1) built-in interdisciplinarity; (2) the linking up of hitherto relatively disconnected micro-, meso- and macro-level perspectives; (3) a policy analysis approach providing a framework to combine the findings from different disciplines and use them in the formulation of policy orientations; and (4) the necessity to take into account **stakeholder input and feedback**. The fourth principle is realized via the **standing MIME Stakeholder Forum**, which serves as a locus for exchange and debate between stakeholders and the project team.

The first Stakeholder Forum meeting took place on 3 June 2015 in Ljubljana at the start of the second MIME Consortium meeting, which provided ample opportunities for interaction between the stakeholders and the MIME team. The general, albeit not exclusive, focus of the first Stakeholder Forum meeting was on the institutions working in the field of translation and interpreting, with many cross-cutting issues linking mediation to language learning and teaching, mobility, language rights, migrant integration and language policy issues.

The following representatives of 10 MIME Stakeholder organizations participated in the Stakeholder Forum meeting.

Short stakeholder and stakeholder institution profiles with contact details are attached in a separate document titled *Stakeholder Profiles*.

1	**Jan Bednarich**	European Commission, DG Translation
2	**Ina Ferbezar**	ALTE – Association of Language Testers in Europe
3	**Eyvor Fogarty**	FIT Europe, International Federation of Translators
4	**Brian Fox**	European Commission, DG Interpretation
5	**Amalija Macek**	EULITA – European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association
6	**Sandro Paolucci**	EULITA - European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association
7	**Kilian Seeber**	AIIC – International Association of Conference Interpreters
8	**Philia Thalgott**	CoE – Council of Europe
9	**Tamás Váradi**	EFNIL – European Federation of National Institutes for Language
10	**Maurizio Viezzi**	CEL-ELC – European Language Council
11	**Maria Teresa Zanola**	REALITER – Rede Panlatina de Terminologia

The Stakeholder Forum meeting started at 10:45 by brief introductions by Prof. François Grin, project coordinator; Prof. Marija Omazić, dissemination manager; and Prof. Nike Pokorn, deputy project coordinator. The agenda included the invited stakeholder presentation by Eyvor Fogarty (FIT Europe),

MIME
Mobility and Inclusion
in Multilingual Europe

followed by brief stakeholder presentations on issues of multilingualism, and the round table discussion *Bringing together practice and research to confront the multilingual challenge*. The meeting was wrapped up at 16:30 by conclusions from project coordinator François Grin.

2. Plenary talk *Professional Needs in Translation and interpreting*

The plenary talk *Professional Needs in Translation and Interpreting* by Eyvor Fogarty of FIT Europe highlighted a succession of the main issues confronting the profession today, interspersed with a host of real-life scenarios. She touched upon the role of regulatory bodies, outsourcing vs. direct employment, cost of translation, need for high quality translator training and certification and mediation in the military. She also proposed to **define and characterize translation** in relation to **multilingualism**, **embed it in the political context**, highlight the **social need** for translation and **interpreting**, and approach **machine translation as a democratizing feature**.

Multilingualism was defined as a **transferable skill** that may lead to increased **employability** and a **life-long learning goal for translators**. Furthermore, the talk stressed the awareness that the **political embeddedness of language, language policy and the political implications of the work of translators and interpreters** are present in the T & I profession (for a specific example, consider the Welsh Language Act (1993), which regulates the provision of translation in both Welsh and English in Wales). The sense of embeddedness also comes from within the profession, as exemplified by the *Professional Interpreters for Justice* campaign, promoting **social inclusion and recognition** of the profession by solidarity and joint social action of public service interpreters. The campaign brings together ten professional interpreters' organisations, representing 2,350 registered public service interpreters in 101 languages, and the profession's regulatory body, the *National Register of Public Service Interpreters* (**NRPSI**), to stop outsourcing, reintroduce direct employment of freelance interpreters by the courts and police services, and persuade the government to provide statutory regulation of the interpreting profession and protection of the title of Legal Interpreter.

The cost of translation was another issue highlighted in the talk, with cases of **"demonization" of translation as too expensive**, ignoring the unpredictability of "flash points" of need for T & I. Another relevant point made was on how the social need for T & I meshes with various social and gender issues (e.g. mediation in the military and aid organizations, role of gender). The final points focused on **machine translation as a democratization or even democratizing feature** – that is, one that contributes to building a more democratic society.

3. Round table discussion

The stakeholders were invited to first introduce themselves and present the main activities and related to multilingualism that their organisations are involved in. Brief descriptions of stakeholder organizations are available in the attached *Stakeholder Profiles* document. The round table discussion was structured around two main questions:

1. What research on multilingualism is done by the stakeholders themselves?

2. What are the research needs of the stakeholders?

The following feedback was recorded in response the first question:

» The Council of Europe's Language Policy Unit has developed policy guidelines and tools involving research in areas such as the languages of schooling, plurilingual[1] and intercultural education, and the linguistic integration of adult migrants; work related to mediation and competences for democratic culture is under way for universities and schools. Upon request, the Council of Europe develops national or regional language education policy 'pro-

---

[1] While the EU uses 'multilingualism' for all contexts, the Council of Europe makes a difference between 'plurilingualism' (related to the individual) and 'multilingualism' (related to an area).

files' and in this context awareness was raised of the social **cost of non-interpretation or low quality interpretation**[2] in medical services, mediation and inter-linguistic communication.

» EULITA carries out the LEGALSEARCH project, which helps end users find a legal interpreter and is based on national registers of legal interpreters. It has been noted that the **absence of translation costs governments money** and **good interpreting can save lives.**

» AIIC commissions research on issues directly relevant to the profession (such as workload, ergonomics, the impact of new technologies on the workplace etc.) and has recently co-sponsored a study on human factors in remote conference interpreting.

» DG Interpretation has also conducted studies on remote interpreting, videoconferencing with simultaneous, conference technologies, as well as surveys on 'customer' satisfaction, the quality of interpretation, and on whether multilingualism improves communication. They identify **monolingualism as the greatest challenge to multilingualism**.

» REALITER brings together persons, national and international institutions of Latin countries working in the field of terminology. The network does research on terminology and provides terminological resources for translation and specialized communication in everyday and professional contexts.

» In addition to translating texts, DG Translation is involved in research on multilingualism, cross-linguistic comparisons, finding gaps and mistranslations, quality assurance in the translation processes, assessment of translation, and marking systems.

As for the research wish list, the stakeholders expressed the following desiderata and needs:

---

[2] This issue was raised occasionnaly during study visits in the context of the development of language education policy profiles.

» Need for IT solutions – databases with **social mapping of translators and interpreters**, their language combinations and expertise.

» Need for **increased mobility of students**, using programmes such as *Democrates*, which offers students a chance to travel across Europe to work in the private sector and learn languages.

» Need to study the **role of multilingualism in the construction and transfer of knowledge**.

» Need to study the r**ole of interpreters as coordinators of exchange and co-participants i**n knowledge transfer.

» Need to raise **awareness among translation studies scholars** of language policy, diversity and multilingualism.

» Need for interpreters not to come across as too self-serving – **putting the needs of translation and interpreting users first.**

» Need to monitor the dangerous symptoms of certain governments cancelling translator and interpreter training and **forsaking multilingualism for using English as a lingua franca** (e.g. the Danish government no longer supports the accreditation of interpreters, and the Slovene government has stopped funding the programme in conference interpreting). ELF (English) is increasingly used as the only lingua franca, which sometimes leads to comprehension problems, even by interpreters.

» Need to critically investigate the use of **ELF as a cure-all solution** in the light of research findings that suggest accented speech is less credible.

» Need to monitor the **effects of** (i) E**U language policy on costs** and (ii) measures to reduce the costs of interpreting, taking into account the economic reality. Strategies that require monitoring include asymmetric and limited internal regimes: CoE, for example, which has 27 member states and 31 languages, is often criticized for relying only on Eng-

lish and French, and for the absence of Russian and German). Need to develop an acceptable, applicable language regime, since no organization can work efficiently in dozens of languages.

» Need to study how **outsourcing vs. direct employment** of translators and interpreters affect the costs and quality of translation.

» Need to **draft source documents and legislation in a clear way** as a prerequisite for high quality translation and saving time and money spent on translation and interpreting.

» Need to **monitor language policy and instigate policy changes** (i.e. the re-appointment of a Commissioner for Multilingualism should be considered; it could be useful to push for a Directive that would regulate access to interpretation in more settings than just the legal one).

» Need to study changing patterns of language usage e.g. the advantages and disadvantages of the use of lingua franca(s), the additional facilities for Basque, Catalan, Galician, Scottish Gaelic or Welsh, and the status of Irish.

» Need to take an **interdisciplinary approach to tackling the multilingual challenge** via targeted language teaching and supportive policies, promotion of the use of national languages

» Need to carry out research on the **use of minority languages, migrant languages**, Roma **languages without standardized form, and their linguistics rights.**

» Need to interpret **language rights as rights to translation.**

» Need to assist with the development of **quality standards and proper training for court interpreters and translators,** taking account of the fact that there are Community vs. national competences in this area.

» Need to find the right **balance between the political status of languages and the non-discriminatory principle of language use on the one hand, and the practical reality on the other** – this could mean maintaining them at the political level while reducing the number of working languages in order to cut costs and improve efficiency.

» Need to find a balance between the **institutional vs. private levels of multilingualism**.

» Need to define the consequences and **costs of going monolingual**.

» Need to find the **right balance between EU and member states' language policies** and avoid ambiguities related to their respective responsibilities.

4. Wrap up and conclusion

The MIME stakeholders come from diverse professional backgrounds, face different realities and have different needs, expectations and takes on research. Some conduct research themselves, some commission it, others need very specific types of research targeted for their niche or the tasks at hand. Generally speaking, the stakeholders expressed concern for the multilingual challenge their institutions are facing and the need to fine-tune language policies and find innovative solutions to maximize their scope, efficiency and impact.

As a result, the project should set up, on the Stakeholder Forum section of the MIME website, a list of contact persons among the stakeholders, with e-mail addresses, as well as a list of MIME researchers (along with their area of specialisation and their e-mail addresses), which can serve as an easy contact point for floating questions and quickly locating expertise. The rationale is to bring together key actors, facilitate a discussion on a variety of issues concerning multilingualism, enable direct exchange and close interaction, and provide constant feedback from the field regarding the practical needs of the different groups of stakeholders and their constituencies.