

## ECHA's Translation Practice

40<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Management Board 16-17 December 2015

<b>Item</b>	16.1
<b>Action</b>	For information
<b>Status</b>	Final - Public

### Key messages

The translations practice established in 2009 had to be reviewed and updated in order to take into account the evolving needs of the Agency and also the budget available in the coming years.

SMEs and the general public remain our main target group for communicating in 23 official EU languages. This is also highlighted in ECHA's Work Programmes. Therefore, the translations activities shall reflect primarily the needs of the SMEs. The official 23 EU languages are Bulgarian, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Maltese, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovakian, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish. ECHA will:

- Keep on translating relevant material into 22 official EU languages<sup>1</sup>
- Reduce the number of pages translated currently (stop translating certain administrative documents such as a Work Programme and translate only the summaries with the facts and figures – savings around EUR 450 000 /year) or instead of translating the entire Evaluation report, only the part with recommendations would be translated – savings about EUR 100 000/year
- Start translating new products relevant to the duty holders (for instance, Q&As, helptexts for IT-tools etc.)

### Background

ECHA needs a consistent, harmonised translations practice so that we provide predictability and certainty for stakeholders. The practice from 2009 had to be revised because:

- Translation demands are increasing
- ECHA's product range is diversifying (today we have a larger range of material for translation)
- There is a pressure to translate more
- Translations are costly

The ECHA Secretariat decided to continue translating into 22 EU languages all the relevant material apart from administrative documents which are more targeted to other EU bodies than SMEs or the general public.

Subsequently, ECHA will continue to translate all current and new types of corporate and external communication products<sup>2</sup> informing duty holders, in particular SMEs, and the general

<sup>1</sup> ECHA does not translate into Irish Gaelic.

<sup>2</sup> New communication products refer to the material not covered in the original translations practice of

public as well as individual correspondence/interaction with companies according to need.<sup>3</sup>

By providing the translations ECHA will ensure:

- Language is not a barrier to compliance or to knowing what ECHA does
- Good customer service
- Communication with single entities is conducted in their language, where this is necessary.

REACH Regulation<sup>4</sup> stipulates that the translation services required for the functioning of the Agency shall be provided by the Translation Centre of the bodies of the European Union. ECHA has a Service Agreement with the CdT on the basis of which it commissions individual translations. The translations are published just as we receive them - unchecked.

## Rationale

- Budgetary constraints in the coming years
- Evolving needs of the Agency
- Limited resources

## Alternative options

In revising the practice, several options were considered: translating less content, fewer types of products, into fewer languages or continuing with the current practice of translating material aimed at SMEs and the general public.

## Drawbacks

Big expenditure on translating administrative documents would not be sustainable within expected budgets. The Agency may be criticised by other EU institutions but most agencies do not translate such documents either. However, summaries of administrative documents such as a Work Programme or General Report will be available in 23 EU languages also in the future. The needs of the SMEs and the general public are not affected.

## Attachment:

N/A

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2009 such as Q&As, subtitles for videos, e-publications, helptexts for IT-tools; as well as material related to individual interaction with companies

<sup>3</sup> Article 104 (1) of the REACH Regulation provides the legal basis for ECHA's practice by referring to Regulation No. 1 of 15 April 1958 determining the languages of the European Community.

<sup>4</sup> Article 104 (2)