



l'alliance

Confederal Alliance of free trade unions

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A grim future for the DGT and multilingualism

The **ALLIANCE** works for a multicultural, multilingual Europe, accessible to all EU citizens and defends a DGT that provides translations for all Community languages. Below the **ALLIANCE** gives its assessment of the situation in the DGT, which has changed its Director-General three times and seen three reorganisations in less than four years. These constant reforms have reduced demand, created artificial overstaffing and finally led to a situation where a large number of colleagues are now being shown the door.

The “demand management” policy applied over the past two years has involved systematically refusing requests for translations, which the DGs concerned then get done in other ways (grey translations, freelance, trainees with no translation qualifications, etc.) without any control of quality. This has reduced the workload for translators of the EU8 languages (the old, non-procedural languages) by more than half since May 2004 and created artificial overstaffing. In addition, staffing needs have been underestimated by about 30%, having been calculated on the false and unrealistic basis of six pages a day over 220 days a year.

Based on these unsound calculations, DGT management has decided to abolish 181 posts in the EU8 departments, leaving them with 55 translators each (taking no account of translators working part-time). Units in Brussels will be most affected. DGT management has not yet said what will happen to the translators currently occupying those posts or on what basis those translators who are to be redeployed will be selected. Nevertheless, the DGT is secretly finalising its plan to reduce staff and will start implementing it in September 2006, blatantly ignoring all the procedures for social dialogue. Since it is likely that there will be a shortage of volunteers, “individual measures” are planned, which will involve calling in members of staff and attempting to persuade them to go.

How can there be any justification for depriving the DGT of translators who are both highly qualified and difficult to replace? Why does the DGT want to cut the number of its translators, forcing it to significantly increase productivity and extend the use of freelance, at the expense of translation quality? Is this a deliberate attempt to weaken the Commission’s translation service to the advantage of private interests and in total contradiction with all the fine words about promoting a multilingual environment in the European institutions?

Faced with this dramatic situation and a total lack of transparency, the **ALLIANCE** confirms its support for our translator colleagues and calls for:

- an immediate end to the destabilisation of the DGT and a commitment to make full use of a translation service that constitutes one of the European civil service’s greatest assets;
- the immediate creation of a joint monitoring committee to oversee this new, hidden, reorganisation of the DGT;
- an evaluation of the real cost of this dismantling of the DGT.

The **ALLIANCE** invites all colleagues affected by any “individual measures” taken by DGT management to contact their representatives so that we can together use all the means at our disposal to defeat these plans to dismantle the DGT.

