



"ATTRACTING TALENT FOR AN UPSKILLED PROFESSION "

First Panel: UNDERSTANDING THE TALENT SHORTAGE

Moderator: Elisabetta DEGIAMPIETRO, Head of Conference Services Unit, DG Interpretation

John O'SHEA, Chairperson, FIT Europe

John O'Shea is the current chairperson of FIT Europe, the Regional Centre of the International Federation of Translators in Europe, for the 2021-2024 mandate and in the previous mandate (2017-2021) served on the Board of the Regional Centre.

He is also a member of the European Commission's Language Industry Expert Group which provides insights and advice to the Commission on translation/language industry matters.

In his role as Chairperson of FIT Europe his interests are, among others, increasing visibility for the translation and interpreting profession, gathering concrete data on the state of the European translation market, collective bargaining and fair pay/fair work for people in the profession, as well as how the requirements in important European legislation like the General Data Protection Regulation impact members of the profession. He speaks regularly at conferences and events to promote the profession and the work done by FIT Europe. He is a member of the Panhellenic Association of Translators (PEM-PAT) and a legal translator by profession. He has published extensively on legal translation issues and is currently involved in a major project to translate Greece's legal codes into English to make Greek law more accessible to a wider audience.

Margo SIJS, Head of Dutch Interpreting unit, DG Interpretation

Margo Sijs is head of the Dutch interpreting unit with the European Commission. After obtaining a degree in conference interpreting and a post-graduate degree in Business Management she started her career as a conference interpreter in Brussels. She became a European Commission official in 2011. She interprets from English, French, Italian, Portuguese and Polish into Dutch and also has a retour from Dutch into French. She very much enjoys following European and international affairs close-up and contributing to the European project on a daily basis. Together with her team of skilled and experienced interpreters she is

currently preparing for the Belgian Presidency of the European Council, which is starting in January.

Maya DE WIT, Sign language Interpreter consultant, trainer & researcher, AIIC

Maya de Wit is a signed language interpreter and consultant. Her working languages are Dutch Sign Language (NGT), International Sign (IS), American Sign Language (ASL), Dutch, English, and German. In October 2023, she received her doctoral degree at the Radboud University with her dissertation “Practitioners’ perspectives on International Sign Conference Interpreting.” Maya is the former coordinator of the AIIC Sign Language Network (2016-2023), former president of the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (2006-2012), and a former board member of the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association (2009-2012). In 2020 she was the course director for the European Commission’s first mentoring scheme for International Sign interpreters. As of July 2023, Maya is the project leader of a to be developed ISO standard on technical requirements for signed language interpreting. Maya is also the author of the publication “Sign Language Interpreting in Europe,” which has gone through six updated editions since the year 2000.

Julie JOHNSON, Chair, Translation & Interpretation, Middlebury Institute of International Studies

Julie E. Johnson, EdD is a Professor at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in California, where she serves as the Translation and Interpretation Program Chair. She teaches graduate courses in simultaneous and consecutive interpreting and translation (French>English) and mindfulness for interpreters—the area of her scholarly research. She also develops and delivers workshops for fellow trainers and working professionals, particularly court interpreters and government linguists. In her own freelance practice, she interprets for conferences, parliamentary delegations, corporate seminars, and legal proceedings, and translates a range of mainly corporate and legal documents.