



Brussels, 19.2.2024
C(2024) 847 final

COMMISSION DECISION

of 19.2.2024

**on the financing of actions related to training in conference interpreting and the
adoption of the work programme for 2024**

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THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 July 2018 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union, amending Regulations (EU) No 1296/2013, (EU) No 1301/2013, (EU) No 1303/2013, (EU) No 1304/2013, (EU) No 1309/2013, (EU) No 1316/2013, (EU) No 223/2014, (EU) No 283/2014, and Decision No 541/2014/EU and repealing Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 966/2012¹, and in particular Article 110 thereof,

Whereas:

- (1) In order to ensure support for training in conference interpreting, it is necessary to adopt an annual financing decision, which constitutes the annual work programme for 2024. Article 110 of Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2018/1046 ('the Financial Regulation') establishes detailed rules on work programmes. This decision is in accordance with the Commission Communication of 9 April 2002 on the implementation of the strategy for preparing for the 2004 enlargement and, in particular, the section on financial support², the Commission Communication of 22 November 2005 on 'A new framework strategy for multilingualism' and, in particular, section IV.3 thereof³ and the Commission Communication of 19 September 2008 on 'Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment'⁴. Where considered appropriate, e.g. to increase the leverage effect of the grant programme and the supported actions, financing could be extended marginally to other types of interpreting training projects fostering the interpreting profession as a whole.
- (2) It is necessary to allow for the payment of interest due for late payment on the basis of Article 116(5) of the Financial Regulation.
- (3) In order to allow for flexibility in the implementation of the work programme, it is appropriate to allow changes which should not be considered substantial for the purposes of Article 110(5) of the Financial Regulation.

¹ OJ L 193, 30.7.2018, p.1.

² SEC(2002)349/2 of 9 April 2002.

³ COM(2005)596 of 22 November 2005.

⁴ SEC (2008) 2443 of 18 September 2008.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1

The work programme

The annual financing decision, constituting the annual work programme for the implementation of the financial support for training in conference interpreting for year 2024, as set out in the Annex, is hereby adopted.

Article 2

Union contribution

The maximum Commission contribution for the work programme for 2024 is set at EUR 441 176 and shall be financed from the appropriations entered in the budget line B2024.20.03.11.02 of the general 2024 budget of the Union and from assigned revenue received for the provision of interpretation services to the other Union institutions and bodies of the Union.

The appropriations provided for in the first paragraph may also cover interest due for late payment.

Article 3

Flexibility clause

Cumulated changes to the allocations to specific actions not exceeding 20% of the maximum contribution set in Article 2, first paragraph, of this Decision shall not be considered to be substantial within the meaning of Article 110(5) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046, where those changes do not significantly affect the nature of the actions and the objective of the work programme.

The authorising officer responsible may apply the changes referred to in the first paragraph. Those changes shall be applied in accordance with the principles of sound financial management and proportionality.

Done at Brussels, 19.2.2024

For the Commission

Johannes HAHN

Member of the Commission



Brussels, 19.2.2024
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ANNEX

ANNEX

to the

COMMISSION DECISION

on the financing of actions related to training in conference interpreting and the adoption of the work programme for 2024

1. Introduction

On the basis of the objectives laid down in Article 58(2)(e) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 of 18 July 2018, this work programme contains the actions to be financed and the budget breakdown for the year 2024 as follows:

- a) for grants (implemented under direct management) (point 2),
- b) for other actions or expenditure (implemented under direct management) (point 3).

a) Legal basis

The support activities covered by this work programme derive from the operational needs of
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the Commission, in the context of its administrative autonomy, as provided for in Article 58(2)(e) of Regulation (EU, Euratom) No 2018/1046 of 18 July 2018.

Budget line

BGUE-B2024 – 20.03.11.02 Professional support

Objectives pursued

To ensure the availability of a sufficient number of qualified conference interpreters responding to the quality standards and the needs of the EU Institutions, the interpretation services of the Commission support and strengthen training programmes by providing professional assistance and financial support. The aim of these activities is to help produce a sufficient number of qualified interpreters who may subsequently be recruited by the Union institutions as officials or accredited conference interpreter agents (free-lancers). This assistance may be granted for official languages and, on a much smaller scale, for languages that are not official Union languages where this is justified by the needs of the Commission and is compatible with other Union policies.

Expected results

1. GRANTS TO UNIVERSITIES

The support programme aims to promote the development of training resources and continuing support for centres of excellence providing training, that meet the demanding professional standards for conference interpreting in the Union institutions, as well as their current and foreseeable language needs.

The programme contributes to the training of quality conference interpreters with the required working languages to ensure the proper functioning of the Union Institutions. Since the trained interpreters have to pass an inter-institutional accreditation test organised by the European Commission and the European Parliament (as well as the Court of Justice of the EU), both institutions run a similar programme and consult each other to optimise the use of available resources and to avoid double-funding. Through this financing, courses and actions can be run to train the interpreters needed by the service.

2. BURSARIES FOR CONFERENCE INTERPRETING STUDENTS

After strict university admission tests, interpreter training needs to take place on a small scale and must be taught by professional interpreters. As a consequence, training in this field is atypical and costly. The bursaries programme aims to cover, at least partially, the administrative and/or tuition fees paid by students, thereby supporting the most promising interpreting students corresponding to the needs and priorities of the service through a rigorous assessment of the candidates' potential. Results will be measured in terms of the rate/number of beneficiaries who successfully completed the training course with the predicted language combination, and took part in the accreditation tests or recruitment competitions, and their success rates in these tests and competitions.

3. ADVANCED TARGETED TRAINING ACTIONS IN THE FIELD OF CONFERENCE INTERPRETING

The main purposes of these actions are to expand the pool of interpreters, as well as to assist and advise universities and trainers on teaching interpretation techniques, designing and running a course, candidate profiles, aptitude tests and examinations.

Every year DG Interpretation identifies specific actions for students, graduates and targeted professional audiences, and/or specific languages that need further support. Based on previous experience, it is expected that particular needs will have to be covered, benefitting from the same level of resources of previous years.

2. Grants

The global budgetary envelope reserved for grants and bursaries under this work programme is EUR 420 000 and shall cover the actions described below in point 2.1. and 2.2.

2.1. Grants to universities and other bodies to finance an action

Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

- Universities, university institutes, consortia and associations of universities or institutes, legally established in a Member State or in a candidate country, and which offer or coordinate postgraduate courses specialising in conference interpreting.
- Associations, consortia and bodies, legally established in a Member State or in a candidate country or in an EFTA country, whose main mission is to develop and/or support cooperation and disseminate best practices in the field of conference interpreter training.
- Where necessary, consortia may include private sector actors who have the specific expertise needed to implement the proposed actions.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

The programme contributes to this mission by supporting the following actions in the field of interpretation:

- Promoting quality and linguistic diversity in the teaching of interpreting in the official languages of the EU and of the candidate countries at master's/post-graduate level.
- Establishing and supporting interpretation courses at postgraduate and master's level providing high quality training in line with the standards of the requirements of the EU Institutions.
- Fostering cooperation among postgraduate courses from different Member States and from candidate countries; a limited number of postgraduate courses from third countries and EFTA countries offering languages of particular interest for the EU may also be included.
- Developing innovative pilot projects including those which create synergies with other types of interpreting training and which foster the interpreting profession as a whole.

Implementation

An annual call for proposals is published on the 'Funding and Tenders' Portal of the European Commission and on the pages of DG Interpretation. The indicative schedule for the call for proposals is as follows:

- March: launch of the call for proposals.
- May-June: closing date for the submission of applications.
- July: award decision
- August-October: conclusion of grant agreements.

2.2. Bursaries to conference interpreting students

Type of applicants targeted by the call for proposals

In order to be eligible, applicants must be nationals of a Member State or candidate country and be enrolled on a specialised postgraduate course in conference interpreting organised by universities or university institutes in the Member States, in candidate countries or, when justified, in third countries. Only students registered at courses which are subject to tuition and/or administrative fees will be eligible to apply.

Description of the activities to be funded under the call for proposals

As a provider of an inter-institutional service, DG Interpretation's mission is to ensure that a sufficient number of qualified conference interpreters is available to enable the Union Institutions to function properly.

The bursaries programme aims to cover, at least partially, the administrative and/or tuition fees paid by students for these high-level courses, thereby supporting the most promising interpreting students corresponding to the needs and priorities of the service. In this way, young people or people in professional mobility can better acquire the specific skills and competences to become high-level conference interpreters, thereby improving the potential interpreting resources available to the Union Institutions.

Implementation

An annual call for proposals is published on the Europa website on the 'Funding and Tenders' portal of the European Commission and on the pages of DG Interpretation.

The planned schedule for the call for proposals is as follows:

- May-June: publication of the call for applications.
- Mid-September: deadline for submitting application files including the proof of admission to a course.
- November: award decision.
- November-December: bursary offers are sent to shortlisted applicants for confirmation of acceptance.

3. *Support to other actions or expenditure*

3.1. **Advanced targeted training actions in the interpreting field and support of study visits aimed at professional interpreters, graduates, master's/post-graduate students and/or university trainers**

Amount

Approximately EUR 21 176

Description

Creation and delivery of ad hoc training support programmes for specific actions in line with its linguistic priorities and the Union institutions' medium and long term needs. These actions may be targeted at EU, candidate country or non-EU country participants. Beneficiaries may be professional interpreters, graduates, master's/post-graduate students and/or university trainers. For graduates, students and professional interpreters the aim is to improve future longer-term employment prospects with the required quality level. For university trainers the main purposes of this action are to assist and advise on teaching of interpretation techniques, designing and running a course, deciding on the candidate profiles for those courses and giving advice on the requisite aptitude testing, as well as on how to run final examinations. In line with the Commission's greening and digitalisation priorities, some of these actions will be organised in an online setting, but some will still need to be organised on-site for networking purposes and for the general benefit of the community.

For graduates, students and interpreters' schemes the participants may receive an allowance and reimbursement of travel expenses, based on the conditions similar to the Commission's Blue Book Traineeship scheme.

Whenever applicable, DG Interpretation will consult or coordinate these actions with DG Human Resources and Security.

The schemes for university trainers are provided to external university trainers by DG Interpretation staff. Participants may receive reimbursement of travel and accommodation expenses, and a daily allowance based on the conditions similar to the reimbursement of external experts (see decision COM(2007)5858).

ANNEX <1>

Action Document for financial support for training in conference interpreting for year 2024

ANNUAL PROGRAMME

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation and action programme/measure.

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

To comply with their legal obligations with regard to multilingualism, as set out in Article 342 TFEU and Council Regulation No 1⁵ and ensure their proper functioning, the institutions of the Union provide interpretation for the conferences and meetings which they organise. The Directorate-General for Interpretation is responsible for interpretation at the Commission, the European Council, the Council of Ministers, the Economic and Social Committee, the Committee of the Regions, the European External Action Service, the European Investment Bank and numerous other Union bodies. Whilst ensuring multilingual communication by providing interpretation from all 24 official Union languages, DG Interpretation is also called on to provide interpretation in many other languages, including International Sign and national sign languages, and especially those of the major strategic and trading partners of the Union.

To ensure the availability of a sufficient number of qualified conference interpreters, the interpretation services of the Commission have always supported and strengthened training programmes by providing professional assistance and financial support. The Commission Decision COM (80)PV563⁶ setting up the Joint Interpreting and Conference Service (PERS (80) 86) already included the award of grants among the activities of the Service. The aim of these activities is to help produce a sufficient number of qualified interpreters who may, subsequently, be recruited by the Union institutions as officials or accredited conference interpreter agents (free-lancers). This assistance may be granted for official languages and, on a much smaller scale, for languages that are not official Union languages where this is justified by the needs of the Commission and is compatible with other Union policies.

The financial part of the Commission's action in the framework of the grant and bursary schemes includes (among other activities):

- a programme of grants for universities and other bodies,

⁵ Council Regulation No 1 determining the languages to be used by the European Economic Community (OJ 17, 6.10.1958, p. 385).

⁶ COM (80) PV563 final, of 25 June 1980.

- a programme of bursaries intended to cover, at least partially, the tuition and/or administrative fees for students enrolled on master or post-graduate courses in conference interpreting,
- advanced targeted training actions and support of study visits in the field of conference interpreting.

The overall maximum amount available for these actions is EUR 441 176. The budgetary cover for this financing is provided by the appropriations in the budget line mentioned under point 1.

In its Communication on ‘Conference Interpreting and Enlargement — A Strategy for the Joint Interpreting and Conference Service in the lead-up to 2004’⁷, the Commission confirmed the importance of these programmes in order to strengthen the capacity and quality of training in the new languages and to continue preparing the candidate countries for future membership.

In its Communication ‘A new framework strategy for multilingualism’⁸, the Commission stated that it will ‘continue to offer universities grants and teaching assistance in the field of conference interpreting (...) and fund student bursaries and training visits’ and that it will ‘support the European Master’s in Conference Interpreting (...) thereby enhancing co-operation, pooling expertise and disseminating best practices (...)’.

This approach was confirmed once more in the 2008 Communication ‘Multilingualism: an asset for Europe and a shared commitment’⁹, where the Commission underlines the impact of its assistance programmes in conference interpreting training.

Again in 2023, DG Interpretation’s Management Plan stressed the need to address succession planning in order to maintain the present level of language coverage, through continuous training of current staff and support to the training of future interpreters.

The available appropriations will be used to provide financial support in the forms mentioned above. A more detailed description is provided under point 2.

2. IMPLEMENTATION

2.1. Indicative implementation period

• GRANTS

- March: launch of the call for proposals.
- May-June: closing date for the submission of applications.
- July: award decision
- August-October: conclusion of grant agreements.

⁷ SEC (2002) 349/2 of 9 April 2002.

⁸ COM (2005) 596 of 22 November 2005.

⁹ SEC (2008) 2443 of 18 September 2008.

- **BURSARIES**

- May-June: publication of the call for applications.
- End-September: deadline for submitting application files including the proof of admission to a course.
- November: award decision.
- November-December: bursary offers are sent to shortlisted applicants for confirmation of acceptance.

- **ADVANCED TARGETED TRAINING ACTIONS IN THE FIELD OF CONFERENCE INTERPRETING**

Ad hoc actions may be organised over the whole year 2024.

2.2. Implementation modalities for an action under project modality or for complementary support to an action under budget support.

The Commission will ensure that the appropriate EU rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are upheld, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures.

2.2.1. Grants (direct management)

The programme contributes to this mission by supporting the following actions in the field of interpretation:

- Promoting quality and linguistic diversity in the teaching of interpreting in the official languages of the EU and of the candidate countries.
- Establishing and supporting postgraduate centres of excellence in conference interpreting.
- Fostering cooperation among postgraduate courses from different Member States and from candidate countries; a limited number of partners from third countries offering languages of particular interest for the EU may also be included; and
- Developing innovative projects that create synergies with other types of interpreter training and which foster the interpreting profession as a whole.

2.2.2. Bursaries (direct management)

The bursaries programme aims to cover, at least partially, the administrative and/or tuition fees paid by students for these high-level courses, thereby supporting the most promising interpreting students corresponding to the needs and priorities of the service. In this way, young people or people in professional mobility can better acquire the specific skills and competences to become high-level conference interpreters, thereby improving the potential interpreting resources available to the Union Institutions.

2.2.3. Support to other actions or expenditure (direct management)

Advanced targeted training actions in the field of interpreting for professional interpreters, graduates, master's/post-graduate students and/or university trainers.

2.3. Scope of geographical eligibility

Member States, EU candidate countries, EFTA countries and other third countries (for actions under 2.2.3).

2.4. Indicative budget

	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Grants (direct management)	345 000 <i>(grants to universities)</i> + 75 000 <i>(bursaries to students)</i>
Support to other actions or expenditure (direct management)	21 176
Totals	441 176

2.5. Organisational set-up and responsibilities

Administrative autonomy of the European Commission, implemented by DG Interpretation

2.6. Performance and Results monitoring and reporting

Within the routine monitoring and reporting established by the Director-General.

2.7. Evaluation

Evaluation takes place within DG Interpretation, taking into account how many newly accredited interpreters received support from DG Interpretation. The impact assessment of the grant scheme will be measured in terms of the rate/number of graduates from the supported programmes who take part in the accreditation tests or recruitment competitions and their success rates, as well as the contribution of the supported action to meeting the needs of the Commission.

For the bursaries, results will be measured in terms of the rate/number of beneficiaries who successfully completed the training course with the predicted language combination, and took part in the accreditation tests or recruitment competitions and their success rates in these tests and competitions.

For other actions and expenditures, SCIC will evaluate how many new interpreters and/or trainers have benefited from the schemes.

2.8. Audit

As with all actions under administrative autonomy, these actions under the work programme are potentially subject to an audit by the Internal Audit Service and the Court of Auditors.

2.9. Communication and visibility

Information related to grants and bursaries (e.g. call for proposals, updates, outcome) is published regularly on the Europa website. Ad hoc programmes are advertised and reported on in the Knowledge Centre on Interpretation, a Commission collaborative platform for the interpreting world. All of these actions are also announced and promoted via DG Interpretation's social media channels ("EU Interpreters")

BUDGETARY IMPACT STATEMENT

To be used where

☒ The work programme constitutes a financing decision or for revision purposes

or

☐ In exceptional cases where the Commission needs to adopt an ad-hoc financing decision

POLICY AREA(S): Administration

ACTIVITY (-IES): Conference interpreting

ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME: 2024

1. BUDGET LINE(S) CONCERNED + HEADING(S)

BGUE-B2024 – 20.03.11.02 Professional support for interpreters, grants and bursaries

2. LEGAL BASIS

Article 58(2)(e) of the Financial Regulation.

3. OVERALL FIGURES FOR THE FINANCIAL YEAR (IN EUROS)

From the total amount of EUR 441 176 foreseen for these actions, 66 % will be financed through the revenue coming from institutions and agencies to which DG Interpretation provides interpreting services*.

3.a. - Current year

Budget line		Commitments	Payments
Initial appropriations for the financial year (voted budget)		150 000	150 000
<i>Of which</i>			
Initial appropriations for the financial year		150 000	150 000
Transfers			

Additional appropriations	*Revenue (C4+C5)	291 176	291 176
Total appropriations		441 176	441 176
Appropriations already set aside by another work programme	<i>At date of _____</i>		
Balance available		441 176	441 176
Total for the measure proposed		441 176	441 176

4. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

4.1. Objectives:

This annual work programme related to the financial support for conference interpreter training in 2024 aims to contribute to the availability of a sufficient number of qualified conference interpreters in order to cover the linguistic needs of the meetings where DG Interpretation provides interpretation. This action also aims to ensure the proper functioning of the Union Institutions. These are its specific objectives:

- Maintaining the capacity to train conference interpreters for all EU official languages, especially for the less widely spoken ones.
- Preparing for future enlargements by reinforcing the necessary training programmes and linguistic diversification for candidate countries to join the Union.
- Ensuring the succession of an ageing population of interpreters who work with the official EU languages, and responding to the need for interpretation in languages of third countries as a consequence of increased relations between the EU and third countries.

4.2. Foreseen actions (the modalities are those specified in the Financial Regulation):

- Grants to universities or university groups specialised in conference interpreter training at post-graduate or master's level:* The objective is to improve the quality of training or increase linguistic diversification depending on the needs of the Union
- Bursaries for students:* These are addressed to students enrolled on a specialised training programme in conference interpreting, where they will acquire the necessary techniques and competences to become highly qualified conference interpreters and where language combinations in line with EU needs will be offered.
- Other training programmes aimed at perfecting conference interpreting skills and interpreter training.* These actions are based on the linguistic priorities as well as on the medium and long-term needs of the EU Institutions, in relation to the future recruitment of qualified interpreters and the need to ensure high-quality training.

5. METHOD OF CALCULATION ADOPTED

The final expenses will depend on the number of eligible applications received for the first two actions, as well as on the number and type of the other specific actions organised. Therefore, the figures indicated below and the way they have been distributed are an estimation:

- Grants – Estimated amount: EUR 345 000
- Bursaries – Estimated amount: EUR 75 000
- Other specific actions – Estimated maximum amount: EUR 21 176

6. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS (IN EURO)

Grants: the payments are usually divided into a prefinancing of 50% and a balance payment of 50%.

Bursaries : the bursaries will amount to the equivalent of the enrolment fee (tuition and/or administrative fee) for the academic year 2024-2025. It will consist of one single payment.

Other specific actions: the schedule of payment depends on the modalities of each action.

Line(s)	Commitments		Payments				
			Year n	Year n+1	Year n+2	Year n+3	Subsequent years
BGUE-B2024 - 20 03 11 02							
Grants	Year n	345 000	172 500	172 500			
Bursaries	Year n	75 000	75 000				
Other actions	Year n	21 176	21 176				
	Total	441 176	268 676	172 500			