

Public procurement and specifications: translators send their recommendations to the authorities

Brussels, 31 May 2017 – The Belgian Quality Translation Association (BQTA) and the Belgian Chamber of Translators and Interpreters (CBTI) have joined forces to produce a guide for public authorities that write and publish calls for tender in this industry. The Vade Mecum for Authors of Tender Specifications is the result of unprecedented collaboration between two branches of the same sector which have sometimes been seen as rivals, but which both understand that the entire profession can gain from such a partnership.

As in many other sectors, specifications for public procurement translation contracts are generally modelled on contracts for general services. The expectations and criteria specific to the translation services being purchased are only rarely defined. And yet they are crucial in ensuring a successful call for tenders.

"All too often, due to lack of knowledge about what goes into a professional, high-quality translation service, the contracting authority's sole criterion is price," explains Rudy Tirry, president of the BQTA. "All too often, this is a missed opportunity for the authority in question, because our sector has many high-quality professionals. And these professionals - be they translation companies or freelance translators - need resources to help them showcase their skills when taking part in calls for tender. That's the least we can do," adds Guillaume Deneufbourg, president of the CBTI.

To that end, the BQTA and CBTI decided to produce this guide to **help authorities write their calls for tender** by listing the factors that contribute to a high-quality translation. In it, they detail the different types of services available to the contracting authority, stipulate those essential items that must feature in the specifications and clearly and concisely explain the relevant quality standards for the translation market.

The **Vade Mecum for Authors of Tender Specifications** will be presented to the press, specification writers and economic stakeholders and politicians on 29 September 2017. This project is supported by the Union of Liberal and Intellectual Professions in Belgium, the UCM, the FVB and the High Council for the Self-Employed and SMEs. ■

BQTA

The *Belgian Quality Translation Association* is the Belgian association of translation companies. Founded in 1995 as a non-profit association, it aims to promote and organise the dialogue between translation companies in Belgium and to encourage greater recognition of the translation sector and the added value delivered by translation companies. It also represents translation companies in their dealings with the Belgian authorities and promotes the interests of the sector in respect of other economic stakeholders. The BQTA is a member of the *European Union of Associations of Translation Companies (EUATC)*.

CBTI

The *Belgian Chamber of Translators and Interpreters* is a royal non-profit association founded in 1955. The CBTI is the only professional association for translators and interpreters in Belgium, bringing together individuals whose occupations are directly related to translation or interpretation with a view to promoting their mutual interests, developing their professional knowledge and skills through in-service training, enhancing the prestige of the professions set out in its bylaws and defending the collective professional interests of its members. The CBTI is a member of the *International Federation of Translators (FIT)*