

AI: a cumbersome newcomer

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a new technology that is bringing about unprecedented upheavals in the division of labour, modes of communication and even decision-making processes, with a significant impact on employment, labour relations, the concentration of economic and political power, and human behaviour.

A project for the future

At the Court of Justice, the Report on transforming Translation Activities, '*Avenir de la Traduction*' (6 June 2025), aims to radically transform the institution's largest department, the Directorate General for Multilingualism (DGM), which, excluding the Interpretation Directorate, has 898 members of staff.

The lawyer linguists' (LL) 'profession', which is by far the largest of all the institution's 'professions' (600), will be decimated. How so?

- The 'machine'* in an AI-driven translation environment (see→) will supplant humans (LLs) in the actual act of translation. 
- Some of the* LLs (estimated at one third) will be assigned to redefined or different roles, working either upstream or downstream of the 'machine', to ensure the quality of the final product, which will subsequently be used to 'train the machine', establishing a virtuous cycle for future translations, with a view to increasing speed and productivity.
- Alongside, new profiles could be sought and recruited.
- The redundant portion of the LL staff (estimated at two thirds) will be transferred to other departments within the institution.

A **questionnaire** has already been sent out to all translation staff, enabling them to describe their experience and any interest they may have in a redeployment, either within the future translation service or in other fields of activity outside translation.

From a hard-working present to an uncertain future

However, legal translation staff – the cornerstone of the institution's multilingualism – are already struggling to balance their commitment to high-quality work with an ever-increasing workload, whilst remaining apprehensive about an uncertain professional future and an unprecedented way of working, which no one can say *when* it will come to pass.

And what of the **transition** from the current situation to the future working environment? This new process, involving large-scale staff movements that may not necessarily be voluntary, accompanied by training, will need to be rolled out, whilst the existing work organisation must ensure that deadlines are met.

Furthermore, the pace of the transition will need to vary according to the difficulties inherent in **each language combination**.

The prospect of being replaced by an unfamiliar machine risks fuelling a sense of professional devaluation and demotivation. Furthermore, the loss of skills will affect the institution more severely than it will affect individuals (See 🖱️ Vladimír Šucha, 🔗 [AI's Real Danger Is What It Does Well](#)).

A prerequisite: structured social dialogue

EPSU-CJ advocates for high-quality public sector jobs, attractive working conditions within the institution's premises and – need we even say it? – will oppose any net reduction in staff numbers that might result from this transformation.

Changes on such a scale require:

- a) a mindset based on staff solidarity and
- b) mutual trust between social partners (including trade unions, which i) have credible representativeness and ii) are equipped with the necessary resources).

However, this trust has been seriously undermined by 🖱️ the 🔗 [‘Optimising the use of premises’](#) plan, which, following massive opposition from staff, has been suspended, with a view to being resumed after a review is carried out “on the organisation of the institution's departments and possible changes to job roles” (see 🖱️ [Memorandum from the Registrar to the trade unions dated 11 June 2025](#)).

Social dialogue should take place between social partners ⚠️ without third parties as go-betweens!

🗣️ In our adage addressed to colleagues, every word counts: A union is about
Sharing experience, building solidarity!

The **EPSU-CJ** Executive Committee



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