

## CHALLENGES IN THE EDUCATION AND APPOINTMENT OF COURT INTERPRETERS IN CROATIA – recent developments

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## Introduction Court interpreters – legal framework

Courts Act, Official Gazette 28/13,

§123

— "(5) The Minister of Justice shall pass a bylaw defining the way of establishing if a person us eligible for appointment as a court intrepreter, their rights and duties, the amount of their compensation and allowance of costs."

- Bylaw on court interpreters (Off. Gaz. 88/08 i 119/08)
  - Basic legal norm defining the rights and obligations of permanent court interpreters

#### Introduction

#### "Permanent Court Interpreter"

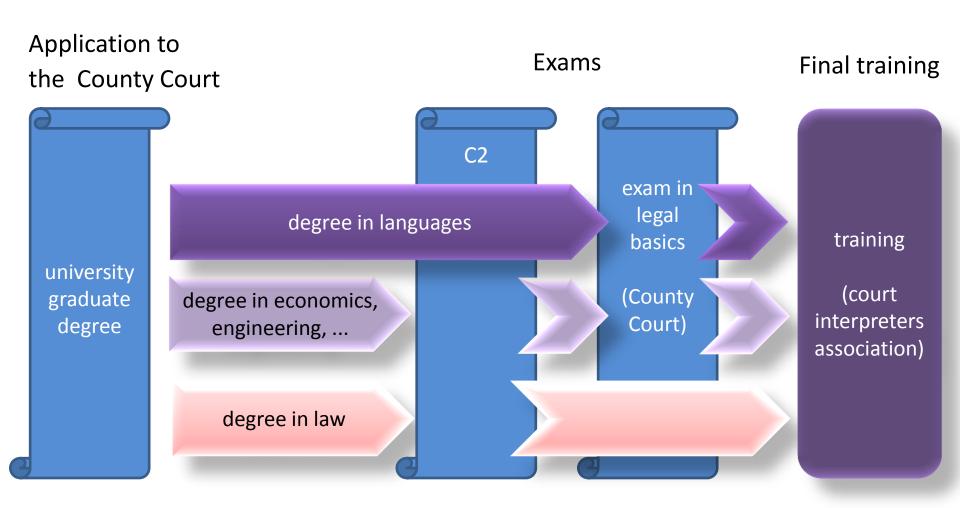
- > "court" = appointed by the court, not restricting the business of an interpreter to only legal domain
- "interpreter" = here meaning a translator doing both written and oral translations
- "permanent" court interpreter as opposed to "ad hoc" sworn interpreter, which can be done for instance by a judge under certain circumstances

### Procedure of appointment of a court interpreter

A person is eligible to be appointed as a court interpreter if the prerequisites listed below have been met:

- general conditions for state servants (no criminal record)
- along with knowledge of Croatian, excellent command of the foreign language(s) the candidate applies for (degree in languages or C2 certificate acc. to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages)
- acquired university graduate degree (Master degree)
- exam in legal basics (judicial administration organistion, state administration, legal terminology) - Croatian legal system only!
- training for court interpreters candidates, done with an association of court interpreters

### Procedure of appointment of a court interpreter



Mentors/coaches – court interpreters with many years of experience

#### Other participants:

- accountant/ auditor
- judge
- police inspector

16-hour training course, two 8-hour sessions (Saturdays only).

#### 1. General information

- Rights and obligations of court interpreters (appointment and term of office, stamp, nameplate, court interpreters journal)
- Legal forms of business for court interpreters (as secondary source of income, craft business, public limited company)

#### 2. Tutorials by specific fields

- Extracts from public registers (birth/ marriage, death certificates...)
- School reports/ diplomas
- Finance
- Working with public notaries
- Working with the court main hearing (involving a court interpreter)
- Working with the police interrogation (simulation of real-life situation)

#### 3. Practical work

- Practical work written translation (producing and verifying by signature and seal)
- Simulation of consecutive interpreting
  - at a public notary's office
  - at a wedding ceremony
- Final paper written translation produced at home, based on which a formal opinion on candidate's skills is made and submitted to the competent County Court

### Appointment of a court interpreter

Finally, after all the prerequisites have been met, the candidate takes an oath before the President of the competent County Court:

»I solemnly swear that I shall perform my duties as court interpreter **abiding by the rules of professional conduct, to the best of my knowledge and ability**."

### Further education opportunities

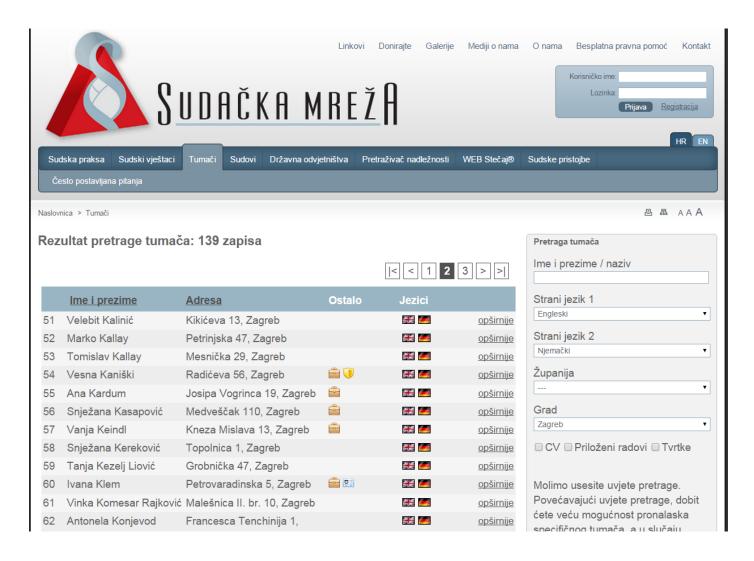
- Occasional linguistic seminars organized by ACIT or other similar organizations (rather random, no structured approach or continuity)
- Lawyer linguists programmes offered at law schools

#### Advertising ban for court interpreters

Bylaw on court interpreters, Art. 13:

"A court interpreter or a legal person providing the services of legal court interpreting shall not advertise on any public or private premises in any way whatsoever except for the usual signage at the registered seat of the court interpreter."

# Official register of court interpreters in Croatia "Judges' Web" <a href="https://www.sudacka-mreza.hr">www.sudacka-mreza.hr</a>



#### Rates

Price (as stipulated in Art. 27 of the Bylaw on court interpreters):

- Written translation (with court interpreter's verification):
  - Calculation basis is a standard 50-character line
  - (6.50 HRK approx. 0.9 EUR)/ standard line
  - min. billing unit is 1 standard page with 30 lines (=1500 ch)
     (→ 195.00 HRK approx. 26 EUR)
  - Price increase possible for the translation of scientific, specialised texts and texts with special alphabet (Arabic, Chinese, Japanese and the like)
  - URGENT TRANSLATION: 50% on top of the regular rate
- Oral translation:
  - 150.00 kn (approx. 20 EUR) for each started hour + expenses

### Rates – a comparison (written translations)

## Source: Eulita survey (2014 update)

Country	EUR/standard page* (1,500 ch)	
Italy	4.00	
Czech Republic	4.60 - 10.75	
Poland	5.54 - 11.94	
Portugal	8.50	
Spain	9.30	
Malta	10.00	
Turkey	12.00	
Austria	22.80	
Denmark	24.20	
France	25.00	
Croatia	26.00	
The Netherlands	23.70 – 46.20	
Slovenia	25.00 - 41.00	
Germany	46.25 – 61.50	
Bulgaria	Negotiable / case to case	

<sup>\*</sup> For the sake of comparison, the prices indicated here were re-calculated on the standard page basis.

### Rates – a comparison (interpreting)

## Source: Eulita survey (2014 update)

Country	EUR/hour	Note
Italy	14.68 for the first two hours (7.34 each) 4.07 for following hours	
Czech Republic	5.50 – 13.00	
Poland	9.42 – 52.00 (depends on language)	
Malta	30.00 half day 50.00 full day	
Croatia	20.00	charged by each started hour + expenses
Austria	24.50 for the first half hour 12.40 for each subsequent half hour	
Spain	30.00 National criminal court 13.00 – 20.00 (police settings)	other rates for diff. regions
France	42.00 for the first hour 30.00 for following hours	
The Netherlands	43.20	
Slovenia	70.00	
Germany	70.00 (consecutive) 75.00 (simultaneous)	
Denmark	75.20	
Portugal	102.00 – 204.00 per "service"	
Turkey	200.00 – 600.00 per day/job	
Bulgaria	negotiable / case to case	

### Just a few more things:

- Obligation to interpret in court (introduced into Civil Procedure Act in 2008):
  - penalty of 500 HRK 10,000 HRK (approx. 70 EUR 1,350 EUR) to the court interpreter who does not appear in a hearing to which he/she has been properly summoned, without providing a timely excuse and reasonable grounds for non-appearance
- Professional liability insurance policy for court interpreters
  - only for the members of court interpreters associations
  - max. coverage 200,000 HRK (approx. 27,000 EUR)

## Any questions?

## Thank you!