

# 30 years in the Making. Belgium as a laboratory to implement professional PSI in a diversified government structure

Nicolas Bruwier (SeTIS Bruxelles), Anne Delizée (UMONS/FTI), Pascal Rilof (Agentschap Integratie & Inburgering)

InDialog 4 / ENPSIT

Multiplicity in public service interpreting and translation

18-19 September 2023

Ghent University, Belgium

AGENTSCHAP  
INTEGRATIE &  
INBURGERING



UMONS  
Université de Mons



Faculty  
of Translation  
and Interpretation  
School of International  
Interpreters



# Belgian institutional framework: federal state with regional political competencies



# Federal and regional political competencies

Political competencies:

|

⇒ **Federal State:** general interest competencies

⇒ **Regions** – Brussels Capital Region, Flanders and Wallonia: personal, person-related policies

⇒ e.g. **Migrant integration programs**

# Key Moment in PSIT History in Belgium

⇒ March 2004: regional social interpreting providers create **COFETIS**

⇒ **Common** interregional objectives + strategies

⇒ 2009: cessation of COFETIS: **what** developed **next**

# French-speaking PSIT in Belgium

1992 – 1st Interpreters contracts within FR-speaking **non-profit organization** (ISM) and federal intercultural mediators



2000 – CIRé-Interprétariat main PSIT service provider in FR – mainly employed interpreters, Brussels and Wallonia



BRUSSELS-CAPITAL  
REGION

2010 – SeTIS Bruxelles – takeover of CIRé-Interprétariat activity + development



1997 – Bruxelles-accueil (SISBA) – mainly volunteer interpreters

WALLONIA

2008 – SeTIS Wallon – exclusive provider in Wallonia until 2018



2018 – Univerbal project – mainly volunteer interpreters

# PSIT services main evolutions 2013-2023

- 2013: SeTIS Wallon recognition by Walloon region as unique interpretation and translation service provider for Regional Integration Program – closes 3 local branches and moves HQ from Liège to Namur
- 2018: New service provider in Liège, Univerbal project / le Monde des Possibles
- 2020: SeTIS Bruxelles recognition by Brussels-Capital Region as a socio-professional integration operator. Important evolution in terms of recruitment.
- 2022: Info-Sourds - SISB opens a « second-line » interpretation service in Belgian French sign language (LSFB)

# *Linguistreaming*: promoting PSIT in Brussels Capital-Region

- 2019: Coalition of 4 Brussels service providers (SeTIS Bruxelles, Bruxelles-Accueil, Brussel-Onthaal) to propose a legal PSIT framework on the basis of:
  - Recognition of service providers
  - Recognition of professional PSIT (code of ethics, training program, public service delegation)
  - Inclusive policy: making public consultation compulsory in terms of needs for interpreters (*Gender-mainstreaming* and *Handistreaming* models)
- 12/2022: Regional Government gives assignement to administration for decree draft

# ***Competencies validation:*** **towards professional recognition**

- 2021: main service providers (SeTIS W, SeTIS Bxl, SISBA, Univerbal,) present a request to French-speaking intergovernmental trade and qualification service (SFMQ)
- Creation of up-to-date job profile, reflecting current realities and needs of the profession (preliminary study to be presented 09/2023)

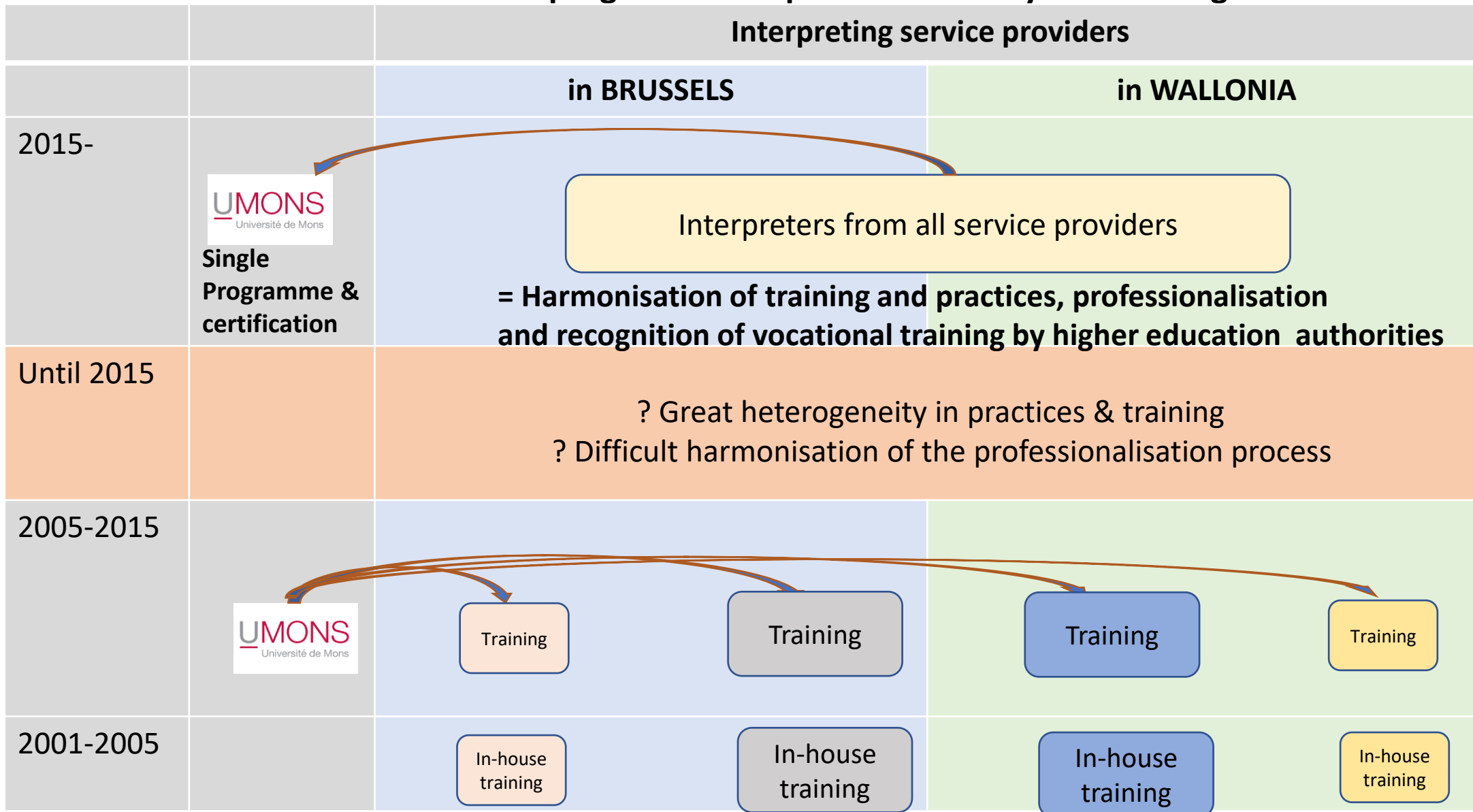


# Current and future challenges in French-Speaking Belgium

- General and Regional elections in 2024:  
-> change of power, change of heart ?
- Official competencies validation process expected by end 2024:  
-> fit-for-purpose ?
- Maintaining cohesion of the parties involved despite great differences in business models (employees, volunteers or freelance interpreters)
- Acceptation of changes and new perspectives within the *LSFB* interpreters' community ?

## Professionalisation of PSI in French-speaking Belgium:

### towards an unified education programme despite the diversity within the government structure



## Meeting the needs in French-speaking Belgium : aims, challenges and solutions

Aims/challenges	Solutions
<p><b>Close to the stakeholders' needs</b> Fit-for-purpose university-level curriculum</p>	<p><b>Regular consultations:</b> university + grassroots associations Scalable <b>modular programme</b></p>
<p><b>Non-standard access to higher education</b></p>	<p><b>Experience valued as much as diplomas</b> No selection test Courses/exams as many times as needed - no extra fee</p>
<p>Effective learning in <b>languages of lesser diffusion</b> (LLD) <b>Progressive learning</b> at different paces Training and <i>education</i></p>	<p><b>Non-language-specific learning methods</b> in multilingual classrooms  <b>4-level spiral learning system</b> Out-of-school-hours classes <b>Practical</b> skills and <i>theoretical</i> concepts</p>
<p><b>Certification system</b> Recognition of vocational training/education</p>	<p>Exams, <b>Certificates of University</b> <b>European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)</b> <b>Accredited by the Research and Higher Education Academy</b></p>

## UMONS PSI curriculum: 4-level spiral learning & certification system

<p><b>Level 4 Specialisation</b></p>	<p><b>Specialised modules for various settings</b></p>	<p>e.g. Vicarious trauma, sexual violence, in-depth terminology in criminal law, addiction and mental health, etc.</p>	<p>5/15-hour theoretical &amp; practical modules</p>	<p>Online quizzes</p>	<p>Attendance certificate</p>
<p><b>Level 3 Mastery</b></p>	<p><b>In-depth study in legal, asylum settings</b> (+health, forthcoming)</p>	<p>e.g. In-depth analysis of interlinguistic transfer, linguistic politeness, inferential processing &amp; negotiation of meaning, police investigation procedures, human trafficking, etc.</p>	<p>Theoretical &amp; practical seminars, 48h or 165h</p>	<p>Written theoretical exams  Oral interpreting exam</p>	<p>Certificate of University 10 or 30 ECTS</p>
<p><b>Level 2 Acquisition</b></p>	<p><b>Basic knowledge &amp; skills</b></p>	<p>e.g. Liaison interpreting skills, remote interpreting, interactional dynamics, terminological research, disciplinary knowledge in healthcare, foreigners' law, etc.</p>	<p>Theoretical &amp; practical seminars, 75h  Optional modules, 35h</p>	<p>Oral interpreting exam</p>	<p>Certificate of successful completion</p>
<p><b>Level 1 Awareness-raising</b></p>	<p><b>Ethical &amp; communicative foundations</b></p>	<p>Ethical sensitivity, positioning, turn-taking, need of further vocational training</p>	<p>Practical seminar, 10h</p>	<p>Online quizzes</p>	<p>Attendance certificate</p>

# Main achievement and challenge in French-speaking Belgium

## Main achievement from 2015 onwards:

- Harmonisation & inclusivity: single university-level curriculum & certification, accessible irrespective of initial educational level and working languages (cf. LLD)
- Professionalisation: pool of interpreters enrolled in a continuing education process, increasingly specialised

## Main challenge:

- Recognition from political authorities
- Public funding

# PSI in Flanders

- Since 1998: Formally acknowledged SI/PSI Providers
  - Today: 4 formally recognized SI-providers, of which 1 in Brussels
- 2004: first SI certifications
- 2009: first Flemish Integration Decree:
  - Defining SI/PSI
  - Establishing the formal Flemish register of certified SI

# Conclusion

⇒ 3 Belgian regions: PSI similarities and dissimilarities

⇒ COFETIS: unifying agent, cessation and European legacy

⇒ « Tous ensemble ... »





# Contacts

- Nicolas Bruwier – SeTIS Bruxelles: [nicolas.bruwier@setisbxl.be](mailto:nicolas.bruwier@setisbxl.be)
- Anne Delizée – UMONS: [anne.delizee@umons.ac.be](mailto:anne.delizee@umons.ac.be)
- Pascal Rillof – Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering: [pascal.rillof@integratie-inburgering.be](mailto:pascal.rillof@integratie-inburgering.be)

AGENTSCHAP  
INTEGRATIE &  
INBURGERING



UMONS  
Université de Mons



Faculty  
of Translation  
and Interpretation  
School of International  
Interpreters



IMéMi  
Interprétation  
Médiation  
Migration

# References

All - Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering. 2014. Handboek : Basisopleiding Sociaal Tolken. Bruxelles : Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering.

All - Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering. 2015. La formation et la certification d'interprètes et de traducteurs en milieu social en Flandre. Bruxelles : Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering.

Bruwier, N. , Delizée, A. ; Michaux, C. et de Brouwer, S., 2019. “Évolution du Service de Traduction et Interprétariat en milieu Social Bruxellois (SeTIS Bruxelles) : de la reconnaissance à la valorisation des compétences chez l'interprète”, FITISPos-IJ, vol. 6, 28-45

COFETIS. 2007. Profil-métier de l'interprète social. Bruxelles : Coordination fédérale de la traduction et de l'interprétation sociale. Bruxelles : COFETIS-FOSOVET asbl.

COFETIS. 2008. Une réponse aux nouveaux besoins de la société multiculturelle. Bruxelles : Coordination fédérale de la traduction et de l'interprétation sociale. Bruxelles : COFETIS-FOSOVET asbl.

Delizée, A. 2023, “Public service interpreting & mediation: A four-level education and certification spiral system”, “Introduction to interpreting and mediation in migratory, social and medical settings”, “ University Certificate in Legal Knowledge for Sworn Translators and/or Interpreters\_Programme (48h) ”, “University Certificate in interpreting in legal settings\_Programme (165h)”, UMONS, FTI-EII

Delizée, A. 2015, « Emergence et professionnalisation de l'interprétation communautaire en Belgique francophone », humanOrg, UMONS.

Delizée, A., & Bruwier, N. (2021). *Code of ethics for interpreters of the Brussels Social Translation and Interpreting Service*. SeTIS Bruxelles, UMONS.

Delizée, A., Bruwier, N., De Brouwer, S., Di Mattia, M., Meziane, A., & Rilof, P. (2015). L'interprétariat en milieu social: Une expertise en péril. *Cahiers Internationaux Du Symbolisme*, 140-141–142, 57–64.

Rilof, P. 2013. Interview. Historique de la structuration et de la professionnalisation de l'ISP dans l'UE. Fichier MP3 : Création Réseau européen\_Pascal Rilof\_6 novembre 2013, in Delizée (2015).