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**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

**FACULTÉ DE TRADUCTION
ET D'INTERPRÉTATION**

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**Interpreting for Global Union Federations:
A beginner's guide**

Mémoire présentée à la Faculté de Traduction et d'Interprétation

Pour l'obtention du MA en Interprétation de Conférence

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ABSTRACT

Global Union Federations are international organisations that group national or regional trade unions in specific industrial or professional domains. Global Union Federations play an active role within the international labour context, but they might be less well-known to us- including novice interpreters- than other supranational organisations.

The main aim of this MA thesis is to provide a general overview of Global Union Federations, both from a general and an interpreting-specific point of view. As novice interpreters ourselves, we consider this environment as an interesting opportunity to acquire work experience after graduating, and a possible platform to access the professional market.

In light of that, this thesis is divided in two main parts. The first part presents a basic guide to the history, functions and structure of Global Union Federations, focusing on the most important background knowledge interpreters need before starting to work for these organisations.

In the second part we will focus on three GUFs based in Geneva that we had the opportunity to look at in detail through the eyes of their chief interpreter. We will concentrate on the more job-specific aspects, such as hiring policies for interpreters, the structure of the interpreting services, the need for interpreters in these organisations, and the most sought-after language combinations, among other subjects.

This MA thesis aims to identify the main obstacles and challenges interpreters face most frequently when working at Global Union Federations and, by doing so, try to draw a comparison, whenever possible, between the work of interpreters at Global Union Federations and other better known institutions, pinpointing possible similarities and differences.

The analysis of data collected by interviewing a chief interpreter working at GUFs based in Geneva presented in this thesis takes into account aspects such as the academic background, age and working experience of the interpreter, and tries to point out the main features of the interpreting work carried out at Global Union Federations.

Keywords: Global Union Federations, International Trade Secretariats, trade unions, interpretation, language policy.

INTRODUCTION

When asked about their ideal job, interpreting students are likely to answer with the name of one or several international organisations: the United Nations (or one of its specialized agencies: UNESCO, FAO, WHO, WIPO, etc.), the European Union –more specifically the European Parliament and the European Commission-, the Council of Europe, NATO, and a long list of acronyms almost everybody has heard of.

There are other organisations which are often overlooked by novice interpreters at first glance. This seems to be the case of Global Union Federations (GUFs), which are not as well-known as the aforementioned examples despite their active role within organisations focusing on international labour.

What, then, are Global Union Federations? What role do they play in international labour regulation? How do they work? These are some of the questions this MA thesis will attempt answer. Since, as stated, GUFs are less well-known than other international organisations, the first step every interpreter has to take is acquiring some basic knowledge about them. That is the aim of the first part of this thesis.

The second part of this MA thesis, on the other hand, will take a more practical approach and will focus on daily issues related to working life that affect interpreters working for these organisations.

We would like to present this MA thesis as a basic GUF tool-kit for novice interpreters, covering topics such as the history and structure of Global Union Federations, but also analysing their hiring policy, their need for interpreting services, the interpreters' working conditions, and comparing the challenges interpreters face in these organisations to those challenges interpreters have to deal with in other institutions.

As stated, the second part of this thesis aims to investigate how interpreting is carried out at this particular type of international organisations. It will also highlight those difficulties and problems that interpreters encounter on a more or less regular basis.

Interpreters working for the first time at GUFs need to be well-informed about the topics the organisations' meetings most frequently deal with and familiarise themselves with the main topics tackled by reading about them in their working languages. They will also need to find the available documents and the material provided by the organisation.

This MA thesis aims to contribute to organising and broadening the information available on interpreting services at GUFs. The necessary information will be collected by interviewing one GUF's chief interpreter. The chief interpreter is responsible for all matters relating to interpreting services at these organisations and

is well-versed in all the challenges in this respect. Specifically, we will consider GUFs' hiring policies – whether GUFs prefer freelance or staff member interpreters, or a combination of the two, for example. In particular, we will carefully examine the existing agreements between interpreters –or professional associations such as AIIC- and these organisations, in order to analyse the mutually agreed working conditions and, wherever possible, identify differences and similarities with other organisations. We will examine those instances when the interpreting service is required, and the kind of interpreting needed.

We will consider the preparation needed in order to provide an adequate interpreting performance and the time available for the interpreter to prepare before the meetings.

This thesis will look to other issues, such as access to information that might be useful to interpreters working at GUFs, whether there is an assessment system for interpreters, and the most sought-after language combinations.

OBJECTIVES AND AIMS

There is extensive information on Global Union Federations, but is not as well-structured as information available on other supranational organisations. Information on GUFs is by and large to be found in their statutes or constitutions and in the form of official publications. Since each GUF focuses on different workers categories and works in different way, having an overview on what GUFs are and what GUFs do might be difficult. Furthermore, based on our first-hand experience, it seems that interpreting students focus more on other international organisations during their studies. Therefore GUFs are perhaps not so often identified by interpreting students as potential future sources of employment, although they do need interpreters in order to carry out their activities and thus could be a good target for these students.

This thesis aims to collect and analyse information on GUFs, organising it in a single document which will try to contribute to broadening knowledge on this topic, in general first of all, and then from an interpreting-specific point of view, with a special focus on their role as employers of interpreters and on how interpreting services are provided at these institutions.

We will analyse the main Global Union Federations and have a look at their goals, functions, history and structure, collecting information and organising it into a well-structured introduction.

We will consider GUFs as a whole and individually: we will introduce each GUF with its own specific industry sector or occupational group and then examine how GUFs work, their history and how they have evolved, identifying what they have in common and how they differ. This first part of our work is intended as an introduction to GUFs that would ideally provide an basic yet comprehensive overview of these institutions.

The second section will focus more specifically on interpreting, analysing the unique aspects of the interpreting work at Global Union Federations.

We want to bring GUFs closer to all interpreters. In light of this, the overall main objective of this thesis is to provide a practical, useful tool for anyone who might be called to work at these organisations, a true “beginner’s guide” for interpreters working at GUFs.

This thesis attempts to answer the main questions and doubts a novice interpreter working for the first time at one of these organisations may have, in order to provide them with a better background knowledge. It aims

to examine all of the different aspects of interpreting for one of these organisations in order to provide a helpful, easy-to-read tool for novice professionals.

By collecting information already available on the topic and adding new data to this, we aim to create a practical and useful guide for anyone who might work at these organisations, from professional interpreters who wish to broaden their knowledge on specific features of Global Union Federations, to students enrolled in interpreting programs who may be thinking about starting to work in this context. It is also intended for those who simply want to have a general understanding on the role and goals of GUFs.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

1. On the origins of GUFs

1.1. International Trade Secretariats

Global Union Federations (GUFs) are international federations of trade unions that group specific industry sectors or specialized occupational groups. GUFs are confederations of autonomous, national trade unions grouping together certain industry sectors or groups of employees. (Rütters, 2001: 9)

The first trade secretariats can be traced back to the end of the 19th century. During the last third of the 1800s, trade unions were in their heyday in Europe, following on from the first steps of the Industrial Revolution. At first, contacts between trade unions were limited to the national level –most were bilateral “union-to-union” relations-, and were focused on mutual membership recognition.

Some professional branches started to found “international federations” from 1889 on. The main cause of this phenomenon was the celebration of several workers’ congresses to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of the French Revolution. This could seem a mere coincidence, but those congresses were held simultaneously by the Possibilists and the Socialists-Marxists in Paris. The fact that both groups acted in parallel bred fierce competition between them, since both of them wanted to strengthen their influence and spread their ideas among the working class. (Rütters, 2001: 9)

Both congresses of 1889 and the Socialist International Congress which came afterwards can be considered as the starting points for the founding of independent international trade unions. International Trade Secretariats were born.

These new bodies were seen as tools to distance labour movements from political domination, and to unify divergent political perspectives under the umbrella of an international trade secretariat. ITS tried to group very different political families within one organisation. Until the outbreak of the First World War, ITS brought together movements such as social democrats, pro-socialist trade unions, British anti-socialist unions, as well as liberal and Christian trade unions.

By 1914, there were already at least a dozen international trade secretariats. Even this early on, there were two clear types:

- a. Unions with manufacturing traditions that were mainly status-oriented, bound to the development of their profession.
- b. Secretariats representing industry sectors, focused on the expansion of the organisation.

During this first organisational phase, ITS' activities were very limited, especially focusing on developing their organisational infrastructure and increasing their membership. In addition, ITS did not have their own staff, so their activities were almost totally dependent on one or some resourceful national trade unions. This situation did not allow for any institutional autonomy and therefore limited ITS' geographical expansion.

WWI shone a light on these limitations. It interrupted ITS' development process, due to the anti-war point of view shared by most of the different international labour organisations, which rendered them unable to participate. On the other hand, the vast majority of member associations joined their respective national war coalitions, and prepared to support the mobilisations in their countries. ITS saw this as counterproductive, especially when they had to return to normality following the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. The polarization resulting from national alliances delayed reorganisation and cooperation among the member associations.

(Rütters, 2001: 13)

In the 1920s, ITS faced different problems and needs which, again, limited their development, their work and their influence. Labour movements were splintering into groups with different focuses –more specifically, politically-oriented vs. those without any specific orientation- both on a national and an international level. Furthermore, the Wall Street Crash of 1929, along with the authoritarian regimes that spread across Europe during the 1920s and 1930s, and the instability that led to the outbreak of World War II made it impossible for ITS to develop their actions in the interwar period.

Only a few ITS could build up an independent organisation, so that their activities, which in most cases were still handled by the secretariat of a member trade union, were limited to the exchange of information on collective bargaining, working conditions, security of work places, health considerations and support of strikes and solidarity actions here and there. (Rütters, 2001: 12)

1.2. The foundation of the ILO

The International Labour Organization was created in 1919, as a part of the Treaty of Versailles (articles 387 to 427):

Whereas the League of Nations has for its object the establishment of universal peace, and such peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice;

And whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those conditions is urgently required [...]

Whereas also the failure of any nation to adopt human conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of other nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries [...]

ARTICLE 387. A permanent organisation is hereby established for the promotion of the objects set forth in the Preamble. [...] (Treaty of Versailles, 1919)

The ILO was –and still is- the only existing tripartite international organisation. This means that it brings together representatives of governments, employers and workers, in an effort to reach common agreements, adopt joint programs, and discuss global labour policies.

In light of that unique characteristic, the creation of the ILO threw the ITS' need for representation and coordination into sharp relief. The need for coherence within a national union delegation, as well as the possibility of actual representation in the tripartite institution made ITS aware of their structural limitations, but also of the possibilities the new global stage offered them. This feeling of empowerment led to enthusiasm that set very high standards for the International Labour Organization, especially regarding professional and branch-specific problems.

The ILO's constituents have the power to set international labour standards. These standards are used to define and establish basic principles and policies regarding rights at work. The main legal instruments drafted by the ILO members are:

a. *conventions*: legally binding international treaties that may be ratified by member states;

b. *recommendations*: non-binding guidelines.¹

The ILO's tripartite structure makes it unique among international organisations. Nevertheless, this can also work against it when it comes to ratifying agreements and conventions.

ARTICLE 3.1. The meeting of the General Conference of representatives of the Members shall be held from time to time as occasion may require, and at least once in every year. It shall be composed of four representatives of each of the Members, of whom two shall be Government delegates and the two others shall be delegates representing respectively the employers and the workpeople of each of the Members. [...]

¹ International Labour Organization. Conventions and Recommendations [on line] Retrieved from: <http://ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm>

ARTICLE 4.1. Every delegate shall be entitled to vote individually on all matters which are taken into consideration by the Conference. [...] (Constitution of the ILO, 1919)

The tripartite structure of the ILO board, together with the national states' reservations on ratifications, made all these expectations very difficult to fulfil, and they failed partly because of these two issues. Nevertheless, the International Labour Organization continued to be considered as the main discussion forum for trade unions and ITS, which were well aware of their need for representation and coordination in order to be heard within the ILO.

Major conventions were adopted during these first years with the support of trade secretariats such as ITF (International Transport Workers' Federation) and IUF (International Union of Food Workers), among others. These conventions were supported by ITS' member unions –together with employers and governments- in order to obtain a set of internationally recognized standards, which could be then adopted on a national level. The conventions mentioned above are part of the so-called Fundamental Conventions of the ILO: *Forced Labour Convention*, 1930 (No. 29); *Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention*, 1948 (No. 87); *Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention*, 1949 (No. 98).²

1.3. From the 20s to World War II

The Red Trade Union International (RTUI) was founded in 1921. It was one of the cogs of the political propaganda machinery designed by the Communist International against the so-called “Amsterdam International” (Rütters, 2001: 13)³. Consequently, relations between ITS and the International Federation of Trade Unions intensified, due to the predominance of socialist/social democratic member unions.

² These were followed by: *Equal Remuneration Convention*, 1951 (No. 100); *Abolition of Forced Labour*, 1957 (No. 105); *Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention*, 1958 (No. 111); *Minimum Age Convention*, 1973 (No. 138); *Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention*, 1999 (No. 182).

International Labour Organization. Conventions and Recommendations [on line] Retrieved from: <http://ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm>

³ The Amsterdam International founded the International Federation of Trade Unions (IFTU) in July, 1919. Union representatives from the United States, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, Spain and Czechoslovakia took part in the conference. The IFTU was mainly social democratic.

ITS kept their distance from RTUI and the Soviet trade unions. Nevertheless, due to the spread of fascist dictatorships across Europe –especially after the Nazi takeover in Germany–, there were initiatives to integrate Soviet unions. In the end, this cooperation never took place.

The authoritarian regimes established across Europe during the late 20s and the 30s were a plague for membership, actions and resources of the trade unions. Unionists were pursued and prosecuted but, in the meantime, trade union resistance formed a basis for an intense propaganda against fascism and national-socialism.

World War II reduced the activities of all ITS, and even forced some of them to shut down entirely during the conflict period. This decline in the ITS' activities and the need for a better organised union movement after 1945 led to the foundation of the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU).

1.4. The World Federation of Trade Unions and the Cold War era

The International Federation of Trade Unions was dissolved in 1945, while the World Federation of Trade Unions was established in Paris on 3rd October of the same year. The unions that took the lead in this process were the British TUC, the Congress of Industrial Organisations (CIO) from the United States of America, the All Union Central Council of Trade Unions of the USSR, and the French *Confédération Générale de Travailleurs* (CGT)⁴.

The aforementioned unions intended to integrate all the previous trade secretariats in this new world trade union organisation, while separating both the economic and the logistic branch of it, in order to avoid future conflicts between the different member unions. The WFTU had to face the problem of integrating the different sections whilst taking into account the pre-existing trade secretariats. These negotiations failed in September 1948 because of

[...] the marked insistence and autonomy claim of the ITS, the Social Democratic / Socialist orientation of most leading functionaries in the ITS, the retarding effect of democratic decision-making in trade secretariats, as well as the WFTU policy to deny autonomy areas to the ITS, led to the final failure of the negotiations about the integration of the trade secretariats.[...] (Rütters, 2001 : 14)

⁴ For further information: World Federation of Trade Unions. About us [on line]: http://www.wftucentral.org/?page_id=79&language=en

In explaining the initial participation of the non-Communist trade unions in the WFTU, three points must be made. First, their participation reflected the relations of the big powers, and was therefore no different from the United States and British participation at the United Nations. Second, new international organisations came into existence at the end of World War II, setting new patterns for social and economic policies at the international level that directly affected the fortunes of labour [...]. And third, if the TUC, the CIO, and a few other major Western European trade unions had sided with the AFL in refusing participation in the WFTU, the Russians would undoubtedly have been able to organise a large international labour movement [...] (Lichtblau, 1958: 4-5)

This failure results in the geographic dispersion of the new trade unions, helped by the political division produced by the Cold War. Traditional areas for trade unionism, such as Middle and Eastern Europe, were substituted for Third World regions. The new independent African countries became increasingly important as a new theatre for competition between the trade sections of the WFTU and the union members of ITS.

The British TUC tried to influence – via its participation in WFTU- the new nationalist labour movements in colonial countries. This strategy aimed to integrate new unions that had already been created into the global system, and also provide these organisations with different kinds of support.

The American CIO joined the WFTU after the American Federation of Labour (AFL) had refused to take part in this international union. The CIO considered its WFTU membership as a matter of prestige, and also as a way to be heard in other international forums, such as the United Nations and the International Labour Organization. Nevertheless, the CIO ended up working with the TUC to block Soviet intentions in the WFTU.

After it had refused to participate in any way in the WFTU, the AFL established bilateral relations with anti-Communist unions in France and Italy. It also became increasingly more active in areas with American presence, such as the Federal Republic of Germany, France, Italy, Japan, South Korea and the non-Communist Chinese.

The situation of German trade unions was especially complicated. Of course, the new German trade union movement wanted to break free of the international isolation and distrust which it had been suffering since the war ended in 1945, but they were offered the WFTU membership under one complex condition: unification with the labour movement of the Democratic Republic of Germany, under Soviet control. This unification never happened since the AFL, TUC and CIO established relations with the West German unions

outside the WFTU frame in order to ensure their independence, and to prevent the Russians from having any influence on German unions.

As international tension mounted, so did the tension between the Communist and the non-Communist unions, with the latter identifying themselves with the interests of the West and the Communists with those of the Soviet Union. The issue that finally forced the break between the two groups was Western-oriented trade unions' acceptance and endorsement of the Marshall Plan, which had been proposed in the summer of 1947 [...] In March 1948, the non-Communists formed in London the ERP –Trade Union Advisory Committee, supporting the Marshall Plan, while the Communists met in Sofia denouncing it and acclaiming its Soviet counterthrust, the Molotov Plan. [...] (In) January 1949, the Western trade unions walked out of a Paris meeting of the WFTU Executive Board, and subsequently joined forces with the AFL to found the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). (Lichtblau, 1958: 17-18)

During the years that followed, the concept of European unity emerged as a new topic. In 1956, after the Suez crisis, the WFTU claimed that Germany had an economic monopoly on the continent. That argument was used to convince workers against this new project of European unity, especially after the foundation of NATO and the signature of the Treaty of Rome, which was supported by both the ICFTU and the IFCTU. Once international and political alignments were clearly defined, a new strategy was born, and it was based on the “conquest” of new allied unions. As already mentioned, new trade unions were being created all around the world, and this led to considerable geographic dispersion of the labour movement. This fact opened a “new market” for international influence that made the ideological division between the WFTU and the ICFTU even more obvious.

This kind of activity was especially considerable in both Africa and Asia, where several new trade unions were founded during those years, and where their leaders did not have a clear international political position yet - this intensified yet further when the non-allied countries movement was established by Tito. Both international federations wanted to increase their international members –and their influence-, so they applied their strategies in order to achieve that goal, themselves embroiled in the global political polarisation that stood until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. (Rütters, 2001: 14-15)

2. Global Union Federations today

After the Second World War, we saw changes in the structure, policy, and influence of trade secretariats. Rütters (2001) points out four main reasons for that change.

Technological development in communications and transport systems is the first obvious reason. The second reason was the Cold War and the separation of the world in two opposing blocs. During that period, some trade secretariats were particularly active in fighting Communist influence, such as the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The decolonization process is identified by Rütters as the third possible reason for trade secretariats consolidating. Following the independence of former colonies, several trade unions were founded. The fourth and last point made by Rütters is the expansion of economic relations on a global level and the consequent expansion of multinational companies. Since the 1960s, multinational companies have played the role of “opponents” to global unions, which have dealt with them in order to reach agreements and regulations.

International Trade Secretariats changed their name to Global Union Federations in 2002. Indeed, during the second half of the 20th century, GUF went from being “international” to being “global”, bringing together trade unions from all continents.

Today, Global Union Federations address the issues arising from globalisation. In a globalising world, GUFs play an important role in protecting fundamental human and trade union rights.

They fight against inequality and promote gender equality, equity and dignity for all. GUFs play a leading role in the struggle for social progress throughout the world. This includes working to eliminate social and economic inequalities between industrialized and developing countries, and exploitation at the hands of various nations, global financial institutions and transnational corporations.

In recent decades, GUFs have started to tackle problems such as corporate irresponsibility, the transferral of labour to low-wage economies and the growing divide that separates rich and poor:

With more than a quarter of global economic activity controlled by just 200 companies and multinational corporations responsible for more than two thirds of all international flows of trade and investment, working people across the world are losing out as deregulation and privatisation open the door to a new wave of corporate irresponsibility. [...] At the same time, unions see a massive threat to jobs through “offshoring” whereby, through foreign direct investment or sub-contracting, all or part of the production of goods and services is placed in another country with the intention to re-import to the home market. [...] The

hard-faced image of globalisation – anti-union, cheapskate employment practices, and irresponsible exercise of corporate power – is not far from the truth for millions of workers. There is an urgent need to redraw the landscape of industrial relations. [...] Unions are looking for new ways to have dialogue with industry to counter these developments and to reorder the globalisation agenda. (Aidan, 2006)

The main tasks of global unions as defined in 1985 at the ICFTU's Annual Survey of Violations of Trade Union Rights are "securing and expanding, defending and implementing trade union rights" (Rütters, n.d.).

White (2006) identified the following areas of interest on which GUFs focus their work:

- Solidarity to Eradication of Poverty
- Education vs. Child Labour
- Gender Equity
- Health and Safety
- Environment
- Migration

In other words, GUFs work to promote, respect and defend human and trade union rights and are opposed to any form of totalitarianism, aggression and discrimination. They fight for gender equality, equity and dignity for all working people. They fight against precarious work, sub-contracting and illegal work. The Living Wage Campaign by IndustriALL is an example of how GUFs campaign for decent pay and working conditions, a meaningful job with prospects, a good working environment, ongoing development of human resources and secure employment.

GUFs fight racism and xenophobia and challenge discrimination on the grounds of gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, and racial or ethnic origin or characteristics.

They aim to increase the participation of indigenous peoples in their programme, and provide assistance to certain categories of workers, such as women and young people, often through creating specialized committees.

2.1. Global Union Federations and their structure

Although GUFs are specific to a particular industry sector or occupational group and differ in their size, organisation and activities, some common features can be found in the way they work.

First of all, GUFs have a well-defined structure, which might include a congress, an executive body, president, vice-president, secretariat, regional offices and further internal division. The specific structure of each GUF can be found in its constitution. Constitutions set out GUFs' aims and methods, as well as their membership requirements and obligations.

GUFs work closely with the United Nations system and other international organisations, representing workers at those global forums and promoting their interests at a world level. Moreover, they work closely and in partnership with workforce and civil society. Their international work as well as the pressure that they apply internationally have proved a major factor in achieving union objectives: an example of this might be the ITF Flags of Convenience Campaign, which will be examined more in detail in the relevant section.

While focusing on the advancement of independent and democratic trade unionism at global level, particular stress is also placed on GUFs' regional dimension. GUFs' regional offices play an important role, addressing specific issues related to particular regions or countries. Thus, GUFs work first on a regional level and then coordinate that work on a global level, so that unions can tackle specific problems, share information and build common strategies.

In order to promote free collective bargaining and protect workers' rights, GUFs try to counterbalance the power of multinational companies and the influence of the IMF, World Bank, and national governments. The ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, and the Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises of the OECD, created in the 1970s, are two of the instruments available to Global Union Federations to put pressure on governments and companies fulfil their obligations.

In order to enhance social dialogue, Global Union Federations support global framework agreements and European Work Councils. These councils are a legally-based structure for social dialogue between workers and transnational companies, and have been promoted by the European Trade Union Confederation and the European Industry Federations, which are the European voice of the Global Union Federations.

Currently there is only one effective and viable international collective bargaining agreement between a Global Union Federation and an international employers' groups: workers represented by the International

Transport Workers' Federation and shipping companies, represented in the Joint Negotiating Group, - including major groups in Europe and Japan-, reached the first ever internationally bargained, worldwide collective agreement in 2003. This has set out standard terms and conditions for seafarers.

2.2. Global Union Federations

Today, there are 9 Global Union Federations. Each of these organises and represents trade unions of a specific industry sector or occupational group on an international level.

Table 1. List of Global Union Federations existing today.

	Foundation year	Headquarters	Unions represented	Workers represented
BWI	2005	Geneva	326	12 million
EI	1993	Brussels	394	30 million
FIA	1952	London	100	-
FIM	1948	Paris	70	-
IFJ	1926	Brussels	-	600,000
IndustriALL	2012	Geneva	-	50 million
ITF	1896	London	708	4.5 million
IUF	1920	Geneva	396	12 million
PSI	1907	Ferney- Voltaire, France	669	20 million
UNI	2000	Nyon, Switzerland	900	20 million

2.2.1 International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF)⁵

Table 2. ITF's basic information

	
Founded	1896, London
Members	4.5 million from 154 countries
Headquarters	London
Regional offices	Nairobi, Ouagadougou, Tokyo, New Delhi, Rio de Janeiro, Amman, Moscow, Brussels.
Main body	Congress (meets every four years)
Website	www.itfglobal.org

The International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) represents 708 unions representing over 4.5 million transport workers from some 154 countries. It is allied with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC).

The ITF was founded in 1896 in London by European seafarers' and dockers' union leaders. Nowadays, it has its headquarters in London and offices in Nairobi, Ouagadougou, Tokyo, New Delhi, Rio de Janeiro, Amman, Moscow and Brussels.

ITF members work on ships, ports, railways, road freight and passenger transport, inland waterways, fisheries, tourism and civil aviation.

It represents the interests of transport workers' unions in bodies whose work is related to or has an impact on the transport industry, such as the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). The ITF also represents the interests of transport workers at the OECD, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation and the International Labour Organization (ILO). Unions meet in major union international conferences to discuss their industry or their

⁵ Based on information made available on the official website.

transnational employer. Specialized international task groups deal with more specific, technical issues such as occupational health.

One of the ITF's main activities is informing and advising unions about developments in the transport industry in other countries or regions of the world. The ITF publishes 'Transport International', a quarterly magazine covering issues of importance to transport workers around the world, along with information about its current activities that can be found on its website.

In case of conflict with employers or governments, the ITF organises international solidarity mechanisms. Practical solidarity can range from protest messages, demonstrations and political pressure, to direct industrial action in the form of strikes or boycotts.

The ITF-led campaign against the ships flying Flags of Convenience (FOCs) is a good example of this solidarity. Such ships have no real nationality and so they can avoid labour regulation in the country of ownership. In practice, FOCs have become a vehicle for paying low wages and forcing workers to work long hours in unsafe working conditions.

The ITF also maintains a specialist education department dedicated to developing strong and democratic transport unions.

The ITF's general activities are financed via the affiliation fees of its member unions. The amount of the fee is based on the size of the union's membership, but reduced affiliation rates may be available for unions with fewer resources. Maritime activities have their own special funding which supports the FOC Campaign.

The main policy-making body is the Congress which meets every four years. All affiliates can send voting delegates to the Congress. They elect the President and five Vice-Presidents (four from different world regions and one Women's Vice-President) and the General Secretary who is in charge of the ITF Secretariat. The Executive Board is made up of 40 representatives from affiliates; it meets twice a year and is in charge of the ITF activities between Congresses. The President, the five Vice-Presidents, and further members of the Executive Board and the General Secretary constitute the Management Committee. A Women Transport Workers' Conference and a Young Transport Workers' Conference are held as part of each Ordinary Congress and elect their respective Committees.

A Constitution states the aims, organisation, membership criteria and general working principles of the ITF.

ITF
House 49-60 Borough Road, London, SE1 1DR, United Kingdom

+44 (0) 20 7403 2733
mail@itf.org.uk
www.itfglobal.org

2.2.2 Education International (EI)⁶

Table 3. EI's basic information

	
Founded	1993, Stockholm
Members	30 million in 171 countries and territories
Headquarters	Brussels
Regional offices	Five regions established: Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Latin America and North America and the Caribbean.
Main body	EI World Congress (meets every three years)
Website	www.ei-ie.org

Education International represents teachers and other education employees, with 30 million members in 394 member organisations from 171 countries and territories.

EI members come from all levels of education – from pre-school to university. Over 50 percent of members are women, and gender equality is mandated by EI statutes in its governance structures.

Education International promotes quality education, represents the interests of teachers and other education employees and promotes equality in society. EI believes quality education should be available to every student in every country and fights against all type of discrimination.

EI also focuses on developing cooperation programs of solidarity between members in industrialised and developing countries; programs are currently up and running in 27 countries and focus on various issues, such as the program on the prevention of HIV/AIDS through education together with the World Health Organisation.

Currently, the EI work focuses on five priorities:

- Protecting schools against the effects of the debt and economic crises;

⁶ Based on information made available on the official website.

- Countering de-professionalisation trends;
- Confronting attacks on education unions;
- Pursuing the rights and equality agenda;
- Strengthening EI membership.⁷

The EI Constitution establishes, among other aspects, the governance and the regional division of the organisation. There are five regions- Europe, Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Latin America and North America and the Caribbean. EI's regional structure is defined by Articles 13 and 19 of the Constitution.

The EI World Congress brings together delegates every three years, and regional conferences meet between Congresses. The Executive Board currently counts 27 members from 24 countries. The President, Vice-Presidents and General Secretary meet at least once between two Executive Board meetings.

The Credentials Committee, Elections Committee, Resolutions Committee, Audit Committee and the Secretariat are established by Art. 8 of the Constitution.

The Executive Board appoints the Finance Committee and the Constitution and By-laws Committee.

The Status of Women Committee advises the Executive Board on issues related to women and girls.

Education International works closely with the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), the Global Union Federations, and the Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) at the OECD, through the Council of Global Unions.

The official languages of EI are English, French, German and Spanish.

Education International
 5, Bd du Roi Albert II, 1210 Brussels, Belgium
 +32 2 224 06 11
 headoffice@ei-ie.org
www.ei-ie.org

⁷ For further information: Education International. Our priorities [on line] Retrieved from: http://www.ei-ie.org/en/websections/content_detail/6170

2.2.3 Public Services International (PSI)⁸

Table 4. PSI's basic information

	
Founded	1907
Members	20 million in 154 countries and territories
Headquarters	Ferney-Voltaire, France
Regional offices	Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, India, Japan, Lebanon, New Zealand, Romania, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Togo, Ukraine, the USA.
Main body	Congress (meets every five years)
Website	www.world-psi.org

Public Services International brings together more than 20 million workers, represented by 669 unions in 154 countries and territories. PSI members work in social services, health care, municipal and community services, central governments, and public utilities such as water and electricity.

Public Services International was founded in 1907. Its international headquarters is located in Ferney-Voltaire, France. It has regional bases in Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Ecuador, India, Japan, Lebanon, New Zealand, Romania, Russia, Singapore, South Africa, Togo, Ukraine and the USA.

PSI works to achieve social justice, quality public services for all, poverty reduction and debt relief, gender equality and employment equity, free collective bargaining and a strong and united union movement. Its

⁸ Based on information made available on the official website.

work is put into place through local and regional campaigns and union development projects to build both on-the-ground capacity and international solidarity.

PSI represents the interests of its affiliates in many fora, such as the International Labour Organization and other United Nations bodies, the World Bank and regional development banks, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, among others.

PSI works with the Council of Global Unions in the Quality Public Services—*Action Now!* campaign which promotes fair taxation as a key means of funding public services.

PSI has a regional structure consisting of four regions: Africa and Arab Countries; Asia and Pacific; Europe; and Inter-America.

The Congress is the supreme decision-making authority of PSI and meets every five years to elect the Executive Board. The Executive Board meets at least once a year and is responsible for the execution of decisions and recommendations of Congress. The other governing bodies of PSI are the Steering Committee, accountable to the Executive Board, and the regional executive committees. Regional conferences are held at least once between Congresses in each region. PSI has active women's committees at global, regional and sub-regional levels, and all the decision-making structures are based on gender parity. The General Secretary is elected by Congress and is responsible for conducting the day-to-day business of PSI.

PSI works with six official languages (English, French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Swedish).

Public Services International
BP 9, 01211 Ferney-Voltaire Cedex, France
+33 (0)450 40 64 64
psi@world-psi.org
www.world-psi.org

2.2.4 Building and Wood Worker's International (BWI)⁹

Table 5. BWI's basic information

	
Founded	2005, Buenos Aires
Members	12 million in 135 countries
Headquarters	Geneva
Regional offices	Panama, Malaysia, South Africa, India, Burkina Faso, Curaçao, Chile, Kenya, Russia, Peru, Brazil, Thailand.
Main body	Congress (meets every four years)
Website	www.bwint.org

The Building and Wood Workers' International is the Global Union Federation grouping 326 trade unions in the building, building materials, wood, forestry and related sectors. It represents around 12 million members in 135 countries.

The BWI was founded on 9th December 2005 in Buenos Aires by the merging of the International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW) and the World Federation of Building and Wood Workers (WFBW).

The BWI promotes the three pillars of sustainable industrial development: economic viability, environmental protection and social responsibility. BWI's priorities are protecting workers' rights, supporting stable employment and decent working conditions and social dialogue, and it also provides training and capacity-building support for unions worldwide. It defends gender equity.

BWI campaigns *Children Should Learn, Not Earn* and *Gender Empowerment* have promoted practical solutions to child labour and low-paid and dangerous work in construction and wood and forestry, by setting up schools for child workers and training women workers.

⁹ Based on information made available on the official website.

Health and Safety is another key concern; BWI has campaigned for a global ban on asbestos, with this ban being implemented in several countries.

BWI has succeeded in gaining the inclusion of the ILO core labour standards in the systems for certification of wood and forestry products, such as FSC (Forestry Stewardship Council) and PEFC (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes), allowing better working conditions in countries such as Ghana, Kenya and Burkina Faso. Moreover, it has signed more than 10 global agreements with multinational construction and wood industry companies to promote respect for ILO Conventions in all their global operations.

In Latin America, BWI assists in training promoters of trade union and human rights, assists in legal cases and launches global solidarity campaigns in support of workers. In May 2005, thanks to the BWI, mandatory clauses were added to World Bank construction contracts on forced labour, child labour, non-discrimination, and other labour standards. In 2006, the private sector wing of the Bank required its clients to respect core labour standards.

The BWI works closely with the European Federation of Building and Wood Workers (EFBWW), the Nordic Federation of Building and Wood Workers (NFBWW), the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the Global Union Federations (GUFs). The BWI has a Special Consultative Status to the Economic and Social Committee of the United Nations and is engaged with international organisations such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO), the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO), the international employers' organisations, such as the Confederation of International Contractors' Associations (CICA) and the regional and international financial institutions such as the World Bank and World Trade Organisation (WTO).

BWI's decision-making bodies are the World Congress, the World Board, the World Council and regional structures. The World Congress which meets once every four years to elects the World Council, which then appoints a World Board, responsible for the administration of the organisation and for the implementation of its policies. The President, Deputy-President, the General Secretary and the Auditors' Committee are also elected by Congress. An International Women's Committee is also established by the World Council to advice on policies, implementation and practical measures to promote effective women participation and

programmes. Regional Committees examine issues affecting workers in the relevant industries and are responsible for their respective regions.

The Headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland. Regional Offices and Project Offices are located in Panama, Malaysia, South Africa, India, Burkina Faso, Curaçao, Chile, Kenya, Russia, Peru, Brazil and Thailand.

BWI

54 route des Acacias, CH-1227 Carouge GE, Switzerland

+ 41 22 827 37 77

info@bwint.org

www.bwint.org

2.2.5 UNI Global Union¹⁰

Table 6. UNI Global Union's basic information

	
Founded	2000
Members	20 million
Headquarters	Nyon, Switzerland
Regional offices	Four regional organisations: UNI-Africa, UNI-Americas, UNI Asia & Pacific and UNI-Europa.
Main body	Congress (meets every four years)
Website	www.uniglobalunion.org/

UNI Global Union represents more than 20 million workers from over 900 trade unions in the sectors of skills and services. UNI represents workers in Cleaning and Security, Commerce, Finance, Gaming, Graphical and Packaging, Hair and Beauty, Information, Communication, Technology and Services Industry (ICTS), Media, Entertainment and Arts, Post and Logistics, Social Insurance, Sport, Temp and Agency workers, and Tourism industries as well as Professionals and Managers, Women and Youth.

It was created on January 1st, 2000, with the name Union Network International, as the result of the merger of four organisations: FIET (International Federation of Employees, technicians and managers), MEI (Media and Entertainment International), IGF (International Graphical Federation) and CI (Communications International, formally PTTI).

¹⁰ Based on information made available on the official website.

It is based in Nyon, Switzerland. It has four regional organisations: UNI-Africa, UNI-Americas, UNI Asia & Pacific and UNI-Europa.

Through its Breaking Through strategy, UNI works in order to ensure justice and equality for working people, especially at a time of unprecedented levels of precarious work, and record youth unemployment. Quality jobs, collective bargaining and social protection are identified as the “keys to success in an increasingly volatile global labour market”.

UNI has signed 51 Global Agreements with multinational companies to set fair standards and conditions for workers around the world. UNI holds seats at key sustainability organisations such as the UN Global Compact and at fora for global leaders like the G20 and the World Economic Forum.

In Colombia, through the Freedom from Fear campaign, UNI is creating a safer environment for trade union work. It is also co-ordinating global resistance for worker and union rights at the world’s biggest retailer, Walmart.

UNI is one of founders of the Bangladesh Accord. Signed by almost 100 brands, this agreement is binding and enforceable and protects garment workers in Bangladesh from the dangers of fire and building hazards.

UNI has three groups which focus on specific issues and sectors. UNI Equal Opportunities works towards a more equal and fair society and against discrimination; UNI P&M coordinates trade union policies for professionals and managers workers at the global and regional level; UNI Youth supports young members in the Global Union for skills and services.

UNI’s decision-making body is the World Congress and is held every four years. In the period between World Congresses, the World Executive Board is responsible for managing the affairs of UNI. It is formed by the President and four Vice-Presidents (one from each Region of UNI), the General Secretary, one women representatives for each region, the President of the World Women’s Committee, the President of the World Youth Committee and the President of the World Professional and Managerial Staff Committee, among others. The UNI World Women’s Conference is held immediately prior to the UNI World Congress. The Youth Committee and the World Committee for Professionals and Managers (P&M) are also established according to UNI constitution.

The languages used at UNI World Congress and World Executive Board are English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish and Swedish.

UNI Global Union
Avenue Reverdil 8-10, 1260 Nyon, Switzerland
+41 22 365 21 00
contact@union-network.org www.uniglobalunion.org

2.2.6 International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF)¹¹

Table 7. IUF's basic information

	
Founded	1920
Members	12 million in 126 countries
Headquarters	Geneva
Regional offices	Africa, Asia/Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America and North America.
Main body	Congress (meets every five years)
Website	www.iuf.org

The International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF) represents workers employed in agriculture and plantations, the preparation and manufacture of food and beverages, hotels, restaurants and catering services and all stages of tobacco processing. It is currently composed of 396 trade unions from 126 countries representing over 12 million workers.

IUF was founded in 1920 and it is based in Geneva, Switzerland. However, the organisation traces its history back to 1889 when the International Federation of Tobacco Workers was founded and then merged with the IUF in 1958.

International labour solidarity has been the IUF's guiding principle. The IUF exists to strengthen member unions through mutual support. It seeks to create an international union counterweight to the power of

¹¹ Based on information made available on the official website.

transnational companies and has succeeded in signing international agreements on global respect for trade union rights with leading companies within its sectors. The active defence of trade union, human and democratic rights is an essential part of its work.

Regional Organisations of the IUF exist in Africa, Asia/Pacific, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America and North America. The regions are autonomous, and pursue independent activities in close collaboration with the IUF and its governing bodies. In addition to the statutory regional organisations, sub-regional bodies exist to coordinate activity at that level.

IUF

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+41 22 793 22 33

iuf@iuf.org

www.iuf.org

2.2.7 International Federation of Journalists (IFJ)¹²

Table 8. IFJ's basic information

	
Founded	1926, Paris
Members	600,000 in 134 countries
Headquarters	Brussels
Regional offices	Latin America, Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe.
Main body	Congress (meets every three years)
Website	www.ifj.org

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) is the world's largest organisation of journalists. First established in Paris in 1926, it was re-launched in 1946 and again, in its present form, in 1952. Nowadays, the Federation represents around 600,000 members from 134 countries.

The main office is located in Brussels, Belgium. The Federation has regional offices in Latin America, Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Europe, such as the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) which organises the Labour Rights Expert Group (LAREG) and the Authors' Rights Experts Group (AREG), the Federation of African Journalists (FAJ), and the Federation of Latin American Journalists (FEPALC). Its official languages are English, French, and Spanish.

The IFJ promotes international action to defend freedom of the press and social justice. It is opposed to discrimination of all kinds and condemns the use of media as propaganda or to promote intolerance and conflict. The IFJ does not subscribe to any given political viewpoint and insists that professional rights can only be defended when there are independent, vigorous and representative trade unions for journalists.

¹² Based on information made available on the official website.

To achieve these goals, the IFJ runs a wide range of projects. The projects are run regionally and deal with the following priority issues: trade union development, press freedom, safety, professional and ethical standards and gender equality.

It campaigns for greater safety for journalists and media staff. The IFJ Safety Fund was established in January 1992 and has become an important source of support for journalists under threat. The Fund is part of the IFJ Safety Programme which includes casework, protests, campaigns and publications.

The IFJ is also the founder, with leading media employers, of the International News Safety Institute, an ONG aimed at improving levels of protection for journalists and media staff.

This organisation speaks for journalists within the United Nations system and within the international trade union movement. IFJ policy is decided by the Congress which meets every three years and work is carried out by the Secretariat based in Brussels under the direction of an elected Executive Committee. The Executive Committee is the governing body between Congresses and is responsible for ensuring that the policies and the working programme of the Federation are implemented. The Congress is also responsible for electing the Officers of the Federation- the President, Senior Vice-President, two Vice-Presidents and the Honorary Treasurer. The President, Senior Vice-President, Vice-Presidents and the Honorary Treasurer together with the General Secretary constitute the Administrative Committee. The General Secretary is the Chief Executive officer of the Federation.

IFJ official languages are English, French and Spanish.

IFJ

International Press Centre, Résidence Palace, Block C, 155 Rue de la Loi, B1040 Brussels, Belgium

+32 2 235 2200

ifj@ifj.org www.ifj.org

2.2.8 International Arts and Entertainment Alliance (IAEA)¹³

Table 9. IAEA's basic information

	
Members	<p>Made of 3 global federations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – FIA (International Federation of Actors) – FIM (International Federation of Musicians) – UNI-MEI (Media, Entertainment and Arts division of UNI)
Main body	IAEA Board (President and Secretary)
Website	www.iaea-globalunion.org

The International Arts and Entertainment Alliance (IAEA) is the global union representing workers in the Arts and Entertainment sector.

It comprises 3 global federations: the International Federation of Actors (FIA), the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) and the Media, Entertainment and Arts division of UNI (UNI-MEI). It is a member of the Council of Global Unions (CGU). It holds observer status with the International Organisation of the Francophonie.

The IAEA Board consist of the President and the Secretary.

¹³ Based on information made available on the official website.

a) International Federation of Musicians (FIM)

Table 10. FIM's basic information

 <p>La voz de los músicos en el mundo</p>		<p>International Federation of Musicians Fédération Internationale des Musiciens Internationale Musiker-Föderation Federación Internacional de Músicos</p>
Founded	1948	
Members	70 trade unions in 65 countries	
Headquarters	Paris	
Regional offices	Three regional groups: FAC (the FIM African Committee), GLM (Grupo Latinoamericano de Músicos) and FIM European group.	
Main body	Congress (meets every four years)	
Website	www.fim-musicians.org	

The International Federation of Musicians was founded in 1948 and represents musicians' unions, guilds and professional associations. Today it counts about 70 members in 65 countries throughout the world. FIM has three regional groups, for Africa (FAC, the FIM African Committee), Latin America (GLM, Grupo Latinoamericano de Músicos) and Europe (the European group of FIM).

The Federation's main objective is to protect the economic, social and artistic interests of musicians represented by its member unions. In order to achieve its objective, FIM works to strengthen international collaboration, signs agreements with other international organisations and obtains and releases information about the music profession.

The administrative and executive bodies of FIM are the Congress, the Executive Committee, the Presidium and the Secretariat. The Congress is highest authority of FIM and sets the general policy and work of the organization. The Executive Committee is made up of a President, four Vice-Presidents and eighteen additional members. The Presidium is formed by the President, four Vice-Presidents and the General Secretary. The Secretariat is responsible for the administration of FIM.

FIM collaborates closely with the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), the International Labour Office (ILO) and UNESCO. It is recognised and consulted by the Council of Europe and the European Union. It is a member of the International Music Council (IMC).

FIM official languages are English, French, German and Spanish.

FIM

21 bis, rue Victor Massé, F-75009 Paris

+33 0 145 263 123

office@fim-musicians.com

www.fim-musicians.org

b) International Federation of Actors (FIA)

Table 11. FIA's basic information

	
Founded	1952
Members	100 trade unions, guilds and associations in over 75 countries
Headquarters	London
Regional offices	North America (FIA-NA), Latin America (FIA-LA), Africa (AfroFIA), European Union, Switzerland and European Economic Area (EuroFIA).
Main body	Congress (meets every four years)
Website	www.fia-actors.com

The International Federation of Actors (FIA) is an international non-governmental organisation representing more than 100 performers' trade unions, guilds and associations in over 75 countries. It represents the interests of actors (in film, television, radio, theatre and live performance), broadcast professionals, dancers, singers, variety and circus artists, among others.

The Federation was founded in 1952 by British Actors' Equity and the Syndicat Français des Artistes-Interprètes. The FIA is governed by its Congress, the Executive Committee and, for administrative and economic matters or urgent decisions in between meetings of the latter, by the Presidium – made of the FIA President and the six Vice-presidents. The FIA Executive Committee meets annually and the Congress takes place every four years.

The FIA's main role is to represent its members in the international arena. It works towards global agreements to protect performers' rights by lobbying governments, and international and European organisations and institutions. It is officially recognised by UNESCO, the International Labour Organization

(ILO), the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), the International Theatre Institute (ITI) and the Council of Europe.

The FIA works on building stronger international solidarity and fights for equal opportunities, non-discrimination, freedom of association, as well as collective bargaining, professional training and career transition. The FIA also aims to share information, knowledge, expertise and resources, particularly with unions in the developing world.

FIA affiliates are grouped regionally in North America (within FIA-NA), Latin America (within FIA-LA), Africa (within AfroFIA), as well as in the European Union, Switzerland and the European Economic Area (within EuroFIA).

The official languages of FIA are English, French, German and Spanish for the Congress and Congress documents, and English and French for all other communication and documents.

FIA
Guild House, Upper St Martin's Lane, London WC2H 9EG
+44 20 7379 0900
www.fia-actors.com

c) **Media, Entertainment and Arts division of UNI (UNI-MEI)**

Table 12. UNI-MEI's basic information

	
Members	100 unions and guilds in over 70 countries
Headquarters	Nyon, Switzerland
Website	http://www.uniglobalunion.org/sectors/media-entertainment-arts

UNI-MEI is the media and entertainment section of UNI Global Union. It represents broadcasting workers, film and theatre technicians and staff, specific creative and professional groups (writers, screenwriters, directors, and visual artists), other arts and entertainment workers, as well as workers in sports and a variety of related groups. It brings together over 100 unions and guilds from more than 70 countries.

It tackles issues ranging from ownership structure evolution, trade policy and technological change to copyright and neighbouring rights, piracy and censorship. It acts to exchange information about collective agreements, legal standards and practices of the categories it represents.

UNI-MEI encourages stronger cooperation and solidarity, both in industrialised countries and in developing ones. It intervenes labour disputes, and where there has been infringement of trade union or human rights or of freedom of expression in the arts or media. UNI MEI has observer status with several inter-governmental bodies, where it defends the interests of its members.

UNI-MEI

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+41 22 365 2100

jim.wilson@union-network.org

www.uniglobalunion.org/sectors/media-entertainment-arts-0

2.2.9 IndustriALL Global Union¹⁴

Table 13. IndustriALL's basic information

	
Founded	2012
Members	50 million workers in 140 countries
Headquarters	Geneva
Regional offices	Five regional offices: Africa Office, South Asia Office, South East Asia Office, CIS Office and Latin America & the Caribbean Office.
Main body	Congress (meets every four years)
Website	www.industrial-all-union.org

IndustriALL Global Union represents 50 million workers in 140 countries in the mining, energy and manufacturing sectors.

The organisation was founded on 19th June 2012 and brings together affiliates of the former global union federations: International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF), International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM) and International Textiles Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF).

Its headquarters are in Geneva and it has 5 regional offices: Africa Office, South Asia Office, South East Asia Office, CIS Office and Latin America & the Caribbean Office. It represents workers in a wide range of sectors from extraction of oil and gas, mining, generation and distribution of electric power, to manufacturing of metals and metal products, shipbuilding, automotive, aerospace, mechanical engineering,

¹⁴ Based on information made available on the official website.

electronics, chemicals, rubber, pulp and paper, building materials, textiles, garments, leather and footwear and environmental services.

IndustriALL promotes global solidarity, better working conditions and trade union rights around the world. It challenges the power of multinational companies and negotiates with them on a global level. IndustriALL fights for another model of globalisation and a new economic and social model that puts people first, based on democracy and social and economic justice within and between countries. IndustriALL fights against precarious work, it works to ensure equal rights and women's participation, create safe workplaces and improve democracy and inclusiveness.

The highest authority of IndustriALL is the Congress, which takes place at least every four years according to the decisions of the Executive Committee regarding date, duration, location and agenda. One of the main duties of the Congress is deliberating and adopting the strategies, goals and activities of IndustriALL for the following four years. The Executive Committee is responsible for implementing all activities, decisions, resolutions, motions, and policies adopted by the Congress. The Secretariat is managed by the General Secretary, who is responsible for implementing the policies and decisions of the Congress, the Executive Committee and the Finance Committee. The Finance Committee consists of the President, three Vice-Presidents, the General Secretary and six members of the Executive Committee from the different regions. IndustriALL works in the following 6 regions: North America, Latin America & the Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, Asia-Pacific and Europe. Regional organisations aim to assist in implementing IndustriALL's general policies and priorities as decided by the Congress and the Executive Committee, and to address matters specific to the region.

IndustriALL Global Union

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2.2.10 Global Unions - Council of Global Unions (CGU)¹⁵

All GUFs, the ITUC and TUAC are members of the Council of Global Unions (CGU). The Council of Global Unions (CGU) held its inaugural meeting in Brussels, 9th-10th January 2007. It was created based on a consensus agreement that was ratified by Global Unions.

CGU's main goal is to encourage and develop closer co-operation among Global Unions. It was not created as an organisation, but rather as a tool for structured cooperation and coordination.

The CGU elects a Chair and a Vice Chair for two-year terms. The Secretary is the General Secretary of the ITUC. Together with the outgoing Chair, they constitute the Coordinating Committee. All member organisations are served by a Coordinator, who is selected by the Coordinating Committee.

The CGU meets in January of each year to discuss issues of common interest. It also considers reports from CGU working parties, determines priorities and makes related decisions on resources. A meeting of the General Secretaries of Global Unions is also held in June.

The CGU has several working groups chaired by General Secretaries. Those groups include: the Work Relationships Group, dealing with precarious work; the Communications Task Force that identifies common core policies; the Migration Working Group, which focuses on workers' right; the Quality Public Services Working Group, which adopted the Geneva Charter in October of 2008, outlines the principles and priorities of the trade union movement on public services, and builds cooperation among trade union organisations; the Burma/Myanmar Working Group has been created for monitoring the development of democracy and the trade union movement in that country. The CGU has been involved in several other countries in the Middle East/North Africa region.

Global Unions
International Trade Union House
5, Boulevard du Roi Albert II 1210 Bruxelles Belgium
jim.baker@global-unions.org
www.global-unions.org/council

¹⁵ Based on information made available on the official website.

2.2.11 GUFs languages

Table 14. List of all GUFs' official languages (Constitution and website)

	Official languages	Website offered in
ITF	Information not provided in the Constitution	EN – DE – ES – FR – PT – RU – AR
EI	EN – FR – DE – ES	EN – FR – ES – RU – AR
PSI	EN – FR – DE – JP – ES – SV	EN – FR – ES
BWI	Information not provided in the Statute – Statute available in EN, IT and SV	EN – FR – DE – ES – RU – AR – ZH
UNI	EN – FR – DE – IT – JP – PT – ES – SV	EN – FR – ES – DE – SV
IUF	Statute not available on the official website	AR – ZH – EN – ES – FR – K – JP – RU – SV
IFJ	EN – FR – ES	EN – FR – ES
FIM	EN – FR – DE – ES	EN – FR – DE – ES
FIA	EN – FR – DE – ES: Congress and Congress-related documents EN – FR: All other communications and documents	EN – FR
IndustriALL	Information not provided in the Constitution – the reference language of origin for the Statute is FR	EN – FR – ES

2.2.12 GUFs headquarters

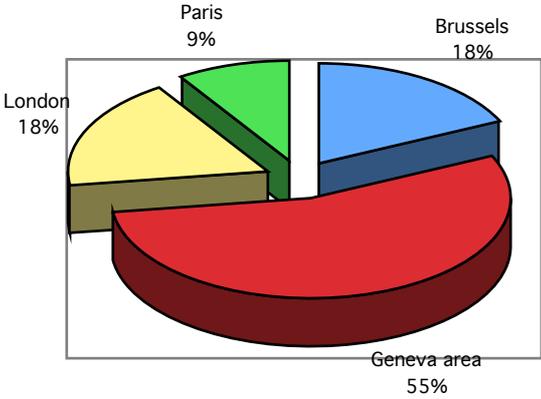


Figure 1. GUF's headquarters

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

After having considered both questionnaires and interviews to collect the information we needed, we opted for interviews.

While questionnaires tend to be seen as more objective than interviews, as well as a more useful tool to obtain generalizable results (Harris & Brown, 2010), they are used when there is a large sample population. Since we are focusing our research on a Geneva-based chief interpreter working for GUFs, we decided that this method was not the most appropriate. Also, sending a questionnaire to the subject via e-mail seemed to be a rather risky approach, since low percentages of recipients tend to answer the questionnaires they have been sent.

Our interviewee was Mr. Peter Sand, a chief interpreter working for three of the major GUFs in Geneva: UNI, PSI and IndustriALL. Although we had just one interviewee, that fact that he works for three different GUFs gave us a fairly complete approach to the work of the interpreters at these institutions.

After identifying our interviewee, this research project was explained to him and we asked him to sign a consent form giving us his permission to record the interview and use it as part of this thesis. The use of a digital voice recorder allowed us to take fewer notes, maintain eye contact with the participant, and keep the interview more dynamic.

Interviews are a flexible tool because they can be adapted as needed; moreover, unlike questionnaires, interviewers can follow up on the interviewee's answers. That way, our interviewee was able to give us more detailed explanations regarding the same topic. We also were able to ask him why he had responded accordingly at certain moments (Longstreet, Walker & Winters, 2001).

In Gall, Gall & Borg (2003), we find at least three different kinds of qualitative interview:

1. *Key informant interview*: the interviewer collects data from individuals who have special knowledge or perceptions related to his/her research topic.
2. *Survey interviews*: used to confirm previous information about a topic.
3. *Focus group interviews*: interviewing a specific group of individuals at the same time.

Given that the aim of this paper is collecting practical information to elaborate a guide for interpreters working at GUF for their first time, we decided to adopt the first of the three approaches for our interview.

Our main aim was to use the chief interpreter's capacity as a recruiter to find out all job-related information from his perspective as a respondent.

We carried out a standardised interview, that is to say we chose to prepare a set of questions in advance. Planning our questions beforehand ensured that the questions were not closed; we wanted our interviewee to have the opportunity to elaborate as much as he wished about any specific topic brought up by the questions asked, and let him decide whether to analyse in further detail some aspects that he might have found particularly pertinent or interesting. In order to provide our future colleagues with the best amount of and the best quality practical information, we wanted to make sure that data collection was not limited either by the style of our questions, or our interviewing style.

As we wanted our interviewee to develop his answers as much as possible, our set of questions was drafted taking special care of its wording and inserting prompts. This allowed us to get open-ended responses (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003).

This open-endedness allows the participants to contribute as much detailed information as they desire and it also allows the researcher to ask probing questions as a means of follow-up. Standardized open-ended interviews are likely the most popular form of interviewing utilized in research studies because of the nature of open-ended questions, allowing the participants to fully express their viewpoints and experiences. (Turner, 2010: 756)

Our list of questions was built to achieve that objective- inviting our interviewee to provide us with elaborate answers without becoming too general or inviting them to give us an answer which is not specifically related to the main topic. Keeping this very basic characteristic in mind, we designed our interview script following the advice in McNamara (2009): (a) wording should be open-ended (respondents should have the option to choose their own terms when answering questions); (b) questions should be as neutral as possible (avoid wording that might influence answers, e.g., evocative, judgemental wording, etc.); (c) questions should be asked one at a time; (d) questions should be worded clearly; (e) be careful when asking "why" questions, since they can make the interviewee digress and start talking about a different topic.

All the data collected in the interview was analysed, reorganised and interpreted, in order to provide an accurate and valid representation of the key aspects that are relevant to the research question.

Interviewing a chief interpreter working at specific GUFs means that information collected will not possibly apply to all existing GUFs. During data analysis and interpretation, a distinction will be made between specificities of a particular GUF and aspects that apply to GUFs in general. Where applicable, a section will be written on challenges posed by any specific features of a GUF.

Since open-ended interviews in composition call for participants to fully express their responses in as much detail as desired, (...) it can be a more cumbersome process for the researcher to sift through the narrative responses in order to fully and accurately reflect an overall perspective of all interview responses through the coding process. (Turner, 2010: 756)

Data collected was also complemented by the analysis of the existing agreement between GUFs and the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC). Analysing that agreement allowed us to identify those mutually agreed working conditions that are less likely to change. We have also tried to spot differences and similarities between the interpreting carried out at GUFs and other major organisations.

DATA AND DATA ANALYSIS

As mentioned in the previous chapter, all the data hereby presented was retrieved from the information provided by our interviewee, Mr. Peter Sand. Due to availability reasons we only interviewed Mr. Sand, who is a current recruiter for three of the major GUFs –UNI, PSI and IndustriALL-.

Our list of questions¹⁶ was divided in five different thematic blocks in order to provide both us and the interviewee with a logical order. This organisational setup was also chosen in order to make the data analysis easier and more coherent. The five blocks are as follows:

- **1. Recruitment**: description of hiring policies for interpreters working at GUFs and the criteria recruiters use to hire new interpreters.
- **2. Languages**: overview of language policy at GUFs (official languages, most spoken languages, most sought-after language combinations, etc.)
- **3. Interpretation**: this block deals with various interpreting-specific matters, from the most used modality of interpretation or the hiring of interpreters with a retour, to the future of the interpreting services at GUFs.
- **4. Organisation of interpreting services at a meeting**: description of the main activities carried out by the chief interpreter and the recruiter.
- **5. Interpreters' preparation for a meeting**: we asked Mr. Sand for advice for interpreters in order to help them when they first work at GUFs.

The analysis of the information retrieved from Mr. Sand's interview will thus be presented in that order.

The chapter that follows is an analysis of our interviewee's answers in line with the thesis' goal, and as such, Mr. Sand's answers may be quoted in whole or in part. Readers can refer to the complete transcript of the interview in Appendix 2.

¹⁶ See Appendix 1

1. Recruitment

The first set of questions aims to analyse the recruitment process and the criteria taken into consideration when recruiting conference interpreters.

1.1. Freelance interpreters or staff interpreters?

Conference interpreters are generally divided in two groups: freelance interpreters and staff interpreters. Freelance conference interpreters are employed on a short-term basis and work for various organisations. Staff conference interpreters are employed by organisations on a temporary or permanent basis. Staff interpreters are thus salaried employees. The majority of interpreters are freelancers, with only a small percentage working as staff interpreters.¹⁷

GUFs rely on professional conference interpreters for their multilingual meetings. We wanted to find out if GUFs work with freelance interpreters, staff interpreters, or a combination of the two.

Our interviewee explained that GUFs only recruit freelance interpreters. Unlike other organizations, such as the UN or the EU, GUFs do not work with staff interpreters. The smaller size of GUFs such as FIM or IFJ, as well as their less frequent meetings -compared to the larger organisations-, might be the reason why GUFs do not hire staff interpreters. The varying number of languages spoken at meetings might be another element that influenced this practice.

1.2. AIIC, agencies or networking?

Our interviewee explained that one of the main responsibilities of the chief interpreter at GUFs is hiring interpreters. In order to do so, Mr. Sand does not rely on agencies nor on AIIC, the conference interpreters' professional organization. Instead, Mr. Sand relies exclusively on his network. For Mr. Sand and the three GUFs he works with, networking and word of mouth seem to be the main ways to find interpreters. Having worked as a lecturer at the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting of Geneva for almost twenty years, Mr. Sand knows many of the former graduates actively working as freelance interpreters.

¹⁷ For further information: Association International d'Interprètes de Conférence. Careers and specialties [on line]: <http://aiic.net/node/9/careers-and-specialties/lang/1>

His network however is not limited to Geneva and interpreters working in Switzerland, since he is also in contact with the main interpreting faculties and interpreting lecturers in Europe. Moreover, having worked as an interpreter himself from many years, he knows his colleagues directly. Thus, he knows who has a specific language combination and how reliable colleagues are.

When hiring interpreters, AIIC is not an essential resource. Mr. Sand does not use it as a database in order to find professional conference interpreters and does not necessarily rely on it to ensure quality. The AIIC website is mainly used by our interviewee as a source of information when looking for personal details of registered interpreters, such as their address.

Mr. Sand never deals with agencies or other intermediaries in order to find conference interpreters. Firstly, thanks to his large network, he need not resort to a third party to contact interpreters or obtain their details. Relying on an agency would entail a slower recruitment process and paying agency commission that could instead be paid directly to the interpreter hired. This allows Mr. Sand to guarantee the best cost-quality ratio. Thus, Mr. Sand prefers to find interpreters through his network and direct experience in the profession.

“PETER SAND: [...] The important thing is not to know everything, but to know who you can ask. And when you have a big network...I think that virtually in every country I know at least one person I can trust. [...]”

When his personal experience in the profession is not enough, he can rely on word of mouth and ask for recommendations from colleagues. His contacts with lecturers working in interpreting faculties across Europe seem to be one of the most important aspects when looking for interpreters.

It is interesting to note how universities and teaching staff seem to be the most important links between GUFs and interpreters. Mr. Sand himself tends to look amongst his former students when looking for interpreters. Now that he does not teach anymore, he would contact the teaching staff he knows to ask for suggestions, or would rely on word of mouth:

“PETER SAND: [...] I do try to get new people a chance but I've got less contact with ETI now, so I rely on people to sort of say “Listen, give such and such a person a chance”. [...]”

1.3. Quality assessment

Recruitment procedures vary from organisation to organisation. When recruiting freelance conference interpreters, organisations usually require them to pass an accreditation test in order to assess the quality of their work.

Interpreters who wish to work for GUFs do not need to pass an accreditation test. In many cases, Mr. Sand knows the interpreters well because they are his former students and does not need to assess their quality through an accreditation test.

In case he is not sure about the quality of an interpreter's work or does not know the interpreter directly, Mr. Sand gives candidates the possibility to work alongside more experienced colleagues. Their work would then be carefully evaluated and the quality assessed.

As in the previous paragraph, the link with the academic environment, especially with the Interpreting faculty in Geneva, is extremely important and seems to be what opens the door to an interpreting career at GUFs. Networking is therefore essential in both recruiting interpreters and assessing the quality of their work.

From the information provided by our interviewee, we notice how the quality assessment and hiring procedures at GUFs differ considerably from other international organizations such as the EU and the UN, where interpreters send an application and might not have had any previous contact with recruiters and working staff. After the application is sent and if it is accepted, the selection process continues with one or more accreditation tests, with the goal of assessing the quality of the candidate's work.

1.4. Main criteria for recruiting interpreters

During our interview, Mr. Sand confirmed that organizing a team of interpreters is responsibility of the chief interpreter. The chief interpreter receives the information about the meeting and the languages needed from the client and set up a team accordingly.

We asked Mr. Sand what has to be taken into account when finding interpreters. We talked about three main points: professional domicile, language combination and experience.

Professional domicile and language combination are becoming more and more important, according to Mr. Sand. Especially when looking at GUFs, avoiding unnecessary travel is very important, both from the point of view of the client and from the point of view of the interpreter. Recruiting locals whenever possible allows the

client to spend less on travel expenses, and at the same time allows interpreters living in or near the hosting city not to be bypassed. Thus, Mr. Sand tries to recruit locals whenever possible because he feels it is also a question of fairness, both for customers and colleagues.

“PETER SAND: [...] I don't see why I would import colleagues from Geneva say to Barcelona when I know there are excellent people in Barcelona, so I don't need to increase costs for the costumer and bypass the colleagues in Barcelona. [...]”

Mr. Sand's point of view is also reflected by the agreement between AIIC and GUFs, when he said that

“[...] Everything possible will be done to give priority to hiring interpreters having their professional address in the region/country/city where the conference is to take place, due account being taken of language requirements. [...]”¹⁸

Language combination is another important criterion when putting together a team of interpreters. The chief interpreter selects the interpreters according to the languages that need to be covered passively and actively during a meeting.¹⁹ Some languages are becoming more and more important in the trade union movement and need to be taken into account when composing a team. Mr. Sand gave the example of Portuguese, which according to our interviewee is not very well represented among interpreters. However, thanks to importance of Brazil within the trade union movement, Portuguese needs to be represented passively during GUFs meetings. Thus, Mr. Sand would first of all look for interpreters who are able to provide a relay from Portuguese. We noticed, however, that AIIC website provides a database featuring interpreters who are members of AIIC and gives the possibility to look for interpreters according to their language combination and their location. Searching for interpreters with Portuguese as a C language, we could find many of them located in different parts of the world, even though Portuguese is indeed less well-represented than other languages such as Spanish, as shown by the tables below:

¹⁸ Association Internationale d'Interprètes de Conférence. AIIC - Global Union Federations Agreement [on line]: <http://aiic.net/page/1350/aiic-global-union-federations-agreement/lang/1>

¹⁹ Interpreters' working languages are classified by AIIC in three categories - A, B, C. For further information: Association International d'Interprètes de Conférence. Working languages [on line]: <http://aiic.net/node/6/working-languages/lang/1>

Table 15. AIIC's interpreters with language combination EN – PT (A-C) and FR – PT (A-C).²⁰

From	Into	Total
Portuguese	English	163 interpreters in 50 cities and 29 countries
Portuguese	French	86 interpreters in 32 cities and 25 countries

Table 16. AIIC's interpreters with language combination EN – ES (A-C) and FR – ES (A-C).²¹

From	Into	Total
Spanish	English	451 interpreters in 90 cities and 39 countries
Spanish	French	349 interpreters in 69 cities and 35 countries

[Source : <http://aiic.net/directories/interpreters/languages?#>]

The main reason for Mr. Sand's difficulty finding interpreters with passive Portuguese might be that Portuguese is not often offered as a passive language in Masters' in Conference Interpreting in Europe, and in particular on the programme at the University of Geneva, which is the main link between Mr. Sand and the interpreters he recruits.

Experience of both the subject and the organisation is also an important aspect to take into consideration, even though it does not seem to be essential from Mr. Sand's perspective. For those who work in the trade union movements, hearing the vocabulary they are used to is very important. The specific vocabulary of an organisation is acquired by reading about the organisation itself and with some experience. For example, a specific Committee should not be called Commission, since this might cause frustration and confusion for clients. In order to prevent this from happening, Mr. Sand never puts together a team of two novice interpreters together in the same booth. Thus, experience of the subject and the organization is important when recruiting interpreters, but does not prevent interpreting students or recent graduates with little experience from being employed.

“PETER SAND: [...] So, it is very important, but as we all started somewhere, including myself a long, long time ago, you have to give people a chance to build up that experience. So, when I take people that

²⁰ Association Internationale d'Interprètes de Conférence. AIIC interpreters currently offer professional spoken translation services in the following language pairs. Retrieved June 1, 2015, from <http://aiic.net/directories/interpreters/languages/>

²¹ Association Internationale d'Interprètes de Conférence. AIIC interpreters currently offer professional spoken translation services in the following language pairs. Retrieved June 1, 2015, from <http://aiic.net/directories/interpreters/languages/>

are just fresh out of school, I always put them with somebody who's been working for some time. I never put two newcomers into the booth together. [...]"

1.5. Experienced or not experienced?

When asking about the experience of interpreters hired over the last year, we divided interpreters into the following four groups:

- recent graduates (fewer than 2 years' experience)
- experienced interpreters (2-10 years' experience)
- very experienced (10-30 years' experience)
- retirees

The majority of interpreters hired by Mr. Sand over the last year were former graduates at the Faculty of Translation and Interpreting of Geneva.

The age range of this group is around 30-35 years. They are students who finished their master degree from 5 to 10 years before the date of employment and are mainly Mr. Sand's former students. Our interviewee mainly relies on our second category of interpreters –experienced interpreters who have been on the market at least for 2 years. The choice of hiring his former students is justified by the fact that Mr. Sand can be sure of the interpreters' competence and professionalism and is thus a guarantee of quality.

Mr. Sand is against recruiting retirees, even though he makes a clear distinction between two types of retirees:

- Retirees who worked their whole life for international organizations and receive a full pension.
- Retirees who left an organization after some years of work for personal reasons and do not receive a full pension (below called "partial retirees").

Mr. Sand's classification of retirees reflects the different types of employment conditions a conference interpreter might work with and partly the division of conference interpreters into freelance and staff interpreters. It also reflects the competitiveness of the market. Interpreters who worked for their entire life for an organisation as staff interpreters earned a regular salary and are guaranteed to receive a full pension after retirement. This might not be true for interpreters who worked as staff interpreters only for a few years or as freelancers. Therefore, Mr. Sand tries not to hire retirees for ethical reasons. The ethics that lie behind Mr.

Sand's decision is mostly due to the highly competitive nature of the interpreting market. According to these ethics, hiring retirees means creating less job opportunities for those interpreters who are still available on the market and those interpreters who are starting or consolidating their career.

However, our interviewee explained that occasionally and only if necessary, he would recruit "partial retirees", in case he had a specific problem when it came to put a team together.

"PETER SAND: [...] Retirees, I am for ethical reasons very, very much against, but, very occasionally, if I cannot find somebody for Portuguese, I may need to. So I do make a very clear distinction between retirees on a full pension, whom I don't take under any circumstances and partial retirees. But I'm very very careful, for me really it's the last resort. [...]"

1.6. Man-power

Interpreters work as a team. The number of interpreters working in each booth varies according to the number of languages spoken at the meeting and the size of the organization. According to the AIIC – Global Union Federations Agreement,

10. The minimum number of interpreters assigned to a meeting shall depend on the number of languages and the type of interpretation selected (simultaneous, consecutive or whispering) [...] (AIIC – Global Union Federations Agreement, 2004)

At GUFs, the standard configuration is 2 interpreters per booth. Mr. Sand made the comparison with the European Parliament, where 3 or even 4 interpreters work in each booth. This difference is explained by the language regime of the European Parliament meetings, where the 24 official languages might be spoken during the same meeting, making a total of 552 possible combinations, while the standard number of languages provided passively at GUFs meetings is 5, as explained during the interview by Mr. Sand.

The chief interpreter of IndustriALL, UNI and PSI also talked about the following few exceptions:

- a) Japan is a very strong country in the trade union movement and needs thus to be mentioned separately from other bilingual booths. Because of their strength in the trade union movement, Japanese interpreters insisted on being 3 per booth, one more interpreter per booth than usual. Trade unions try to fight this tendency and insist on the Japanese booth being made up of 2 interpreters, as the other booths. Mr. Sand's responsibility is to mediate between the Japanese resistance to reduce the number of interpreters to 2 and the trade unions' requests.

- b) There are other bilingual booths –apart from the Japanese booth- whose power among the trade union movement is not as strong, but that insist on being made up of 3 interpreters instead of 2. The shortage of funds in the trade union movement makes it more difficult for the chief interpreter to accept these requests. In those situations, the chief interpreter is a mediator whose responsibility is to find a suitable solution for all the parties involved. The chief interpreter needs to take into account the needs and working conditions of the interpreters he recruits and the budget and constraints of the client, the trade unions. In these circumstances, one viable solution would be hiring 3 interpreters for each bilingual booth when the meeting will be longer than usual, when the subject of the meeting is more technical or when many speakers are expected to take the floor in those languages and the interpreters will thus have a high workload.
- c) Another interesting exception mentioned by our interviewee is the English booth, which might be reduced to just one interpreter. When Mr. Sand knows in advance that the meeting is going to be held in English for most of time, he might be the only interpreter working in the English booth with a second colleague from another booth whose A languages also include English helping him, but only if he knows the client prefers that 2 interpreters are present.

Taking into consideration these exceptions, the number of interpreters per booth at GUFs meeting is normally 2, occasionally 3 and sometimes 1.

According to the agreement between AIIC, the global association of conference interpreters, and GUFs²², manning strength should be as follows:

Table 17. AIIC's recommendations on man-power depending on the interpretation services needed.

Number of languages	Minimum number of interpreters	
	Consecutive	Simultaneous
Interpretation into 2	2	3

The agreement between the International Association of Conference Interpreters and GUFs states that “For conferences of a technical or scientific nature, or presenting special difficulties, these numbers shall be increased.”²³

²² Association Internationale d’Interprètes de Conférence. AIIC - Global Union Federations Agreement [on line]: <http://aiic.net/page/1350/aiic-global-union-federations-agreement/lang/1>

²³ Association Internationale d’Interprètes de Conférence. AIIC - Global Union Federations Agreement [on line]: <http://aiic.net/page/1350>

Mr. Sand explained this rule is not really followed by chief interpreters at GUFs because of the nature of GUFs conferences. Even though trade unions have their own specific vocabulary, it is not very technical. The vocabulary used at GUFs conferences should be familiar to anybody who reads the newspapers and has a good general knowledge. In international organisations, delegates want to hear the vocabulary they are used to. This is also true with GUFs. Thus, knowing the vocabulary regularly used at GUFs and using the right terms is important for interpreters.

Mr. Sand underlined that, even though the vocabulary in general is not highly technical, there are some meetings that constitute an exception. Our interviewee made the example of meetings focusing on finance. Finance is a very technical subject and it would be very hard (if not impossible) for an interpreter to work at such a meeting with little knowledge or experience of the topic. In those cases, Mr. Sand would look for seasoned interpreters with extensive experience particularly in the financial sector.

1.7. Man-days

We asked our interviewee to estimate the number of man-days GUFs requires per year. We did not ask Mr. Sand to look up for figures in advance, so his answer was an estimate. Our interviewee organises approximately 30 trade union meetings per year. Those meetings require a varying number of languages, from only 3 languages to the 14 languages spoken during the Congress. Mr. Sand estimated that the three GUFs he is responsible for require approximately 180 man-days per year.

In order to give a better idea to the reader about what this estimate means, we chose to compare it with figures from one of the major employer of interpreters, the European Commission.

According to figures published by the Directorate General for Interpretation, the European Commission's interpreting service and conference organiser, 50 - 60 meetings were organized each day in 2014, for a total of 11200 meeting days per year. The language arrangements for these meetings vary significantly – from only one interpreter if the interpretation is consecutive and between two languages, to simultaneous interpreting into and out of 24 or more languages, which requires at least 72 interpreters. These figures mean that the

European Commission and the other Institutions the DG Interpretation serves²⁴ required around 111000 man-days in 2014.²⁵

Table 18. Comparison between GUFs' and DG Interpretation's (European Commission) average estimated man-days.

GUFs (UNI, IndustriALL, PSI)	DG Interpretation
30 meetings per year	11200 meeting days per year
3 to 14 languages per meeting	1 to 24 or more languages per meeting
± 180 man-days per year	± 111000 man-days per year

From these figures, we can deduce that, even though GUFs are one major employer of professional conference interpreters, their size is still considerably smaller than other major employers such as the EU Institutions and the ONU.

1.8. Replacing an interpreter

We asked our interviewee to talk about the procedure of finding a replacement when an interpreter is not able to work anymore. Mr. Sand started his answer by underlining the problems caused by a last-minute replacement. When composing a team, interpreters are carefully chosen according to their language combination. By doing so, each interpreter is a piece of a carefully composed puzzle, and if one of these pieces is taken away, it might cause the entire structure to collapse.

“PETER SAND: [...] You know, because I have to put the team together also taking into account language combinations, one piece of the puzzle taken away can cause a lot of the structure to collapse, so it depends. [...]”

²⁴ The Directorate General for Interpretation provides interpretation in meetings arranged by the European Commission, the European Council, the Council of the Union, the Committee of the Regions, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Investment Bank and the agencies and offices in the Member States.

²⁵ For further information: SCIC. DG Interpretation in Key Figures [on line]: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/scic/about-dg-interpretation/index_en.htm#anchor3

Professional conference interpreters are in general aware of this and would make an effort to be at work in most cases, so that finding a replacement is not something that occurs particularly often.

“PETER SAND: [...] I studied at ETI myself, I left in '81 and I think I have missed, in all those years, one meeting for illness. In fact, I was taken from the meeting with food poisoning. I think that all the colleagues I know would make an effort, freelancers do not fall ill. [...]”

Mr. Sand also stressed the importance of honesty among freelance conference interpreters.

“PETER SAND: [...] Obviously, if it's for illness..., but some people, you'll be very surprised, will tell me that their grandmother has died for the third time or what have you (laughs). So, it depends on what the reason is, but if there is a good reason I am a freelancer myself; I always like honesty, so the minute I have the impression somebody is being dishonest with me, that's pretty bad for me. [...]”

Mr. Sand prefers to look for replacements himself. However, if very busy or during travels with limited access to Internet, he might ask the interpreter to look for a replacement. In these cases, the interpreter would look for a replacement and would then pass the information to Mr. Sand, who would then confirm it or not. This way, the chief interpreter would generally always have a final say.

2. Languages

This second block of questions deals with linguistic policy, interpreters' linguistic combinations and the evolution of the language regime at GUFs. Its main aim is to provide the readers with a general idea of the language requirements of these organisations, especially for novice interpreters who might be wondering whether their language combination is suitable for a future contract at GUFs, or those who might be thinking of adding a new passive language.

As it has been explained in previous sections, every GUF has a specific language regime according to their own specific needs –or the geographical regions where their member trade unions are stronger. Nevertheless, these considerations may vary depending on the context, the delegates attending the meeting and, of course, the international geopolitical situation.

When asked about this specific topic, Mr. Sand was very straightforward: the main criterion to decide a meeting's linguistic regime is participants. Obviously, this conglomerate is always changing depending on several political and social factors, so it is fair to assume that language regimes change every few years:

“PETER SAND: [...] For instance German, which used to be an exceedingly important language for the trade union movement because the German trade unions were amongst the strongest. More and more Germans will accept to speak English. [...]”

In spite of younger generations accepting to speak English in international forums, language skills have to be always taken into account. Because of this reason, Mr. Sand also said that he is “sometimes told to keep somebody on standby” in case non-English-native participants with weak English attend the meeting.

Regarding Spanish, our interviewee was very clear: “I’d say Spanish is always a must”. This fact is explained by the strength some Latin American trade union movements have.

“PETER SAND: [...] And you’d be surprised about some of the countries which have a very strong trade union movement like Argentina. [...] Argentinians have a very strong union movement and they need Spanish.”

French is another language which is always provided, although Mr. Sand argues that young French-speakers tend to take the floor in English. Nevertheless, “although a lot of French people speak English nowadays, trade unionist don’t. Except for people of your age: I do a youth group and I’d say young French people are now starting to enter speaking English more at meetings.”

According to Mr. Sand there are languages into which there might be no interpretation provided, although they will be always interpreted. That is the case of Portuguese and Italian.

“PETER SAND: [...] Portuguese is nearly always there passive. There are a lot of languages which used to be regular features but which are disappearing for a number of different reasons like Italian, but there is always passive Italian [...]”

Mr. Sand confirmed his “standard language combination” is English, French, Spanish, Japanese and Swedish. The presence of this last language is due to the fact that Sweden is “one of the biggest contributors to the international union movement”. Plus, Sweden and the Scandinavian and Nordic countries have one of the highest unionisation rates around the world: about a 90% according to our interviewee, “a unionisation rate which every other country would dream of having”, he added.

Our interviewee was right when talking about the impressive levels of unionisation in the Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway). Nevertheless, the aforementioned figure of 90% is more than

exaggerated. Mr. Sand used it to illustrate the importance of trade unions in those countries, although it is far from reality.

When checking the OECD website, it is clear that Nordic countries have a higher than the average rate of unionization, but it does not reach anywhere near 90%. For 2013, OECD's statistics showed that the OECD average unionisation rate was 16.9%, whereas this figure went up to 53.5% in Norway, 66.8% in Denmark, 67.7% in Sweden and 68.6% in Finland. Very impressive figures indeed, but far away from our interviewee's optimistic estimation.²⁶ In spite of this miscalculation, Mr. Sand's statement is still valid, since these figures explain the importance of Swedish and the other Scandinavian languages within the international trade union movement.

Despite Swedish's constant presence at the GUFs, Mr. Sand complained about how difficult it is to find interpreters who have all three Scandinavian languages as passive languages: "one of my biggest headaches is finding people with Scandinavian languages". He was very clear about this fact: "somebody who can only do Swedish is of no use to me: I need people who could do Swedish-Norwegian-Danish".

Russian is used in the biggest unions based in Geneva, such as Public Services International (PSI) and IndustriALL.

There might be some meetings where one or several delegations might ask for interpretation to be provided into a specific language outside the "official" language regime. In those cases, it is the responsibility of the trade union/s which asked for that specific booth to pay for it.

"PETER SAND: [...] I've got a meeting coming up and the Finns want Finnish. And Finnish is not an official language of the organisation, so I provide the Finnish interpreters, but the Finnish unions pay for them directly. [...] So if somebody puts in a special request, then we work out a direct payment method with that union."

Bilingual interpreters and interpreters with a retour (B language) were the focus of the last part of this thematic block. Regarding the first, Mr. Sand used as example both the Russian and the Japanese booths, which always work back into English. It is fair to assume that interpreters with a retour cover rare languages –in those cases where interpretation is provided for them. This is also the case for Arabic and Chinese at the UN. There is a

²⁶ For further info readers may want to check the OECD's statistics archive: https://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=UN_DEN

specific market for this kind of interpreters, since according to Mr. Sand there are bilingual meetings. As he explained.

“PETER SAND: [...] I have bilingual meetings, and if it’s bilingual then there will be two people [in the booth] and one will have a B. I have a B in French and I work backwards and forwards in English-French meetings [...]. And I’ll take other people, perhaps I will put myself on with somebody who’s got the reverse of me, that is A French – B English [...] And a lot of them are also Spanish bilingual [meetings], which there are very, very few...unfortunately.”

Mr. Sand finished this block of questions being very clear about the fact that there’s a considerable market for Spanish-English bilinguals at the Genevan GUFs.

3. Interpretation

Having talked about which languages are provided and how the linguistic regime is decided for each meeting, the interview moved on to the third thematic block: interpretation. It might seem quite obvious in content, but there are always different contexts and situations that can alter the work of the interpreters, especially novice interpreters –our focus in this thesis.

Although all interpreters are trained in both consecutive – liaison interpretation and simultaneous interpretation, Mr. Sand made a clear distinction between the two of them. When asked about a percentage, he answered that simultaneous interpreting was used more than 95% of the time.

Our interviewee stated that since the 1950s and 1960s, consecutive interpreting has been used less and less. Despite this, Mr. Sand explained that it might still be used at GUFs for after-dinner speeches, although he added that this discipline is being replaced by whispered interpretation.

“PETER SAND: [...] Consecutive may well be used for example at after-dinner speeches. It’s very rare to have a full consecutive now. Because what usually happens is that in what used to be a consecutive environment now is whispered. So I’ll sit next to the person and whisper for him, which is equally tiring for everybody, but they sometimes insist on it.”

Mr. Sand added that whispered interpretation is also increasingly used at bilateral meetings, a setup that previously used consecutive or liaison interpretation.

This figure must be clarified, since our interviewee just gave us an approximate percentage. According to AIIC, in 2010, 84% of the reported work-days were in simultaneous, whereas this figure went down to 5.5%

for consecutive, 3.9% for bidule, 2.7% for chouchotage and 2% for liason interpreting.²⁷ It is true that these statistics are for the interpretation market in general, but they give us an idea of how often the different modalities of interpretation are used.

Interpretation –especially as provided by the English booth- tends to be broadcast at some international forums, such as the UN. GUFs seem to use this method, although not on a regular basis, according to our interviewee. We think this might have to do with the fact that these organisations do not take minutes of all their meetings:

“ILDEFONSO LAGUNA: Is interpretation recorded or broadcast?

PETER SAND: It is from time to time. Rarely, though. Trade unions don't really take minutes of meetings except for their top meeting. But then they only record, well they don't record, they have a minute-taker and they only record decisions.”

Since novice interpreters might be interested in getting some feedback from the recruiter, this question was included in the list for this interview. We were curious about whether there is an assessment system put in place for novice interpreters. After having spent two, three or four semesters getting feedback from their professors, the first time they find themselves in a meeting, novice interpreters might wonder how they have done. Having people relying on you to be able to follow the development of the meeting can be an overwhelming feeling the first time one is out in the real world, so we asked Mr. Sand whether the interpretation services at GUFs had put in place an assessment system.

With a broad smile, our interviewee answered that there was no such thing as an “official” assessment system, although he tended to listen to all the new interpreters he hired for the first time. Interestingly enough, he also said that he gets feedback from the delegates after the meeting, since he has been recruiting interpreters for GUFs for such a long time. Not only that, he might get some specific requests concerning the interpreters he needs to hire, not just in terms of language combination, but also linguistic varieties or accents:

“PETER SAND: [...] I was a teacher for a long time and some of the people I recruit are also either teachers or former teachers, and so if I'm taking somebody new, I'll listen to them. And also I get feedback from the delegates, because I've been recruiting now for a long time for the trade unions, so I know the delegates personally and they'll say 'oh, that new person is good' or

²⁷ For further information : Association Internationale d'Interprètes de Conférence. AIIC Statshots : numbers worth a thousand words [on line] : <http://aiic.net/page/3848/aiic-statshots-numbers-worth-a-thousand-words/lang/1>

‘where does that person come from’, or ‘can you provide me with somebody who’s got an Argentinian accent?’, which is also a fact. That’s happened to me.”

Since Peter Sand was teaching at FTI for a long time, we wanted to know his opinion on what are the major challenges a novice –or even an experienced- interpreter might have to face when working at any of the GUFs. Our question was more focused on features directly related to interpretation, such as the speed of the speakers, terminology, working with texts, etc. Nevertheless, Mr. Sand’s first answer was something we had not thought about beforehand: dealing with people who cannot find the right words –even in their own native language- to express the ideas they want to explain.

When he mentioned it, we both realised he had brought up an issue that is very specific to certain international forums. Trade unions are not made up by high-level diplomats, but of working-class leaders who, depending on their background, might not have had access to an education, or who might have more or less experience in attending this kind of international meetings. Due to these factors, interpreters sometimes need to decipher what the speaker is trying to say in order to convey his/her message, which might not be that clear in the original language.

“PETER SAND: [One of the major challenges] is people with little education, which is –and don’t get me wrong, I identify with a lot of things in the trade union movement, so I am not classist at all about people’s level of education-, but it is a big challenge to try and work out what somebody...I don’t know...[For example], Chileans who’ve got very, very little education, but who are starting to get to the trade union movement, who can’t find the right words...So trying to understand them sometimes is a challenge.”

The next part of his answer does not apply to any of the readers who will work in the English booth –not completely, at least. Mr. Sand continued his explanation by saying that accents are perhaps THE challenge. By “accents” he meant, of course, people who are not native English speakers but take the floor in English because their mother tongue is not provided by the interpretation service.

“PETER SAND: You will see when you’ll start out: when you get a Pakistani, a Nigerian –I am taking the two most difficult ones-, Japanese speaking English, Koreans speaking English...”

All these non-native accents are to be dealt with by other booths, which are made up by native speakers of other languages. This might seem stating the obvious, but when one thinks about it a little bit more, Mr. Sand’s point is very clear: when interpreters have to interpret a non-native speaker they face two major challenges: 1)

the person who takes the floor is not speaking in his/her mother tongue, so syntax might be misleading –which might result in a lack of clarity or possible misunderstandings; 2) even if their comprehension is extremely precise, interpreters are not native speakers of that language either, so they have to pay extra attention to what it is being said in order to process it correctly before actually interpreting.

“Participants believe, or claim to believe, that they will communicate better with one another if they speak English to one another. [...] The vast majority of speakers who choose to speak English as a foreign language in an international meeting overestimate their competence. They may have a good accent, they may have a reasonable grasp of syntax and grammar, often they will have an excellent knowledge of the relevant technical vocabulary. But still they are not able to express themselves clearly and precisely in English” (Jones, 2013: 16)

Our interviewee argued that it is in those cases where he tends to use somebody in the booth who has a retour. He used Russian as an example,

“PETER SAND: [...] When you know the language 100%, [...] you don't have the same difficulty coping with it as a person who has to work it out first. So at certain times, I may put in a B because I know that the B will understand it. [...] For instance, there are a lot of the former “-Stans”: Kazakhstan, etc., a lot of them don't have Russian as a mother tongue, but speak Russian and then, if I've got somebody who's got passive Russian, they won't be as...they won't find it as easy as somebody for whom it is his mother tongue.”

When talking about challenges, we cannot forget about people reading texts and speed. Those are a major issue –even for experienced interpreters, according to Mr. Sand. Although he acknowledged speed as one of the main difficulties interpreters have to cope with, he said that it really depends on the speaker. It cannot be said that speed is overall increasing, since there are several factors that might have an influence over a speaker's speed, such as lack of confidence, the fact of reading a speech that has been prepared in advanced – and sometimes over-rehearsed. Mr. Sand also highlighted some linguistic and cultural characteristics.

“PETER SAND: [...] There are some people who just speak naturally fast, you know. [...] You wait until you get to the Americans. Americans speak very, very fast. And the problem is that American is very concise. So in Spanish you are gonna have to add about 15% or 20% on top of the fast American.”

The next few questions in this block were about the figure of the team leader. Mr. Sand discussed the responsibilities of the team leader and the qualities he looks for in a person who is going to be in that position. Mr. Sand explained that he only appoints one team leader for all booths and for each conference because normally organisers do not want to deal with several different people asking for documents, timetables, schedules, etc. So, keeping that in mind and in order to facilitate and streamline coordination, he will put a person in charge of liaising between the organisers and the interpreters.

Our interviewee stated that the team leader must let the organisers know what the interpreters' work conditions are and what they need (texts, documents, agenda, list of participants, etc.). Obviously, once the team leader has made everything clear and managed to get all the documents, he/she will also be in charge of making the necessary copies for all booths and distributing them, making sure everybody gets all the material they need in time.

The team leader's duties also include "making sure that people are there on time" and "also making sure that the organiser keeps to a certain schedule". These are two very important tasks, due to the fact that interpreters need to be always on time –or even early- for a meeting. It is regarded as highly unprofessional when an interpreter arrives late or when the meeting is about to start. Interpreters must be already in their respective booths when the delegates start taking their seats, so they can start interpreting at any moment. Nobody is going to wait for the interpreters to settle down: that has to be done before the meeting starts.

But the team leader also must make sure that organisers respect their part of the deal. That is why a team leader, according to Mr. Sand, needs to be somebody who is able to negotiate and who has got people skills. The team leader needs to find a balance between his position as an interpreter himself and what the organisers ask from him; the team leader is "someone who takes account of what interpreters want, but also flexibility, because we have to be flexible." To sum up, our interviewee was really clear about his hiring policy: "what qualities are looked? Well, one of the qualities, one of the things I look for in an interpreter is, first of all work quality. That's the absolute number one. Number two is flexibility."

As said above, one of the team leader's main duties is to make sure that interpreters' work conditions are respected. So, on that topic, we wanted to know whether the AIIC-Global Union Federations Agreement²⁸ was

²⁸ You can find the complete document here : Association Internationale d'Interprètes de Conférence. AIIC – Global Union Federations Agreement [on line] : <http://aiic.net/page/1350/aiic-global-union-federations-agreement/lang/1>

respected. The document states: “the normal length of a day’s interpretation [...] shall not exceed 3 or 3 ½ hours”.

Mr. Sand answered this question with a sensible “on the whole, yes”. After that, he explained that even as a recruiter he is often at the meetings as an interpreter himself, so he has to make a balanced decision.

“PETER SAND: I really try and stick to it [the AIIC – Global Union Federations Agreement]. I mean, often I am in the meetings myself and I also know when to overrun. I also know how much we can do and not do. It’s funny when you’re a recruiter, because you have to get and try to see things through the eyes of the customer; you have to look at them through your own eyes and through the eyes of your colleagues. And you gotta try and come up with a halfway solution which satisfies everybody. If I was a maximalist, I’d say: ‘right, this is it’ and then none of us would get any work anymore. But who’s well served by that? And that’s why being a recruiter sometimes is not an easy task, but it’s also why is important to have people who know that you’ve got their best interests at heart and, if you give in, it’s because there is a reason. [...]”

As we can see above, his requisite of flexibility works both ways: for the interpreters, but also for the team leader and organisers/customers. None of the parties can be maximalist in their positions, since all the interpreters working at GUFs are freelancers, so they cannot afford to get in bad terms with any client/recruiter. On the other hand, customers need to be aware of the characteristics and work conditions of the task the interpreters are carrying out –raising awareness of this is also part of AIIC’s and each interpreter’s job.

Mr. Sand ended up defining the team leader as a “mediator” and admitting that he “could not have somebody as a chief interpreter who just says ‘we follow the line’”. He expanded on this explanation with the following comment,

“PETER SAND: The agreement is a framework agreement, ok? And all agreements –even contracts- have to be interpreted. And you have to interpret them with a mind willing to smooth things over.”

The last part of the present thematic block was formed by a set of three questions about the future of interpreting at GUFs. Mr. Sand was asked: 1) whether he thought the need for an interpretation service would increase in the medium / long-term; 2) whether he foresaw an increase in the use of the so-called International

English or *Globish*; 3) whether he could see a possibility of new languages being introduced as official languages at the GUFs.

Regarding the first of these three questions, Mr. Sand argued that “in the trade union movement there will always be need for language services because they are the last language-gifted”. Exceptions made of certain trade unionists, most of the people who have the choice of speaking in their respective mother tongue do so. He added that languages such as Portuguese and Arabic might get stronger, depending on the evolution of the geopolitical situation, so there might be an increasing need of these two.

“PETER SAND: [...] I think Spanish and English will stay strong. French will remain perhaps strong but, funny enough, not because of France but because of the French-speaking countries of Africa, who always insist on speaking French. [...] And I think Portuguese will get stronger. [...] There are meetings with Arabic in the trade union movement, and there may be more. [...] Perhaps about four a year. [...] I depends on what happens in the labour movements in the North of Africa: if they start becoming a bit stronger and if the countries in the West which are trying to help them become stronger.”

Mr. Sand answered the question about *Globish* explaining that colleagues in the European Parliament have a new term for that concept which he finds “more accurate: at the Parliament they call it *desperanto*”. Despite this pun, he nevertheless agreed on it being used increasingly, although he explained that this fact also depended on the context. This general trend has been explained in papers and articles, such as McCrum (2010),

in the short term, Globish is set to only grow. Some 70 to 80 percent of the world’s Internet home pages are in English, compared with 4.5 percent in German and 3.1 percent in Japanese. According to the British Council, by 2030 “nearly one third of the world’s population will be trying to learn English at the same time.” That means ever more voices adapting the English language to suit their needs, finding in Globish a common linguistic denominator.

Although being well aware of the generalised use of *Globish* in the vast majority of supranational institutions, our interviewee was very clear when making the distinction between high-ranked positions in an umbrella organisation and other delegates. “But I know that a lot of people at the top of *Comisiones Obreras*...well, they don’t speak anything other than Spanish”, he added. So again, we are confronted here with a context-related use: according to Mr. Sand, governmental delegates and other diplomatic representatives will use

Globish in an international meeting, whereas trade unionists –if they are given the chance- would stick to their respective mother tongues when taking the floor.

He concluded this answer by explaining how difficult it is sometimes for certain delegates to try and convey their ideas in English or *Globish* because they are just not proficient enough in the language. Mr. Sand argued that big languages will still be provided with interpretation in the future, and the ones that are not official nor widely spread will continue to have to pay for their own interpreters, although he let us know that he considered this system far from being perfect.

“PETER SAND: [...] Sometimes I get very sad because you get trade unionist from the Czech Republic and their English is often not very good. But because they are weak unions they don't have very much money, there's no interpretation provided and nobody speaks Czech in any case. So I'd say that if you come from, you know, a big language community, there will be work for a longer term than if you come from a small language community.”

The last question of this block received a very clear answer from Mr. Sand: he did not think any new languages would be introduced at the GUFs, with maybe the sole exception of Portuguese –depending on the future insistence of the Portuguese-speaking countries.

4. Organisation of interpreting service at meetings

4.1. Facilities

Every GUF is organized differently and has different facilities. We talked with Mr. Sand about the facilities usually used by the three GUFs he is the chief interpreter of: UNI, IndustriALL and PSI.

Mr. Sand confirmed that UNI uses its own meeting rooms at its headquarters in Nyon, Switzerland. As explained in UNI official website, its offices include two meeting rooms that can accommodate up to 200 people and can be also rented by third parties. One of them has full interpretation equipment, which allows a maximum of 9 languages to be covered by interpretation, as well as video-conferencing facilities.²⁹ Some of the booths available at UNI are mobile booths permanently installed in the room.

Mr. Sand said that IndustriALL will very likely have its own meeting rooms at its headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, at the end of the works carried out at the time of writing to refurbish its premises.

²⁹ For further information : UNI Global Union. About us [on line] : <http://www.uniglobalunion.org/about-us/book-a-room>

Our interviewee also explained that PSI does not have any meeting rooms and will not have any in the foreseeable future.

He added that when facilities are not available or present, GUFs use other organizations or hotels facilities. In Geneva, GUFs might use the ILO facilities or the meeting rooms of the Ramada Hotel. In both cases, GUFs have to equip the meeting rooms with mobile booths and mobile equipment.

Mr Sand specified that, if the meeting is held in another country, GUFs use hotel facilities. In this case, GUFs again use mobile booths and mobile equipment to ensure appropriate working conditions for interpreters.

The majority of GUFs' meetings tend to be held in Geneva or in Brussels, where their headquarters are located.

Mr Sand highlighted that GUFs are generally organized in sections according to continents and that most of GUFs' European sections tend to be based in Brussels. When these sections meet in Brussels, they might use the European Commission's facilities. Sometimes, GUFs meeting in Brussels might get funding from the European Commission for interpreting, or the Commission would employ and pay interpreters working at GUFs' meetings.

4.2. Location

We asked our interviewee about the criteria taken into consideration by GUFs when choosing the location of their meetings. He explained that the location of meetings depends on the type of the meeting. In general, meetings are held at the GUF's headquarters.

UNI Congress is held once every four years. Its location is chosen on a rotating basis, with every Congress held in a different continent. The 2014 Congress was held in South Africa, the 2018 Congress will be held in the United Kingdom and the following one will probably be held in Asia, according to Mr. Sand.

Mr. Sand took the UNI 2018 Congress as an example. The 2018 Congress will be held in the United Kingdom because of the personal wish of Philip Jennings, UNI's General Secretary at the moment of writing, who comes from Wales. Since the 2018 Congress will be the last Congress he attends as General Secretary, he expressed the wish for the Congress to be held in Cardiff, the capital of Wales. At the same time, the city of Liverpool, which has a strong trade union background, also presented an offer to host the Congress.

Eventually, the Executive Committee took a decision and Liverpool will host the 2018 UNI Congress. The main criterion taken into consideration when making this decision was facilities available in both cities.

Mr. Sand underlined how organising an important event such as the Congress involves a lot of planning and starts four years in advance. It is essential to consider practical aspects such as the number of hotel rooms available, the distance between hotels and the congress centre and the availability of hotels of different categories, to make sure that every delegate can find suitable accommodation.

Our interviewee also pointed out that the location of a meeting is sometimes influenced by politics and has a symbolic meaning. One example he made is one important future meeting of IndustriALL, which at the time of writing, will be held in Bangladesh. This country was chosen after the 2013 Rana Plaza collapse. On 24th April 2013, an eight-storey commercial building named Rana Plaza in Dhaka, Bangladesh, collapsed killing 1,129 garment workers.

“PETER SAND: [...] The unions are trying to spearhead a program to try to get these factory owners to control proper safety standards are respected. So we're gonna go to Bangladesh, as a symbol of solidarity. [...]”

Those two examples show how the location of a meeting might be influenced by various elements, such as a personal wish, the political situation or an event.

4.3. GUFs meetings

Mr. Sand explained that GUFs' meetings are very diverse and the type of meeting changes according to its objective. He estimated that the majority of GUF meetings are statutory bodies' meetings. The Executive meets once a year to set the guidelines for the organisation's activities. The objective of statutory bodies meetings is thus to set policy. A smaller number of meetings are steering committees. They take care of policy implementation.

GUFs are in general divided into sections representing different categories of workers. Each of these departments has its own meetings. The aim of these meetings is to set policy and decide what work will be carried out. Mr. Sand specified that this work might involve how to recruit more members and how to organise workers in the unions. Recruiting more members is a particularly important topic for the trade union movement:

“PETER SAND: [...] Obviously the movement can only be as strong as its membership [...]”

The main objective of many meetings is to organise strike actions and to make sure those actions have an impact. Those meetings are more focused on strategy and coordination. Our interviewee pointed out that, very occasionally, GUFs meetings take the form of a negotiation. In those occasions, GUFs and companies manage to find an agreement on working conditions.

“PETER SAND: [...] UNI for instance has had some very very good international agreements with, well if I take Spain, Zara. In fact, I think it was probably one of the first meetings I’ve ever seen where the CEO of Zara came to a UNI meeting to sign. [...]”

Thus, GUF meetings can vary greatly and can be negotiations, presentations, drafting committees, plenary sessions, steering committees and discussion fora.

5. Interpreters’ preparation for a meeting

When interpreters get a contract for a conference, one of the first things they need to know is the topic for the meeting. The topic, and indeed the setup, will have a great influence on and play a major role in how the interpreter will prepare for that specific meeting. There are also other factors that the interpreter might have to take into consideration, such as the degree of technicality of the topic, his/her previous background knowledge on the matter, the documents he/she has been provided with and, of course, the amount of time he/she has to properly prepare.

Mr. Sand explained to us that most of the meetings are strategic meetings, but that there are not that many negotiations. Global Union Federations are the meeting point where all the trade unions of different professional sectors come together, so they are the place where unions decide what their next step will be in terms of a specific action, campaign or multilateral conference. That is the reason why most of the meetings held at their respective headquarters are focused on decision-making and designing further actions to be carried out.

There are also statutory meetings that are obligatory according to the internal regulations of the different GUFs. Every GUF –just like any other organisation- needs to decide on their budget and how they use it,

whether to accept new members, etc.. GUFs also hold meetings where they work on the organisational structure, its management, its control, and its potential expansion.

“PETER SAND: [There are] not very negotiations. Unions don’t negotiate in their own headquarters, [...] they will talk about strategy at meetings and then negotiators will go off and perhaps discuss in the European Works Council, etc. So I’d say very few negotiating, but mostly strategic meetings.

And then also the statutory meetings like the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee...There are meetings that have to take place. [...] But I would say that most of the meetings are mapping out strategies.”

Mr. Sand said that organisations are finally getting used to uploading the documents they are going to use in a meeting to the Internet, so all people attending it –including interpreters- have access to them and are able to download them beforehand. He nevertheless added that there are systems that might need to be revisited: “[...] UNI has a very strange system where you have to download each document separately”.

There is no such thing as a unified server or portal where one can access all the documents provided by the different GUFs. This is because each organisation wants to preserve its autonomy. This is one of the main difficulties the recruiter has to face when trying to settle the team for each meeting –including the documents they need to be provided with- because sometimes there are several meetings taking place at the same time in different GUFs and their schedules clash. Despite this, Mr. Sand argued he was still “able to provide written documents for the booths, because we all prefer to have written documents.”

The documents that are available on the different servers and websites are a very important source of background information. When preparing, in order to get the background information that is needed to acquire the basics of the meeting one is going to work at, it is always useful to look at the documents used in previous meetings. These will give us an idea of the topics that are going to be discussed, as well as about the type of documents we are going to be dealing with in the booth.

Normally, the documents that are distributed for interpreters to have them in the booth are “always proposition papers on a particular subject”, as well as “who’s in charge of the various committees, and so those documents would be available. Plus the agenda, of course. The agenda is always available. There’s usually also a participants’ list, because all the interpreters have difficulties recognising names”, commented Mr. Sand.

When asked about PowerPoint presentations, Mr. Sand answered that it really depended on the speaker. One cannot always count on getting the slides in advance –or even at all. Sometimes you get the speaker’s notes, but not the actual presentation.

At this point, our interviewee made an aside to tell us about videos. Apparently, when a video is showed at a meeting, interpreters are supposed to interpret it. The problem lies in the script; the booths will probably not get a copy. Even for experienced interpreters, having to interpret a video is a big challenge, especially without any help from the script. When faced with this problem, Mr. Sand said that we have to let our listeners know that providing a verbatim interpretation will be impossible. But we cannot say no when asked to interpret videos, because there will be delegates who will not understand what they are watching and they need the information provided in them.

“PETER SAND: [...] The worst thing are videos, because they expect us to interpret videos. [...] If we get the script, it’s doable. But sometimes we don’t get the script, and then it becomes very difficult indeed. [...] I would just get back to flexibility: we try and do it, sometimes we say ‘we’ll try and do it, but you’ll probably end up with a summary’. You can say a lot of things to the listeners and they’ll understand. I think it depends on how you say it.”

There are also speeches and statements that are read by the delegates. We asked Mr. Sand whether in those cases interpreters get the text in advance or at least when the meeting starts. Our interviewee answered that, as a recruiter and chief interpreter, he always asks for them, but he does not always get them. As with PowerPoints, the fact of providing the text of a speech in advance depends on the individual delegate. Delegates who have been attending this kind of multilingual meetings are used to sending their documents for them to be distributed to the interpreters, but people who just started coming to these forums might not really think about it.

Apart from that, we have to consider that perhaps delegates do not want their documents to be copied and given away because of a matter of confidentiality. This is not particularly common at the GUFs, but “I do work for certain organisations like banks, who won’t give up any of the documents in advance: you get them just before they start and they come and collect them immediately afterwards”, explained Mr. Sand.

There are no pre-conference briefings with colleagues, but Mr. Sand explained that every time he has hired a novice interpreter he would tell him/her to arrive fifteen or twenty minutes in advance, in order to explain him/her what to expect in the development of the meeting where the person is about to work for the first time.

Nevertheless, he insisted that he also welcomes questions coming from these novice interpreters in terms of preparation. He said he would always offer advice to anybody who came to see him or wrote him an e-mail asking for hints to properly prepare for a meeting. Mr. Sand explained that interpreters need to “rely on the person who’s recruiting them and be proactive”. He expects people to show interest in preparing in order to be able to provide a good quality performance when in the booth.

Mr. Sand focused on one’s preparation being the most important tool to be able to face potential difficulties. He also explained that he offers the possibility of doing dummy booth at the GUFs and insisted on the importance of using that opportunity. According to him, doing dummy booth offers freshly-graduated interpreters the opportunity to witness what happens in a meeting without the extra pressure of having to provide a service on which other people rely. Without having to actually work in the meeting, one is able to analyse the different patterns and situations that come up as a conference or meeting unfolds.

“PETER SAND: [...] What I quite often at UNI, I say to people ‘do you wanna come and dummy booth? Come. Tell me your availability, I’ll tell you when the meetings are [...] Basically, if people want to come do dummy booth, they can. They can do so in the organisations, not just the GUFs. I mean, you can ask Ian Newton at the ILO if you wanna go do dummy booth. At the World Trade Organisation, they let you go and dummy booth [...] I’d say most of the organisations have a system whereby younger freshly-qualified interpreters can practice before getting into real life.

[...] I cannot think of a better way than to come and get first-hand experience and not have to work. I mean, nobody relying on you. Because there you really can listen and see how a meeting progress. There is no better way than seeing a meeting unfold and how’s the floor given, who takes the floor, what languages are spoken, what are the people that I encounter in this organisation like, etc.”

The last aspect of preparation Mr. Sand spoke of was glossaries. He agreed that glossaries are incredibly useful. He insisted on encouraging everybody to make their own glossaries because “often things you have written down will stick in your memory”. Our interviewee added he is willing to share his glossaries –even with people he does not know-, but also warned that this is not always the case: “there are some people who are non-sharers [...] And there are people like me who think that the better we work, the better it is for the profession.”

There are always glossaries available on the different organisations’ websites. They tend to have these glossaries both in digital and paper formats. Despite them being available in both formats, he suggested that

glossaries in digital form are always far more efficient than the ones in paper form, since it is faster and easier to keep them up to date, whereas updating paper glossaries is more time-consuming and they are also less practical to use in the booth.

Mr. Sand also commented that interpreters are provided with translations of the different documents –major policy documents, for example- in English and their respective language. He considered these as being a “very good source of vocabulary”, especially for slogans whose official translation cannot be guessed from the original. He added that using parallel texts helps a lot when trying to learn new terminology. Delegates expect to hear certain words, terms and expressions, “so those are the kinds of things you need to get background documentation, because otherwise you’d confuse everybody and you’d confuse yourself as well”, he explained.

Our interviewee gave us some very useful piece of advice before wrapping up the interview: 1) You need to always be able to rely on your general knowledge, and that is why an interpreter has to broaden it as much as possible. Mr. Sand said that interpreters need to be “like a sponge”; 2) learn to be interested in all sort of topics, from geopolitics to economics, and from biology to philosophy; 3) ask as much as you can and about everything, one can learn a lot from colleagues.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Our motivation behind this thesis was our desire, as interpreting students, to offer a clear picture of how interpreting works at Global Union Federations. This was paired with the intention to provide novice interpreters with complete information on a potential employer that is often not taken into consideration when thinking about major employers of professional conference interpreters. We had the feeling that interpreting students, ourselves included, are generally not aware of the role these institutions play and their interpretation requirements.

Knowing how an institution works, how it is structured and what kind of topics it deals with is fundamental for a conference interpreter in order to be well prepared and ready to work for those institutions. Since preparation is the key to a successful interpretation, we decided to provide some information on GUFs in order to make interpreters' preparation easier.

When researching on the topic, we also noticed that there was precious little literature about GUFs, both as a whole and as individual organizations. The first part of this thesis is thus dedicated to the development of GUFs in recent history and the role they have played in international labour regulation. This allows the reader to have a broader picture of how the role played by GUFs has evolved, as well as the development in time of their main objectives and values. We subsequently examined each GUF separately, organising the information provided by GUFs on their websites. Each GUF is organised differently and brings together trade unions operating in different working sectors, dealing thus with different and diverse subjects. This section is meant to be a useful resource for interpreters or for anybody who wishes to have an overview on GUFs as a whole and their individual features.

The second part of this thesis focuses on interpretation at GUFs. Our aim was to create a guide for interpreting students and professional interpreters wishing to know more on how interpretation services are organised at GUFs. In order to do so, we first analysed the agreement between the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC) and GUFs. Secondly, we interview Mr. Peter Sand, current chief interpreter of three GUFs and experienced freelance conference interpreter.

Peter Sand is chief interpreter of UNI, IndustriALL and PSI, three GUFs based in Geneva. Thus, the information retrieved from this interview focuses mainly on GUFs and the interpreting market in the area of

Geneva. We opted for a qualitative approach and decided to do an interview, which gave us the advantage of more freedom and flexibility in retrieving relevant information. This method also allows readers to read the interview themselves and draw their own conclusions.

Our objective in interviewing Mr. Sand was to discuss the topic directly with someone who is in charge, and thus well aware, of all matters concerning the interpreting service at GUFs and is familiar with all the challenges related to the profession.

In the second part of this thesis, we tried to outline the profile of interpreters working for GUFs, as well as the profile of GUFs as employers of conference interpreters.

GUFs only recruit freelance interpreters. These interpreters generally work in team of 2 interpreters per booth. Networking proved to be extremely important both in finding interpreters and in assessing the quality of their work. The chief interpreter is the link between freelance interpreters and GUFs. He uses his network of contacts, built by working as an interpretation teacher for many years and his experience as a freelance conference interpreter himself to find the interpreters he needs and guarantee their professionalism.

The academic environment and the teaching staff also proved to be an essential link between students and the professional world, acting as a springboard for worthy students. Forming part of this network or being introduced to it by word of mouth is thus much more important for interpreters than belonging to agencies or AIIC.

When finding interpreters, Mr. Sand gives priority to their professional domicile, their language combination and their experience, even though the last criterion is only of particular importance in rare technical meetings. Beside the quality of his/her work, an interpreter must be flexible. Flexibility is particularly important if we consider the normal length of a day's interpretation, which should not exceed 3 or 3 ½ hours but might vary slightly according to circumstances and with the approval of the chief interpreter.

The most common languages into which interpretation is provided during GUFs meetings are English, French, Spanish, Japanese and Swedish. Portuguese is nearly always provided passively. Italian and German, even though they used to be important languages for the trade union movement, are today provided mostly passively and only occasionally also actively. A sought-after but rare profile that emerged during the interview would have the following language combination: Spanish and English A, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish C.

95% of the time, interpretation is done simultaneously. Consecutive interpretation is still occasionally used at GUFs for after-dinner speeches, though consecutive is more and more frequently replaced by whispered interpretation.

We asked our interviewee about the major challenges faced by interpreters when working at GUFs meetings. They turned out to be the low level of education of speakers which might makes it difficult for them to express their ideas; the strong regional accents of non-native English speakers taking the floor in English and finally speakers' speed, especially if paired with density of information.

At GUF conferences, one team leader is appointed for all booths. He or she liaises between interpreters, organisers and other parties involved and is responsible for making sure that the schedule is respected by both interpreters and organisers.

Regarding the future of interpreting at GUFs, Mr. Sand showed optimism. He expressed certainty that the trade union movement will keep on relying on interpreting services in the future, especially because of the low language skills of the participants as compared to other international organisations. Some languages might become more important inside the trade union movement in the future depending on the evolution of the geopolitical situation, such as Portuguese and Arabic. Another phenomenon which was discussed was the use of International English, or *Globish*, and the increasing frequency with which this is spoken at conferences.

GUF meetings differ considerably according to their objectives. Their aim can be to set a policy, to implement this policy, to organise workers, to determine strategy and actions to be taken and, occasionally, to negotiate an agreement on working conditions. Meetings are normally held at GUF headquarters or in the city where these headquarters are located, but the location of the most important conferences might be designated according to the personal wish expressed by an important personality, such as the General Secretary, or according to the political situation or an event.

Preparation is a key element in the work of an interpreter. Interpreters are in general provided with relevant documents, even though the use of technology to upload and share documents at GUFs can be further developed, and there is no unified system among two or more GUFs. Interpreters are also provided with written versions of the most important documents that will be discussed, as well as their relevant translations. Texts of speeches, PowerPoint presentations and videos are not always provided to interpreters in advance

and might thus constitute a challenge. Mr. Sand talked about an interpreter's preparation as the most important tool that allows him/her to successfully face potential challenges. He highlighted how important it is for an interpreter to be proactive, and ask colleagues and the chief interpreter for hints on how to prepare. He also touches on glossaries, translations and resources available on the organisations' websites, which can provide interpreters with invaluable information, such as the specific vocabulary used in an organisation. Mr. Sand reiterated what every interpreter should already know: an interpreter needs to constantly broaden his/her general knowledge and learn to be interested in all sorts of topics.

It was not possible to analyse the interpretation service at each existing GUF due to resources and time constraints. A more detailed study of the differences in the work of interpreters among GUFs would be an interesting follow up on this thesis. Further research could also involve surveying interpreters to investigate their work experiences with GUFs and their impressions and suggestions; this would make it possible to complete this study with different, more complete and diverse points of view.

With this thesis, we hope to have provided interpreting students and readers with a tool to make their preparation easier with a view to a future employment at GUFs.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

Interpreting for GUFs (questions for interview):

Recruitment

1. Do you work with staff interpreters or with freelance interpreters? If with both, which percentage?
2. Where do you look for freelance interpreters?
 - a. database
 - b. AIIC
 - c. agencies
3. Do interpreters need to pass an accreditation test?
4. What do you take into consideration when hiring interpreters?
 - a. Language combination
 - b. Location
 - c. Experience:
 - i. of the subject
 - ii. of the organisation
 - iii. the interpreter's professional domicile with relation to the host city/country
5. Who is responsible for hiring interpreters?
 - a. Dedicated service/office
 - b. Team leader
 - c. Chief interpreters
6. Over the last year, interpreters hire were (indicate approximate percentage):
 - a. graduates
 - b. experienced
 - c. very experienced
 - d. retirees
7. Team size: how many interpreters for each booth?
 - a. 2
 - b. 3

- c. more than 3
8. Which is the average number of mandates per year at GUF for a professional interpreter (comparison with other organisations)?
 9. Replacement: when needed, does the interpreter take care of finding a colleague available to replace him/her?
 10. “11. For conferences of a technical or scientific nature, or presenting special difficulties, these numbers shall be increased.” (AIIC - Global Union Federations Agreement)
 - i. What requirements should a conference meet in order to be defined as technical?

Languages

11. Into which languages interpretation is required?
 - a. languages spoken at the meeting
 - b. official languages of the GUF
 - c. specific requests from delegates or any other participant
 - i. If there any extra booths set up according to specific requests, who pays for the interpretation service?
12. Are there any booths that are always present, such as FR and EN?
13. Do languages change according to the type of meeting being held? (see below for suggestion of different types of meetings)
14. Do you hire interpreters with a B language?
 - a. Over the last years, how frequently have you hired interpreters with a B language?
15. Which B languages are the most requested?
 - a. EN
 - b. FR
 - c. others

Interpretation

16. Which mode of interpreting is used?
 - a. simultaneous only
 - b. consecutive
 - c. whispering
17. Social functions: is it common to have dinners, field trips, etc. to be covered by the interpreters?

18. Is interpretation recorded and/or broadcasted?
19. Is there an assessment system for interpreters? If so, how often do interpreters get a feedback?
20. What are, according to you, the mayor challenges of interpretation at GUFs?
 - a. Speed
 - b. Vocabulary
 - c. Working with texts
 - d. Accents
 - e. International English
 - f. Technical conditions (booths, visibility, equipment)
21. Is there a team leader – for each booth? One for all booths?
22. What are the main responsibilities of a team leader?
23. According to article 9 of the AIIC - Global Union Federations Agreement, “the normal length of a day's interpretation shall not exceed two periods of 3 to 3 ½ hours each...Some flexibility, within reasonable limits, is possible by prior agreement with the interpreters”. Is this limit respected? If not always, what percentage of meetings last longer than established, with interpreters’ working days lasting longer too?
24. Future of interpreting at GUF:
 - a. Will the need for interpretation service increase?
 - b. Will international English be spoken more and more often?
 - c. Do you think new languages will be introduced at GUFs meetings?

Organisation of interpreting service at a meeting

25. Do GUFs have their own meeting rooms?
 - a. If not, do they use conference facilities?
 - b. Do they use mobile booths?
26. Venue: where is the largest proportion of meetings held?
 - a. GUF headquarters
 - b. Location changing according to:
 - i. Participants?
 - ii. Facilities available?

27. What kind of meetings are GUFs meetings?

- a. Negotiations
- b. Presentations
- c. Drafting committees
- d. Working groups
- e. Plenary sessions
- f. Steering committees
- g. Dialogue/discussion forums

Interpreters' preparation for a meeting

28. Are any meeting documents supplied?

29. If yes, how long in advance (days before the work date, on the day itself, during the conference)?

- a. What kind of documents are usually provided?
 - i. program or agenda
 - ii. background papers on the subjects and organisations involved
 - iii. documents to be discussed
 - iv. texts of speeches to be delivered
 - v. PowerPoint presentations and the speakers' notes
 - vi. multilingual glossaries of the relevant terminology
 - vii. summaries or minutes of previous meetings
 - viii. list of speakers and delegates
 - ix. speakers' bios

30. Who is responsible for the delivery of documents? (chief interpreter, team leader, conference organiser)

31. Are documents placed on the Internet for the delegates and interpreters to download themselves?

32. Does it happen to have a pre-conference briefing with experts before a session, in addition to the interpreters' preparation for a difficult technical meeting?

33. Is any specific training offered to interpreters before or during their work for you?

34. How do you help interpreters working at GUFs for the first time to familiarize with the new working environment?

- a. Help provided by colleagues
- b. Briefings

c. Training

35. Do you offer the possibilities to dummy booth for interpreting students?

a. If not, would you consider the possibility of introducing it in the future?

Appendix 2:

Interview with Peter Sand, chief interpreter of UNI, PSI and IndustriALL (complete transcription):

ILDEFONSO LAGUNA (IL): Thank you very much for coming here, for giving us a little bit of your time. Well, we've divided the interview in blocks, so it'll be a little bit easier for us in order to analyse the information afterwards. Well, I think Irene you can start with the first block.

IRENE SANTORO (IS): Yes. So, the first block is about recruitment. The first question of course is: do you work with staff interpreters or with freelance interpreters?

PETER SAND (PS): Freelance.

IS: Only freelance?

PS: Only freelance.

IS: Ok. The second question is: where do you look for freelance interpreters? Do you have a database? Do you use to AIIC or do you deal with agencies?

PS: I never deal with agencies.

IS: Ok. And the reason is?

PS: I suppose there are many reasons I don't do so. First of all, I don't need to. Secondly, I don't see why I should pay agency fees. I prefer the colleagues that I work with to get the money directly rather than having to pay them...Most agents ask for fees from interpreters, so..., I don't need to..., I can buy faster, I really don't need it. And also, because I've been in the profession for a very long time, I have a big, big network. The important thing is not to know everything, but to know who you can ask. And when you have a big network...I think that virtually in every country I know at least one person I can trust.

IS: Ok. So, do you have a database?

PS: I have a database in my head. I taught at ETI for twenty years, so that's already a big database. I tend to look amongst my former students or students that are fresh out of ETI. Word of mouth I suppose is probably a very important source for me. If I'm looking for a particular language combination which I don't have immediately at hand, then I'll contact people and say "Who can you recommend...?". I mean, I'm in contact with teachers in Paris, I'm in contact with teachers at La Laguna, so I'd go through my network.

IS: Ok, so AIIC website and AIIC members are not important in this case.

PS: I am a member of AIIC myself and I use the AIIC website often to get addresses but it's certainly not my only port of call and I don't rely on the AIIC website to ensure quality.

IS: Ok, ok. Thank you. Then, do interpreters need to pass an accreditation test in order to work for you?

PS: No. I'm not the UN, eh...(laughs)

IS: Ok. How do you assess the quality of the interpretation or the interpreter him or herself?

PS: Two ways: either they're former students of mine so, I don't know if you know anything about my past here, but I stopped teaching here about two years ago, so all the people up to about two years ago I used to know pretty well myself. And I nearly always try to give people a try-out, that is if I'm not 100% sure, I'll try them out with either somebody who is more experienced working with them, or either with me or some other colleagues listening in.

IS: Ok. What do you take into consideration when hiring interpreters? Is the language combination the main criterion or the location, the experience of the interpreter on the subject, with the organisation, or again the interpreter's professional domicile?

PS: Professional domicile is becoming more and more important. And you want to ask me about the GUFs, the Global Union Federations...For them in particular now more and more is becoming important that we don't get people to travel unnecessarily. If I was a customer, I would also appreciate that, so whenever possible I try to get locals. I always think it's nice for locals not to be bypassed, so I think there is also a question of fairness, both vis-à-vis the customer, and vis-à-vis colleagues. I don't see why I would import colleagues from Geneva say to Barcelona when I know there are excellent people in Barcelona, so I don't need to increase costs for the customer and bypass the colleagues in Barcelona.

IS: And I guess language combination is very important...

PS: Language combination, yes, is important and is getting more and more important for certain languages that are rising in importance in the trade union movement.

IS and IL: Such as?

PS: Portuguese. Portuguese is... Probably, I think, when I compose a team the first thing I do is look for relays from Portuguese. That is thanks to Brazil. As you can imagine, not thanks to Portugal. The Brazilians are becoming now...they more and more want at least to be able to speak Portuguese. They listen to Spanish, but

they want to speak Portuguese. And Portuguese is not very well represented. So that's why the first thing, when I recruit, I look who's got Portuguese.

IS: And what about the experience on the subject or with the organisation of the interpreter? Is that important?

PS: It is very important, because all clients want to hear their vocabulary. So, it is very important, but as we all started somewhere, including myself a long, long time ago, you have to give people a chance to build up that experience. So, when I take people that are just fresh out of school, I always put them with somebody who's been working for some time. I never put two newcomers into the booth together.

IS: Ok. Who is responsible for finding interpreters? Is there a dedicated service or a dedicated office, is there a team leader who's responsible for finding the interpreters they need or does the chief interpreter do that?

PS: That is the job of the chief interpreter. In my case, I'm the person who looks. I'm given the mandate, I'm told by the union "we've got a meeting on such and such date, we need these languages", and I put the team together.

IS: Over the last year, interpreters you hired, if you could indicate an approximate percentage, were graduates, experienced interpreters or retirees? With graduates we mean somebody who has less than 2 years of experience, experienced interpreters from two to ten years, then maybe another group would have from 10 to 25 years of experience, and then retirees.

PS: Well, I would say that the bulk of my recruiting is done amongst the former graduates here, because I know them best. And I would say that the age range from most of the people is around 30-35, people that came out of school say 5 years ago, 10 years ago. So, that's the bulk. I do try to get new people a chance but I've got less contact with ETI now, so I rely on people to sort of say "Listen, give such and such a person a chance". Retirees, I am for ethical reasons very, very much against, but, very occasionally, if I cannot find somebody for Portuguese, I may need to. But I'm very careful what retirees, in other words, for me there are retirees and retirees. There are people who have done a full life working in organisations and are on a full pension. Other people have left the organisation say after 10 years, either for family reasons or because their husband or wife moved somewhere else, and if you've only worked for an organisation for 10 years, you will not be able to live off that. So I do make a very clear distinction between retirees on a full pension, whom I don't take under any circumstances and partial retirees. But I'm very, very careful, for me really it's the last resort.

IS: So, question number seven is about manning strength. How many interpreters usually work in each booth?

We thought about two, three or more than three interpreters as possibilities.

PS: Ok well, I'm not the European Parliament (laughs), the European Parliament sometimes gets 4. I'd say that the standard configuration is 2 per booth. I work a lot in the Unions with Japanese. Up until very recently the Japanese had a very strong force and insisted on being 3. The trade unions are fighting that, because they say "How can the Japanese be the only ones who insist on being 3", so for some of my meetings I manage to reduce it to 2, but it's..., there's always a lot of resistance on the part of the Japanese. There are some booths, especially the bilingual booths, that insist on being 3 and the trade union movement, because they have shortage of funds, it's very difficult to get them to accept 3. So I'd say, standard 2, occasionally 3, sometimes 1. Yes, you're looking at me a bit surprised by that, we're in a very competitive world at the moment. So for short meetings, if I know that the meeting is going to be 95% English, I might put myself say in the English booth alone, with somebody who can come and help me if I know that that is going to be important for the customer.

IS: Ok. On the agreement between AIIC and the Global Union Federations, it is said that "For conferences of a technical or scientific nature, or presenting special difficulties, these numbers shall be increased."

PS: I would say that that's honored more in the breach than any other way (laughs), if you know that expression. First of all the trade unions are not very technical. They have their own vocabulary, which I think that anybody who reads newspapers and has a general knowledge would be familiar with. And I'm not putting them down, but it's not rocket science, but they like to hear the words that they're used to. A lot of delegates find it very outputting if you use constantly the wrong words. They've got an European Works Council; if you call it European Works Committee, that irritates them. And that, I would say, it's the same for every organisation. So it's very, very rare that in the trade union movement - I also organise for other things, I organise for basketball, that's a different kettle of fish because that is technical - but in the trade union movement I'd say it's very rare but it does happen, it does happen. I do one meeting a year for one of the trade unions which is on finance and on financial instruments and derivatives, and that you need a specialized vocabulary, you need to prepare for it, you can't walk in without. So, in which case, I would tend to look for people with more experience, particularly in the financial sector, people who know how to prepare and won't be afraid of getting a lot of technical details.

IS: The next question is: Could you estimate the number of man-days the organisation requires? We would like, ideally, to make a comparison with other organisations.

PS: It's very difficult to tell you that. If you told me to look up some figures before I came, I would have been able to do so and perhaps I'll be able to sort of look up some figures for you. Let me think. I must do around 30 or so trade union meetings a year; some are only 3 languages, some are 5 languages, some are 8 languages, one of them just had its Congress, so we had a week with about 14 languages, so you can sort of think it up quickly. I can't really give you a precise figure; I would estimate that both parts should be about 100 man-days a year.

IS: Ok. The last question on recruitment is about replacements. What happens when interpreters need to be replaced? Do they look for a replacement?

PS: I would start by becoming angry (laughs), because it adds a layer of complication. I'm being flippant. You know, because I have to put the team together also taking into account language combinations, one piece of the puzzle taken away can cause a lot of the structure to collapse, so it depends. Obviously if it's for illness..., but some people, you'll be very surprised, will tell me that their grandmother has died for the third time or what have you (laughs). So, it depends on what the reason is, but if there is a good reason I am a freelancer myself; I always like honesty, so the minute I have the impression somebody is being dishonest with me, that's pretty bad for me. I haven't answered your question I realize, do I get them? I prefer to look myself. Sometimes, if I'm exceedingly busy, suppose that I'm travelling and I have no or limited access to Internet, I may say to the person "Look, but before you confirm, let me know who". So, I will always have the final say. I'd say that in three quarters of the cases I look myself.

IS: Ok. Does it happen really often?

PS: It does happen, not very often. You know, freelancers have a tendency not to get sick, that's quite interesting (laughs), if you compare the figures with staff interpreters. I studied at ETI myself, I left in '81 and I think I have missed, in all those years, one meeting for illness. In fact, I was taken from the meeting with food poisoning. I think that all the colleagues I know would make an effort, freelancers do not fall ill. (Laughs) They tend to wait to fall ill after the meeting. (Laughs)

IS: Ok. I'm finished with recruitment, now Ilde it's your turn.

IL: Now it's my turn. I'm gonna ask you some questions about languages, linguistic policy and interpretation itself. So, into which languages is interpretation required: languages that are spoke at the meeting or the official languages of the GUF?

PS: It depends on who the participants are. Sometimes I'm asked to give options out but they are not sure the language is gonna be confirmed. For instance German, which used to be an exceedingly important language for the trade union movement because the German trade unions were amongst the strongest. More and more the Germans will accept to speak English. More and more. But sometimes I am told "keep somebody on standby in case such and such a person whose English is not so good comes", so that happens.

I'd say that Spanish is nearly always a must. Trade unions use Spanish not because of Spain but because of Latin America. And you'd be surprised about some of the countries which have a very strong trade union movement like Argentina. So, yeah, Argentina, the Argentinians have a very strong union movement and they need Spanish.

So Spanish is always there and say Portuguese is nearly always there passive. There are lot of languages which used to be regular features but which are disappearing for a number of different reasons like Italian, but there is nearly always passive Italian...Ehm, what else? French, of course, is nearly always there because, although a lot of French people speak English nowadays, the trade unionists don't. Except people of your age: I do a youth group and I'd say that young French people now are starting to enter speaking English more at meetings. So I'd say that my standard language combination would be English, French, Spanish, Japanese, Swedish...why Swedish? Sweden is one of the biggest contributors to the international trade union movement. They've got a unionization rate which every other country would dream of having, you know? [We're talking] about a 90% level. So they can insist on having interpretation because they are financing a lot of the entire set of activities. That's also...I forgot to mention: one of my biggest headaches is finding people with Scandinavian languages.

IS: (laughs)

PS: Because the trouble is that...[I'm doing] a little aside here but just say you...ehm...is a fact you can add in somewhere...Somebody who can only do Swedish is of no use to me: I need people who could do Swedish-Norwegian-Danish. And, if you can find me one person who can do all three, that's fantastic. I know about two or three.

IL: Wow.

PS: When they are taken, my whole structure collapses.

IS: Ok, so we know which languages [we need to learn]

PS: [But in the Spanish booth I rely on someone who has Danish and Swedish and she becomes my relay for Scandinavian.

IL: I think she was my professor in Barcelona...

PS: Lourdes?

IL: No...

PS: Lourdes de Rioja.

IL: No, a professor of mine had Danish, she's bilingual.

PS: Ok, who?

IL: Mary Pearce.

PS: Mary Pearce, yes. But Lourdes is in the Spanish booth and she works from Danish and Swedish. So she is almost perfect for me but she's still missing Norwegian.

IS: (laughs)

IL: That's the next step.

PS: If you want to add Norwegian, there are two different versions of Norwegian which are completely distinct.

IL: Oh, wow!

PS: New Norwegian and...

IL: Bokmål?

PS: Bokmål, yes, and New Norsk and they are not intelligible to one another (laughs).

IL: And then, I've got another question concerning languages which is...

IS: [Sorry, let me interrupt: I was curious about Arabic, Chinese, Russian...

PS: Russian, Russian is...for some meetings is...needed. I'd say that I've recruited for three of the biggest unions here. One of them is Public Services International, where everybody works in the public sector: they need Russian. The other ones...oh, no...and the, and IndustriALL, which is...you've heard of IndustriaLL?

IL: Yeah...

PS: The name is a new is "Industry-ALL" and it is a merger of three different trade unions: it used to be the metal workers, the textile workers...the textile and garment workers, and the chemical workers, and they've merged and they are all in IndustriALL. They also use Russian.

IL: (to Irene) Do you have any other...

IS: [No, no

IL: Ok...so, if...I don't know, if some delegate has asked for a specific booth that is not usually there, who pays for that?

PS: Usually they do.

IL: Ok.

PS: For instance I have to provide...I've got a meeting coming out and the Finns want Finnish. And Finnish is not an official language of the organisation, so I provide the Finnish interpreters, but the Finnish unions pay for them directly.

IL: So it's basically what happens at the UN for example when...

PS: [Yeah.

IL: Ok.

PS: So if somebody puts in a special request then we work out a direct payment method with that union.

IL: Ok. Well, my next question was already answered, 'cause it was if there are any booths that are always present, but you said...

PS: [Yeah]

IL: [English, French, Spanish, Japanese and Swedish.

PS: Yeah.

IL: Ok. And again, if languages change according to the type of meeting being held? As in, I don't know, if it's a drafting committee or a negotiation, do those change the language combinations?

PS: Yes. When I'm asked to provide interpreters, I'll be told what language regime is, and I'll be told if there are languages which are not confirmed yet, and I'll be told if there are passive languages.

IL: Ok.

PS: We are talking about Portuguese. I do provide active Portuguese, but most of the time is passive.

IL: And then, do you hire any interpreters with a B language, as in with a retour?

PS: Yes, I do.

IL: So, into which languages do you use that retour?

PS: Ehm...mostly Russian, Japanese...

IL: So from Russian into English, for example?

PS: Russian back into English. The Japanese booth always works back into English. Sometimes I have bilingual meetings, and if it's a bilingual meeting then there will be two people and one will have a B. I have a B in French and I work backwards and forwards in English-French meetings, bilingual meetings. And I'll take other people, perhaps I will put myself on with somebody who's got the reverse of me, that is A French- B English, so...yes, and a lot of them are also Spanish bilinguals, which there are very, very few...unfortunately.

IS: So, if somebody has a B language...

PS: [There is a market here for example for Spanish-English bilinguals.

IS: Ok.

IL: That's all for languages now. So, concerning interpretation itself: which mode of interpretation is mostly used?

PS: Simultaneous.

IL: Ok...

PS: Some consecutive, also there's sometimes whispered as well.

IL: So, we could say, I don't know like 95% simultaneous?

PS: It's probably more. And few, very few consecutives. Consecutive may well be used for example at after-dinner speeches. It's very rare to have a full consecutive now. Because what usually happens is that in what used to be a consecutive environment now is whispered. So I'll sit next to the person and whisper for him, which is equally tiring for everybody, but they sometimes insist on it.

IL: So it is common to have for example like dinners or, I don't know, field trips covered by interpreters.

PS: Or sometimes bilateral meetings and there will be a whispered, an interpreter between two parties, like liaison interpreting but whispered.

IL: Is interpretation recorded or broadcast?

PS: It is from time to time. Rarely, though. The trade unions don't really take minutes of meetings except for their top meeting. But then they only record, well they don't record, they have a minute-taker and they only record decisions.

IL: Is there an assessment system for interpreters? And, if so, how do you assess?

PS: No. Me. [Laughs] I was a teacher for a long time and some of the people I recruit are also either teachers or former teachers, and so if I'm taking somebody new, I'll listen to them. And also I get feedback from the delegates, because I've been recruiting now for a long time for the trade unions, so I know most of the delegates personally and they'll say "oh, that new person is good" or "where does that person come from?", or "can you provide me with somebody who's got an Argentinian accent?", which is also a fact, that's happened to me.

IL: Oh, really?

PS: Yeah, I had one meeting where there are five or six Argentinians and I put in somebody who had a very, very strong accent from Madrid. And they said "could you provide somebody with a South American accent?"

IL: Oh, wow!

PS: Interesting, isn't it?

IS: Interesting, yeah.

PS: And so for international meetings sometimes I mix the Spanish booth: I'll have one Latin American, one Spanish, so everybody is happy.

IL: (laughs)

PS: And I tell the Spanish sometimes to tone it down if they have a very big...the *ceceo*...

IL: No, I don't *ceceo*.

PS: Some people do, some people don't, you know...

IS: (laughs)

IL: [No, I don't do *ceceo*]

PS: No, but it's quite interesting. I sometimes say "just tone it down", 'cause some people have a very soft *ceceo* and other have got it very harsh, so I just say "tone it down" if we have a big Latin American contingent. That's a point that comes up all the time.

IL: Yeah, I do *seseo*.

PS: Yeah?

IL: 'cause I'm Andalusian.

PS: But that's easier for you, I mean...

IL: [Yeah, I mean that's the way I speak naturally]

PS: Yes, but it's also quite interesting that if I can't find a Latin American, but I can find somebody from the Canaries...

IL: [Yeah, because...

PS: [I've got it.]

IL: Yeah.

PS: Everybody's happy.

IL: (laughs)

IS: That's very interesting.

PS: Yeah, the Canary Islands... There's for me a perfect halfway house.

IL: Yeah.

IS: (laughs)

IL: They sound like...

PS: [Even the Venezuelans are happy, 'cause I think the Canary Islanders and the Venezuelans speak more or less the same way.]

IL: Yeah, to me they sound like Chileans sometimes...

PS: Yeah.

IS: So the perfect interpreter would come from, would be from the Canary Islands, would be bilingual English-Spanish, and he would have Danish, Norwegian and Swedish.

PS: Exactly! You found the identity! Well, I mean, I'll tell you there is one person I know, one young person who did a stage in ETI, I met here at ETI during her stage, who is an interesting case 'cause she's a Feroe Islander, which is a very weird language and who does all three Scandinavian languages, and a double booth, neither of which includes her mother tongue. She is an English-Spanish bilingual with all the Scandinavian languages. All of them.

IS: And how did she learn all the Scandinavian languages?

PS: She learnt Spanish because her partner is Peruvian and she's spent many years living in Peru. She is just gifted.

IL: Wow. That's impressive.

IS & IL: (laugh)

PS: And she is what? Thirty?

IS & IL: Wow.

IL: I'm gonna try not to get depressed after that.

PS: If you want come and meet her, you can do so. She'll be working in one of my meetings in May. So if you are interested in coming and seeing a phenomenon...

IS: Yeah, yeah, we'd love to do that.

PS: A Peruvian-speaking Feroese.

IL: (laughs) Wow! That's quite a mix.

PS: Yeah.

IL: And then, according to you what are the major challenges for an interpreter in the GUFs? Speed, vocabulary, working with texts, accents, international English?

PS: In the trade union movement?

IL: Yes.

PS: I would say often people with little education, which is –and don't get me wrong, I identify with a lot of things in the trade union movement, so I am not classist at all about people's level of education- but it is a big challenge to try and work out what somebody...I don't know...Chileans who've got very, very little education, but who are starting to get to the trade union movement, who can't find the right words, so trying to understand them sometimes is a challenge.

For people who don't have English as a mother tongue, big challenge is accents. You will see when you'll start out, when you get a Pakistani, a Nigerian –I am taking the two most difficult ones-, Japanese speaking English, Koreans speaking English...

So a lot of people who don't have English as a mother tongue but who have to speak English, people reading texts, speed is always a problem. I'm telling people to slow down and, I can tell you, after thirty years, I have stopped saying "slow down".

IS & IL: (laugh)

PS: They slow down for fifteen seconds and they...

IS: Do you have the feeling that speed is increasing more and more?

PS: I think it really depends on the individual. You know, often is a question of lack of confidence –not being used to speak in public-, people don't...

IL: [so it's a matter of stress]

PS: Maybe it's stress-related. There are some people who just speak naturally fast, you know. Well, neither of you will be working in the English booth, so you wait till you get to the Americans. Americans really speak very, very fast. And the problem is that American is very concise. So in Spanish you are gonna have to add about 15% or 20% on top of the fast American.

IL: Yeah...

PS: Right, yeah...Speed is definitely a challenge, as I said, regional accents or accents. Regional accents, I have many of the trade unionists, I have one who comes to UNI who's got an extremely strong Glasgow accent. And when I know that she's gonna come, sometimes I put a B into...I mean, I have no difficulties understanding somebody with a Glasgow regional accent, like you won't have any difficulty understanding a Basque or you know, you can fill in. When you know the language 100%, you don't need...you don't have the same difficulty coping with it as a person who has to work it out first. So at certain times, I may put in a B because I know that the B will understand it. Same thing for Russian. For instance, there are a lot of the former "-Stans": Kazakhstan, etc., lot of them don't have Russian as a mother tongue but speak Russian and then, if I've got somebody who's got passive Russian, they won't be as...they won't find it as easy as somebody for whom is his mother tongue.

IL: In cases where you, for example, a person takes the floor and he or she has a very thick regional accent, do you use then a B so he or she can be a pivot for the other interpreters to take him or her on relay?

PS: Do you mean...do I...No. What I have done, very, very occasionally –I used to do it a lot, now is quite, is a little bit...delicate-, but sometimes, if it's a very, very difficult regional accent I might do what we call shadowing: I'll repeat everything in English and then I'll tell everybody to take it on relay from me. But that only works in very particular circumstances: you gotta make sure you have a channel that doesn't go out into

the public, 'cause otherwise they may feel embarrassed or they may...so, if I can get a channel that is restricted to the booths, then I'll shadow.

IL: Is there a team leader for each booth or one for all booths?

PS: One for all booths.

IS: I have another question about technical conditions: do you use mobile booths a lot? Because we went to...we attended a meeting, a GUF meeting and there were two mobile booths I think.

PS: Do you remember where it was?

IL: UNI. It was at UNI.

IS: It was a...where were we?

IL: It was at UNI.

IS: Sorry?

IL: It was at UNI.

IS: Yeah, I meant the city...

PS: UNI is in Nyon.

IS & IL: Yes.

PS: And what context was it?

IL: They were preparing the conference, actually.

IS: The South African...

PS: But it wasn't when there was a meeting going on, or there was a meeting on?

IS: There was a meeting going on.

IL: It was a preparatory meeting for the conference.

PS: Ok, so it was before the South African conference.

IL: Yes.

PS: Right. Well, most...There are about six booths which are fixed booths, but because they have often more languages they've put in mobile booths, but they are permanent mobile booths. But those booths are there constantly, they don't remove them. So I'd say at UNI the booths are there constantly –even the mobile booths: there are two mobile booths, sorry, three mobile booths. But that is a fix mobile booth. PSI usually

holds its meetings at the ILO and IndustriALL either at the ILO or it holds meetings...where does it go?...At a hotel and then it's mobile booths.

IS: Ok. But it doesn't constitute any...it's not a problem, I mean, the conditions are the same.

PS: There are also AIIC regulations on how big the booths have to be, etc., and I would say that the suppliers of booth equipment here in Geneva respect that. If you go to other places that may not be the case. Sometimes you have a pretty sad feeling: when you are in an African country, I've been into places where the booths were, you know, for one person.

IS: (laughs)

IL: Wow...Coming back to the team leader, what are his or her responsibilities?

PS: Well, first of all to liaise between the interpreters and the organisers. I think that one thing I have seen with lot of organisers is that they don't want lots of people coming out to them and saying "I don't have this paper, I don't have that paper". They just want a person that they talk to and that person just distributes. So, if I am team leader or if I ask somebody to be team leader, I expect them, first of all, to clear all things that we need, so that the organiser knows what our conditions are, what we need –for example, if there are documents that are going to be read out, we want to get copies, etc., so that would be the task of the team leader-. The team leader will also be responsible for making sure that people are there on time.

IL: Very important.

PS: Very important. Also making sure that the organiser keeps to a certain schedule, so you know, they don't overrun. They all overrun, but you always have to negotiate, so you need to have somebody who is a...who's got good skills, people skills I would say; somebody who knows how to say "you know, one o'clock we are gonna have our break and we are gonna come back at two o'clock" and he'll say "no, we can't take two o'clock, perhaps we can split it: 1:30pm..." Yeah, someone who can...who takes account of what interpreters want, but also flexibility, because we have to be flexible.

You know, you'll see there are to different types of interpreters: those who work for the organisations and who stick to the rules, you know "one minute past the hour: that's it, meeting's over" [laugh]; and those who work on the freelance market and you do that and you are out of the job very quickly.

IS: So they never get ill and they never complain.

PS: Well, people complain, you know?

IL: Yeah, but once the meeting's over.

PS: (laughs) You know? I always say to my colleagues that sometimes they say to run over and, of course, you wanna stick to the times, but on the last day of meetings it's very rare that it runs into the afternoon. So I say: "how come you never complain on the last day when you are half a day off and you're paid, but you complain on the first day where you have to work an extra half an hour?"

IS & IL: (laugh)

PS: So, you know, I take it with a pinch of salt, but if you ask me –maybe it's one of your future questions actually, so... - what qualities are looked, well one of the qualities, one of the things I look for an interpreter is, first of all, work, quality. That's absolute number one. Number two is flexibility. If somebody is a brilliant interpreter and makes my life...

IL: [Impossible]

PS: Yeah, impossible. I wouldn't take them. It has happened. And I will just not take them. And this one person kept on saying to me "why are you not taking me?", well 'cause you made my life horrible.

IL: (laughs) Well, you can't argue with that.

PS: Well, she said "give me ten examples", I gave her ten examples and she rebated each one of them. So I said "I don't think we have any basis for a discussion" and I said "if you say 'I'll think about it'..."

IS & IL: (laugh)

IS: So, is there just one team leader for each conference?

PS: Yeah. As I said, you know, I know in the [European] Parliament, for instance, there are various team leaders. First of all, the Heads of Booth, etc., but we are not that big. I mean, I do have meetings where I have fourteen, sixteen, twenty interpreters. A congress is very big: there's Arabic booth, and there's a Korean booth and there's all kind of things. Too many cooks spoil the broth, so one team leader.

IL: Now, I wanna ask you about the normal length of a day's interpretation. According to AIIC – Global Union Federations Agreement, this shall not exceed 3 or 3½ hours. Are those limits respected?

PS: On the whole, yes. (Smiles) I'm smiling now because I just had to contract two Japanese... The Japanese are very, very difficult colleagues to work with. In fact, I've got a name for them: I call them "high-maintenance". [laugh] The Japanese booth is very, very "high-maintenance". And so, they will look at exactly the agreement and they'll say: "if it goes over three and a half hours, we are gonna put in for overtime". So, I'd

say: “what about flexibility?”, “no, no, no flexibility”. [laugh] So, it really depends. Then I have to work a little bit on the Japanese delegation, I have to say to them “make sure it doesn’t overrun: you know, five minutes you can do, but don’t do that because otherwise you are gonna get problems and they’ll start putting in...”. Ok, but I would say that’s the only booth that does that to me, the only ones.

IS: (laughs) Ok...That’s also interesting.

PS: I really try and stick to it. I mean, often I am in the meetings myself and I also know when to overrun, I also know how much we can do and not do. It’s funny when you are a recruiter because you have to get and try to see things through the eyes of the customer; you have to look at them through your own eyes and through the eyes of your colleagues. And you gotta try and come up with a halfway solution which satisfies everybody. If I was a maximalist, I’d say: “right, this is it” and then none of us would get any work anymore. But who’s well served by that? And that’s why being a recruiter sometimes is not an easy task, but it’s also why is important to have people who know that you’ve got their best interests at heart and, if you give in, it’s because there is a reason. I always explain it, you know? Sometimes we have an agreement and in that agreement you’ll see that we have an hour and a half lunch break. Sometimes they’ll say to me: “can we reduce it by an hour?” and I would say: “ok, we can reduce it to an hour. What do we get in exchange?”, and usually they’ll say: “well, we’ll finish at four instead of at six”. I’ll say then: “Ok, we’ll do it”. Usually I’ll go around asking people first of all if they are prepared to do it. But I think now I know most of the people and I think that most of the people I work with we’ll trust me and if I say “we’ll do it” it’s because we’ve got some kind of compensation at the end.

IS: Ok...Now, could we say that the chief interpreter is kind of a mediator?

PS: Yeah, yeah. As I said, it’s somebody who’s gotta have the interests of both parties in mind. You can’t...I could not have somebody as a chief interpreter who just says “we follow the line”.

IS: Ok.

PS: The agreement is a framework agreement, ok? And all agreements –even contracts- have to be interpreted. And you have to interpret them with a mind willing to smooth things over.

IS: And how much overtime is [the “norm”?

PS: [Very, very difficult to say, it depends. If I was told, for example –and it's happened-, “can we go an hour, an hour and a half over, but then we won't come back tomorrow?”, I think most interpreters would say yes straight-away.

IL: They'd say “it's fine”.

PS: If it's a normal working day and we're gonna be working on the same thing the next day, perhaps the most I'll accept is an extra half an hour. I'll bargain, I'll...you know, it'll be like they say “can we have an hour” and I'll say “no, we are gonna have fifteen minutes” and then we'll end up having half an hour. But then I'll say “but after half an hour we're going”.

IL: Then I'd like to ask you about the future of interpreting at GUFs.

PS: For you, young people!

IL: Yes...Do you think the need for an interpretation service will increase?

PS: I think that in the trade union movement there will always be need for languages because they are the least language-gifted. I need to say, I haven't met many trade unionists from Spain who can speak anything but Spanish.

IL: That doesn't surprise me.

PS: I haven't met many Latin Americans who can speak anything apart from Spanish; I have met no American trade unionists apart from people from Latin American heritage who can speak Spanish. So I think Spanish and English will remain strong. French will remain perhaps strong but, funny enough, not because of France but because of the French-speaking countries of Africa who always insist on speaking French. So French is actually's been saved by the French-speaking countries of Africa –North-Africa included. And I think Portuguese will get stronger.

I think that certain languages may disappear more and more –at least active. I think that German will become more and more a passive language

IL: What about Arabic?

PS: Arabic? Now, the trouble with learning Arabic is that you are confined to certain markets, that's basically the...

IL: [I am not planning on adding Arabic as a passive language...

PS: [No, no, but I mean, Arabic...There are meetings with Arabic in the trade union movement, and there may be more. We are starting to see...I am getting requests for certain meetings where they know that they are gonna have Arabic speakers. Perhaps about four a year, though. That's it, for the time being. But it may expand...it may expand...It depends on what happens in the labour movements in the North of Africa, if they start becoming a bit stronger and if the countries in the West which are trying to help them become stronger. If they do, there may be Arabic.

IL: Well, the next question was if you think international English will be spoken more and more often...as in *Globish* .

PS: I've heard a new word for that. Instead of *Globish* , at the Parliament they call it "desperanto", which I find more accurate.

IS & IL: (laugh)

PS: I would say that at international conferences "desperanto" is being spoken more and more. (laughs) In the trade unions, at certain levels, but it depends where. I would say that people who have senior positions in the trade unions, in an umbrella organisation, right? But I know that a lot of people at the top of *Comisiones Obreras*...well, they don't speak anything other than Spanish.

IL: Yeah.

PS: I think it also depends on the background because Spanish is such an important language that they don't need to, like English is.

IL: We've been spoilt.

PS: (laughs) Yeah, you've been spoilt. Whereas if you come from a minority country, you know, if you are a trade unionist...Sometimes I get very sad because you get trade unionists from the Czech Republic and their English is often not very good. But because they are weak unions and they don't have very much money, there is no interpretation provided and nobody speaks Czech in any case. So I'd say that if you come from, you know, a big language community, there will be work for the long term than if you come from a small language community.

IL: The last question of this block is if you think new languages will be introduced at the GUFs.

PS: Well, perhaps if China takes over the whole world (laughs)...No, I don't see any new languages being introduced at the GUFs at the moment. Perhaps active Portuguese more, perhaps. It depends on how insistent they are...And the Brazilians often, well, are quite happy to listen to Spanish. Their passive Spanish is good.

IS: (sound breaks up)

PS: Irene, you are gonna have to repeat that 'cause the sound is breaking up a little bit.

IL: Yeah, please...Can you repeat that? The sound is breaking up...Can you repeat the question again?

PS: *Otra vez...*

IS: I was asking about Italian because you said that it's a passive language and that it's not provided as an active language any more. Do you think it's going to disappear completely?

PS: I don't think so, I mean Italy it's still an important country and still a major economy, so...It's very difficult to say: the Italian trade movement is still there, they still send people. What often happens with active Italian is that it tends to be very last minute because the Italians, as you know, they sort of say they're gonna come and they don't come, which is very, very sad. But I don't think it will disappear, no. As a passive language it will stay. At all the meetings where there are Italians I've never heard them speak anything other than Italian, and I always make sure there's somebody on the team who has Italian.

IL: That's it for this block. It's Irene's turn.

IS: Yes. I would like to talk about the organisation of interpreting service at meetings, so for example some logistical questions such as: do GUFs have their own meeting rooms?

PS: Well, UNI has its own meeting rooms and IndustriALL has just refurbished its premises and I think it will have its own meeting room with booths. PSI won't.

IS: So in the case you don't have any specific facilities, where do you go? Do you use conference facilities, do you use mobile booths, do you use other organisations' facilities? You talked about the ILO before.

PS: Yes, so ILO is one possibility, IndustriALL often goes to the Ramada Hotel next to the Servette stadium, but they bring in mobile booths. Let me think what do we do...Some of them...PSI sometimes hold its meetings the UNI building. I'm just trying to think...When they go abroad it's often in hotels, and again with mobile booths and mobile equipment.

IS: So, are all the meetings held at the headquarters, or at least in Geneva...?

PS: Most of the meetings are held in Geneva. You know that all the GUFs have European sections of their organisations and most of those European sections tend to be based in Brussels and they also have meetings, I don't know where they take them, 'cause I don't organise the meetings organised by UNI Europa for examples, or EPSU, which is the European section of PSI. But I presume they use facilities...I mean, the ones in Brussels sometimes use the Commission's facilities and sometimes get Commission's money for interpreting and sometimes they get Commission's interpreters – not staff interpreters, but the Commission will employ people and pay them.

IS: Ok. Does it happen that you choose a location according to the participants? So if there are a lot of Japanese participants the meeting is held on Japan?

PS: No. Usually, if it's a Congress it's on a rotation basis, but the Congress is every four years. So, they don't go to the same continent. [The last one was in] South Africa, next Congress will be in the United Kingdom the one after that will probably be in Asia, so it tends to rotate. Sometimes, for political reasons, they will have a meeting in a particular place, like the next big meeting of IndustriALL will be in Bangladesh. Why? Because they represent garment workers, you know there was the big accident that took place in Dhaka, in Bangladesh, with lots of people dying in a terrible fire. And the unions are trying to spearhead a program to try to get these factory owners to control proper safety standards are respected. So we're gonna go to Bangladesh, as a symbol of solidarity.

IS: Ok. The last Congress was held in South Africa, the next one will be in the UK, so how is this location decided? Is it just on a rotation [basis]...?

PS: No, it is...The General Secretary of UNI is from Wales and it will be his last Congress. He wanted to have the Congress in Cardiff, which is the capital of Wales, but the facilities in Cardiff are not as good as in Liverpool. Liverpool has a very, very strong trade union background – very strong trade union background. So when there were two cities that wanted to organise it – Cardiff and Liverpool – but the facilities in Liverpool were better, so...But there was a decision taken by the Executive Committee, on which offer do we take. But it's always a question also of what facilities are available. Are there enough hotel rooms? You know, at the Congress there are thousands delegates, so it's a major thing. How far is the Congress centre from the major hotels? How many 2, 3, 4 stars, because some of the delegates cannot afford to go to expensive hotels...So a

lot of different elements going to...They're organizing a Congress and they usually organise it four years in advance. The actual planning starts four years in advance, you can imagine how much goes into it.

IS: Ok. The next question is: what kind of meetings are GUFs' meetings? Are they negotiations, presentations, drafting committees, plenary sessions, steering committees, dialogue or discussion forums, we thought...

PS: You've covered them all. (laughs) You can put a tick next to all of them.

IS: What would you say is the most [common]?

PS: It depends, you know. There are statutory bodies, that is the Executive has to meet once a year, and they will set the guidelines for what the organisations is going to do. It won't find you, it will set policy it will set policy, right. Steering committees, which is a smaller number, will look at how things will be implemented. Then you'll have a breakdown through sectors. UNI is a big organisation representing workers from lots of different industries, from beauticians, people working in gambling or casinos, people working in the security industry, you know, like building security, called property services; people working in post and telecommunications...So, each of these departments will have their own meetings, the meetings will be to set policy, it may be to decide what actions are gonna be taken; those actions may involve how do we recruit more members into the trade union movement, obviously the movement can only be as strong as its membership, so there are recruitment meetings on how to - the word used in English is "organising", sounds like organising the meetings but means organise workers - how do you organise workers in the union. A lot of work goes into organising, 'cause that's the be-all and end-all of trade unionism, I mean, without it nothing works. It may be organising strike actions, I don't know, I was just translating a text this morning which will be discussed at the next meeting for Amazon workers. Amazon workers in Germany have been calling multiple strikes since last year, because since it's an American company they don't want to talk the unions, and so the unions in Germany are very strong, so they keep on organising strikes, and they organise them in busy periods, like Christmas, now at Easter. And perhaps it will be very interesting to see if they manage to succeed, but...So it's sometimes strategy, how are we gonna coordinate, how are we gonna do this striking in Germany and make sure that the motherhouse in the States feels the effects. In Latin America there are a lot of supermarket chains which are Latin American supermarket chains, with one big supermarket chain that belongs to the Chileans. So, the Latin American countries come together and see how they're going to get better working conditions. So all this is strategy meetings, I would say. Occasionally, occasionally, there will be a negotiating meeting.

UNI for instance has had some very very good international agreements with, well if I take Spain, Zara. In fact, I think it was probably one of the first meetings I've ever seen where the CEO of Zara came to a UNI meeting to sign...Yeah, he came. It wasn't the other way around, it wasn't UNI going to their headquarters which is located in Logroño, if I'm not mistaken, no, La Coruña. It was the CEO of Zara who came to the Executive Committee in Ireland to sign an agreement on working conditions, yeah.

IL: So Amancio Ortega went all the way to...

PS: To Ireland.

IL: Wow.

PS: So there are quite moving moments when you see that. You know, when they want to..., when they're not fighting each other but they're trying to work out an agreement.

IS: Ok...it's nice to know.

PS: Yeah, sorry, I've given you anecdotes as well, but anecdotes are also the spice of life.

IL: Yeah.

IL: Do you have any other questions for this block?

IS: No, no, this was my last one.

IL: Well then...I would like to ask you about the types of meetings. Could you give us, not percentages, but for example more or less how often do you have negotiations?

PS: Not very many negotiations. Unions don't negotiate in their own headquarters, they would have...they will talk about strategy at meetings, and then negotiators will then go off and perhaps discuss in the European Works Council, etc. So I'd say very few negotiating, but mostly strategy meetings.

IL: Ok.

PS: And then also the statutory meetings like the Executive Committee, the Finance Committee...These are meetings that have to take place. For example, all organisations have to have a meeting where they go through accounts, where they approve the budgets, etc., so those are statutory meetings of which there are a number every year. And perhaps each section will have statutory meetings as well, you know, sort of people working for post offices and telecommunications, they will have a meeting where they'll discuss their budget and how they're gonna use that budget. But I would say that most of the meetings are mapping out strategies.

IL: Now I'd like to ask you some questions about how interpreters prepare for a meeting. Are there any documents which are supplied to the interpreters in advance or even the same day?

PS: Sometimes yes, sometimes no, more and more electronically. More and more organisations have put in their documents up on line and I will then send a link to the whole team saying "go on to this link and download the documents". Some of the links work really well, some others are really bad. I mean, UNI has a very strange system where you have to download each document separately. Even though I have been fighting and saying "put everything into one same file", I don't get them to do it. But I won't give up! [laugh] I'm very, very stubborn.

IS: So are you thinking about introducing something like a unified system so that people can upload their documents and then interpreters can download them?

PS: At the moment I haven't thought of that because each organisation likes to do their own thing. It would be wonderful if there was one single server for the GUFs and they would put there all their documents. It hasn't come to that. It would be very nice. It's very difficult to getting to coordinate. I've been trying to get the three big ones to coordinate their meetings so they don't clash, because sometimes I find it very difficult to get people with Scandinavian and if I've got two or three meetings, or there are three meetings on the same week, then I'm gonna get stuck. But documents I'd say that mostly, more or less online. I am still able to get, to provide written documents for the booths, because we all prefer to have written documents. How long I will manage to do that? I don't know. That is, I think I'm fighting a losing battle there [laugh], but there are always ways of preparing for a meeting. Even if it's only looking at last year's, 'cause all the documents stay on the server. So, I mean, if you are working at UNI and you've got a meeting on commerce workers, you can look at the commerce workers' documents from the last meeting. So there's always a way of preparing, knowing what subject's gonna be discussed. I mean, a lot of the subjects are not necessarily something new: a new strike being organised, or workers who have been...I don't know...made redundant or whatever. I believe though that if you read the papers, you know more or less what's going on.

IL: What kind of documents are the ones which are provided on a regular basis?

PS: There are always proposition papers on a particular subject. For instance, this is what's happening at Amazon, this is what's happened over the last year, they have been on negotiations, who's in charge of the various committees, and so those documents would be available. Plus the agenda, of course. The agenda is

always available. There's usually also a participants list, because all interpreters have difficulties recognising names pronounced in...well...

IL: Yeah, I see...

IS: (laughs)

IL: So do you provide [the interpreters with] the speakers' bios or at least the names?

PS: The names, yes, at least the names.

IL: That's fine then.

PS: You might at some point be able to find out who the speaker is.

IL: And what about, for example, Powerpoint presentations?

PS: Powerpoint, yeah...There are big problems...Sometimes you get them in advance, sometimes not; sometimes you have them in writing. The worst thing are videos, 'cause they expect us to interpret videos.

IL: And do you get a script?

PS: If we get the script, it's doable. But sometimes we don't get the script. And then it becomes very difficult indeed. They say "can you do it?" and you say "well, it depends..." Sometimes, you know, I would just get back to the flexibility: we try and do it, sometimes we say "we'll try and do it, but you'll probably end up with a summary". You can say a lot of things to the listeners and they will understand. I think it depends on how you say it. If you start sounding angry in your voice, you are not gonna make friends. But if you say "the interpreter doesn't have the script, he'll do his best, but I am gonna have to take shortcuts and leave out some parts because of the speed", that'll do.

IL: And then, are you provided with the text of the speeches that are going to be read?

PS: In theory, yes. In theory, yes, and we always ask for it. We don't always get it. At least we try. I always, always ask for it and I always say at the beginning of every meeting, I say "if you are gonna read, please give us a copy and give us it in advance so that we make copies". Because you know, if I'm given a copy just before he reads it out and I've got eight booths, how am I gonna copy them? Sometimes they respect it, sometimes they don't. It depends...I'd say that people who attend meetings regularly and know that these copies need to be provided do so; you come to the meeting for the first time, you would have not thought about it.

IS: (sound breaks up) But do you feel that delegates don't give their copies in advance because they fear...?

PS: [No, because of confidentiality.]

IS: Yeah, I see.

IL: Ok.

PS: But there are meetings –I’m not talking about GUF meetings here-, but I do work for certain organisations like banks, who won’t give up any of the documents in advance: you get them just before they start and they come and collect them immediately afterwards.

IL: Well, yeah, I assume that’s their policy...

PS: Yeah.

IL: Who’s responsible for delivering the documents?

PS: It’s the chief interpreter who’s gotta be sure. And the recruiter. It’s me who goes to the organisation and say “when are the documents gonna be available?”, “are you gonna put them online?”, “will you send them to us?”. The one who has to make sure of all that is the recruiter, I’d say.

IL: Do you have pre-conference briefings?

PS: With colleagues?

IL: Yeah, with colleagues to prepare...I don’t know, the newbies for their first meeting...

PS: If there’s a newbie, then I’d say “come fifteen minutes earlier” and I’ll just discuss how the meeting is gonna be. But, as I said, I rarely put a newbie on in the booth with another newbie, so the boothmate should be able to...

IL: And what happens if it’s a brand new subject, a brand new topic?

PS: Well, you prepare...you prepare like we all do. You know, if I recruit you, and you say to me “how can I prepare?”, I’ll say “go on to this site, go and get these documents, go around to UNI and ask them to give you that document...ehm...read this paper, this article that was published in The Economist.” So you have to rely I suppose on the person who’s recruiting you...And you have to be also proactive, you have to say “I’ve never done this meeting afore, what should I expect? How would you suggest that I prepare for it?”.

The worst thing is to say nothing because you are afraid of...

IL: [Yeah, of course, you need to ask]

PS: Yes. Ask, ask, what does it say in the Bible? “Ask and it shall be given to you”...Hopefully.

IL: So, is there any specific training offered or not? Is it just your own preparation?

PS: Your own preparation. But what I do quite often at UNI, I say to people “do you wanna come and do dummy booth? Come. Tell me your availability, I’ll tell you when the meetings are...And I’ve got a big meeting in PSI in May, you know”...When I was a teacher it was easier, ‘cause I’d say to the students “tell me, who wants to come and do a bit of dummy booth?”. And now I rely a little bit on Kilian to tell me if he’s got students he wants to bring along. But basically, if people want to come do dummy booth, they can. They can do so in the organisations, not just the GUFs, I mean you can ask Ian Newton at the ILO if you wanna go do dummy booth. At the World Trade Organisation they let you go and do dummy booth, so there are...I’d say most organisations have a system whereby younger freshly-qualified interpreters can practice before getting into real life.

IL: You were ahead of me ‘cause that was my next question...

PS: Am I ahead of you?

IL: (laughs) Yeah, the dummy booth was my next question.

PS: Oh, sorry about that...

IL: No, no, it was perfect! So then, the last question I have for you...we have for you, I think, how do you help interpreters, new interpreters to familiarise with GUFs? Apart from dummy boothing...

PS: Yeah, I really cannot think of a better way than to come and get first-hand experience and not have to work. I mean, nobody relying on you. Because there you really can listen and see how a meeting progresses. There is no better way than seeing a meeting unfold and how’s the floor given, who takes the floor, what languages are spoken, what are the people that I encounter in this organisation like...There is no one thing...I mean, obviously you have to read up, you read up about the organisation, even going onto their homepage. On their homepage you find a lot about them: where do they come from?, who do they represent?, how many people do they represent worldwide?, are they strong in Latin America?, are they strong in Europe?, are they strong everywhere or not strong at all? I think that is the first thing you need to do...If it’s an organisation or a merger, what’s the importance or the share of each one? You know, the chemical workers as part of the metal workers –which are not metal workers anymore, and this is probably the biggest union in the world-, ship-building workers...Massive, when you think of the scale of some of these industries. So I mean, you...General knowledge is probably the most important thing: just keeping your eyes open, reading about things. We read articles that perhaps you wouldn’t read if you weren’t an interpreter. You read a newspaper completely

differently. I remember one of your colleagues in the Spanish booth, I remember we did an economic presentation and he looked at me afterwards and –he did a pretty awful job-, and he said “well, I’m not interested in Economics”. So I said “well, learn to be interested in Economics”. If you just say “no, I’m not interested”, you won’t learn. So you gotta, you gotta be like a sponge. As much as possible: ask, ask, ask people about the meeting: “what do you do?”, “how did you prepare for this one?”. Ask your boothmates what they are doing...The thing is the subject is so vast that you don’t know where to begin. But I think the most important thing when you are working for an organisation for the very first time is to know what that organisation does, what its main bodies are, where it stands on the political...

IL: [spectrum]

PS: Yeah, the political spectrum...Because sometimes you don’t hear acoustically. What I’m saying is that you’ve gotta have a filter, ‘cause sometimes we doubt, you know I don’t know what *Comisiones Obreras* has said and then I hear that they are in favour of liberalisation. Then I should think “hmmm, probably not”. And those are the kind of filters that you need to know, so even if you are not quite sure you heard correctly, that you don’t say things which are manifestly wrong.

IS: Are there any resources available to interpreters, such as glossaries for example...glossaries that they use internally?

PS: No. I’m a glossary fan, so I collect glossaries on absolutely everything and anybody who asks me for a glossary I share. I don’t know, I think that most people want to have glossaries. You just have to be very careful: there are some people who are sharers and there are other people who are non-sharers –“I’ve done it, this is all my work and I’m not gonna give it to you”. [laugh] And there are people like me who think that the better we work, the better it is to the profession.

Glossaries are always useful, but your own glossaries are the best. I don’t know how you remember things, but often things you have written down will stick in your memory. I can give you my glossary and it may be very useful because it’ll give you all the...I don’t know...all the abbreviations. And the GUFs love abbreviations. They just love them. And we hate abbreviations, because you know, you can’t think of them quickly so...I think if there’s one thing I tend to write down those are abbreviations, ‘cause in the heat of the moment you just simple don’t think of them.

Most of the organisations have glossaries: if you go to the WTO, which is very specialised, they have glossaries –both paper and electronic; the GUFs...I've got a glossary and if you ever come to UNI, I would share it with you...or you ask, you ask the recruiter, you say “do you have a glossary for this?”. You know, I've got glossaries on football, all kinds of things. I suppose you should just find out who are the kind of people who like making glossaries and turn to them. I mean, I get a lot of people I don't even know who say “do you have...I don't know...a glossary on car engines?” and I say “yeah, here it is”.

IS: And do you have them on paper or on your computer?

PS: Computer. I do not have paper at all for glossaries. At all. It's not efficient enough. First of all, if you are in a meeting you need to be able to find things really fast and if you've got ten pages, you are not gonna find it. You'll find it for the next time it comes up, but it's not fast enough. And very few people have the discipline to keep paper up to date, whereas when you have to enter it in the computer, it's always up to date.

IS: Just one last question about documents: are you also provided with translations of the documents or there's just one version, the English version?

PS: No, no, they are often translated. And often the booths will get a copy of some major important policy documents in their own language. That's also a very good source of vocabulary, of course. For instance, get the Spanish document, get the English document, go through them and see...I don't know...'cause there are certain things you simply, cannot, cannot ever guess. UNI has a big campaign which is called *Breaking Through*, which in Spanish would be...? I'll tell you, 'cause if I tell you what they've called it...In Spanish is called *Rompiendo barreras*. Would you guess it?

IL: No...

PS: No. But if you saw the translation, you'd be confused because in all the Spanish documents it says *Rompiendo barreras*. So those are the kinds of things that you need to get background documentation, 'cause otherwise you'd confuse everybody and you'd confuse yourself as well.

IL: Yeah, and that's really specific, so they...the delegates need to hear that.

PS: They need to hear that word, especially if you know, they've obviously got their language specialist and said “how can we say *Breaking Through* so it sounds snappy in Spanish?”.

IS: Ok, so I have finished with my questions.

IL: Yeah, me too, I think that's it.

PS: Happy Easter then!

IS: Thank you, you too.

IL: You too, Mr. Sand. Thank you for this interview.