



Brief Report on Meeting of European T/I Associations

on 6 June 2008
in the Savoia Regency Hotel, Bologna, Italy

Number of participants: 20
Number of associations represented: 15 + FIT Europe
Number of countries: 11

The meeting, chaired by Sandro Corradini (Chairman, AITI), began at 5.20 p.m.

Item 1: Welcome by Sandro Corradini.
The attendants introduced themselves briefly.

Item 2: Draft agenda
The draft agenda was approved.

Item 3: Brief account of Barcelona meeting.
João Esteves-Ferreira (FIT Europe) gave a brief account of the informal meeting held in Barcelona on 13 October 2007. He pointed out that a written report had been circulated by the host association (ASETRAD) and was also available on the FIT Europe website, under "Documents".

Item 4: Results of FIT activities worldwide
Patricia Alarcon (CBTIP) asked if anyone knew what FIT was doing or had recently done at global level. Apart from the forthcoming World Congress in Shanghai and the introduction of the international ID card, none of the participants knew of any achievements at global level since Tampere 2005.

Item 5: Run-up to Shanghai, August 2008
Patricia Alarcon (CBTIP) asked what was known about the situation regarding proxies for Shanghai. The discussion revealed that of the seven associations listed in the Barcelona report, AITI would not after all be attending the Shanghai Congress, but that 4 others (KS/Denmark, NGTV/Netherlands, BDÜ/Germany and ATR/Romania (the latter if accepted as new FIT Member)) would be willing to accept proxies from associations unable to attend. This brought the total to 10 associations known to be prepared to accept proxies. FIT Europe was asked to use its mailing list to make all European member associations aware of this offer.

Various mentions of possible moves to break away from FIT and form an independent regional federation led to a lively debate about ways of improving/reforming FIT. The outcome was a consensus that while there was a clear will to strengthen the regions, any reform of FIT needed to be undertaken from within. Antje Kopp (BDÜ) suggested that regional activities could be strengthened if annual membership dues were split 50/50 between FIT World and FIT Europe. No definite conclusions were reached on this point.

A number of associations suggested that the European delegates to the Statutory Congress should have a brief informal meeting in Shanghai immediately before the Statutory Congress. FIT Europe was asked to try and arrange such a meeting for the day before the congress. It was agreed that if they were not otherwise informed, the delegates would meet at the hotel bar at 4.00 p.m. on 1 August.

Item 6: Improving communication among FIT associations

Sandro Corradini (AITI) raised the question of slow (postal) communication with member associations by FIT World. He suggested that for normal purposes, postal communication could be dispensed with entirely. The resulting financial savings could initially be used to finance improved technical facilities for electronic communication.

One suggestion that met with general approval was the creation of a restricted zone within the FIT World website which would be reserved for member associations only. The associations would receive an e-mail supplying them with a link to the relevant information, which they could then download at their convenience. This could be combined with a record of receipt, which would permit targeted follow-up if associations persistently failed to fetch their documents.

AITI/ASTTI said they would look into the possibilities and put a motion from the floor in Shanghai.

Item 7: Progress reports on other European projects (FIT-Europe SC members)

Referring briefly to the previous item, João Esteves-Ferreira (FIT Europe) reported that within Europe it was now standard practice to send all communications to the associations by e-mail. He then went on to enumerate the various current projects:

- **Bad payers:**
A wealth of information about how to collect bad debts was available on the FIT Europe website. This included input from the ATA as a potential “client country” for European translators, and also a large number of European countries. Input was still needed from Ireland, the Netherlands and the Nordic countries in particular.
- **Code of ethics:**
See Item 8.
- **Admission criteria:**
A large amount of material had been received and was on the website, but often only in the language of the individual association. The next step, currently in progress, was to compile a summary of the main points of each admission criterion in French and English. This could be ready before the General Assembly in December.
- **European standard:**
There had been a generally positive response to the certification recommendations. The next step could be to form a small task force to draw up checklists for the translator, possibly even leading to the creation of a model quality manual. This required considerable time and human resources and would be put on hold until after Shanghai.
- **Structure and means:**
The working group had come to the conclusion that the key criteria for any structural improvements were: legitimacy, stability and efficiency. The FIT Executive Committee had invited FIT Europe to review its own bylaws, and this work was now in progress. The draft would be sent to the European associations for comment as soon as possible, with the aim of presenting a revised version to the next General Assembly in Paris (6 December 2008, concrete proposals to be notified to members at least 3 months earlier).
- **Interpreting:**
This potentially interesting project was currently dormant, because it required considerable input of human resources and time, which had so far failed to materialise. If no suitable offers were received by the end of June, the project would be discontinued.

Item 8: Feedback on the FIT Code of Ethics

Reiner Heard (Aticom), who had presented the results of this project to the AITI conference that morning, invited the associations to send feedback so that a revised version could be proposed to the General Assembly in Paris (6 December 2008, proposals to be notified to members at least 3 months earlier). The present draft would be circulated in English and French and a deadline would be set for replies.

Item 9: Pan-European survey on rates, next activities of FIT Europe

João Esteves-Ferreira (FIT Europe) mentioned that the idea had been raised of expanding the SFT rates survey (rates per word/line/hour etc. charged by translation service providers for various language combinations) to take in all European associations. Antje Kopp (BDÜ) reported that a similar project (in German) was currently being run by her association. In view of cartel legislation, she said, this had to be confined to a snapshot of a past situation (previous year). The Dutch and the Danish associations said they were also running similar projects. After some discussion it was decided to request FIT Europe SC to form an ad hoc working group which would first examine the technical possibilities and financial needs, and then make recommendations. Three of those present volunteered for this work: Sabine Colombe (SFT), Antje Kopp (BDÜ), Perpetua Uiterwaal (NGTV)

João Esteves-Ferreira (FIT Europe) also mentioned that most of the current FIT Europe projects were leading towards the long-term goal of a "European translator profile". As this depended on other results and would take considerable time and effort to produce, it was in any case on hold until after Shanghai.

Item 10: Next meetings

Several associations voiced a need to have a further informal meeting after Shanghai but before the General Assembly in Paris. Antje Kopp (BDÜ) offered to host an informal meeting at the BDÜ offices in Berlin, probably on 27 September 2008. Looking further ahead, Antje Kopp suggested that the BDÜ's planned major event in Berlin from 12-15 September 2009 would also provide a convenient opportunity for an informal meeting or a FIT Europe formal meeting if desired.

Item 11: Any Other Business

- Sandro Corradini (AITI) raised the idea of collaboration / exchange of information on insurance for translators, including special rates negotiated by local associations. This was noted as a possible project for the future.
- He also asked for views about work on a common platform for e-learning. Developments in several countries (Italy, Germany, UK, Argentina) were mentioned by various associations. It was decided that although this was an interesting possibility, it was likely to be very resource-intensive and should be put on hold until the autumn.

The meeting closed at approximately 7.25 p.m.

16 June 2008

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
at the
Meeting of European T/I Associations
on 6 June 2008
in the Savoia Regency Hotel, Bologna, Italy

Chair:

Sandro Corradini – Chairman, AITI +

Participants

Patricia Alarcon - CBTIP

Silvia Cerrella Bauer - ASTTI

Cristiana Coblis - ATR

Sabine Colombe - SFT

João Esteves-Ferreira - FIT Europe +

Andrew Evans - FIT Europe *+

Agnès Feltkamp - CBTIP

Giannina Gindler - ADÜ Nord

Catherine Greensmith - ITI

Doris Grollman - CBTIP

Reiner Heard - ATICOM +

Birgitte Jensen - KS-DK +

Antje Kopp - BDÜ

Terence Oliver - FIT Europe +

Javier Sancho - ASETRAD +

Manfred Schmitz - VÜD

Perpetua Uiterwaal - NGTV

Observers from other regions

Silvana Marchetti - CTPCBA

Mary Ellen Kerans - MET (Mediterranean Editors and Translators)

+ FIT Europe Steering Committee Members

* FIT Council Members