

## **SRUK/CERU Proposals to REA on Multilingualism in EU Research**

The Society of Spanish Researchers in the United Kingdom (SRUK/CERU) is fully committed to the promotion of multilingualism as part of the Society's initiatives, therefore encouraging, alongside the use of English, the use of Spanish and other co-official languages of Spain.

The European Research Executive Agency (REA) is a funding body for research and innovation and it manages European Union (EU) research grants. REA's mission is to help build a greener Europe with prosperous, inclusive societies and economies that take full advantage of the digital age.

Multilingualism is a way of life for most citizens of the EU. The EU has 24 official and working languages, and recognises more than 60 regional and minority languages. Immigration and freedom of movement are bringing more and more people into contact with different languages, across several age groups and in various cultural contexts.

### **Background**

REA is exploring the possibility of supporting the publication of scientific research results in every EU language, including minority or endangered languages, by using novel AI tools that support translation of research texts into languages other than English.

Furthermore, the development and use of generative AI tools could also result in the automatic dissemination of scientific results in such a way that the content would be adapted to the needs of different groups of the general public in their mother language. The use of AI for scientific dissemination in other EU languages would contribute to a fair and egalitarian publication of the results of EU-funded projects in languages other than English. EU-funded research publications could be made readily and timely available in all EU languages through the application and further development of appropriate AI tools.

### **CORDIS**

The Community Research and Development Information Service (CORDIS) is the European Commission's primary source of results from the projects funded by the EU's framework programmes for research and innovation, from FP1 to Horizon Europe. Its mission is to bring research results to professionals in the field, to foster open science, to create innovative products and services and to stimulate growth across Europe.

CORDIS has a rich and structured public repository with all project information held by the European Commission such as project factsheets, participants' information, reports, deliverables and links to open-access publications. CORDIS also produces its own range of publications and articles to make it easier for the users to find relevant results that can be used in other web domains. The print editions are in English while the web versions are also available in French, German, Italian, Polish and Spanish.



## SRUK/CERU

The Society of Spanish Researchers in the UK (SRUK/CERU) is a non-for-profit association, created by and for researchers and registered in the UK in 2012. SRUK/CERU has four key aims: 1) to create a social and professional network of Spanish researchers in the UK, 2) to bring research closer to the public in both countries, 3) to represent the interests of the community of Spanish researchers in the UK with institutions in Spain and UK, 4) to facilitate the emergence of collaborations between R&D institutions in both countries. According to its second objective, SRUK/CERU has numerous scientific communication, outreach and public engagement initiatives in English, Spanish and other languages.

With regards to multilingualism in research, SRUK/CERU states that for science to be accessible to all citizens, it must be communicated not only in English but also in other languages. At SRUK/CERU, we are committed to promoting Spanish and the other co-official languages of Spain as vehicular languages for the communication and dissemination of science, without detracting from the use of English in specialized articles. We also emphasize the need to develop a system of incentives and evaluation that rewards the dissemination of science in languages other than English. SRUK/CERU is committed to collaborating with institutions interested in developing policies that promote a more plural and multilingual science, development and innovation system.

According to SRUK/CERU's views on multilingualism in research, please, find below our recommendations to REA's programme proposal:

### SRUK/CERU recommendations

- Prior to implementation of a full programme, we recommend that REA launches a pilot to understand and analyse the performance and usefulness of automatic translation and AI tools when translating scientific texts that are part of EU-funded projects from English to other languages.
- The pilot should start gradually by translating brief texts, such as project objectives or summaries, along with the titles and abstracts of published open-access research outputs. Full research publications could be translated in a later phase.
- The pilot and the programme more generally should be evidence-based and take into consideration current research findings in relation with the use of AI for automatic translation, science communication in languages other than English, multilingualism in scientific teams, etc.
- The quality of automatic translation of scientific texts should be carefully evaluated, as AI tools require access to very large amounts of written scientific input in the relevant language that may not necessarily exist. The absence of a significant corpus of scientific publications in a particular language could determine the quality of the automatic translation for each language.
- REA should allocate specific funds to this pilot programme and should specify whether



the costs of translating projects' outcomes would come from each project budget or from a specific source of funding, as research support services provided by the agency. Should funding for translation come from the research budget, it should not result in a reduction of funding for other components of any given project. In the long term, we consider that a mixed approach may be suitable, by providing research support staff part of REA who could help research teams undertake the translation requirements.

- The pilot should gather feedback about the researchers' experience in the programme, including the time for proofreading, editing and revising the AI-generated translations, the resources invested into the process etc. This feedback should be incorporated into any future versions of the programme.
- REA should define clearly the criteria that would inform the need for translating research produced in English into other languages of the EU. These languages should include the official languages of the states in which the researchers work as well as any co-official language from the country or region in which the research is taking place as per the languages covered by the States Parties to the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Translation costs should be adjusted to reflect the multilingual reality of each team, region or country.
- Based on the pilot experience and specialized advice on the matter, REA should develop a toolkit or guide specifying how to use automatic translation for this purpose and the challenges and specificities that researchers should take into account including: artificial style, unclear or not coherent language, contextual references, etc.; scientific terminology, neologisms, lexical borrowings, etc.; orthography, alphabets, punctuation and typographic conventions.

**Language Policy Committee  
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