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# ITIA BULLETIN

August 2009

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Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association  
*Cumann Aistritheoirí agus Teangairí na hÉireann*

19 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, Ireland

Tel.: +353-1-872 1302 Fax: +353-1-872 6282

Email: [itiasecretary\(a\)eircom.net](mailto:itiasecretary(a)eircom.net) Web: [www.translatorsassociation.ie](http://www.translatorsassociation.ie)

## ■ Editorial

Dear Readers,  
Happy summer one and all. The little snatches of sunshine are filling me with the spirit of Pollyanna as I try to look on the bright side of the recession. It is a struggle but I can find one Pollyanna-style upside:

The less work I do, the less invoicing I have to do. Hurray!

There should be plenty to interest you in this issue of the bulletin. Please do contact me with any interesting stories or ideas.

**Elizabeth Hayes**  
Editor ITIA Bulletin  
theitiabulletin@gmail.com

## ■ Welsh makes it to Brussels

The growth of the Welsh language is being recognised at European level due to successful lobbying by Welsh MEP, Jill Evans. From July, Welsh speakers will be able to correspond with the European Commission in Welsh. A 'Memorandum of Understanding' was signed in Brussels to this effect.

When possible, the Commission will translate documents itself, but may forward letters to the Permanent Representation of the UK to the EU for transfer to the designated body for translation. The UK government will pay annually for the translations based on the number of pages translated. Similar arrangements have been in place for Spain's regional languages - Basque, Catalan and Galician – since 2005. The European Commission is following in the footsteps of the European Council of Ministers which opened the door to Welsh in November 2008.

The EU institutions' translation and interpreting services absorb €1.1bn or 1% of the EU budget every year, an amount described by Leonard Orban, Commissioner for Multilingualism, as "the cost of democracy".

Ms. Jill Evans, MEP, said, "I'm pleased that we've taken another step forward in boosting the status of the Welsh language at European level and raising the profile of Wales. It's right that Welsh speakers should deal with the European Commission in their language of choice."

## ■ Dáil question regarding T/I

Question 1207

TD Denis Naughten (Roscommon-South Leitrim, Fine Gael) asked the Minister for Education and Science about his plans to introduce a certification system for interpreters, especially those working with Government and its agencies; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [29557/09]

Batt O'Keeffe (Minister, Department of Education and Science; Cork North West, *Fianna Fail*) responded:

It is open to providers of higher education to establish and provide certified programmes of education and training in the field of interpreting. For example, I am aware of a programme leading to a Graduate Certificate in Community Interpreting provided by Dublin City University. There are also many people in the interpreting industry who have certified qualifications from outside the State. It is a matter for those seeking interpreting services, including Government Departments and State Agencies, to determine their requirements depending on the particular context in which the service is required.

## ■ Criminals to gain right to T/I services

The European Commission is proposing to introduce new legislation to enshrine the right to translation/interpreting services where necessary for suspected criminals. Under this legislation, the suspect would have the right to an interpreter from the moment of arrest until the case ends and they would also have the right to read key documents related to their case in their native language. Although the European Convention on Human Rights, to which all EU Member States are parties, technically guarantees these rights, it is not implemented to the same degree in all member states. In addition, the Convention is not always respected and obtaining remedy against breaches of the Convention may take considerable time. As a result, suspects do not have the same access to interpretation and translation across the EU. The European Commission firmly believes that access to translation/interpreting services is indispensable if the suspect is to know the accusations made against him and to understand the procedure.

The translation/interpreting is to be provided free of charge to the suspect and must be of sufficient quality. In addition, EU member states will have to train their legal staff to inform the suspect of proceedings.

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*...suspects do not have the same access to interpretation and translation across the EU.*

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This is the second time that the European Commission has tried to provide extra rights for suspected criminals. In 2004, a larger proposal was made in this area that included the provision of several new rights for criminals such as the right to legal aid, the right to a lawyer, the right to contact family members or their embassy and the right to translation/interpreting services. This proposal was abandoned after member states could not reach agreement on it. Five member states, including Ireland, blocked this proposal on the grounds that the European Convention of Human Rights already provided the rights. Now the Commission is approaching the issue on a step-by-step basis by dealing with each issue separately. According to the Commission, "This proposal is therefore a first step in a renewed ambition to further enhance mutual trust between judicial authorities of different Member States, which is an essential ingredient of mutual recognition of judicial measures in the EU."

## ■ Joining the ITIA

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* is always delighted to welcome new members to the Association. There are five categories of membership:

- ◆ Associate
- ◆ Professional
- ◆ Corporate
- ◆ Concession (undergraduate & senior citizen)
- ◆ Honorary

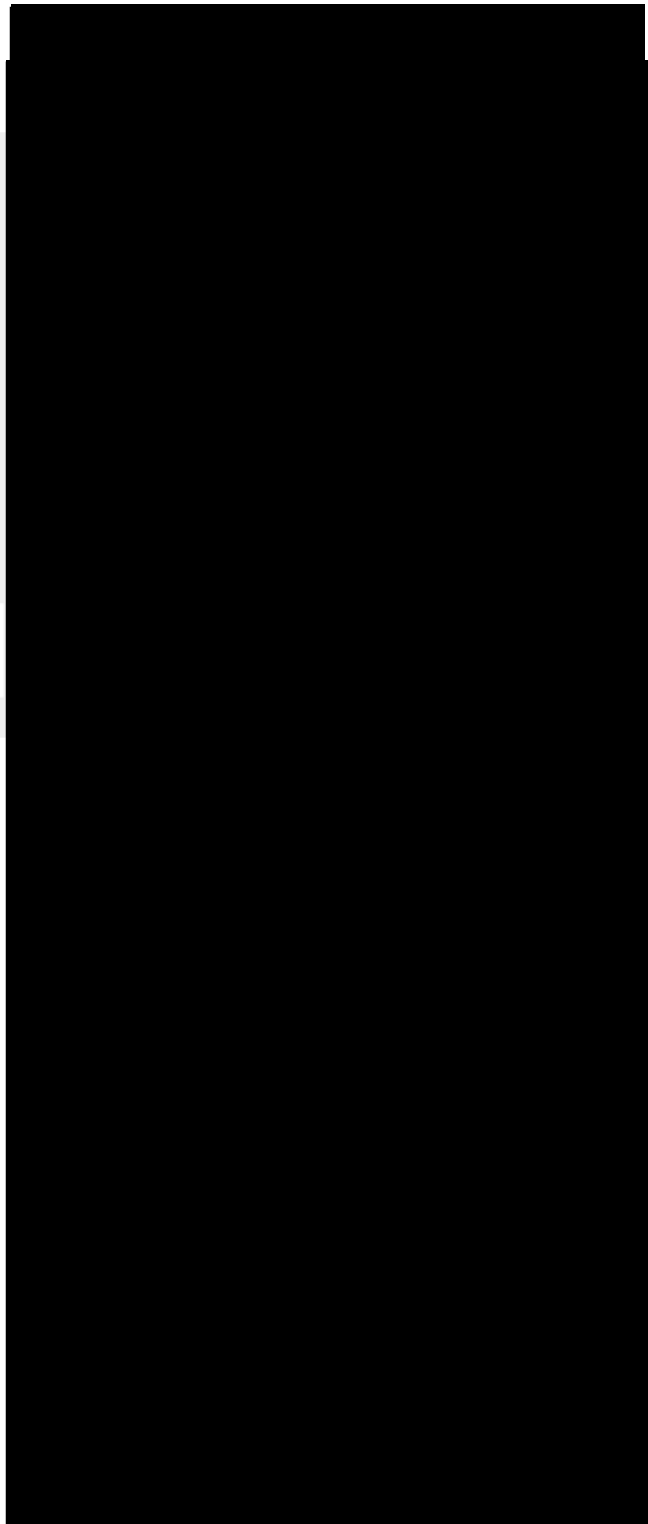
*Associate membership* is open to anyone with an interest in translating or interpreting. *Professional membership* is for those who meet strict criteria set by the professional membership committee of the ITIA and which is part of the drive to raise the status of the profession in the European market.

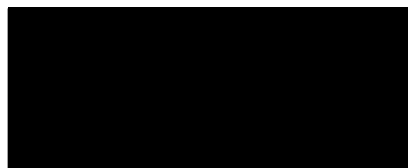
*Corporate membership* is for firms and agencies associated with the profession while *concession membership* is for undergraduate students engaged in

third level language and/or translation studies and senior citizens. Finally, *honorary membership* is intended for national and international persons who have distinguished themselves in our professional field. For more information on how to join as well as for the relevant application forms, visit the ITIA website at:

[www.translatorsassociation.ie](http://www.translatorsassociation.ie)

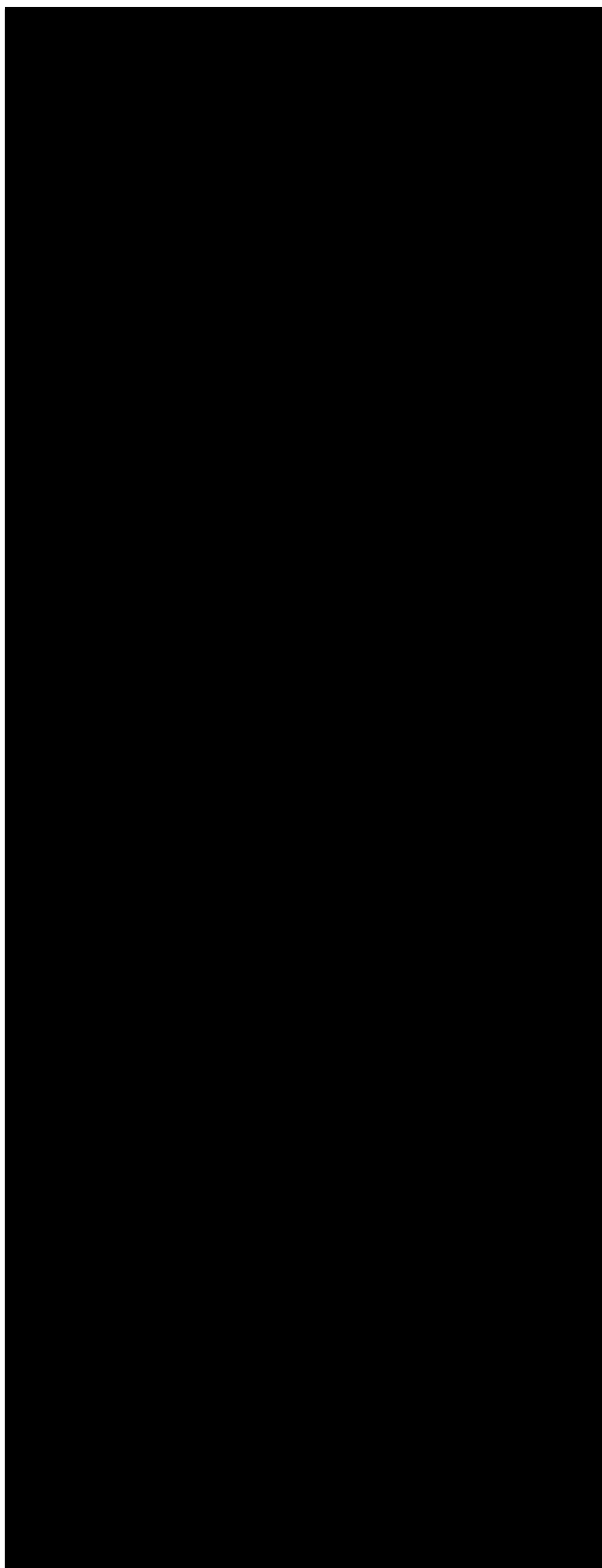
## New ITIA Certified Translators

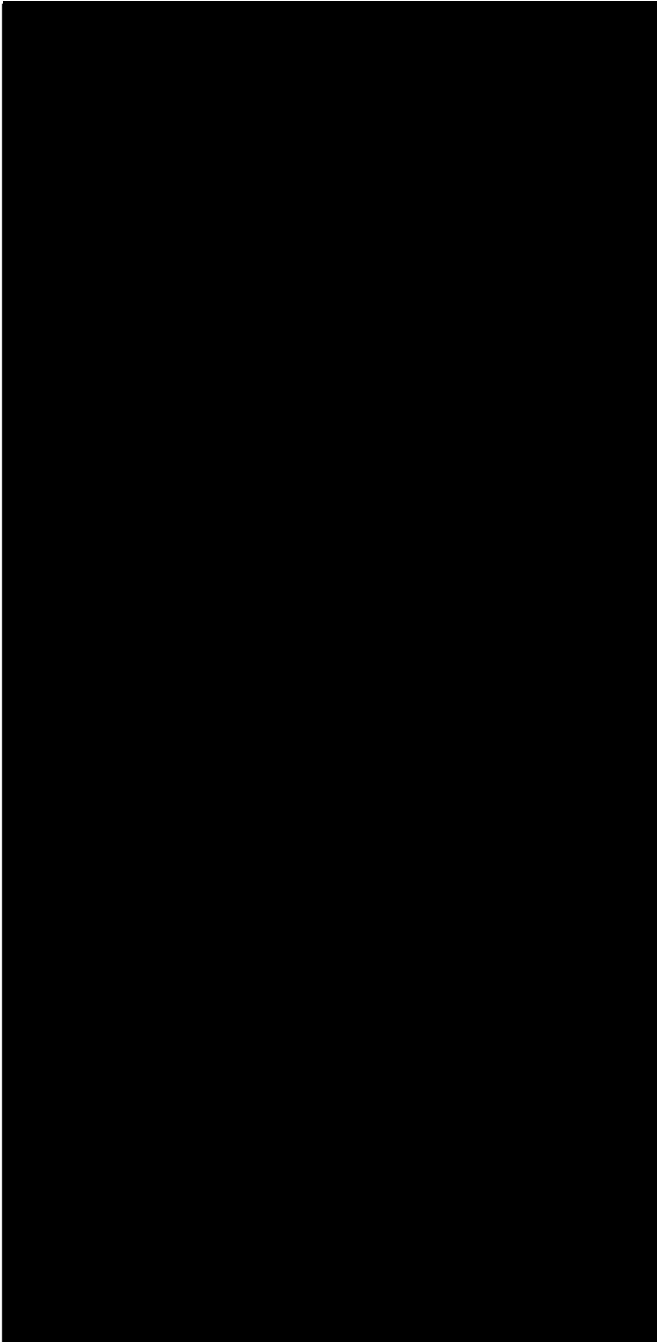




## New Associate Members

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## New Corporate Members



## ■ Ever more language issues in Irish healthcare

While criticism has been circulating of the standard of English demonstrated by some nurses in the Irish healthcare system, the HSE is rolling out a project that aims to help patients who have little or no English.

As reported in the *Irish Times*, July 28th 2009: Patient groups, namely the Irish Patients' Association and Patients Together, have been criticising the standard of English of some of the foreign nurses working in Ireland. Currently, qualified nurses from non-EU countries must demonstrate that they have adequate language skills by having an internationally recognised qualification. There is no such requirement for nurses coming from EU countries due to the terms of the EU directive covering recognition of professional qualifications. *Patients Together* spokesperson Janette Byrne said that they have received a lot of complaints from patients claiming that they had difficulty communicating with foreign nurses and care assistants. There were two separate cases this year of nurses facing disciplinary proceedings for failure to demonstrate a sufficient standard of English. Ursula Byrne, acting director of regulation at *An Bord Altranais*, pointed out though that the two language-related disciplinary cases heard earlier this year were the only ones to have come before the board and should be seen in the context of there being 67,572 individuals on the nursing register.

*RTE News* (Six-One News July 30th 2009) reported that multi-lingual booklets in 20 languages will be used in

The next issue of the ITIA Bulletin will be out next month. If you have any contributions, suggestions or scandals that you would like to share with over 1,000 subscribers worldwide, send them to Elizabeth Hayes at [theitiabulletin\(a\)gmail.com](mailto:theitiabulletin(a)gmail.com).

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57 hospitals across Ireland. The booklets contain lists of phrases in English and another language and users simply point to the relevant phrase. As such, it is intended for use by patients with very little or no English. This is not the first time that such a booklet has been promoted in Ireland. In late 2005, the ICGP (Irish College of General Practitioners) and the HSE published a similar book in 8 languages for use by GPs. The publication was reported and criticised in this publication by the ITIA's Mary Phelan (December 2005 issue). She said, 'The disadvantage of this type of approach is always going to be that the patient has no voice to verify information, to ask questions about treatment, to express their worries or concerns. That is why I favour the use of trained interpreters in any meeting between medical personnel and patients with limited English proficiency.'

After a mere three-week trial period in Our Lady's Hospital in Drogheda, the booklets are being distributed to 57 acute hospitals nationwide.

## ■ Oxford University Press announces new Kafka translations

Oxford University Press have recently published three new translations of classic works by Franz Kafka in their Oxford World Classics collection. All feature introductions and extensive editorial and translator's notes, along with a chronology of Kafka's life and suggestions for further reading. The *Metamorphosis & Other Stories* – featuring a new critical edition of Kafka's autobiographical *Letter to his Father* – has been translated by Joyce Crick, who was awarded the Schlegel-Tieck Prize for her translation of Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams*. The *Castle* has been translated by three-time Schlegel-Tieck prize-winner Anthea Bell, who has translated W.G. Sebald and Stefan Zweig and is best known as the translator of *Astérix*. She is also the recipient of the Austrian State Prize for Literary Translation and the Wolff Award. The *Trial* has been translated by Mike Mitchell, again a Schlegel-Tieck prize-winner for his translation of Herbert Rosendorfer in 1998, and this edition includes not just the main text, but also the chapters that Kafka left incomplete and which are often omitted. All three volumes have been edited by the renowned Kafka scholar Ritchie Robertson.

## ■ Gmail integrates automatic translation technology

Google is introducing its automatic translation technology to Gmail. This will mean that users can translate incoming messages directly from and into a variety of languages. The tool, which is still in testing stage, also enables users to translate an entire thread of emails with a single click. To try this tool for yourself (and providing of course that you have a gmail account!), go to settings, labs, enable message translation.

As always with automatic translation, one is advised to handle with care. There are reports of some rather garbled translations in language combinations such as Hindi>English. However, below is an excerpt of an article in French from *lemonde.fr* with Gmail's English translation:

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*Le ministre de la justice irlandais, Dermot Ahern, a annoncé, mercredi 29 juillet, que l'Irlande allait accueillir deux détenus du camp américain de Guantanamo à Cuba, qui devraient être transférés dans les prochains mois. "Quand j'étais ministre des affaires étrangères, j'avais été le premier ministre de l'Union européenne à appeler à la fermeture du centre de détention. Le gouvernement a, à maintes reprises depuis lors, réclamé sa fermeture", a expliqué M. Ahern, dans un communiqué diffusé après la visite à Washington et Guantanamo d'un groupe de responsables irlandais.*

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The Minister of Justice of Ireland, Dermot Ahern, announced on Wednesday 29 July, that Ireland would host two American inmates from the Guantanamo camp in Cuba, which should be transferred in the coming months. "When I was minister Foreign Affairs, I was the first minister of the European Union to call for closing the detention center. The government has repeatedly since then demanded its closure," Ahern said in a news release after the visit to Washington and Guantanamo to a group of Irish.

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Not bad, Google. Not bad at all.

## ■ Translation costs in the headlines again

The London-based Daily Telegraph recently published an article about the translation of documents by Councils across Britain (published June 15th 2009). GB£50m was spent last year on translation by councils. The journalist, Ben Leach, investigated the kind of documents being translated and the subsequent demand for these documents focusing on incidences where documents were translated and never read or rarely read. For example, a guide to a new secondary school was translated by one council into Polish, Somali and Turkish but never read in these languages.

*Translation, it would appear, is becoming a field in the battle surrounding integration of immigrant communities.*

This is the latest in a long line of such news reports questioning the cost and usefulness of translation in the public sphere. The squandering of taxpayers money and the integration of immigrant communities are the two main features of these articles.

Translation, it would appear, is becoming a field in the battle surrounding integration of immigrant communities. Because translation costs in public bodies are easily quantified, they make a persuasive argument for rethinking the need for translations of public documents. It is undoubtedly true that translating documents into languages that will never be read is wasteful and inefficient. However, integration policy is about more than numbers and attacking it via the cost of translation is all too easy.

## ■ Court interpreter alleges racial discrimination

A Los Angeles Superior Court interpreter filed a class action claiming the court subjects her and other interpreters to racial discrimination, saying their foreign national origins are “highlighted by the nature of their work.”

Alicia Grubic sued the court, presiding Judge Stephen Czuleger and head clerk John Clarke, claiming the court pays interpreters less than other court employees and keeps them from advancing, because interpreters are “overwhelmingly non-native-born members of minority national/ethnic groups.” Grubic says court supervisors associate and identify interpreters with the “foreign-born monolingual criminal defendants” they work with.

In 2003, Superior Court interpreters finally won the right to be classified as employees, rather than contractors without benefits, the lawsuit says. Still, the court allegedly refuses to treat interpreters to the same employment policies as other court employees. Interpreters do not have salary “steps,” or structured raises based on seniority, as other employees do, according to the complaint. The court allegedly promotes white employees with no interpreting experience to supervise the court's 400 interpreters, rather than promoting the interpreters themselves. Interpreters are also barred from transferring to administrative positions within the court, the plaintiffs claim, and from taking management classes and exams available to other court employees.

Grubic says Superior Court judges often ignore interpreters when introducing court staff to a jury and when asking staff if they mind working late. Judges allegedly begin proceedings without waiting for interpreters to reach their clients, even when an interpreter is “racing” across a courtroom to reach a monolingual defendant. In contrast, the lawsuit says, judges will “always delay court proceedings for as a court reporter needs.”

*Superior Court judges often ignore interpreters when introducing court staff to a jury*

Allen Parachini, head of the court's information office, refused to comment. “Since it's pending litigation, we can't really say anything.”

The class wants a declaratory judgment forcing the Superior Court to grant interpreters salary “steps” and mandate sensitivity training for Superior Court judges, along with treble damages.

Taken from <http://tinyurl.com/n9uv5c>

## ■ Conferences, Calls & Courses

### IPCITI 2009

5th International Postgraduate Conference in Translation and Interpreting, 21-22 November 2009

We are pleased to announce the Fifth International Postgraduate Conference in Translation and Interpreting (IPCITI 2009) which will take place at Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh, on 21-22 November 2009.

#### Conference Aims

This two-day conference is designed to give translation and interpreting postgraduates from ALL research areas an opportunity to present and discuss their research in an informal and intellectually stimulating setting.

IPCITI 2009 is the fifth in a series of postgraduate conferences which marks the consolidation of a series of international conferences organised in collaboration between the University of Edinburgh, Dublin City University, the University of Manchester and Heriot-Watt University. The aim of IPCITI 2009 is to promote greater participation in translation and interpreting research and address salient issues in the field, and to promote a supportive environment in which young researchers can exchange ideas on current themes and issues in Translation Studies.

Because our event is intended for all students from the discipline of translation and interpreting studies, we have chosen to keep it widely focused so that delegates are invited to submit abstracts from ALL areas relating to translation and interpreting studies.

<http://www.sml.hw.ac.uk/events/ipciti/>



## ■ Contacting The ITIA

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Cumann Aistritheoirí agus Teangairí na hÉireann

Address: 19 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, Ireland  
Telephone: +353-1-872 1302  
Fax: +353-1-872 6282  
Email: [itiasecretary\(a\)eircom.net](mailto:itiasecretary(a)eircom.net)  
Web: [www.translatorsassociation.ie](http://www.translatorsassociation.ie)

### ITIA BULLETIN

Editor: Elizabeth Hayes  
[theitiabulletin@gmail.com](mailto:theitiabulletin@gmail.com)  
Layout: Jody Byrne

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## ■ ITIA Resources for Translators

The *Irish Translators' & Interpreters' Association* has compiled a series of useful information leaflets for translators and interpreters - both members and non-members alike. These leaflets are available from the ITIA website at [www.translatorsassociation.ie](http://www.translatorsassociation.ie).