

EAFT (European Association For Terminology)

ELETO (Hellenic Society for Terminology)

International Symposium

***“National Languages and Terminology
in Higher Education, Science & Technology”***

Athens, Greece, 7 November 2013

In conjunction with and preceding the 9th Conference “Hellenic Language and Terminology” (Athens, 7-9 November 2013), an international symposium about the use of National languages and terminology as teaching languages in higher education was held at the Kostis Palamas building of the University of Athens. Main organisers of the symposium were ELETO and EAFT, with the University of Athens and the University of Cyprus as co-organisers. The symposium was supported by the General Delegation for the French Language and the Languages of France (DGLFLF) and the Foundation for the Dutch language (SN).

Co-chairmen of the conference were Jan Roukens (EAFT) and Panagiotis G. Krimpas (ELETO). The speakers represented the European Commission and several European countries: Greece, Cyprus, the Netherlands, Spain/Catalonia, Sweden, Norway, France, the United Kingdom/Wales, Estonia and Slovenia.

The aim of the symposium was to analyse the situation regarding the use of the national languages and, increasingly, English as teaching languages in European higher education, universities in particular, and to assess the effects of the policies and practices of the last decades, such as the impact on scientific languages and terminologies, on linguistic behaviour of graduates in society, on the quality of knowledge transfer before and professional performance after graduation. Further aims were to raise awareness about these issues and to mobilise civil society, as well as to draw conclusions regarding Greece and Cyprus and other countries of Europe.

The Conclusions and Recommendations – see below - of the symposium were presented in a Final Open Debate at the end of the Conference “Hellenic language and Terminology”. Representatives of the Universities of Athens, Thessaloniki, Cyprus, and the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) participated in the debate, moderated by emeritus Professor Theodosios Tasios (NTUA).

The Open Debate focussed on the current situation in Greece and Cyprus and developed reflections on the benefits and risks of the use of English in the educational process in universities. Suggestions were made about the need for developing and implementing

language policies for educational institutions, allowing the evaluation of the benefits of active bilingualism or multilingualism, ensuring the quality of knowledge transfer and protecting the cultural and linguistic diversity of peoples and countries that make up Europe and define their identity.

The programme and the speeches of the symposium have been published electronically on the website http://www.eleto.gr/en/ELETO-EAFT_Conference_2013-11-07.html (Greek and English).

**Conclusions and Recommendations of the symposium,
to be refined and discussed further
during subsequent conferences**

- I. Citizens have the right to be educated at all levels by using the official national languages of the country or region where they live. To allow citizens to function in international settings, they should be trained to express themselves in additional languages.
- II. The decision to use particular teaching language(s) in public sector schools is a matter of general societal importance and should be made democratically. This is not a matter to be decided by individual schools.
- III. The written and the oral language are essential for the transfer of knowledge and ideas at all levels of education. It is the ultimate responsibility of governments to ensure that these essential instruments of are kept up to date.
- IV. The practice to measure quality in the higher education sector solely on the basis of numbers of publications and references, and the preference given to the use of English in such publications, should be abolished as discriminatory, inadequate and imprecise.
- V. Scientific progress is an integral part of every culture. The availability of scientific records in the languages of the various cultures is natural and necessary.

**The International Programme Committee
The Greek Organizing Committee**