

## The LETRINT project: Investigating translation at international organizations

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## What is LETRINT?

- 5-year project on "Legal Translation in International Institutional Settings"
- First Consolidator Grant awarded to a Translation Studies project in Europe
- Responds to the need for empirical data on institutional translation: scope, patterns and quality assurance at international organizations




## MAIN GOALS

1. Define the scope and conditions of institutional legal translation:
  - **TEXTUAL MAPPING**
  - **CONTEXTUALIZATION FROM A LEGAL PERSPECTIVE**
  - **ANALYSIS OF WORKFLOWS** (incl. QA and use of tools)
    - ⇒ Shed light on volume and relevance of text categories + extratextual factors + legal implications
2. Describe **DISCOURSE FEATURES** (incl. hybridity of institutional discourses) **AND TRANSLATION PROBLEMS**: corpus annotation (terminology as key feature)
  - ⇒ Implications for **quality assurance and training**: main domains, recurrent problems, profiles required, levels of revision, priorities and resource allocation...





3. Establish correlations between **PERCEPTIONS OF QUALITY** and competence profiles (thematic / linguistic / translation expertise) based on tests with various groups and annotated texts
  - ⇒ empirical results to support **added value of professional translation** for institutional missions




## LETRINT corpora

- Intergovernmental and supranational organizations: UN, WTO and EU






- Period: 2005, 2010, 2015
- Languages: English, French, Spanish
- Corpus compilation using institutional search engines
- Compiled and processed (LETRINT 0 – 3 monolingual comparable corpora): 513,640 texts, 1.71 billion words
- Aligned after stratified sampling (LETRINT 1 – parallel trilingual corpus): **7,918 texts, 25.76m words**



## LETRINT corpora

Corpora	Main methods applied	Size per language (millions of tokens)			Size per setting in all languages (millions of tokens)		
		EN	ES	FR	EU	UN	WTO
LINST	All-inclusive compilation of publicly available texts in EN, FR or ES	641.32	517.48	555.71	1,089.34	461.24	163.92
LETRINT 0	Selection of translated texts according to language and technical specifications + systematic text classification	362.86	406.48	409.28	730.44	300.16	147.63
LETRINT 1	Stratified sampling for compilation of sampling frames (key genres as strata from each legal category) + tailored systematic sampling for selection of units within strata	7.87	8.59	9.31	9.87	9.12	6.78



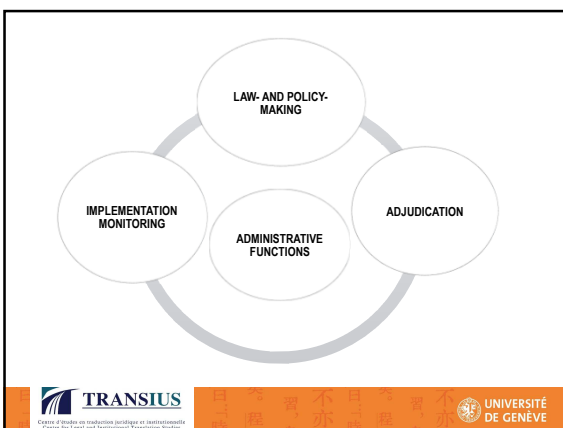
### Phase 1: Scope of institutional translation from a legal perspective

Texts in major settings of multilingual text production:

- **Law-making**, including hard and soft law (e.g. treaty vs declaration): at the top of hierarchy, legal framework for other processes
- **Monitoring** of Member States' compliance (e.g. universal periodic review at UN, trade policy review at WTO, infringement procedures at EU)
- **Judicial / adjudicative procedures**, including contentious and advisory proceedings (ICJ, CJEU, WTO's dispute settlement bodies)

### Text categorization also revealed...

- Constellation of interrelated **primary texts** (key legal functions) and **subsidiary texts**:
  - input / preparatory, e.g. treaty negotiation documents
  - instrumental, e.g. meeting agendas, checklists
  - derived, e.g. activity reports, press releases
- **Additional administrative functions** (human resources, finance and procurement procedures, other coordination and internal matters)



<b>I. LAW- AND POLICY- MAKING</b>	a. Key (e.g. treaties, agreements, regulations, directives) b. Secondary (input, instrumental or derived) (e.g. technical reports, proposals, minutes)
1.1. HARD LAW	
1.2. SOFT LAW AND OTHER POLICY FORMULATION	a. Key (e.g. declarations, resolutions, guidelines, model laws) b. Secondary (input, instrumental or derived) (e.g. records, technical reports, letters)
<b>II. MONITORING</b>	
2.1. MANDATORY COMPLIANCE MONITORING	a. Key (e.g. States' reports, monitoring bodies' reports) b. Secondary (input, instrumental or derived) (e.g. procedural notes, letters)
2.2. PRE-ACCESSION MONITORING	a. Key (e.g. communications, questions and replies) b. Secondary (input, instrumental or derived) (e.g. statements, minutes)
2.3. OTHER MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION MATTERS	a. Key (e.g. progress reports, working papers, notes) b. Secondary (input, instrumental or derived) (e.g. checklists, letters)
<b>3. ADJUDICATION</b>	a. Key (primary case documents, e.g. requests, appeals, judgments) b. Secondary (input, instrumental or derived) (e.g. activity reports, summaries, press releases)
<b>4. ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS</b> (not included in other categories)	
4.1. ORGANISATION'S HUMAN RESOURCES, FINANCE AND PROCUREMENT	(e.g. budgets, recruitment notices, calls for tenders, staff notices)
4.2. OTHER COORDINATION AND INTERNAL MATTERS	(e.g. minutes, notes, presentations, reports)

### Aligned trilingual parallel corpus: primary genres selected

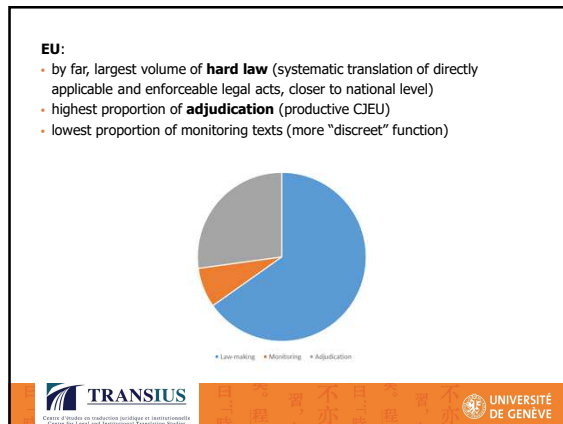
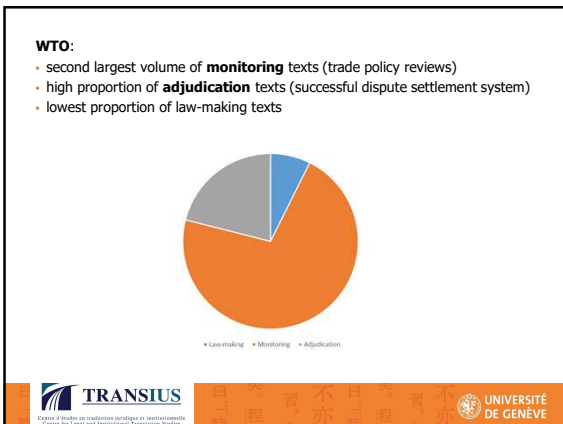
	Law- and policy-making	Mandatory compliance monitoring	Adjudication
<b>EU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulations</li> <li>• Directives</li> <li>• Recommendations</li> <li>• Guidelines</li> <li>• Opinions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European Commission (EC) reports</li> <li>• Prior notifications of concentrations issued by the Directorate-General for Competition of the EC</li> <li>• EC invitations to submit comments on State aid pursuant to art. 88(2) of the EC Treaty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CJEU judgments</li> <li>• Actions before the CJEU</li> </ul>
<b>UN</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and the Human Rights Council (HRC)</li> <li>• Reports issued by the International Law Commission (ILC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National reports in selected mandatory monitoring procedures</li> <li>• Concluding observations issued by the UN human rights treaty bodies</li> <li>• Decisions, views and opinions issued by selected UN treaty bodies in complaint procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate and dissenting opinions by ICJ judges</li> <li>• States' pleadings in contentious cases before the ICJ</li> </ul>
<b>WTO</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decisions by the Ministerial Conferences and binding decisions by the General Council</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports issued by the Trade Policy Review Mechanism (TPRM) Secretariat</li> <li>• National reports presented as part of Trade Policy Reviews (TPR)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dispute settlement reports issued by panels and the Appellate Body</li> <li>• States' requests to the Dispute Settlement Body (DSB) for the establishment of a panel</li> </ul>

### Phase 1: Illustrative results

Correlation between **text volumes per category** and **features of each legal order**

**UN:**

- large volume of **monitoring** texts (dynamic role of human rights treaty bodies)
- high proportion of soft law within law-making (resolutions)
- lowest volume of adjudication texts (ICJ)



**Also conducted**

- Interviews on QA with more than 40 heads of translation units
- Lexicometric analysis of consistency and adequacy of translations of selected legal terms
- Analysis of terminological databases and surveys on their use by institutional translators

**... and ongoing**

- Corpus annotation of discourse variables (including legal and other specialized terminology) and translation difficulties ("rich points")
- Larger-scale studies of adequacy and quality perceptions to come...

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**THANK YOU**

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