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| **Agenda item: PL 2** | **Document C25/12-E** |
| **16 May 2025** |
| **Original: English** |
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| Report by the Chair of the Council Working Group on Languages (CWG-LANG) | |
| OUTCOMES OF THE 16TH MEETING OF THE CWG-LANG | |
| **Purpose**  This report summarizes the activities and achievements of 16th meeting of the Council Working Group on Languages (CWG-LANG), pursuant to Resolution 154 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022) and Council Resolution 1372 (Mod. 2024).  **Action required by the Council**  The Council is invited to **note** the report.  **Relevant link(s) with the Strategic Plan**  Excellence in human resources and organizational innovation.  **Financial implications**  Within the allocated budget 2024-2025.  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  **References**  [*Resolution 154 (Rev. Bucharest, 2022)*](https://www.itu.int/en/council/Documents/basic-texts-2023/RES-154-E.pdf) *of the Plenipotentiary Conference;* [*Council Resolution 1372 (Mod. 2024)*](https://www.itu.int/hub/publication/s-conf-cl-2024/)*; Documents* [[[*CWG-LANG-16/5*](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0005/en)](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0005/en)](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0005/en)*,* [[*CWG-LANG/16-3*](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0003/en)](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0003/en)*, and* [*C25/INF/7*](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-INF-0007/en) | |

# 1 Introduction

This document contains the Chair’s summary report of the sixteenth meeting of the Council Working Group on the use of the six official languages of the Union (CWG-LANG) held on 12 February 2025, based on the full record of the meeting (Document [CWG-LANG-16/5](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0005/en)). The meeting was chaired by CWG-LANG Vice-Chair Ms Blanca Gonzalez (Spain), acting as interim chair in the absence of the CWG-LANG Chair, Ms Sharon Bosire (Kenya).

In line with Resolution 154, and as per the Secretary-General’s report contained in Document [CWG-LANG-16/2](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0002/en), the work of CWG-LANG focused on:

a) Analysis of budgets and volumes for translation and interpretation in the six official languages for the period 2019-2024

b) Use of new technologies to increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the provision of language services, including machine translation through the ITU Translate suite of AI-powered tools

c) Challenges and opportunities of AI interpretation and evaluation of AI-powered interpretation as trialled in the meeting

d) Implementation of the Guide to current and future practices in multilingualism at ITU and its accompanying staff guidelines on the use of machine translation

e) Updates on the work of the ITU Coordination Committee on Terminology (CCT), including a new workflow and collaboration with Member States on the translation of terms and definitions

f) Efforts to improve the harmonization of the ITU website in all six languages and enhance search functionality

g) Participation in inter-institutional meetings to benchmark tools and procedures.

# 2 Main topics of discussion

a) Achievements in cost efficiency in the language services, and the level of transparency in reporting, were welcomed by delegates. Any savings could be used to invest more in new technologies, whilst ensuring the quality of language services is retained

b) The further developments and increased use of machine translation through ITU Translate were welcomed. The quality of ITU Translate on web pages should continue to improve through monitoring, post-editing and feedback mechanisms allowing delegates to provide direct input

c) Testing of AI-powered interpretation during the meeting was positively received. Further testing was recommended, including in sector Study Groups, ensuring participants are aware of its use and can provide evaluation of technical and linguistic quality

d) The document on the Measures and Principles for interpretation and translation at ITU should be opened for discussion with a view to incorporating clearly the use of machine translation for relevant documents, web pages and publications

e) The use of machine translation and AI-powered interpretation in non-official languages should be considered in the future

f) The following oral report on efforts to improve the ITU website was provided to CWG‑LANG in response to the request for more detailed information raised in the Russian Federation contribution (Document [CWG-LANG-16/4](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0004/en)):

ITU has made improvements to the website, including continuing to refine the use of Google Search on the ITU’s public-facing website to improve the search experience, improving the website feedback feature and analysing user experience and behaviour. All new websites built on the WordPress platform include automatic translation in the six official languages of the Union. The secretariat has been allocated CHF 350K for the New Website Project budget and is working to identify the remaining CHF 250K outlined in the project budget. Requests for Proposals for Information Architecture and Taxonomy, and for WordPress Expert Development have been prepared. Work to analyse current websites and create a web governance framework has begun. Regular updates on the progress of the project will be provided to CWG-LANG, CWG-FHR and to the Council.

# 3 CWG-LANG outcomes

The main outcomes of the [sixteenth meeting of CWG-LANG](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0005/en) were to:

– request that the secretariat provide detailed annual expenditure against the CHF 85M budgetary cap for language services in future reports to CWG-LANG, as well as a footnote identifying 2022 as an exceptional year in terms of conferences held;

– include updates on the website development and search engine improvement in all future reports to CWG-LANG as set out in Resolution 154;

– note the update on the implementation of the guide on multilingualism, including data on the use of ITU Translate machine translation tools ([CWG-LANG/16-3](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-RCLCWGLANG16-C-0003/en)); and

– submit to the Council the information document on the report on the challenges and opportunities of the use of AI-powered interpretation in ITU (Document [C25/INF/7](https://www.itu.int/md/S25-CL-INF-0007/en)).

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