

21 April 2020

OPEN LETTER

To all Governments in Europe,

On behalf of EULITA, the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association, I would like to express my profound sorrow at the loss of lives and all the difficulties your government and your country are currently experiencing as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic has developed into an unprecedented crisis which has a devastating effect on us all.

With this in mind, I would like to bring to your attention the situation of legal interpreters and translators who have been badly affected by business and court shutdowns caused by the pandemic. As countries went into lockdown, many of these professionals have found themselves without employment as their assignments have been cancelled or greatly reduced. For many, it means a loss of income by 100% in this otherwise high season of spring and early summer, with no clear prospects of what might come in the second half of the year.

EULITA is aware that governments across Europe are taking measures to help businesses and employees to mitigate the impact of this unprecedented crisis. However, it has come to our attention that in some countries, the measures available do not take into account self-employed legal interpreters and translators who therefore are not covered under any protective shield and are in need of urgent support.

For these reasons, EULITA strongly urges all governments in Europe to address this problem and extend financial support measures to interpreters and translators in order to help them face the consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak. Furthermore, on behalf of EULITA, I call on the governments to firmly encourage and recommend that public institutions strive to adjust to the current circumstances by using, whenever possible, the service of interpreters and translators working remotely from home instead of cancelling their assignments. I would also like to remind everybody that the current, tragic situation should not be used as an excuse to violate the right to a fair trial.

We appeal to every government to take prompt and decisive actions to protect the profession of legal interpreters and translators.

Yours sincerely,

Daniela Amodeo

President of EULITA, the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association