

Who Are We Translating For? Who Is Translating?

International Travelling Conference

Traductologie de plein champ, 10th edition, 2026

Is it the end of translation? Should we bid farewell to universality? Our era is not only one of artificial intelligence (AI); it is also marked by the fragmentation of societies, political entities, professions (particularly translation) and audiences. Translation and translation training are at the heart of these developments, which affect professionals, teachers, students, and translation audiences alike. We propose to examine how a narrower focus on a specific audience can lead to different translations. Indeed, while the shift from the widespread distribution of audiovisual products (broadcasting) to targeted distribution (narrowcasting) has raised a whole series of questions that go far beyond the field of marketing, the orientation of translation towards a specific audience raises questions about the practices, strategies, professional profiles, and ethical, deontological, and ideological issues of translation.

All of these changes are underpinned by two related questions:

1) Who are we translating for?

Communication, especially when it is multilingual, is becoming increasingly calibrated: it is multiplying to target specific audiences, often driven by tools that rely on the use of big data, for better—reaching audiences that were previously marginalized or even ignored, with implications for citizenship and inclusivity— or for the worse—sometimes transnational and multilingual influence campaigns designed to sway political or societal choices, with democratic and civic implications.

2) Who is translating ?

Translation graduates; specialized audiences; members of the same social group with shared identities; IT professionals; conversational agents... Computerization, as we know, has led to a fragmentation of professional translation. Its most recent expression, at the perhaps precarious time when we are launching this call for papers, will it have the opposite effect, given that it is a general-purpose technology, as indicated by the acronym GPT (General Purpose Technology), even if the iconic ChatGPT originally owes the second part of its name to (Generative Pre-Trained Transformer)?

The organizing committee of this international conference (Belgium, France, Poland, Quebec, Switzerland) certainly does not believe that human translation will disappear; however, believing is not enough: we must argue, we must demonstrate, we must organize ourselves to weigh in and show the place of human translation in today's world. Has the audience for translation changed? If so, how? How does accessibility shape translation practices and broaden the very concept of translation? How and why is the identity of the translator now taking center stage? Can everything be translated, and for everyone? What are the ethical, professional, environmental, and democratic issues at stake in translation in the age of AI? How can we ensure that these issues are visible in the public and private sectors? What role does human translation still play, and what role should machine translation play in various areas of public life (justice, hospitals, politics, etc.)? How can training programs anticipate these developments?

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We welcome proposals addressing, but not limited to, the topics listed below, from three perspectives corresponding to the three meeting places, namely (1) interactions between translations, translators, and contemporary audiences (University of Wrocław); (2) translation and community (University of Sherbrooke); and (3) translation and questions of ethics and professional conduct (University of Liège):

Translation, dissemination, and targeted broadcasting (or narrowcasting)
Translation and editing for specific audiences
The role of translation in the community (public service, justice, accessibility)
Translation professions: what future for general or specialized translation?
Contemporary audiences for translation
Ethical, professional and democratic issues in translation in the age of AI
Defining contemporary universals for translation

This conference is part of the Traductologie de plein champ series, which began in 2007 at Paris Diderot University (now Paris Cité University). This will be the tenth edition. Like previous editions, it aims to bring together translation scholars, translation teachers, professionals, and students around topics of common interest. As in previous editions, the conference will take place in three locations on three different dates, in person:

Wrocław (Poland), March 12 and 13, 2026
Sherbrooke (Quebec), April 16 and 17, 2026
Liège (Belgium), May 12 and 13, 2026.

The conference will be followed by three publications in peer-reviewed journals: Parallèles (University of Geneva, late 2026); Romanica Wratislaviensia and Anglica Wratislaviensia (University of Wrocław, 2028).

Schedule

Proposals in French or English, the languages of the conference, should be sent before **Sept. 15, 2025** to traducto.de.plein.champ@gmail.com.

They should include:

- an abstract of approximately 300 words;
- a short bibliography (3 to 5 references maximum);
- a biography (100 words).

Response to contributors: October 10, 2025

Dates of the three parts of the conference:

Wrocław: March 13-14, 2026

Sherbrooke : April 16-17, 2026

Liège: May 12-13, 2026

Scientific Comittee

Valérie Bada, University of Liège
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