

112 ETS

Interpretation of calls to the Brussels 100/112 call centre

End of Project Evaluation Document



V 10

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Introduction

The 112 ETS project was proposed by EENA and the Brussels 100/112 Call Centre (CS100/112). The objective is to demonstrate the feasibility of improving the response to emergency calls in foreign languages using external interpreters. The first discussions took place in November 2009 and the pilot project with real calls run from March to June 2010.

Project implementation

Achieving objectives

Mobilising interpreters



Through collaboration with « Renouveau et Démocratie », a trade union of EU officials taht actively supported the project it was possible to quickly mobilise 66 volunteer interpreters and to cover the following 11 languages:

- German, English, Arabic, Spanish, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Romanian, Slovakian and Czech.

see link <http://www.renouveau-democratie.eu/2010/02/multilingual-112-in-brussels-progress-achieved/>)

A planning for the duty roster was established for the whole period of the pilot project. This planning which was managed by a member of the Brussels CS 100/112 took into account the availability of volunteer interpreters.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
109					jeudi	vendredi	samedi	dimanche	
110	Espagnol				1-avr-10	2-avr-10	3-avr-10	4-avr-10	
111					X M r i	X M r i	X M r i	X M r i	
112	M. B. ob. n. a								
113	J. E. s. n. e. g								
114	J. E. f. d. q. e	lundi	mardi	mercredi	jeudi	vendredi	samedi	dimanche	
115	X M r i	5-avr-10	6-avr-10	7-avr-10	8-avr-10	9-avr-10	10-avr-10	11-avr-10	
116	AB_r_o_a_o-M_n	M. B. ob. n. a							
117	P.M_t_o_i_-R_m_r_z								
118	L. P. r. s. N. ñ								
119	A.F_r_a	lundi	mardi	mercredi	jeudi	vendredi	samedi	dimanche	
120		12-avr-10	13-avr-10	14-avr-10	15-avr-10	16-avr-10	17-avr-10	18-avr-10	
121		L. P. r. s. N. ñ							
122									
123									
124		lundi	mardi	mercredi	jeudi	vendredi	samedi	dimanche	
125		19-avr-10	20-avr-10	21-avr-10	22-avr-10	23-avr-10	24-avr-10	25-avr-10	
126		P.M_t_o_i_-R_m_r							
127									
128									
129		lundi	mardi	mercredi	jeudi	vendredi			
130		26-avr-10	27-avr-10	28-avr-10	29-avr-10	30-avr-10			
131		J. E. f. d. q. e							
132									
133									

Example for April: language Spanish.

Duty rounds were ensured as far as possible with 1 volunteer interpreter per language and per week (24h/24h).

Managing calls

Multilingue: solution provisoire



11 lignes téléphoniques déviées sur 11 n° de GSM de traducteurs CEE

- Allemand
- Anglais
- Arabe
- Espagnol
- Grec
- Italien
- Portugais
- Polonais
- Roumain
- Slovaque
- Tchèque

24h/24
7 jours/7

The person managing the planning has the direct number of all volunteer interpreters. He organises the direct transfer of the call from the CS100/112 call centre to the interpreter on duty.

Managing the multilingual communication

We implemented the general process described in the preliminary document. As a reminder: The process retained for dealing with the multilingual call implies:

- 1°) Identification of the language spoken by the calling party
- 2°) Contacting the interpreter
- 3°) Establishment of a three-way conference and managing the call

1°) Identification of the language spoken by the calling party

During the pilot project the CS100/112 operators did not use any help with the language identification.

2°) Contacting the interpreter

For each language supported a unique telephone number was designated in the telephone directory of the CS100/112 call centre. This call was directly transferred towards the mobile telephone of the interpreter on duty.

3°) Establishment of a tree-way conference and managing the call.

This was achieved through the use of a common functionality of the AEG system used at the CS100/112 call centre.

Follow-up of interventions

CS100/112 operators and volunteer interpreters were asked to fill up an evaluation form after each intervention (see Annex 1).

These forms were used to follow-up the specific interventions and to help evaluate the quality of the help provided by the interpreter in managing and dispatching help.

Modifications/improvements during the project

In order to increase the number of interventions, the system was made available to other services, namely: the CS100/112 call centres of Mons, Namur and Liège, as well as the Special Emergency Services and the Mobile and Resuscitation Emergency Services of the Brussels region were associated during the period of the pilot project.

Example of poster published in Brussels hospitals

112  **Multilingual 112 in Brussel**

Projet pilote au centre 100-112 de Bruxelles:
pour une période de trois mois nous disposons de traducteurs disponibles 24h/24 dans les 12 langues suivantes:

- Allemand
- Anglais
- Arabe
- Espagnol
- Grec
- Italien
- Portugais
- Polonais
- Roumain
- Slovaque
- Suédois
- Tchègue

L'objectif du projet est la réponse à l'appelant dans sa langue. Nous souhaitons toutefois faire profiter de cette expérience les intervenants de terrain et plus particulièrement les équipes SMUR.

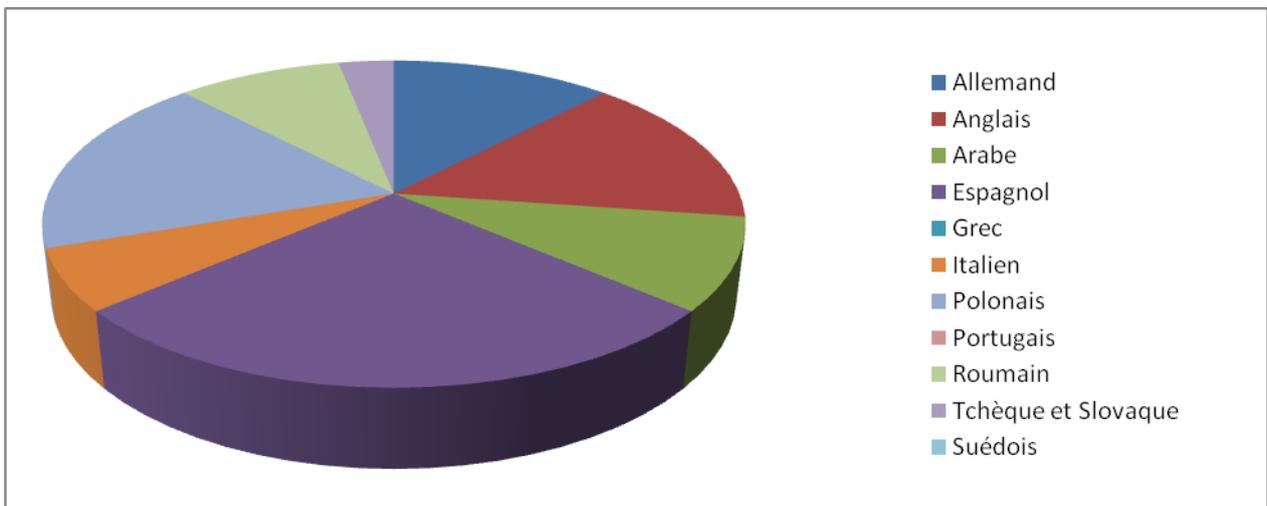
En préhospitalier, si le contact est difficile avec un patient ou sa famille pour des raisons linguistiques, formez le 100 ou 112 et demandez à être mis en conférence avec l'interprète de garde de votre choix.

 du 8 mars au 8 juin 2010...

Results

Number of calls serviced per language

	German	English	Arabic	Spanish	Greek	Italian	Polish	Portuguese	Romanian	Czech and Slovak	Total
#	4	5	3	9	0	2	6	0	3	1	33
%	12,1	15,2	9,1	27,3	0,0	6,1	18,2	0,0	9,1	3,0	100



On the basis of the number of evaluation forms received one considers that the real interventions were more than 33.

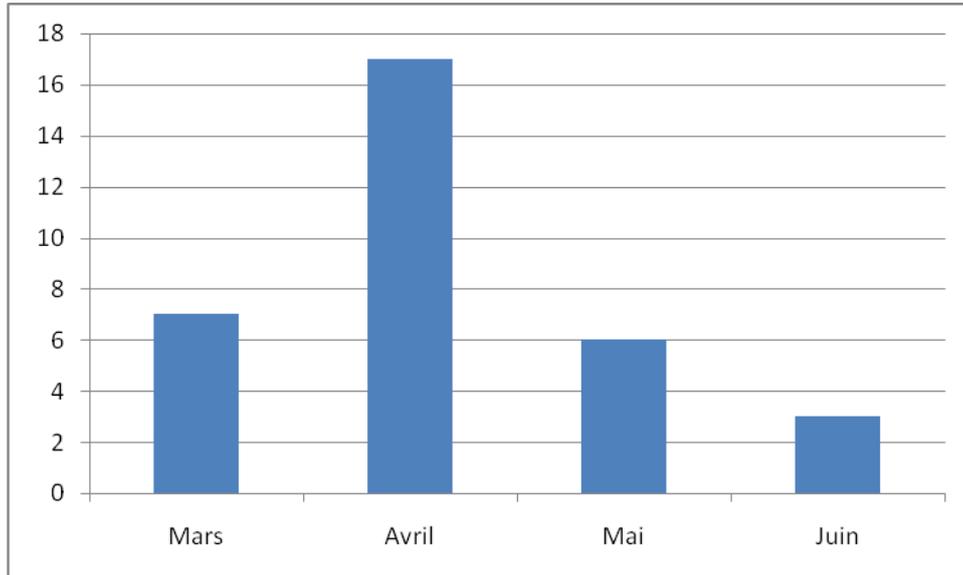
The CS100/112 call centre of Mons submitted evaluation forms for 2 interventions.

The number of interventions mentioned above, even if it is considered less reliable, shows the marginal character of «multilingual» calls in comparison with the total number of calls received annually (+ 400.00 calls) in Brussels. However, implementing the recommendation of the European Commission (11/2/2009) concerning the multilingual character of the single emergency call number is only one aspect one should take into consideration.

The strictly quantitative criterion of the concerned calls disappears when one hears the recordings of the interventions. For each call, using an interpreter helped solve a situation blocked simply because the communication was impossible.

Number of calls serviced per month during the pilot project

	March	April	May	June	Total
#	7	17	6	3	33
%	21,2	51,5	18,2	9,1	100,0



March : 3 weeks - June: 1 week (8 days)

Special attention should be given during holidays with greater numbers of tourists.

Perception by the users

	Good	Bad		Good	Bad
Technical quality	28/33		Dispatch of help	25/33	
Language Identification	27/33		Not-replied	5/33	
Interpretation	27/33				

The impressions of users (callers, operators, interpreters) are extremely positive and this is felt when hearing again the recordings of the interventions. Callers are satisfied (and often astonished) with the quality of the response of the CS100/112. Interpreters feel useful and valorised for the benefit of people that are often «compatriots». Operators are happy to be able to use a tool that enables them to fulfil their role as a public service.

Conclusions and recommendations

Whatever system is chosen to ensure handling of multilingual calls in our CS100/112 call centres it must take into account several criteria.

Optimization of the system

On the basis of the number of calls replied, it should be better to centralise the management of the system and make the service available to other CS100/112 call centres that could organise a 3-way conference call directly with the interpreter. Each CS100/112 call centre could serve as a relay (4-way conference) with the corresponding structures within their zones (Specialized Emergency Services, Police, ambulances, medical doctors)

The problem of the target language of the interpreters (FR/NL) should also be solved. There is need for bilingual operators or double the costs for establishing a FR and a NL system.

It would also be useful to limit the system to a realistic number of languages. In Brussels the following languages could be sufficient:

German, English, Arabic, Spanish, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Romanian, Slovak and Czech, Russian and Chinese.

Speed of the system

The selected system should ensure contact between the caller and the interpreter in a very short period of time (no more than one minute), otherwise the caller hangs up. Efficiency is thus penalised because the call centre has to call back the caller. From this point of view the system established during the pilot phase in Brussels was very efficient. It is reminded that the operator contacted the interpreter directly without transiting through a call centre that would launch a search for an interpreter.

This functioning mode necessitates the previous establishment of a duty roster of interpreters to be managed on a regular basis by a person responsible. The number of languages supported is also pre-defined in an obligatory way (see list above).

It would also be useful to system could also be used to establish a system of calling the interpreters in cascade to ensure a response as soon as possible.

Identification of the caller's language

In Brussels, during the pilot phase we made no use of a system for the caller's language identification. This created fewer difficulties given the fact that the system functioned with a limited number of languages. Some problems were encountered however when trying to distinguish between Russian and Polish.

The preliminary document mentioned a piece of software for identifying dialects that could run in the background of the AEG application. Unfortunately, such pieces of software are not available for emergency situations.

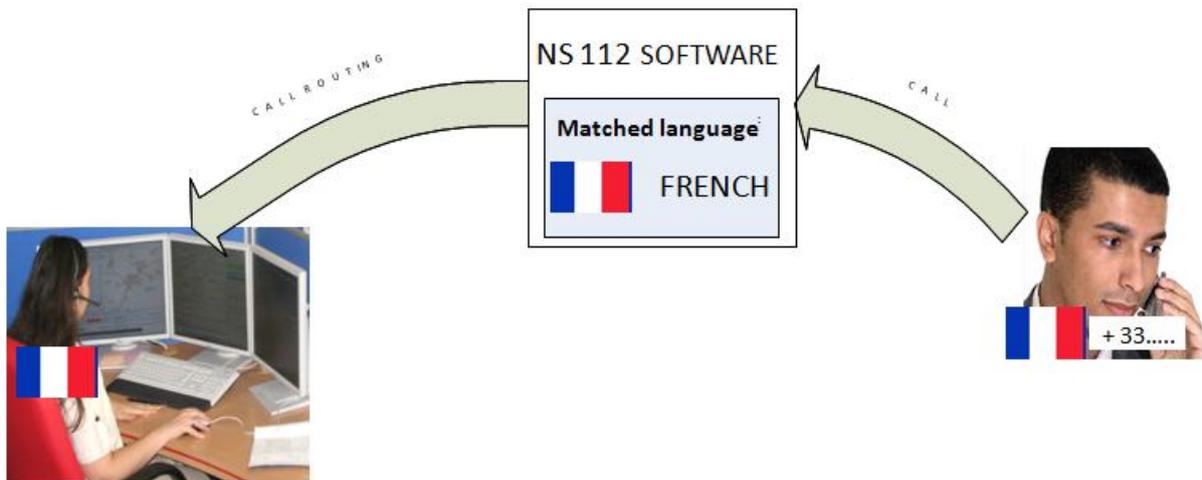
The experience from the pilot project suggests rather the need for establishing a specific training program for the operators. This training could aim to ensure language identification through the following methods:

- Prosology (recognition of intonation, the specific melody of languages),
- The characteristic phonology of source languages,
- The use of a thematic dictionary linked to emergency situations.

To this effect contacts have been established with the company WebInterpret.

A system to recognise the «country codes» of the caller's mobile telephone could also be created. Such a system is used in Bulgaria and enables the operator to know instantly the country of origin of the mobile's number and to transfer automatically the call to the operator speaking the language defined in the system.

Simplified functioning of «country code» identification in Bulgaria



Limits of volunteers and sustainability of the system

Working with volunteer interpreters presents certain limits if the objective is to establish a sustainable system.

Volunteering was especially appreciated for the whole duration of the project and was certainly a determining factor as far as the efficiency of handling calls during the pilot phase was concerned.

Most of the interpreters were eager to continue with the project.

A possible way forward could be to go through an association of interpreters as the **AIIC** (Professional Conference **Interpreters** Worldwide) or the STU-ALHU Service of Emergency Interpreters. An other possibility would be to collaborate with student interpreters.

Participating interpreters would become members of this association. It could be possible to sign a contract (example of X€ / language and per week on duty). The association would establish the duty roster to be communicated to the manager of the system at the CS 100/112 call centres.

Until today, no contact has been taken with one or the other association of interpreters.

Annex 1 - Example of form filled in by a CS100/112 operator

Rapport d'intervention dans le cadre du projet « 112 M. Bilingue »
à renvoyer à thierry.chelidon@inbr.uisrael.be

Date de l'appel: 04/05/2010

Heure de l'appel: 02h34

Langue de l'appelant: Polonais

Votre avis concernant la qualité technique de la communication:

Très bien et très rapide

Avez-vous éprouvé des difficultés à identifier le nom de l'appelant ?

Non le requérant n'a indiqué que la personne le parlait que le Polonais

Avez-vous éprouvé des difficultés à contacter l'interprète ? Si oui, lesquelles ?

Non

Vos remarques concernant la gestion de la communication en multiconférence:

Très bien j'ai expliqué en 2/3 accidents de quoi il s'agissait et la procédure à suivre pour faire l'appelant est-il resté en ligne ? A-t-il compris votre volonté de faire appel à un interprète ?

Oui car il s'agissait d'une personne parlant français qui a appelé pour le

Avez-vous eu des difficultés à transmettre les informations relatives à l'intervenant ?

Non

L'interprète a-t-il obtenu les réponses aux questions que vous posiez ?

Oui

Votre intervention a-t-elle conduit à l'envoi de secours à l'équipé ?

Oui, les secours étaient déjà partis je donnais des confirmations + donne des conseils aux parents en attendant
autres remarques concernant l'intervention: les secours

Très bien et très pratique

MFR3

Example of form filled in by an interpreter

Rapport d'intervention dans le cadre du projet « 112 Multilingue »
à renvoyer à thierry.charlier@fire.brugisnet.be

Date de l'appel : 29/03/2010

Heure de l'appel : 23h00

Langue de l'appelant : anglais

Votre avis concernant la qualité technique de la communication :

Sans problème.

La langue de l'appelant a-t-elle été identifiée correctement par l'opérateur du 112 :

Oui, mais l'appelant n'était pas anglophone natif.

Vos remarques concernant la gestion de la communication en mode conférence :

Sans problèmes.

Avez-vous eu des difficultés à entrer en contact avec l'appelant ? si oui, lesquelles ?

L'appelant était en détresse et avait un peu de mal à s'exprimer rendant la communication un peu difficile.

Avez-vous eu des difficultés à traduire les informations demandées par l'opérateur du 112 ?

Non, mais c'était clair que l'appelant n'était pas anglophone natif et il a fallu traduire les instructions de l'opérateur en langage simple. Comme anglophone natif ceci ne me posait pas un problème.

Votre intervention a-t-elle conduit à l'envoi de secours adéquats ?

Oui.

Autres remarques concernant l'intervention :

Néant