

NRPSI joins MPs and Peers in plea for protecting language skills in Brexit negotiations

17 October 2016: The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) has pledged its support to the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on Modern Languages' call for the Government to ensure Brexit negotiations make the UK's language skills a top policy issue.

The APPG on Modern Languages has today launched **Brexit and Languages: A checklist for Government negotiators and officials** highlighting the four essential language-specific objectives of the Brexit process:

1. Guaranteeing residency status for EU nationals already living in the UK and safeguarding future recruitment of EU citizens to address the shortage of language skills
2. Continuing full UK participation in the Erasmus+ programme (noting the examples of Norway and Switzerland)
3. Committing to legislate to replicate the rights enshrined in the 2010 European Directive on the Right to Interpretation and Translation in Criminal Proceedings
4. A post-Brexit plan in education (from primary school to post-graduate research, including apprenticeships), business and the civil service, with specific actions to ensure the UK produces sufficient linguists to meet its future requirements as a leader in global free trade and on the international stage

NRPSI Chair Ted Sangster said: "NRPSI fully supports the APPG on Modern Languages' plea to the Government to make the UK's language skills a top policy issue in the Brexit process. Our organisation was established after a tragic death resulting from inaccurate court interpreting to assure the quality of interpreting services provided to the public services and public. If we are to be able to continue to do our job effectively, we need qualified interpreters. We also require that the Government legislate to replicate the rights enshrined in the 2010 EU Directive on The Right to Interpreting and Translation in Criminal Proceedings. Both of these things are essential to public protection."

NRPSI Executive Director Stephen Bishop added: “With almost a third (30%)* of NRPSI registered public service interpreters being non-UK EU nationals, the consequence of EU nationals already living in the UK not being guaranteed residency status is stark. The deficit in language skills in the UK would deepen, impacting not only the public and public services who rely on their expertise but the future of the public service interpreting profession itself as well.”

- View the APPG on Modern Language’s [media release](#).
- View and download a pdf version of the APPG on Modern Languages’ [Brexit and Languages: A checklist for Government negotiators and officials](#).

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Editors’ Notes:

*The ‘NRPSI Annual Review of Public Service Interpreting in the UK’ provides data on the Registrants on the National Register, together with an analysis of the complaints heard by NRPSI over the last three years (2013-2015). It is part of the NRPSI registration process to check that interpreters are entitled to work in the UK.

About National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI)

The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) is the UK’s independent voluntary regulator of professional interpreters. Funded by Registrants’ fees, it is a not-for-profit organisation. By maintaining interpreting standards it safeguards the public. All NRPSI registered interpreters, there are currently 1,882 covering 100 languages, satisfy rigorous entry criteria in terms of qualifications and experience, and demonstrate their commitment to professional standards by signing NRPSI’s Code of Professional Conduct. While NRPSI is a voluntary regulator, its powers allow it to discipline and, ultimately, exclude a Registrant who breaks its Code of Professional Conduct. In this way, it can ensure interpreters on the Register, which is publicly available and searchable online for free, are appropriately qualified, have the level of competence claimed and employ best practice.

<http://www.nrpsi.org.uk/>