

THE DIGEST

IN THIS ISSUE

[2 The AIIC Interview: Treasurer](#)

[5 The DDC Meets in Paris](#)

[6 A Reminder from CACL](#)

[7 UK&Ireland](#)

[8. France / Brazil](#)

[9. Greece & Cyprus](#)

[10 Work Statistical Survey Update](#)

[12 Legal Interpreting Committee](#)

[13 The Science Hub](#)

[15 Events Calendar](#)



THE AIIC INTERVIEW

As February is the start of AIIC's financial year, we sat down with Micky Friedman, the current Treasurer of AIIC, to learn more about how the Association's finances work.

Hi Micky! Tell us a bit about how you got involved in AIIC finance.

It was a process that started in the 1980s when I was the Council Member for AIIC Luxembourg (the Council was later replaced by the Advisory Board) and then the Council Member for Italy. After I had served on the Council for the maximum number of years, I joined the Budget Committee (BC) and eventually became the Chair.

In the run-up to the 2003 Assembly in Porto, the Treasurer at the time suddenly stepped down. It was decided that the Chair of the Budget Committee would replace them for the last months of the Triennium, and that should have been my experience as Treasurer. But as you probably know, unexpected events at the Valencia Assembly in 2018 resulted in me being elected Treasurer.

Is a similar experience important to be Treasurer?

Not necessarily. You need to understand how AIIC works, and being on the BC is certainly useful for this. Though being regional treasurer is perhaps an even better preparation as they also have to deal with individual members.

The 2024 dues invoices went out this month, with the news that there would be a reduction from last year's dues. How do you decide how much the dues are going to be?

Everyone who may need money in the coming year is asked to complete a request form and return it to us by the end of February. The Treasurer and Executive Secretary review them to check that they make sense, for example, that there are no unmotivated variations from the previous year, then we send them to the Budget Committee for their comments.

The next stage is for ExCo to go through the requests and the comments with a fine-tooth comb. We can ask groups and delegations to clarify their requests or provide us with more details so we can decide whether to approve them or change the amount. The AB is invited to comment on the draft, then we calculate how much the dues will be. If ExCo thinks it's ok, we sign off on the budget, otherwise we have to go back and see where we can make cuts.

Have most members paid their dues so far?

Not yet. 1080 out of 3035 members have paid so far. It may not sound like many, but it is higher than the number that had been paid at this time in previous years. Pre-candidates are doing slightly better with 173 out of 364 invoices paid already. If you haven't paid your dues yet, [log into your portal](#) and do it today!

How come the dues have gone down with Assembly coming up?

Assemblies are obviously very expensive, so to avoid a spike in dues every 3 years, money is put aside each year for the Assembly.



You mentioned the Budget Committee. What's the role of this elected Assembly body?

Their job is to ensure compliance with AIIC's financial regulations. They give an opinion on the budget, though the final decision rests with ExCo. They conduct audits and they have to give written approval for any large spending requests that haven't been budgeted for. This year, they'll be auditing AIIC's bank accounts. Sometimes they decide what to audit themselves, but they also receive suggestions from the external auditors.

What kind of special projects has AIIC funded recently, how do you decide what is a worthy project and what does AIIC get in return?

In the last year, the 2 big projects have been:

- funding for Professor Avan's Auditory Health Study. This is an independent study, and we hope that the results will prove useful for the delegations when negotiating working conditions for conference interpreters.
- the review of the Basic Texts. Assembly decided that the time had come to prune back the texts and modernise them. They are currently with lawyers in France who are working to standardise them and not cover every eventuality.

Traditionally, AIIC hasn't asked for anything in return for funding. The exception to this has been the AIIC Research Grant. This was set up in 2020 and the winners are expected to provide regular reports on their progress. In the case of Professor Agnieszka Chmiel and Dr Nicoletta Spinolo (2021) they also contributed to the AIIC blog and Professor Heidi Salaets and Professor Geert Brône (2022) gave a presentation of their project when we were in Brussels for the 70th anniversary celebrations. The grant was suspended last year in the absence of a research committee to oversee it, but it will be back!

How are the regions funded?

The regions get 8% of the dues from their members, and some regions also charge regional dues. This refund, as we call it, is paid in July if at least 50% of the regional members have paid their dues by then.

This money helps to finance events, training and projects that are important to members. Many regions have chosen to use it to host the Nuremberg exhibition, which can be helpful in attracting attention to AIIC and giving members the opportunity to get together.

Some regions spend all this money each year, and you will have seen photos in The Digest of members socialising or studying together. Other regions are less active at the moment and are sitting on piles of money. If your region isn't active and you have ideas for events, get involved and help them spend it!

As Treasurer, you are also a member of ExCo. How do you balance the two?

I am a member of ExCo, but I don't get involved in everything that they do. Being Treasurer is obviously my first responsibility and this includes checking every payment request that comes in, authorising spending and generally keeping an eye on AIIC's financial situation.



*At the Atomium with
ExCo colleagues.
Left to right: Damien
Fan, Francisco Garcia
Hurtado, Micky
Friedman, Jenny
Fearnside*

DISCIPLINARY AND DISPUTES COMMITTEE MEETING

January 2024 seems to have been the month for AIIC's various bodies and groups to hold in-person meetings. At the same time ExCo, the AB StC, CACL and PRIMS were meeting in Bangkok and Bali, the Disciplinary and Disputes Committee of AIIC came together in rather chillier Paris for its first and only in-person meeting of the triennium. Having taken over in January 2022, in the midst of the pandemic, all of our interactions so far had been online on Zoom or Slack so we jumped at the chance to get together for some in-depth debates about our work. We had a long list of agenda items to get through, including the relative significance of dispute resolution versus complaints, outreach and communication with membership, an update to our Rules of Procedure, and preparing the ground for the new DDC that will take over once elected by Assembly in January 2025.

We had the great fortune to be allowed to use a meeting room at ESIT, in return for which we held a presentation before MA conference interpreting students on the work of the DDC and ethics in conference interpreting in particular. It proved a very popular subject and we had a lively exchange with them and also the recently elected Secretary of AIIC France, Agnès Debarge, who joined us for the afternoon. Un grand merci to Camille Collard from ESIT, who kindly arranged to have ESIT host us in the beautiful 12th arrondissement.



DDC members in Paris, from left to right: Emmanuel Ayuk, Karin Walker, Mary Fons i Fleming, Eva Bodor, Veronica Barzelatto, Denise Tschager, Frédérique Malbos

CACL: GENTLE REMINDER TO PRE-CANDIDATES

Dear Pre-candidates,

Hope 2024 has started well for you! We look forward to further progress on your way to becoming a member of AIIC.

CACL stands ready to help you along the way. As part of this effort, we are sending you this message to share a few tips and reminders.

Tips:

- ✓ Do keep a written record of your meetings carefully, using the Excel form downloadable for your membership application. You will be relieved of the burden of recounting your meetings if the record is updated regularly.
- ✓ Check the official language pairs of your potential sponsors. They can only sponsor the pairs they have as official in AIIC.
- ✓ Among your sponsors, you need only two sponsors from your region.

A little reminder:

- ✓ CACL offers pre-screening of your membership application. This is a voluntary service by the Committee. If you wish to enjoy that service so that any potential issues with your application may be detected before CACL's next statutory meeting in June 2024, make sure you submit your application before 15 May 2024. Any application sent after that will not be pre-screened before the June meeting.
- ✓ Do remember that once your application is approved and you become a candidate on CACL's published list of new candidates, there is a challenge period. It is only after this challenge period when your candidacy is unchallenged that you can declare yourself a member of AIIC. So there is a bit of a delayed gratification – get your champagne ready but only open the bottle after the challenge period. The same goes for sharing your good news on social media.

AIIC UK & IRELAND

The UK&I Region was in Scotland early February for an interesting outreach event with Heriot-Watt University's interpreting students.

Our Region is diverse geographically, but also amongst our members. So we were happy to celebrate a second start of 2024, with our own Year of the Dragon festivities in London on the 10th of February. We learnt about Eastern vs Western dragons, caught up, welcomed new members, precandidates and guests, and tasted snacks brought especially all the way from China by one of our Bureau members.



AIIC FRANCE

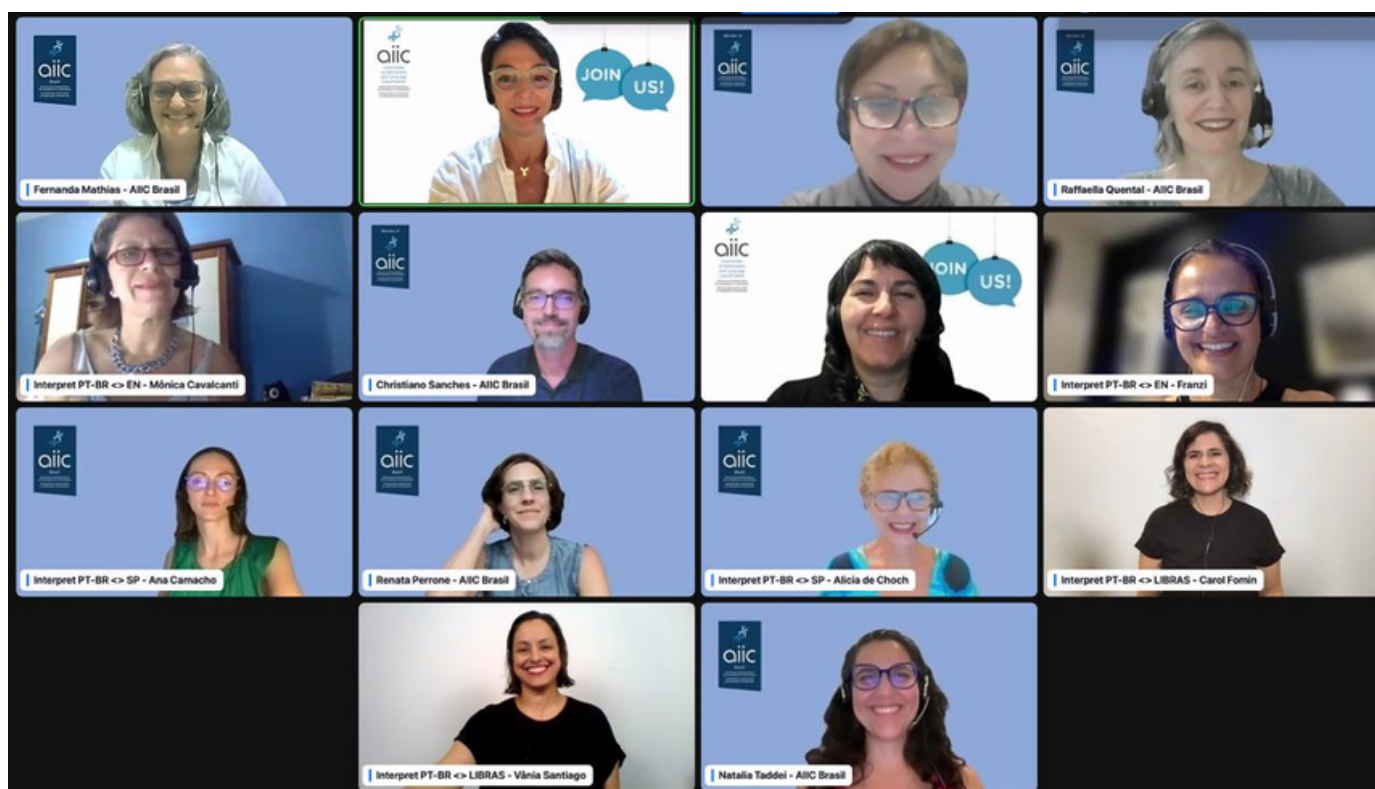
On 6 February, AIIC France presented the results of its September 2023 survey on interpreting practices in France, carried out jointly with the SFT, Société française des traducteurs.

With a turnout of 100+ tuning in to listen to the results, the webinar was an opportunity to share the results about remuneration, days of work, clients, RSI prevalence, interpreters sentiment about the future. Both professional associations conveyed messages about best practices and the respective roles of AIIC and SFT.

The webinar was recorded and is available [here](#), as well as the powerpoint presentation. Some more specific data about AIIC members is available in our February newsletter [Echo des cabines](#).

AIIC BRAZIL

On 26th February, AIIC Brazil became the latest region to team up with CACL for an outreach event. Together they welcomed a lovely crowd to hear Anna Vianna's presentation on the candidacy procedure, and answered the many questions that potential candidates had. You can [watch the meeting](#) on AIIC Brazil's YouTube channel.



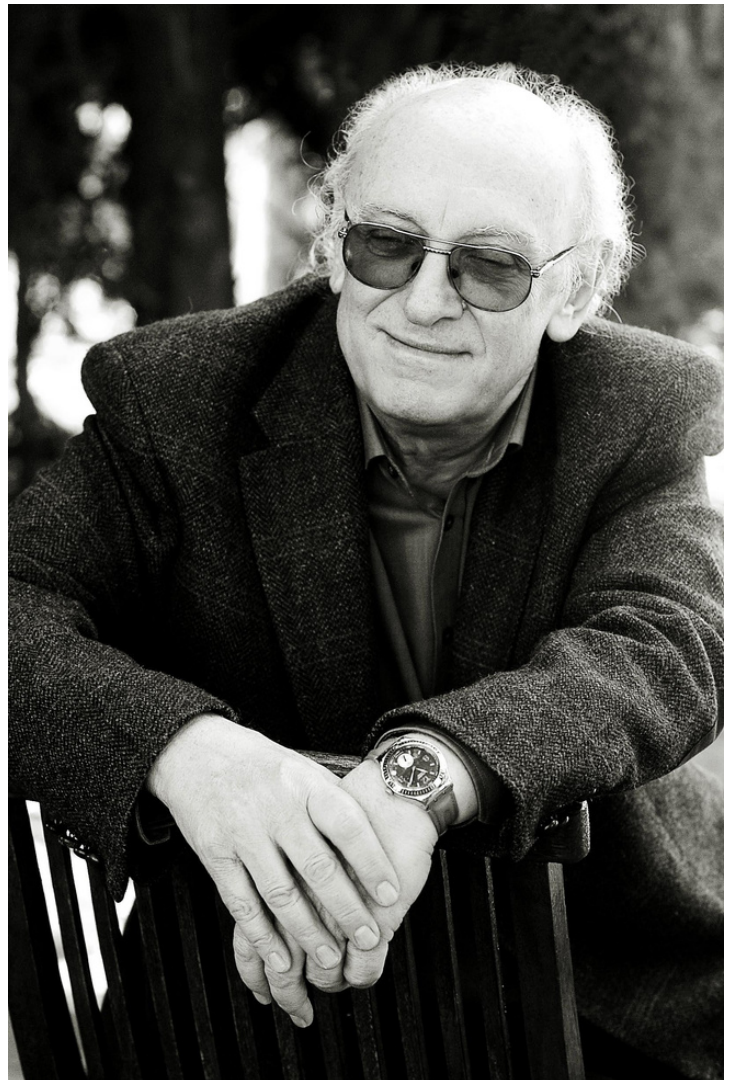
AIIC GREECE & CYPRUS

The key take-home message in this event was the power of teaming up with an experienced Region. Thanks to work in AIIC's Advisory Board, AIIC Italia generously welcomed onboard another language and culture and we were absolutely thrilled to participate and learn first-hand about the trials and tribulations of organizing such an event.

This offered us the amazing experience of connecting with and listening to one of Greece's most acclaimed crime novelists, Petros Markaris, who only attended primary school in Greek and continued his schooling in German, yet managed to write his internationally renowned series in his mother tongue.

Petros Markaris also talked about Greece's national poet Dionysis Solomos, who wrote Greece's national anthem and who wrote mostly in Italian, the language of his schooling yet still managed to garner acclaim for his Greek poems. I think only someone who speaks Greek knows what a feat this is!

Petros Markaris who was born in 1937, talked about his formative years in Istanbul, where the walls created between the multitudes of communities were there to preserve their mother tongue, while out on the streets, one could easily hear Turkish, Jewish, Greek and other languages being spoken at once. An interesting snapshot of a country that had evolved from an empire which had assimilated, yet preserved so many cultures, through the vector of the Mother Tongue.



For those who were not able to attend, you can watch the event [here](#) from the comfort of your own home.

WORK STATISTICAL SURVEY - GETTING READY FOR KICK-OFF

We are finalising the last details before we can get back into the business of collecting data about work volume and rates in order to have a clearer picture of what our markets and working conditions look like.

The survey will be carried out by our selected provider, DevStat, who will process and anonymise all the data. Our thanks to the volunteer pilot testers, who are probably doing their piloting this very week.



What to Expect

You will be able to download an Excel file to help you compile all the data needed to fill in the survey. Its use is not a requirement, but it is designed to be as user-friendly as possible and to calculate minimum, average and maximum rates with minimal stress to you. Also, while it will be locked so that you can't change the calculations by mistake, it will be all yours: you will have control over what you put in there, you can save it wherever you like under whatever level of security you are comfortable with, and there will be no automatic exporting of data, so you decide what goes into the survey. You might also want to start entering your data for 2024 in a separate copy of the file (just a hint).

We will provide a list of all the questions in advance so you know what to expect. Some questions will not be shown to all members: for instance, you will not see questions about rates charged in different markets if you were a staff interpreter throughout 2023.

You will receive a link by email. This link will be unique to you: do not share it with anyone else or they will have access to your answers. You can come back to the survey and fill it in over more than one session. You can navigate easily between completed sections to check content and make any changes.

You will be able to save a PDF copy of your answers, for your own records.

For newcomers who never experienced past editions, the focus of the survey is work volume (number of days working for different kinds of employers and in different modes) and work rates (for freelancers). Occupational health is also a significant area where we have expanded the number of questions. For working conditions, we have included new questions that have to do with distance interpreting-related variables.

Call To Action

We hope the results of the survey will be of interest to most of you and encourage all members to take part. This means active members, of course, but also precandidates, candidates and associates. We need a significant number of respondents in every market to ensure that our data are meaningful. It's up to us to generate the data we need to get a sense of what each market looks like for AIIC interpreters!

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Publication of the Microphone Study

The [full report of the 2023 Microphone Study](#) is now available to AIIC members and pre-candidates.



LEGAL INTERPRETING COMMITTEE

The Legal Interpreting Committee of AIIIC joined forces again with that of SYDISE (Greek Association of Conference Interpreters) to take a close look at training interpreters in languages that are rarely spoken in a specific geographical or other setting. These languages of lesser diffusion (LLD), with fewer speakers and regional usage, require unique approaches, to overcome challenges such as limited trainers, academic scarcity, resource gap, legal interpreter shortage and fluctuating demand.

Christiane Driesen, convenor of the AIIIC Legal Interpreting Committee, scientific director of several Training Programmes for legal interpreters, and Professor set the scene by talking about the methods that have been used to train interpreters who don't share the same language combinations as their instructors. Christiane highlighted the tandem training method as a key solution. Learners work with pairs under the supervision of highly experienced native speakers of their languages, fostering mutual learning and practical experience, especially valuable for legal settings. This method addresses the need for interpreters skilled in legal nuances and court procedures, ensuring equitable legal representation for LLD speakers.

Annie Bougault de Benedictis, conference interpreter and an interpreter trainer at the International Criminal Court spoke about training interpreters in languages of lesser diffusion – giving us an in depth picture starting with the rights to interpretation enshrined in the ICC's Rome Statute and ending with the schedule for just such a course developed in order to train interpreters to work at the court, Annie spoke evocatively about the dedication of the trainees and their rigorous training.

During this online forum, we introduced a new format, featuring a conversation between George Drummond, LIC member, and Alfred Goma Ballou, who had first-hand experience as a participant in the training course at the ICC for languages of lesser diffusion and went on to work as an interpreter at the Court. Later he also contributed as a trainer and examiner himself. The format enabled a lively conversation, where our colleague was able to put across his personal experience and insights about the process.

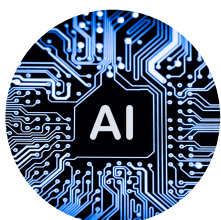
In view of the encouraging reaction from the audience, we shall certainly consider this approach for future online forums. AIIIC's LIC would like to thank them, as well as volunteers Rachel Brevière and Smitha Chakravarthy for providing interpretation in this extremely well attended multilingual event.

THE SCIENCE HUB

The deadline to volunteer for the new Science Hub is fast approaching and there's still time to get involved.

ExCo is happy to see that the reaction to this shake-up of the ExCo groups has been positive overall and that members who haven't volunteered before have been putting their names forward.

If you're still thinking about volunteering, you have until Monday to make up your mind and contact the Secretariat. In the meantime, here's a reminder of what the new structure will look like.



AI: Produce guidance for interpreters and conference organisers on the use of AI in conference settings.



Distance Interpreting: Draft and update official AIIC DI documentation and guidelines to promote optimum working conditions in DI.



Health: Provide information, assistance and support, and make recommendations in the health field for AIIC members and its bodies.



Research: Administer the AIIC Research Grant and make recommendations on which studies AIIC should support.



Technical: Propose, undertake and implement any relevant and innovative technology -related studies, projects and activities.

39th Assembly

8-11 January 2025, Swissotel, Lima

Dates to watch out for:

June

List of IAB candidates submitted to ExCo

September

Assembly portal opens. Declare your candidacy and propose amendments or resolutions

October

Registration for the 39th Assembly opens

#AIIC39



aiic

ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE
DES INTERPRÈTES DE CONFÉRENCE
INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF CONFERENCE INTERPRETERS

EVENT CALENDAR

- 6 March [An Introduction to Marketing for Conference Interpreters](#)
Workshop organised by AIIIC France with Julia Poger (in English)
Location: Online
- 16 March [AIIIC Africa Regional Meeting](#)
Location: Abidjan
- 23 March [Stress Management: Tools and Strategies](#)
ATPD workshop with Chris Guichot de Fortis
Location: online
- 24 March [Stress Management: Tools and Strategies](#)
ATPD workshop with Chris Guichot de Fortis
Location: online
- 29 March [All you need to know about joining AIIIC](#)
A meeting with AIIIC France and CACL (in French)
Location: Online
- 27 April Budget Committee Meeting
- 27 April [Bridging Teaching and Research in Interpreting Studies](#)
ATPD workshop for young academics
Location: Online