Newly elected president of EULETA 2016-2018 – David Albert BEST (ULB)

(EULETA = European Legal English Teachers’ Association: www.euleta.org)

David Albert BEST, coordinator of English courses at the Faculty of Law and Criminology (ULB) since 2011, was recently elected President of the European Legal English Teachers’ Association, for a two year mandate, at the association’s Annual General Meeting, held during the biennial EULETA Conference at Zurich University of Applied Sciences School of Management and Law, Winterthur, Switzerland, 30 September-2 October 2016.

David has lived and worked in Brussels since 2010. Initially working for a brief period in the secretariat of one of the main political groups at the EU Committee of the Regions, he has – since 2011 – coordinated and taught courses on English for Law at the ULB’s Faculty of Law and Criminology. He has been teaching at the SBS-EM Faculty for the same length of time and has also given EU multilingualism/translation lectures for the Faculté de Lettres, Traduction et Communication. He is the contributing lecturer of a “Language and Law” module to Roma 3 University Law Department’s Masters on “Law and the Humanities”, as well as editor-in-chief of EULETA’s upcoming new online journal. He holds a degree in European Studies and a PhD in Italian Studies and has taught Italian language, literature and cultural studies at the Universities of Cork (2003-2007), St Andrews (2005-2006), and Trinity College Dublin (2008-2009), as well as English Language, Cultural Studies and Translation at the Università degli studi di Napoli ‘l’Orientale’ (2009-2011). His research and publications range from a monograph and essays on 20th/21st-century Italian literature, to editing and translating (from the Italian), D. Cosmai, The Language of Europe: Multilingualism and Translation in the EU Institutions (Bruxelles, 2014), to more recent papers in the field of EU [Legal] Translation and Terminology.

David has been a proactive presence within the European Legal English Teachers’ Association since 2013. As the newly-elected President, beyond heading up the EULETA Executive Board and keeping communication lines open between members and decision-makers across Europe, he will ensure that the recently-formed Education Committee and E-Journal project continue to evolve and reach maturity (see below) and that the conception of similarly original new projects are given scope to flourish in the future. He is keen to see EULETA’s presence grow in academic circles, strengthening a viable link between the worlds of legal scholarship and practice: since becoming a member (in Groningen 2013), his own contacts and collaborative synergies with colleagues across Europe have increased with new Erasmus teaching exchanges (Cracow and Osijek) and become enhanced through shared projects (Masaryk and Rome III). All members of EULETA can avail of the positive knock-on effects of such active Europe-wide networking. His conviction is that EULETA’s strength and added value resides in the dynamic cross-fertilisation that comes from its highly diverse pool of members, which are made up of legal practitioners, consultants, private or freelance language experts, translators, interpreters and lawyer-linguists, language school teachers, and university-level scholars, lecturers, and researchers. EULETA is expanding along each of these avenues and deepening the ties between them to the mutual benefit of all who work at the interface of Language and Law.

What is EULETA?
The European Legal English Teachers’ Association (EULETA) is a non-profit organisation and was born during a Language Teachers’ conference at the University of Greifswald, Germany, in 2006, when a group of delegates specialising in the teaching of Legal English came together and discussed how their area of teaching could be improved and developed. They decided to set up an educational organisation to promote the professional development of teachers of Legal English. EULETA was launched and incorporated as a registered association under German law. It is fully recognised as a non-profit organisation. Membership fees and donations are tax-deductible throughout the European Union.

EULETA unites Legal English teachers from all over Europe and beyond to promote the effective and innovative teaching of English specifically for the academic and professional field of Law. The association has members in almost all EU and extra-EU European states, as well as some spread as far as Singapore, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, Dubai, Australia, the USA and Brazil. Membership currently stands at around 90 subscriptions and has been increasing steadily by around 20% since the association was launched. EULETA promotes networking and the sharing of experience, best practice and information. The association
accommodates teachers from academic settings, language schools, freelance language networks, and legal business contexts, and provides a link between practitioners from many different backgrounds.

One of **EULETA**'s main activities is the organisation of domain-specific annual conferences or workshops where experts in the field of Legal English meet to give presentations or chair workshops on methodology, materials development, legal-linguistic issues, and other topical matters that arise at the interface between Language and Law. **EULETA** organises one event per year at different locations, alternating between a three-day conference and a one-day workshop format: in the past few years, these have taken place in Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland. **EULETA** will meet next year in Brno, Czech Republic, and the following year in St Petersburg, Russia. **EULETA** also provides constantly updated information on materials, publications and online resources, maintains a trainer directory for users and a network of country representatives, and publishes reviews of new publications in the field of English for Law. For its members, **EULETA** offers a range of benefits, including free teaching materials, training programmes, reduced conference fees, and access to several of the most prestigious international English Language Teaching associations, databases, and resources.

**Objects of EULETA, Governance, and Membership**

The object of the association is to promote the effective and innovative teaching of Legal English. **EULETA** associate members do so by exchanging opinions and experience, publishing information, running conferences, seminars and training programmes, and working on collaborative Europe-wide projects. In particular, **EULETA**

- fosters continuing professional development
- provides an array of networking opportunities
- organises conferences and workshops/seminars
- publishes teaching materials, an online journal and training manuals
- runs a website with a dedicated members area
- facilitates an online discussion group
- maintains a social media presence
- participates in the shaping of accreditation/qualifications and certificates for Legal English teachers
- promotes training and examination standards for national and international recognition of Legal English
- offers a dedicated website for members and professionals
- provides an outlet for greater active participation by members in achieving the aims of **EULETA**

The association is governed by a board of six members who serve in a voluntary, non-remunerative capacity. They are elected by members for a two-year term. Elections are held at the AGM (to which all members are invited) during **EULETA**'s biennial conference. Membership (by paid subscription) is open to anyone involved in the teaching of Legal English, whether in academia or in practice. Members are part of a rapidly growing network of lawyer-linguists and gain access to teaching ideas, lesson plans and materials (and can share their own if they so wish), and a wealth of networking opportunities. Free access to the reputed **TransLegal** online dictionary, a listing in the **EULETA** Trainer Directory, reduced conference fees, and a dedicated section on the website www.euleta.org are further benefits of being a **EULETA** member.

**New and Ongoing EULETA Collaborations:**

One of the principal activities of **EULETA** is the conception and nurturing of projects to innovate and improve the teaching of Legal English, as well as sharing knowledge and tools to this end. Much of the material available in the **Members-only** section of www.euleta.org is the result of past synergies. Members can check this section at any time to see what they can avail of (or indeed what they might propose), including pages featuring the best of **Past events**, a host of lesson **Materials**, in-depth reviews of **Course books**, an introduction to the **Education Committee**, an interactive **Blog**, space for posting/hearing about **Job offers**, a directory of **EULETA Country reps**, and an overview of **EULETA Governance**. **EULETA** conferences and workshops are incubators of innovation in teaching methods and tools development, and both the formal and the social brainstorming sessions that these events entail always lead to the launch of new projects. Here are some of the most recent collaborative initiatives launched or carried forward by **EULETA** since Passau 2015 (workshop) and Winterthur 2016 (conference):

⇒ The **EULETA Education Committee** was set up in October 2015 to focus on education projects and programmes to benefit **EULETA** members, Legal English students and teachers, and the development of Legal English at large. The **Education Committee** provides an outlet for greater active participation by members in achieving the aims of **EULETA** as well as benefitting members individually, corporately, and institutionally. The **Education Committee** has no formal elections, chair, or standing membership. If members have an idea that they are prepared to steer through to fruition, then they are welcome to submit it to the **EULETA Board**. Some of the ideas which the **Education Committee** are currently developing: **Issues focused on our academic members; Issues of interest to language schools; Teacher-training programmes; EULETA accredited courses; EULETA E-Journal.**

⇒ The **EULETA Legal English Teacher Training Manual. A resource kit for entry-level legal English teachers** (can be downloaded from www.euleta.org in the **Members-only** section), initially coordinated by Paul Cooper, Czech Republic; experience, time, and ideas given by the following: J. Arnold (UK), D. Best (Belgium), P. Cooper, A. Łuczak (Poland), A. Petz (Hungary), A. Wiebalck...
(Switzerland). This is the first **EULETA Education Committee** project to have reached fruition and is designed as a “starter pack” with the new Legal English teacher in mind, but will also appeal to a wider readership.

**The EULETA E-Journal** (editor-in-chief D. Best) – Since the last **EULETA** workshop (Passau, September 2015), a small core of **Education Committee** members have been working on an online journal project to host output produced both by **EULETA** members and others in the international community of Legal English teachers and scholars. The project is now in its final stages and has been provisionally accepted for publication by the University of Rome II’s E-Press. The **EULETA E-Journal** will offer a platform for the publication of information, research and working papers, pedagogical tools and views, which enable teachers/practitioners and researchers in Legal English to contribute to the broadening of their field and to keep abreast of developments therein. The **EULETA E-Journal** will publish articles, reviews and conference/workshop proceedings on all aspects of Legal English Teaching as it occurs in the contexts of academic study, scholarly exchange, and professional or workplace settings. A wide range of linguistic, educational, and practice-related topics may be treated from the perspective of English for Specific Purposes (ESP), including teaching methodology and teacher training, student/client needs and learning-context analysis, testing and development of assessment methods, materials and tools development and appraisal, research writing and drafting techniques, and speaking at all academic and professional levels pertaining to Legal English. All topics relevant to Legal English and the teaching of this hybrid discipline within ESP/Linguistics/Law/Business studies fall within the scope of the journal.

**Goals (cultural and academic) of the EULETA E-Journal:**
1. Promote and support research publications on the teaching and training of Legal English;
2. Provide a peer-reviewed outlet under the auspices of **EULETA** for teachers, trainers and researchers in the field of Legal English to publish research findings;
3. Provide a career-enhancing incentive under the auspices of **EULETA** for research in the field of teaching and learning legal English;
4. Provide an open-access repository for scholarly articles in the field of Teaching and Learning Legal English;
5. Assist in the identification and recognition of the Teaching of Legal English as a specialised discipline within the broader field of language learning, applied languages, and ESP;
6. Enable parallels and contrasts to be identified with other ESP fields and thus enhance the identity and bolster the academic field of Legal English;
7. Assist in the identification of Teachers of Legal English as specialised language professionals within the broader field of language teaching and learning;
8. Foster transdisciplinary dialogue between academics who are teaching and researching in the field of Legal English within the language-teaching domain and in other disciplines;
9. Foster dialogue between academics and professionals who are working in the field of Legal English, i.e. public sector-private sector dialogue and educator-practitioner dialogue.

**EULETA Study Trips:** For some years, **EULETA** member Mark Brophy has been running Legal Tours, essentially city-trips across Europe comprising study visits to legal institutions and seminars hosted by law-related or educational establishments. For the past two years, these have been organised in conjunction with **EULETA** and opened up to all **EULETA** members. Mark teamed up with A. Petz of **EULETA** to conduct a Legal Tour of Budapest in 2015, and continued the trend with another Legal Tour, co-organised by D. Best, in Brussels in 2016, which took in visits to the European Economic and Social Committee and to the EU Committee of the Regions, a visit and seminars at the ULB Law Faculty, and an educational tour of the Palais de Justice.

**EULETA Exam Development Working Group:** The most recent initiative to come out of **EULETA** is the formation of a dedicated study group to conduct needs analysis and ground work for the future preparation of an international Legal English exam in replacement of the Cambridge-endorsed “International Legal English Certificate” (ILEC), which was withdrawn in 2015.

**www.euleta.org**

For more information, e-mail contact@euleta.org