European Commission

EU and multilingualism
CEF Digital
CEF Automated Translation

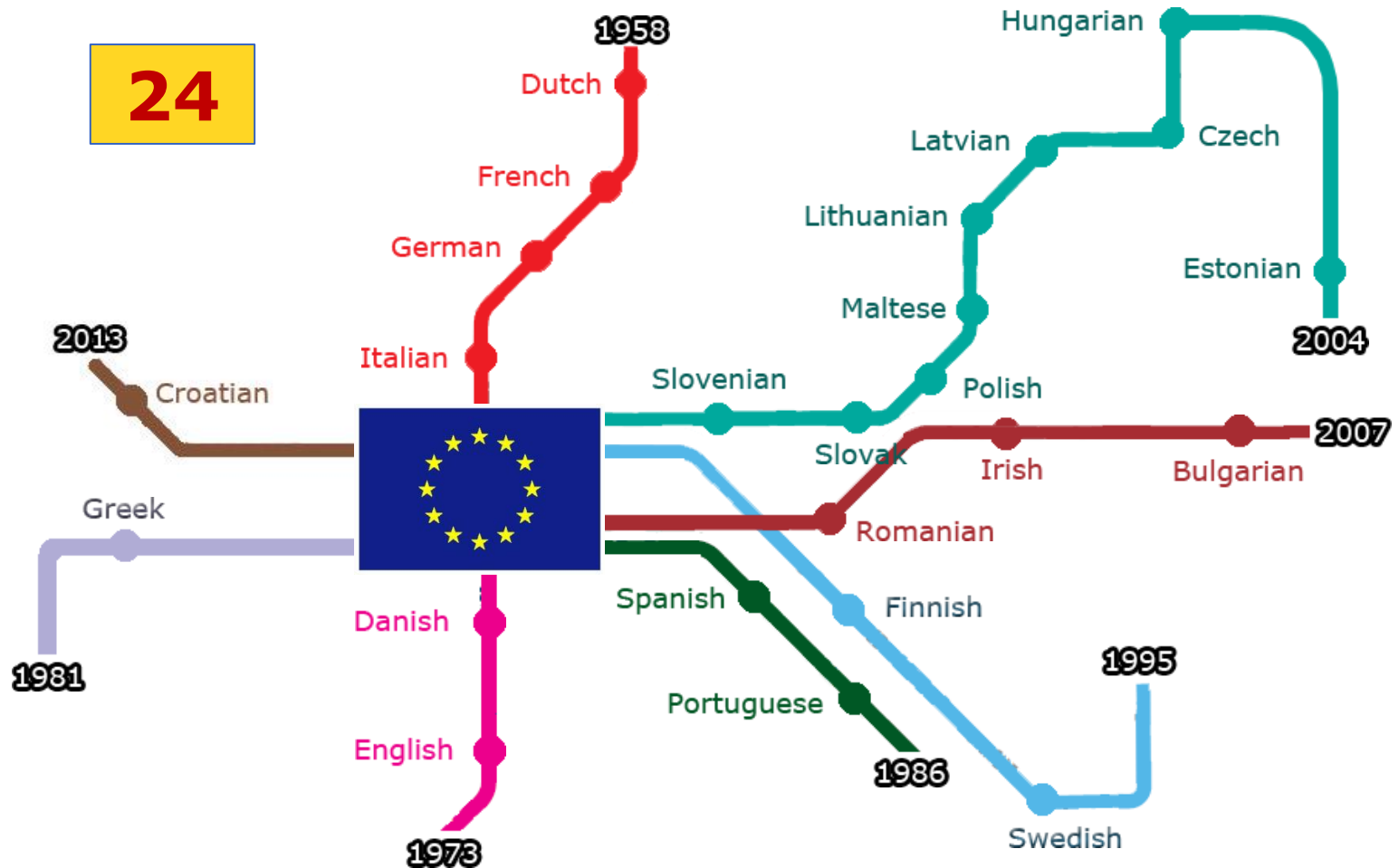**<Brian BUHAGIAR>**

European Commission

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EU and multilingualism

- Linguistic diversity in European Union
  - 24 official EU languages
  - about 60 major "regional/minority" languages
- The equality of the EU official languages is enshrined in the European legal basis
- EU is committed to supporting multilingualism
  - support for language technologies in R&I programmes
  - support for the use of Machine Translation in public administrations (MT@EC)
  - deployment of mature language technologies through the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) Programme

EU official languages over time

24

1958
Dutch
French
German
Italian

2013
Croatian

Greek

1981

Danish

English

1973

Hungarian
Latvian
Lithuanian
Maltese
Slovenian
Slovak

Czech
Estonian

2004

Polish
Irish
Romanian
Spanish
Portuguese

Finnish

Bulgarian

2007

1995

1986

Swedish

3

Digital Single Market strategy

- A Digital Single Market can create up to €340 billion in additional growth, hundreds of thousands of new jobs, and a vibrant knowledge-based society

- European Digital Market is multilingual
    - **90% of European consumers prefer to browse websites in their own language;**
    - **82% of the 4000+ web shops are mono-lingual;**
    - **42% of multilingual internet users never purchase online products and services in languages other than their own.**

- Language barriers affect private and public services

- Digital public sector is part of the DSM strategy

Connecting Europe Facility – CEF

- established by REGULATION (EU) No 1316/2013
- **CEF Digital** = pan-European Digital Service Infrastructures (DSIs), for example, cross-border
  - **eJustice**
  - **eProcurement**
  - **eHealth**
  - **Europeana**
  - **Open Data Portal**
- CEF is a *deployment* programme – using mature technologies

Multilingual challenge of pan-European public services

- The European Digital Single Market is **multilingual**
- Pan-European public services address the whole EU
- No lingua franca among public administrations in Europe
- 90% of EU web users prefer to use their own language in online services
- **Human translation** is **too expensive** and **too slow** with the intended text volumes
- Human translation is **not a solution** in all use scenarios
- Available online translators have **gaps in language coverage** and are **not secure**

→ *multilingual support is needed*

Part of the solution is: CEF Automated Translation platform

CEF.AT will make European public online services multilingual

...by deploying mature language technologies (such as **MT@EC**) in a secure platform

Goal

→ *To make public digital services equally usable by all EU users, irrespective of their working language and language skills*

→ *To facilitate cross-border information exchange in public administration*

The role of Member States

- CEF.AT helps to create accessible and multilingual **pan-European** online public services

- Technology underlying CEF.AT needs linguistic data (**language resources**) in EU languages

- Member States should **take ownership** of their own language and make sure their language is adequately supported in CEF.AT

- Member States' involvement and help are essential for CEF.AT efforts to succeed!

- **European Language Resource Coordination** (ELRC) is a project, funded through CEF Digital, that facilitates this process

Advantages of CEF.AT for Member States

- It provides an automated translation service free of charge[1] for MS administrations

- You can use it to translate documents, messages, snippets of text

- It enables sharing of information, better understanding

- It will make pan-European public services more accessible to your citizens and administrators by reducing the language barrier

  - **Companies in your country can participate in calls for tenders in other EU countries**

  - **Your citizens can find out about their rights in the EU, file complaints, access legal documents, use health services in the EU -- using their own language**

[1] *for the duration of the CEF programme*

Grazzi!