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Ordinance on the Federal Administration Language Services (Language Services Ordinance, LangSO)

of 14 November 2012 (Status as of 1 October 2014)

The Swiss Federal Council,

on the basis of Articles 43 paragraph 2 and 47 paragraph 2 of the Government and Administration Organisation Act of 21 March 1997¹, and in implementation of the Languages Act of 5 October 2007²,

ordains:

Section 1 Subject Matter

Art. 1

¹ This Ordinance regulates:

- a. the organisation of the Federal Administration language services;
- b. translation and the other linguistic services provided by the language services;
- c. cooperation among the language services and between the language services and other administrative units as well as coordination with clients.

² It therefore regulates how the language services contribute:

- a. to guaranteeing the high quality of the form and content of publications governed by the legislation on official publications and of other federal texts;
- b. to the activities of the Confederation in providing information and in communicating in several languages;
- c. to promoting multilingualism and to the internal functioning of the Federal Administration as a multilingual organisation.

AS 2012 6457

¹ SR 172.010

² SR 441.1

Section 2 Organisation and Coordination

Art. 2 Organisation

¹ The Federal Administration language services include all units that provide translation and other linguistic services in the Central Language Services of the Federal Chancellery and in the departments.

² They are organised according to language.

³ They work with the Parliamentary Services Language Service on professional and organisational matters and consult with the same on matters of common interest.

Art. 3 Federal Chancellery units

The Central Language Services of the Federal Chancellery comprise a separate unit each for German, French, Italian, Romansh, English and terminology, each with its own head.

Art. 4 Departmental units

¹ The language services in the departments comprise units for German, French, Italian and, where appropriate, for English and for further languages, each with its own head responsible for the language concerned.

² Each department has at least one central unit each for German, French and Italian that plans and coordinates the work in the language concerned within the department.

³ The head of a central unit may issue instructions and request information within the department insofar as this is required for planning and coordination of its work.

Art. 5 Cross-departmental coordination

¹ The Federal Chancellery shall coordinate translation and other linguistic services in the Federal Administration; in doing so, it shall respect the requirements for manageability, the connection between the various tasks, the balance between the languages and their status.

² The Conference of Language Services (COLS) shall support the Federal Chancellery in ascertaining the needs of the language services and in guiding and coordinating their activities.

³ The COLS is a consultative body. It comprises representatives of the Central Language Services of the Federal Chancellery and the departmental language services. The Parliamentary Services Language Service may participate in the COLS.

⁴ The Federal Chancellery oversees the COLS. It approves its regulations.

Section 3 Linguistic Services

Art. 6 Individual linguistic services

Linguistic services include in particular:

- a. the translation of texts into one or more languages;
- b. the proofreading of translations and other texts to assure their quality and their compliance with formal requirements (revision);
- c. terminology work in certain areas and the provision and maintenance of terminological aids for the language services themselves or for the entire Federal Administration;
- d. the provision and maintenance of language tools;
- e. advice on linguistic matters.

Art. 7 Quality standards

¹ The linguistic services shall meet quality standards that in particular contribute to making texts precise, coherent, simple, understandable and gender-neutral.

² The quality standards are set out in the directives mentioned in Article 2 paragraph 2 of the Languages Ordinance of 4 June 2010^{3,4}

Art. 8 Languages

¹ The languages in which the translation and the other linguistic services are provided are determined primarily by the legislation on languages and official publications.

² Texts that do not fall within paragraph 1 and which are intended to be read by the general public and texts that are intended to aid the internal functioning of the Federal Administration and to be read by its employees shall be made available in several languages, provided their importance and the range of addressees so require.

³ The Federal Chancellery shall set out the details in directives.

Art. 9 Joint planning

The Federal Administration language services and their clients shall jointly determine in their planning process the time required for individual linguistic services; they shall fix deadlines so that quality assurance can be carried out and, in the case of official publications, so that they can be published in all the official languages at the same time.

³ SR 441.11

⁴ Amended by No II 1 of the O of 27 Aug. 2014, in force since 1 Oct. 2014 (AS 2014 2987).