



## International Translation Day

On September 30, translators around the world celebrate the day of their patron saint, Jerome, and with it translation itself—a profession as old as humanity.

FIT's official celebration of International Translation Day began in 1991, when Professor Gonie Bang and the federation's public relations committee called for member associations to use the day to raise their profile. Their aim was to remind users of translation and interpreting services of the important work performed by translators, often with exemplary dedication and, more often still, in the shadows.

While Saint Jerome was an early Christian—he produced the first Latin translation of the Bible and wrote texts on the art of translation—International Translation Day is resolutely secular and non-denominational. In the same spirit, FIT urges translators from all horizons to come together on September 30 to promote the profession by reaching out to fellow translators and interpreters, sister associations, and users of translation services.

In February 1996, FIT president Jean-François Joly reminded delegates to the federation's conference in Melbourne that International Translation Day offers a unique opportunity to meet the goal set in the federation's by-laws: “to uphold the moral and material interests of translators throughout the world; advocate and advance the recognition of their profession; enhance their status in society; and further the knowledge and appreciation of translation as a science and an art.”

Since then, economic ties between countries have developed exponentially. Translators today are cross-cultural communication specialists and essential business partners; without their expertise, it is difficult to work successfully across borders. The economic impact of translation is also growing. Translators must acquire new skills and new approaches to remain (or, in some cases, become) valued partners in a fast-changing world. It is up to translators—as individuals and as a professional community—to meet these new responsibilities with passion, commitment and rigor.

But the challenge of International Translation Day remains the same: to raise awareness of the translation profession. Which is as timely now as it was in 1991. The best way to celebrate the day is by planning activities linked to the current year's theme, which is traditionally defined at the end of the previous year.

Examples include:

- Events targeting the general public (press articles and interviews; meetings with users), using all possible channels
- Events for translators (training courses, seminars, etc.), organized in tandem with sister associations and other stakeholders
- Initiatives to promote a given translator association to the outside world (institutional marketing).

Past successes abound, ranging from targeted distribution of the FIT press release (downloadable from the FIT website) to school outreach, translation competitions, and even outings such as a hike to one of the ten churches dedicated to Saint Jerome in Slovenia!

Today no business or professional organization can afford to neglect promotion—and that includes translators. Use International Translation Day to advance the cause!

*The International Federation of Translators is the world federation of professional associations bringing together translators, interpreters and terminologists. It has 107 members in over 60 countries and represents more than 80,000 professionals. [www.fit-itf.org](http://www.fit-itf.org)*