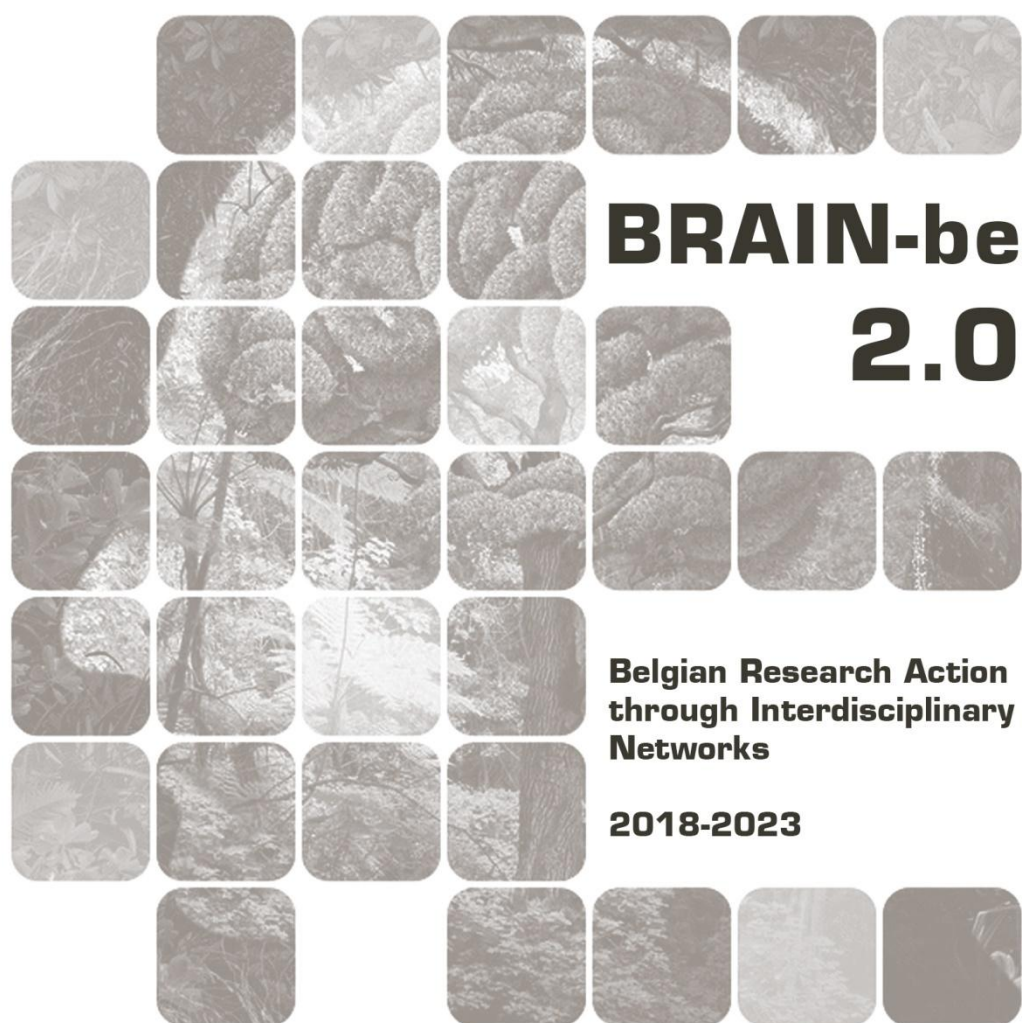


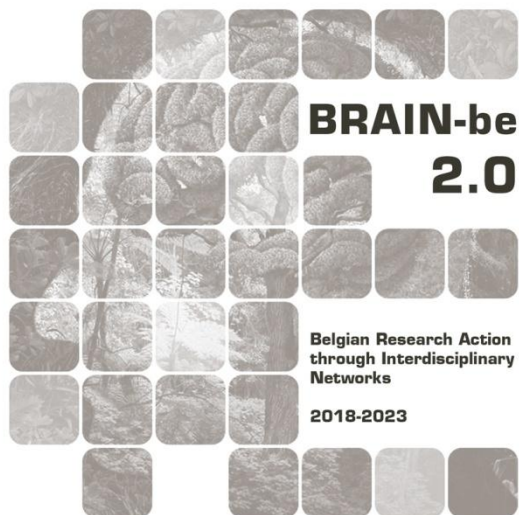


BELTRANS

Intra-Belgian literary translations since 1970

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Pillar 2: Heritage science



NETWORK PROJECT

BELTRANS

Intra-Belgian literary translations since 1970

Contract - B2/202/P2/BELTRANS

FINAL REPORT

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SUMMARY

BELTRANS studied the untold history of literary translation flows in Belgium between French and Dutch in the period 1970–2020. The project examined the link between intra-Belgian cultural transfers and the mutual knowledge and perception of each other's culture during a period of increasing regionalisation of the state, which caused a growing distance between Belgium's linguistic and cultural communities. To this end, the project gathered, linked, enriched and disseminated data on Belgian authors and their works, which had previously been dispersed and disconnected across various collections. In this way, the project contributed significantly to the preservation of Belgium's cultural heritage at both national and international levels and made large quantities of new and FAIR data available for scientific research, as well as for book professionals and a broad public. Until now, intra-Belgian literary translation flows had never been studied at a large and systematic scale, neither quantitatively nor qualitatively, for the previous fifty years. This history remained a blind spot. There had not yet been extensive research on the embeddedness of translation history in the broader political, social and institutional evolutions within multilingual Belgium. Although some qualitative studies had already been devoted to intra-Belgian translation, research had mainly focused on literary translation from Dutch into French, primarily in periodicals, and had covered only a small selection of translators and mediators often situated in early Belgian history or limited corpora. Moreover, existing databases containing translation data required cross-referencing to verify their completeness. KBR had already gathered a vast collection of contemporary Belgian publications through legal deposit, but the Belgian Bibliography still contained some lacunae, and exhaustive FAIR datasets regarding Belgian authors and intra-Belgian translations had not yet been published as open data, nor had they been integrated into global open science data repositories.

In this project, these gaps were addressed by 1) providing as complete a picture as possible of what kinds of books by Belgian authors have been translated into French and Dutch between 1970 and 2020, both within Belgium and abroad; 2) examining book translations across different literary genres circulating in the public sphere, not only highbrow translated literature but also more popular segments of literary production; 3) mapping an unexplored period of cross-cultural actors, translators and networks in Belgian translation history, while also paying attention to gender aspects for the specific period, including the pioneering role played by women in translation activities; 4) linking literary book translations to reciprocal cultural perception between Flanders and Francophone Belgium, to regional and national identity, and to political developments; 5) fine-tuning the concepts and methodologies of existing quantitative and qualitative studies of translational cultural exchanges in multilingual states; 6) studying the interaction between political structures and cultural cohabitation, and finally 7) developing policy guidelines. By doing so, BELTRANS combined an innovative and interdisciplinary approach with strategic goals about the scientific, societal and institutional valorisation of Belgium's cultural heritage.

Keywords: Belgian literature, cultural identity and history, translation, reception, FAIR data, policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The BELTRANS project was conceived to address a major blind spot in Belgian literary, cultural and translation history: the absence of a systematic, large-scale study of literary translations between the Dutch- and French-speaking communities in Belgium. Covering the period 1970-2020, the project investigated how books circulated across linguistic borders within a multilingual federal state, and how translation contributed to cultural exchange, literary mediation, identity formation and mutual perception between Belgium's language communities.

To achieve this objective, BELTRANS combined expertise in literary studies, translation studies, cultural history, sociology of literature, digital humanities and research data management. Through the integration and enrichment of bibliographic and authority data from a wide range of Belgian and international sources, the project developed the first FAIR and open-access research infrastructure dedicated to intra-Belgian literary translations. The resulting BELTRANS corpus and database provide an unprecedented empirical foundation for the study of translation flows, cultural actors, publishing networks, reception processes and translation policies in multilingual contexts.

Beyond the creation of a sustainable research infrastructure, BELTRANS generated new knowledge about the dynamics of literary translation in Belgium, the role of translators and institutions as cultural mediators, and the relationship between translation practices and broader political, social and cultural transformations associated with federalisation, shifting identities and changing cultural policies. The project also contributed to methodological innovation by integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches (consulting archives and performing stakeholder interviews) to translation history and by developing models that can be applied to other multilingual societies.

This final report presents the activities, achievements and impact of the project over its four-year duration. It documents the creation of the BELTRANS database and linked open datasets, the scientific results obtained in the different work packages, the training of young researchers and students, the dissemination and valorisation activities undertaken, and the contribution of the project to research infrastructures, cultural heritage, translation policy and public understanding of Belgium's multilingual literary landscape. Through these achievements, BELTRANS has laid the foundations for future research on literary circulation, cultural transfer and multilingualism in Belgium and beyond.

Summarized, the project combined an innovative and interdisciplinary approach with strategic goals and made an impact on various domains:

- Science: generated knowledge about Belgium, as a society and a cultural space, in a diachronic perspective, and about research data management.
- Economy: had an impact on the Belgian book industry by providing translation policy guidelines and by valorising Belgian authors and their (translated) works, both within Belgium and abroad.
- Society: disseminated the project's results not only in research communities but also among a broad reading audience, with the aim to inform Belgian readers about each other's literature in translation and thus ease the mutual access and create a Belgian readership.

- *Culture*: has rewritten recent Belgian cultural history by stressing the importance of translations and translators as cultural gateways and gatekeepers within Belgium.
- *Policy and public services*: provided translation policy guidelines for the future by showing which strategies have shown themselves to be the most effective ones in promoting or circulating Belgian authors and their (translated) works.
- *Conservation and valorisation of KBR's collections*: helped KBR to identify gaps in the Belgian Bibliography and to collect the missing editions, either via the legal deposit or via purchase.

2. STATE OF THE ART AND OBJECTIVES

Until the beginning of the project, intra-Belgian literary translation flows had never been studied at a large and systematic scale (neither quantitatively nor qualitatively) for the period 1970-2020. Unlike for other countries or language communities (e.g. France & Gillespie 2006; Chevrel et al. 2012; Banoun et al. 2019), the history of literary translation in multilingual Belgium remained a blind spot. Until the beginning of the project, translation flows and other border crossing cultural activities between Flanders and francophone Belgium remained under the radar of literary or cultural historiography, which often ignored intra-Belgian 'connected histories'. Translation – a border crossing and interconnecting activity par excellence –, however, plays a crucial role in the appropriation of literary movements, genres, ideas and values, and in the construction of a national and/or regional cultural and intellectual patrimony (Bachmann-Medick 2016, Malmkjaer 2018). Therefore, a profound insight into Belgium's literary and cultural history in connection with its political developments and (multilingual) cultural identities required a detailed and large-scale study of the key role played by translations. Apart from some initial steps (D'hulst et al. 2016, Schreiber & D'hulst 2017), there had been no extensive research on the embeddedness of translation history in the broader political, social and institutional evolutions within Belgium. During the last two decades, quantitative analyses of book translations (how many books were translated, from and into which languages etc., e.g. Heilbron 2010; Sapiro 2008, 2012) in all societal fields worldwide had been initiated. However, such analyses mainly quantified linear processes of import through translation between monolingual countries (e.g. France, the Netherlands), neglecting the fact that several source and target languages may coexist and interact within one country (e.g. Belgium), and that translations into a specific language may also be delocalized, i.e. produced in another country than Belgium (Brems 2018). In contrast to quantitative research, some qualitative studies had already been devoted to translation in Belgium. Historical descriptive research on literary translation 'made in Belgium' had focused on the analysis of the contextual parameters of translation (publishers, series editors, translators, networks, etc.) and of translational praxis (paratexts, translation strategies, reader response, etc.) (e.g. Gravet 2013; Vanasten 2009, Brems & Ceuppens 2016). However, until now this research had covered only limited corpora and periods, and a small selection of translators and mediators, often situated in early Belgian history (see e.g. D'hulst et al. 2014). Research on intraBelgian translation had mainly focused on literary translation from Dutch into French (Meylaerts 2011a), primarily in periodicals (see e.g. Vandemeulebroucke 2009) and almost always on the interwar period. Moreover, research on literary translation had until now focused either on cases of highbrow literature (the canon of fiction and

poetry, e.g. Brems and Ceuppens 2016) or on genres of non-belletristic literature (comic strips, e.g. Brems 2013), but never on a mix of genres.

As far as the collection of data and data management were concerned, existing databases containing translation data required cross-referencing to verify their completeness. The national deposit library of Belgium, KBR, had already gathered a vast collection of contemporary Belgian publications through legal deposit, but the Belgian Bibliography still contained some lacunae and exhaustive FAIR datasets regarding Belgian contemporary authors and intra-Belgian translations had not yet been published as open data, nor had they been integrated in global open science data repositories.

In this project, these gaps were addressed 1) by providing as complete a picture as possible of which books with legal deposit have been translated between Belgian literatures into French and Dutch since 1970 till 2020, and where these translations were published, taking into account phenomena of delocalization; 2) by looking at book translations of different literary genres that circulate in the public sphere, not only highbrow translated literature, but also more popular segments of literary production; 3) by mapping an unexplored period of cross-cultural actors, translators and networks in Belgian translation history, while also paying attention to gender aspects for the specific period, including the pioneering role played by women in translation activities; 4) by linking literary book translations to reciprocal cultural perception between Flanders and Francophone Belgium, to regional and national identity and to political developments; 5) by fine-tuning the concepts and methodologies of existing quantitative and qualitative studies of translational cultural exchanges for multilingual states, 6) by studying the interaction between political structures and cultural cohabitation, and finally 7) by developing policy guidelines in order to valorise Belgian authors and their works, within Belgium and abroad. By doing so, the project combined an innovative and interdisciplinary approach with strategic goals about the scientific, societal and institutional valorisation of existing data.

The project combined seven interrelated research and strategic objectives (each of them was a work package, see Point 2.2.ii, Methodology):

1) Creating FAIR data on contemporary Belgian authors and their works in French and Dutch translation in order to prepare and establish the corpus

The project gathered, standardized, linked and enriched relevant data from various leading collections (legal deposit, bibliographies and electronic databases, (publisher) archives and catalogues, literary funds) that contained data on contemporary Belgian authors and their works in Dutch or French translation, according to the FAIR data principles. By doing so, BELTRANS provided easy and sustainable data use, in order to stimulate and facilitate scientific research in digital humanities, but also for societal purposes.

2) Mapping and quantitative analysis of intra-Belgian literary translation flows (corpus)

On the basis of the preliminary phase of source investigation and data management, the project mapped the literary book translations between Dutch-speaking and French-speaking Belgium. A quantitative and comparative analysis of those literary translation flows generated insight into 1) size and structure; 2) the influence of genre, language and language position; 3) the most successful

authors and works, as well as the significant gaps and gender (im)balance, 4) the diachronic evolutions of intra-Belgian translation flows. After the quantitative analysis, we narrowed down the corpus of translated texts that were further investigated for the qualitative study in the next steps: novels, comics, children's literature and history.

3) Analysing the roles of organisations, publishing houses and actors

For each of these genres, we then examined which organisations, publishing houses and actors (authors, translators, series' editors, publishers, agents) and with possible gender-differences in the incidence had played a role in the publication of book translations into French and Dutch (1970-2020). This gave insight into 1) the role of various Belgian (Dutch-/French-language) networks and organisations in the selection, production, and circulation of translations, 2) the leading publishing houses both in Belgium and abroad, 3) the profile of the authors, translators, publishers: their educational background, their gender, their legal, social, intellectual, professional position and status, their networks.

4) Studying the reception of the translated texts

BELTRANS studied the reception of a representative selection of works from each of the selected genres of intra-Belgian literary book translations (both the success stories and the failed transfers). This gave insight into 1) the (lack of) knowledge of each other's literature 2) the framing strategies with which the two cultures imported and interpreted each other's literature 3) the norms (literary, social, political, gendered) by which the literary criticism and the public sphere in both parts of the country assessed the other part of the country 4) the image that both parts of the country had of each other's literature and culture 5) the perception of a shared cultural repertoire and identity in both communities and its evolution: whether translations had played a role in the national, Belgian sense of identity.

5) Contextualizing transfers via translation with regards to Belgian cultural and societal evolutions

By studying the processes of intra-Belgian cultural exchange, this project provided insight into how the findings of WP 1-4 related to social, gender, political and cultural evolutions in the timeframe 1970 to 2020, that was relevant to these aspects. It particularly examined if and how the successive state reforms and their consequences on the cultural policies, but also the different shifts in the political landscape, had affected the translation flows, and thus the reciprocal cultural perception in Belgium between the Flemish and French Communities. This project thus filled an important gap in the knowledge about the relationship between intra-national literatures, their translations in an international, multidirectional linguistic space and the embedding of translation processes in the broader linguistic, cultural and political developments within Belgium since 1970.

6) Developing policy guidelines in order to valorise Belgian authors and their works

We provided translation policy guidelines for the future, identifying the strategies that had proven most effective in promoting or circulating Belgian authors and their (translated) works. In terms of mutual understanding and perception, BELTRANS assessed the impact of regional branding (such as

'Flanders Literature'), national branding (such as the campaign 'Lisez-vous le belge?') and cross-cultural cooperation agreements c.q. initiatives. BELTRANS helped federal, regional and local institutions or organisations to share and adopt effective practices and strategies, create synergies and adjust their policies where necessary.

7) Valorisation, dissemination and exploitation

Finally, in addition to the usual publication and dissemination of the research results BELTRANS published as much information online as possible in order to facilitate its (re)use – for subsequent research or for other (professional) ends. The FAIR datasets were integrated into open science data repositories and were made accessible both for scientific exploitation and social valorisation. Moreover, the project's results were disseminated not only in research communities but also among a broad reading public and book professionals (Info Booklet forthcoming). The project also contributed on a permanent basis to the valorisation of Belgian authors and their (translated) works, both within Belgium and abroad. For further details see section Impact.

3. METHODOLOGY

As the scope of the research project concerned the reciprocal translation dynamics between Dutch- and French-speaking literatures in multilingual Belgium over the last 50 years, this project combined different methods of literary and cultural studies, translation and transfer studies, sociology of literature and translation, translation policy, cultural history and politics, discourse analysis, gender studies, reception studies, archival studies, digital humanities and data management studies. The overall methodological approach consisted of systematic data intensive methods and combined qualitative and quantitative methods in order to analyse and understand the research object in all its complexities. Finally, the scholarly methodological framework was combined with various dissemination and valorisation strategies that were indispensable to present the outcomes of the project to a large and diverse audience.

The combination of these various disciplines and methodologies was new and innovative. Indeed, referring to the state of the art before BELTRANS, the research object – translations of literature in the broad sense and through several genres in a multilingual state and in its international, multidirectional connections – had never been studied from this multileveled, interdisciplinary methodological perspective. As one of the project's specific objectives, the further integration of these quantitative and qualitative methodologies was concretized and fine-tuned according to the needs and findings of the project. This generated new methodological and epistemological approaches that should be applicable to other corpora and contexts as well, especially regarding translational cultural exchanges in multilingual states on an international level. Moreover, it was inherent to this multidimensional and collaborative research project, with its diverse networks of collaborators and recipients, that during the project specific scholarly research approaches were conveyed to the implied stakeholders and through methods and channels of data dissemination even to the general public. In their turn, both of these groups gave useful input that was taken into account. This 'agile

methodology', thus consisting of feedback on intermediate findings, allowed adjustments throughout the research process and improved the final results.

Special attention was paid to differentiated outcomes of research data with regard to women and men. With regard to gender aspects, the quantitative approach ensured that gender differentiated data from authors, translators, publishers, agents and networks were collected, indexed and analysed through equality data collection practices. In the same way, the qualitative approach investigated gender differences between women and men as cultural actors and as recipients of translated literary goods and the impact of gender in cultural and institutional networks and transfers.

As far as ethics were concerned, the data sets collected, compiled and obtained from the project gathered and processed personal data from a variety of cultural actors and their networks, with different genders, political opinion and philosophical convictions and coming from various cultural, ethnical and religious backgrounds. They will obviously be treated and analysed in accordance with GDPR, the Law on the protection of privacy. Individuals were asked for their consent and were explicitly informed about the purpose of the interviews in which they participated, by means of an agreement that included all information about the data collection, processing and dissemination.

3.1 Research setting

In order to implement the study objectives mentioned above, to test the research hypothesis and answer the research questions, this project adopted the following research design, based on the selected research strategies and disciplines, their methodological applications, and the choices made about the corpus. Each research objective was methodologically translated into one Work Package (WP). Because these WPs ensued from each other and were therefore largely carried out successively (see 3.2. Work plan), their methodological outlines are presented in chronological order. Although specific methodological options were defined per WP, there was evident methodological and (inter)disciplinary complementarity between them.

Due to a lack of exhaustive bibliographical information about the period under study and because an international intra-Belgian history of literary translations did not exist yet at the time, we first proceeded by a systematic quantitative mapping of data regarding translations between Dutch- and French-speaking literatures within Belgium.

The following combination of criteria and methodological considerations guided the data search queries, as well as the data selection and delimitation:

- 1. Language:** we focused on Dutch and French, both as source and as target languages, because they are the most widely spoken official languages within Belgium, and subsequently the most widely represented languages when it comes to intra-Belgium translations. Moreover, they play a central role in the communitarian controversies. For this project we therefore did not take into account German, even though it is Belgium's third official language. We did not look at the many non-official languages that are spoken within Belgium either (e.g. English, Arabic, Turkish, Congolese languages, ...). We paid attention to the international connections of intra-Belgian translation processes due to possible triangulation with other languages and multidirectionality.

- 2. Nationality/Citizenship:** we focused on (Flemish and French-speaking) Belgian authors, not on Dutch or French authors, and defined a Belgian author as a person who has a Belgian nationality and who contributed to the translation in the role (or MARC21 'relator term') of author, scenarist, illustrator or publishing director. Translations where only the translator was Belgian were therefore out of scope.
- 3. Location:** we took into account books (originals and translations) by Belgian authors published by Flemish or Francophone-Belgian publishers but also by publishers abroad in the Dutch- or French-speaking world, since Belgian authors are often published elsewhere (e.g. the Netherlands, France, Switzerland or Canada), and subsequently distributed within Belgium (Meylaerts 2009).
- 4. Period:** we began in 1970, at the time of the first reform of the Belgian state, which created the cultural communities. The five next steps of the state reform (1980, 1988-1989, 1993, 2001 and 2014), by empowering the federated entities – which could play an important role in supporting and financing the publications and their translation - and modifying the relations between the communities, will be important milestones in the analysis of the evolution of the intra-Belgian translations.

These choices assured both the representativeness of the data sets and the feasibility of the project in line with the research questions.

3.2 Work packages

3.2.1 Work Package 1 – Creating FAIR data on contemporary Belgian authors and their works in French and Dutch translation in order to prepare and establish the corpus

WP1 aimed at the gathering, linking, standardization and enrichment of existing data about literary works of contemporary Belgian authors and their translations into French and Dutch, through the integration of relevant authority data (e.g. authors, publishers, translators ...) and bibliographic data from leading collections.

These four major collections served as direct data sources, meaning that the relevant translations found within them have been integrated into the BELTRANS linked database:

- the catalogue of the Royal Library of Belgium (KBR);
- the Koninklijke Bibliotheek van Nederland (KB);
- the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF);
- the UNESCO – Index translationum.

Other bibliographic sources served as indirect data sources. This means that we used them to search the KBR catalogue for relevant translations and identify them as such by enriching the records with the source language:

- Literatuur Vlaanderen (former Dutch foundation for literature) and the Dutch Foundation for Literature, in particular their Translation database

- Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles – list of supported translations
- Boekenbank from Meta4Books
- WorldCat from OCLC, with a licensing agreement and strict limitations
- Electre Data Services
- University of Vienna – Digital Library and Bibliography of Literature in Translation (DLBT)
- Nederlandse boek in vertaling (1958-1997), both the printed version a digital dataset found in the catalogue of KB (Netherlands)
- Traduqtiv
- Stripinfo!
- Vlaams stripcentrum
- StripDocumentatieCentrum Nederland
- BD Gest'
- Archives & Musée de la Littérature (AML) – literary archives of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, with particular attention for texts produced and published within Belgium
- Publisher archives and catalogues

In order to narrow down the book translations NL-FR and FR-NL to those with at least one Belgian contributor in the role of author, illustrator or scenarist, these data sources have been proven to be very valuable for Belgian authority data:

- the KBR catalogue: info on ca. 43K Belgian persons
- the ISNI database (linked data dump + API-query): info on ca. 43K Belgian persons + bridge identifier
- Wikidata: info on ca. 52K Belgian persons (not all creators of a work) + bridge identifier
- VIAF from OCLC
- the BnF catalogue: info on ca. 21K Belgian persons
- the KB catalogue: info on ca. 11K Belgian persons

Moreover, to enrich data on authors, KBR had previously consulted information from the following sources:

- for Dutch-speaking authors: Letterenhuis, Vlaamse auteursvereniging and Auteurslezingen (Literatuur Vlaanderen);

- for French-speaking authors: Objectif Plumes, BELA, AREAW - Association Royale des Écrivains et Artistes de Wallonie/Bruxelles, AEB - Association des Écrivains belges de langue française, Maison de la poésie, Service du Livre Luxembourgeois.

In order to constitute the expected electronic bibliography, we used FAIR data principles and developed a linked database. Beside the data integration in batch coordinated by KBR, bottom-up data collection methods were implemented, along with the application of technologies in Digital humanities. Further information on the creation of the BELTRANS corpus can be found in an upcoming article by Ann Van Camp and Sven Lieber.

3.2.2 Work Package 2 - Mapping and quantitative analysis of intra-Belgian literary translation flows

After the preliminary phase of source investigation and data management, once our overview of intra-Belgian literary translations since 1970 was complete, we proceeded to WP2. This involved a quantitative and comparative mapping of the collected data on intra-Belgian literary book translations.

To this end, we used quantitative methods from translation sociology (Heilbron 2009; Sapiro 2008 & 2009), combined with methodological insights specific of multilingual cultures with their complex ways of articulating and institutionalising languages and cultures in relation to territories and/or linguistic, societal and political constellations (see a.o. Meylaerts 2009). The first research results obtained allowed to fine-tune the existing and used quantitative methods, and we sought for methodological innovations valuable for other researchers, see Brems, Meylaerts & Vanasten (forthcoming).

After the quantitative analysis and the subsequent identification of key actors and sectors of translation, and the synthetic conclusions about intra-Belgian literary translation flows that resulted from it, we narrowed down the **corpus** of translated texts and went more deeply into its qualitative investigation in the next steps (WP 3-5), in order to distinguish five distinct types of translation: novels, comics, youth books, poetry and literary non-fiction & life writing. The genres were selected on the basis of partial existing research indicators (see state of the art), pilot research by the promoters and available data check samples. The genre-selection was also aligned with the categories used in the Belgian bibliography (KBR).

1. **Novels** are situated in the front line of translated literature, and their authors receive plenty of media attention, which provided material to measure the impact and perception in both language communities.
2. **Comics** are a 'Belgian specialty' and the perception of them contributes greatly to a Belgian sense of national identification, at least abroad. In both language areas, comics are a genre that is produced within Belgium and translated internationally (Heilbron 2009, Brems 2013 & 2018). Some comics or comics series were also structurally (sometimes quasi simultaneously) published in French and in Dutch.

3. **Children's literature** is, thanks to public grants in the context of reading promotion, one of the most substantially translated genres (with no less than 43 % in the category of literature), at least abroad.
4. **History and literary non-fiction** represented a significant category of translated literature (from Dutch into French for the contemporary period for instance) and was particularly well-adjusted to our research into cultural identity and societal themes.
5. **Poetry** was added as fifth genre in the framework of an additional FWO-project G046221N "België-Belgique: fifty years of intra-Belgian literary translations (1970-2020)", because poetry, like comics, is a genre in which Belgian publishers have specialised.

With this genre selection, we covered a large quantitative part of the literary spectrum and looked at different segments of the literary field, each with their own specificities. Moreover, this selection helped us to tackle questions of collective memory (e.g. collective 'heroes', fictional settings that strengthen cultural identity and belonging) that proved important for the mutual cultural perception and representation of both communities. By selecting these five genres, we assured furthermore, on a quantitative level, the most representative corpus when we take into account the global collected data in the electronic bibliography. For each of those genres, a number of authors and their translated works were selected, ensuring that the gender balance of the qualitative corpus faithfully reflected the gender balance observed during the quantitative analysis. For the qualitative analysis, the feasibility of interpreting the data was also assured thanks to the clearly defined scope of the corpus.

3.2.3 Work Package 3 – Analysing the roles of actors, institutions and organisations

In WP3 we investigated for each publication genre the role and function of actors, institutions, nonprofit organisations and publishing houses in the publication of book translations into French and Dutch in Belgium over the last 50 years, by means of a qualitative approach based on the previous empirical and interpretative quantitative results.

We first used insights from translation sociology. This allowed us to identify key individual actors involved in intra-Belgian translation processes, to examine their status, role and place in the societal and institutional networks, and to write and document the profiles of a representative, gender-balanced selection among them.

For the analysis of the institutions, publishing houses, associations and organisations, we took a translation policy approach (Kang 2014, Meylaerts 2011), i.e. an analysis of economically as well as culturally inspired translation policies. To reconstruct Belgian literary translation policy, we conducted extensive and in-depth archival research, exploring previously untapped archival collections and bringing them into meaningful dialogue with our research questions. This allowed us to take into account translation transfers that were not only determined and caused by cultural and historical factors, but also by more economic impulses. Nearly twenty actors were interviewed in order to evaluate the aids and measures of public institutions since the 1970's. Digital tools such as Excel, Tableau or Python were implemented in order to visualize the networks and findings.

At the end, we fine-tuned the existing concepts and methodologies and developed new multidisciplinary models of research to investigate and map out the role of actors, institutions and organisations, not only in the construction of a multilingual Belgian culture, but also in intra-national literary translation processes. These insights were valuable in other contexts and applicable to other corpora that are concerned with intra-national literary translation, or broader translational cultural exchanges in multilingual states. Finally, these data and insights about actors, institutions and organisations allowed us to prepare the research setting for the investigation of the reception of the studied translations (WP4).

3.2.4 Work Package 4 – Studying the reception of the translated texts

Next, we delimited for WP4, on the basis of our previous findings, a representative selection of works from each of the five types of intra-Belgian literary book translations. For this exemplary sample, we elaborated a second corpus consisting of metadata, reception documents about the authors and their works in translation, in order to bring into light the intellectual, professional and public audience and reception for these selected translated works in the other part of the country.

We collected a corpus of translation criticism, i.e. the reception documents relating to the translated texts, and to the reception study itself for the selected works. To complete the metadata corpus, a mixed approach of collecting reviews (press, radio, TV, social media), archival work, and interviews provided the data in Dutch- and French-language for analysing both the professional (critics) and public (readers, audience) reception and perception. Here a reception studies approach (see below) was applied, collecting reviews of the translated texts through online databases (Delpher, BNTL, LiteRom, GoPress, Europresse...) and semi-digitized databases (KBR-databases, VRT, RTBF,...). We looked at the literary criticism in the media: newspapers and magazines, radio and TV, internet sources, paying also attention to the women-men balance among critics. We also analysed the line-up of literary festivals (invitations of authors), literature readings and book fairs, using online search engines and posters and brochures kept in archives (Letterenhuis, Archives et Musée de la littérature). Reviews and press articles that had not yet been published as open data were retrieved and transferred to the researchers thanks to the help of professional associations and literary archives, that were willing to give access to their funds for the needs of research. Field experience and knowledge of methodological axes from the partners and literary archives regarding several funds completed the reception study design.

Analyzing the review materials was done using reception studies and the framing theory as it was operationalized for Translation Studies by Mona Baker and others (Baker 2006). In order to formulate synthetic accounts on the status and visibility of intra-Belgian literary translation, and its reception in Belgian history (1970-2020), we relied on cultural transfer studies as implemented in the various fields of Literary Studies (Leerssen 2014, Roland, Lüsebrink 2008 & 2010), Translation Studies (Göpferich, Meylaerts, Gonne 2016) or Cultural and Art History (Werner & Zimmermann 2003, Middell 2013 & 2016), but also on methodological axes that made it possible to cartography failed transfers and to draw conclusions about misunderstandings and transfers in the margins. For taking into account the intra-Belgian cultural history and its cross-cultural activities, insights from the research paradigm of

connected histories (Subrahmanyam 1997) were fruitful, as well as from cultural history and its approach regarding national identities (Anderson 2006) and memory (Nora 2011). The epistemology and the methods of contemporary history - especially regarding oral sources, but also its societal issues (Lagrou 2013) -, were also crucial in order to integrate properly historical criticism to the analysis.

3.2.5 Work Package 5 – Contextualising the literary transfers through translation with regard to Belgian cultural and societal evolutions

These historical approaches were even more central in WP 5. We considered the findings of WP 1-4 and applied a cultural history and *histoire croisée*/Verflechtungsgeschichte-approach (Werner & Zimmerman 2003, Lüsebrink 2008), to make the link with the cultural, political and social developments of Belgium since 1970, focusing on the interplay between literary translation and history at large (Kurgan & Montens 2001, Cortjaens et al. 2008). This way, the collected data were historicized and contextualized against the background of the period under study, which involved the successive state reforms and their consequences on cultural policies, such as the increasing regionalization of literatures and cultures. This historical contextualization allowed us to analyse both the specificity of translation practices as a subdomain of cultural life, and the way in which these practices reflect, were part of, had influence on, and could be understood by means of the general evolutions and shifts within Belgian culture, politics and society. The successive reforms of the Belgian state played a role of milestone in the analysis of the intra-Belgian translations. Here, the evolutions that emerged through WP 1-4 were scrutinized in light of the successive mutations of the Belgian state, in terms of federalisation. To put it simply, this process created new political entities, with strong identity issues at stake, gave them more and more power, and transformed their relations, with the citizens, with the central/federal state and with each other. Each step of this process emerged from shifts in the political landscape, but also contributed to new changes. The rising political autonomy and financial latitude of these entities, but also the development of their own cultural policies, including in economic terms, but also in terms of real ‘nation-building’ projects, had an impact on the translation flows, which was at the center of our project. This project thus brought a substantial contribution to political history, not by describing the political debates and the reforms themselves, but by evaluating the results of these reforms on the practices in the field of translation.

The corpus of the previous WPs was questioned to evaluate the impact of the multiple aspects of the reforms of the Belgian state on the actors, the institutions and organisations and the reception of the translations and, eventually, on the translation flows themselves. This gave a very innovative insight on Belgian political history, by reversing the traditional approach. Instead of capturing it from a top-down perspective, focused on the actors and the cause of the political decision, we considered it through its consequences, from below. And these consequences had not only a political dimension, but also fell within the frame of cultural history and economic history. However, beside the major question of the institutional mutations and their impact on the identities, the question of the intra-Belgian translations was also examined in the light of societal, economic and technological mutations, which exceed the limits of the Belgian state. Globalization, European construction or the rise of information and communication technologies represent macro-mutations in the long run, with huge

linguistic, economic and identity issues. All of them transformed the world and the Belgian society, and we needed to understand how those transformations affected the material framework, needs, objectives, and results of the intra-Belgian translation flows.

The question of the rupture or the continuities in the cultural exchanges between the two main linguistic communities, through the successive reforms of the Belgian state and the societal evolutions (Destatte, 2019), was thus central in WP 5. It yielded an understanding of the relation between the translation of literature in the broadest sense, the production of culture and the specificities of Belgian contemporary history. Moreover, through this historicized and contextualised translation analysis, we gained insight into the reciprocal cultural perception between Flanders and Francophone Belgium.

3.2.6 Work Package 6 – Developing policy guidelines in order to valorise Belgian authors and their works, within Belgium and abroad

Building upon our research findings, which revealed untold (hi)stories about intra-Belgian literary translation dynamics in the past 50 years through interrelating, enriching and integrating (digital) collections from various sources, we concluded our study in WP6 by:

- suggesting effective valorisation strategies for intra-national cultural heritage in Belgium, in terms of visibility, circulation and mutual understanding of Belgian authors and their (translated) works in both language communities;
- proposing suggestions for the future on the basis of the research outcomes related to the impact of regional or national branding or cross-cultural cooperation agreements c.q. initiatives;
- formulating translation policy guidelines for federal, regional and local institutions and organisations, Info Booklet forthcoming.

3.2.7 Work Package 7 – Valorisation, dissemination and exploitation of the research results for a scientific, professional and cultural public

Finally, in WP7, we adopted strategies to contribute on a permanent basis to the valorisation of Belgian authors and their (translated) works, both within Belgium and abroad.

The created FAIR datasets, via the electronic bibliography, were integrated into open science data repositories and in this way were made accessible for both scientific exploitation and social valorisation.

In addition to the usual publication and dissemination strategies of the research results through project progress updates, scientific articles and conference papers, public interventions, workshop, a final international conference and the final report, we published as much information online as possible in order to facilitate its (re)use – for subsequent research or for other (professional) ends. Communication was handled through appropriate channels with awareness of ethical or gender issues. Thanks to the cooperation with regional governments and literary archives, the project's results were not only disseminated in research communities but also among a broad reading public and book professionals, e.g. during the Foire du Livre de Bruxelles 2023.

3.2.8 Work Package 8 – Coordination, project management and reporting

KBR was in charge of the coordination, management and reporting throughout the project in order to ensure:

- a feasible and up-to-date project planning and resource management which guaranteed the timely delivery of all outputs,
- necessary information exchange infrastructure, monthly team meetings and efficient internal communication,
- agenda items and reports of meetings,
- interim and final project reports for BELSPO,
- publication and dissemination of the research results.

3.2.9 Work Package 9 – Writing of PhD thesis by the PhD students

BELTRANS resulted in one defended PhD thesis (Ewoud Goethals, KU Leuven, 3 April 2026), and a second PhD thesis (Clara Folie) will follow at UCLouvain. A third PhD-thesis was funded by FWO-project G046221N and was also successfully defended in March 2026. See also section 6.3.

3.2.10 Work Package 10 – Data management

KBR was in charge of the data management during the entire project. It ensured full compliance with FAIR data principles and the legal framework in terms of collecting, processing and disseminating all data and documents during the project. In practice, all data was stored in the OneDrive environment of KU Leuven, where all project partners had access. TABLE I provides a summary of the data management which is further explained in the remainder of this section.

TABLE I: Summary of BELTRANS' data management

Name	Category	Type	Format	Volume	License	Preservation
Corpus input data	Input	Bibliographic and authority data	XML, CSV or RDF	Several hundred MBs	Unesco Open Access, CC0-1.0, Etalab	KU Leuven RDR
BELTRANS corpus	Output	Bibliographic and authority data, enriched with external identifiers and Geo encoding.	CSV and RDF	167 MB (3.04 GB including all intermediate versions)	CC-BY 4.0	Zenodo, SODHA
Grant information	Input	Tables	CSV	> 10 MB	restrictive	KU Leuven RDR
Interviews	Output	Audio, videos and transcripts	MP3, m4a, mp4, txt, docx	1.48 GB	restrictive	KU Leuven RDR
Archive material	Input	Images	.jpg	8.65 GB	restrictive	KU Leuven RDR
Bibliographies	Output	Bibliographic references	.bib	> 10MB	Open	KU Leuven RDR

Corpus input data

This data comes from the catalogue of KBR and data sources that are publicly available such as data from the National Library of France (BnF), the ISNI database or the Online Database UNESCO Index Translationum. Retrieving and integrating this information was the main challenge of WP1. Depending on the data source, the data was retrieved via data dumps or query endpoints in the formats XML, CSV or RDF.

Each data source was documented by its creator. We additionally documented how we extracted the data. Both the source code for data extraction with related documentation as well as declarative mapping rules describing how to map fields from heterogeneous formats to RDF entities are available via a GitHub repository: <https://github.com/kbrbe/beltrans-data-integration>

This data was used to compile our corpus. We do not re-publish this already available data, but we use it as provenance information and add links from respective BELTRANS corpus entities.

BELTRANS corpus

In accordance with WP1, this corpus is available under the CC-BY 4.0 license via the open repository Zenodo and the SODHA platform <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20668316>

The corpus' native model is RDF, but serializations of it are available as CSV and in different RDF serialization formats. In addition to the data dumps, we developed a user interface to explore the corpus. This user interface is based on the SAMPO-UI software and will be hosted at <https://beltrans.kbr.be>

Whereas the actual corpus files are deposited on research data repositories with guaranteed preservation for at least 20 years, the enriched underlying bibliographic and authority data are part of the KBR catalogue. Hence they are part of the Belgian legal deposit and preserved as part of KBR's legal mission.

Grant information

This information was requested from literary funding agencies and was delivered via E-mail in the form of spreadsheets. This information is not disclosed via the corpus.

Interviews

Interviews were conducted by the PhD students together with various stakeholders and by using commodity software and hardware, e.g. smartphones or online meeting tools like Microsoft Teams. Metadata like signed consent forms were deposited on the OneDrive next to created transcripts and if kept, the original audio or video.

Archival material

Different archives were consulted by the PhD students. Images were taken, stored in the OneDrive environment and manually consulted when needed.

Bibliographies

Throughout the project, the PhD students collected references in the collaborative bibliography managing tool Zotero. However, this database was only used during the project, and the theses of the PhD students represent the most complete bibliographies.

3.3 Costs of data-sets

No costs had to be incurred for data sets acquisition. We worked on the basis of existing databases, collections and repositories, and obtained bibliographies, registers of authors and their works and (access to) archives thanks to collaboration with the stakeholders, who we proposed to be members of the follow-up committee.

The two corpuses of data that needed to be gathered and established concerned 1) the primary systematic inventory of data (WP 1) regarding the Belgian authors and their book translations in Dutch

and in French, and also their Belgian and foreign publishers, based on existing databases, collections and repositories; 2) the new metadata of translation criticism about a representative selection of five translated literary genres within the first corpus database, and the surveys from the focus groups (WP 3 & 4).

4. SCIENTIFIC RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Research & Innovation Results

At the end of the BELTRANS-project, we have:

WP1 – established <https://beltrans.kbr.be>, the first scientific digital and open access database of translated intra-Belgian book literature into French and Dutch for the period 1970-2020, which also includes information on source titles, a list of contemporary Belgian Dutch- and French-speaking authors and a register of Belgian and foreign publishers who published Belgian authors since 1970. The underlying linked datasets were also published on Zenodo and Social Sciences and Digital Humanities Archive – [SODHA](#), both in RDF and csv;

WP2 – *WP3* – *WP 4* – *WP5*: Within work packages 2 to 5, we produced a substantial body of presentations and scholarly publications, reflecting the breadth and depth of the research carried out throughout the project. An overview of these outputs can be found under sections 5.4 (Presentations) and 6.1–6.2 (Publications).

In addition to these results, the project's findings have also been consolidated in the doctoral theses developed in its framework. These theses further elaborate on the project's results and contribute to its long-term academic impact. At the time of writing, one of these dissertations has already been successfully defended and is publicly accessible online (6.3).

WP 6 – provided translation policy guidelines for the future, in order to help federal, regional and local institutions and organisations to share and adopt effective practices and strategies, create synergies and adjust their policies if necessary (Info Booklet forthcoming);

WP 7 – provided information about the project and its results on the partner's websites and on social media; presented conference papers; organized an international conference; shared the data in open data repositories;

WP 8 – provided a project planning and resource management plan, including intern reports of meetings and interim and final project reports for BELSPO; through publications we will have delivered the outcomes and research results of the project to all partners, institutions, organisations, stakeholders, professional associations and a general audience;

WP 9 – delivered one PhD thesis (from Ewoud Goethals) and prepared a third PhD thesis (from Clara Folie with BELSPO funding), expected to be published and shared with a broad community and considered as significant scientific results of the project. A third PhD thesis was funded by FWO (Timothy Sirjacobs) and defended in March 2026.

WP 10 – delivered reports on full compliance with the FAIR data principles and legal framework regarding the collecting, processing and dissemination of all data and documents during the project.

4.2 Outcome

4.2.1 Leverage

The project its results and the built up expertise in Linked Data infrastructures have resulted in three new project applications:

- BLIS. Belgian Literature in Secondary Education (2024-2028), BOF C2 KU Leuven (524.000 EUR). Promotors Elke Brems, Elke D’hoker and Reine Meylaerts (KU Leuven).
- BiB, Biodiversity in Belgium. Application submitted to FWO (Senior Projects) in April 2026. Promotors Elke Brems (KU Leuven), Reine Meylaerts (KU Leuven), Sven Lieber (KBR).
- MetaBelgica. A shared entity management infrastructure between Federal Scientific Institutions in Belgium (2023-2026), INFRA-FED programme of BELSPO (728.560 EUR). Promotors Hannes Lowagie (KBR), Karine Lasaracina (MRBAB/KMSKB), Erik Buelinckx (IRPA/KIK), Els Angenon (MRAH/KMKG).

4.2.2 Training

The BELTRANS project has given eight KBR interns and two volunteers (Samuel Limpens and Ayla Van Damme) the opportunity to develop highly sought-after skills in the research and information sector under the supervision of Ann Van Camp and/or Sven Lieber, whilst contributing to the compilation of the corpus or the enrichment of translation, author, translator and publisher data:

- 2021, 3 March – 19 May: Quinten De Smet (Universiteit Antwerpen, Bachelor Taal- en Letterkunde)
- 2021, 4 October – 10 December: Camille Breyre (UCLouvain, Master en Sciences et Technologies de l’Information et de la Communication)
- 2022, 7 February – 31 Juin: Fabrizio Pascucci (KU Leuven, Master Digital Humanities)
- 2022, 18 October – 15 December: Alexia Wagmans (ULiège, Master complémentaire en Éditions et Métiers du Livre à finalité approfondie)
- 2023, 23 January – 3 March: Laure Grabowski (IESSID – HE2B, Bibliothécaire-documentaliste)
- 2024, 12 February – 31 May: Meihan Luo (KU Leuven, Master Digital Humanities)
- 2024, 16 September – 14 February: Caroline Laqua (TH Köln, Bachelor Library and Information Science)
- 2026, 9 February – 13 April: Hanne Colémont (Universiteit Antwerpen, Master Taal- en Letterkunde), regarding translation flows NL-EN and EN-NL

At UCLouvain, the BELTRANS project has provided master's student in History Guillaume Toisoul with the opportunity to conduct innovative archival research and to develop digital humanities expertise, scientific research skills and training/experience in academic publishing under the supervision of Clara Folie, Emmanuel Debruyne and Stéphanie Vanasten. At the same time, he has contributed to the refinement, cleaning and validation of the historical corpus data, the enrichment of author–translator–authority role combinations, including gender-related information, and the development and testing of additional visualisations and analytical graphs.

4.2.3 Improved access to KBR's collections, in particular the Belgian Bibliography

Thanks to the BELTRANS project, KBR has improved access to its contemporary printed books and enhanced the functionalities of the general catalogue in several areas:

- The **data quality** of records on contemporary book publications has improved significantly because, in collaboration with the Bibliographic Information Agency, we have introduced several new information fields (e.g. the source language of translations or the gender of the author), a number of fields are now mandatory (e.g. the country of publication and the language of the document), a large number of provisional basic records have been enriched into full bibliographic descriptions as part of the project, duplicates have been removed, and the classification category for thousands of comic books has been changed from children's literature to comic books, etc.

To illustrate: the 'source language' information field (041\$h in MARC21) was added to the KBR catalogue specifically for BELTRANS, and over 86K translations have now been enriched with their source language. Furthermore, the number of 'authors' (= person authorities) that we were able to identify as Belgian has **tripled** during the BELTRANS-project.

- The **search criteria** in the catalogue have been expanded to include both the language of publication and -if applicable- a source language, so that users can find translations more easily.
- The so-called 'permalinks' for KBR records will henceforth be truly **persistent URIs**, so that users no longer risk encountering error messages or broken links when duplicates are merged or a record is deleted for any reason.
- Partly thanks to BELTRANS and partly due to the fact that KBR became an ISNI registration agency in October 2020, KBR has decided to make the module containing person records (i.e. **authors**) available **in the general catalogue** as well. In the course of 2026, KBR will also disclose the module containing corporate bodies (i.e. **publishers**) in the general catalogue. This will allow users to view not only the collection items, but also the person contributors or organisations that created them.

Furthermore, BELTRANS was the first major research project to make extensive use of both the collection and the classification system of the Belgian Bibliography, which provided a strong case for the complete digitisation of the printed '[Bibliographie de Belgique](#)' in 2025 and its publication on

www.belgicaperiodicals.be to mark the 150th anniversary of the first issue (1875).

Last but not least, the fact that KBR acted as a partner in a translation research project means that translation researchers now find it easier to approach KBR with requests to facilitate their research.

4.3 Impact

4.3.1 Scientific knowledge, future capacities and skills

The project has generated knowledge about Belgium, as a society and a cultural space, in a diachronic perspective. This knowledge is quantitative as well as qualitative (WP2-5). The gathered data about translation flows between Belgian literatures show the strengths and weaknesses of the interaction of cultures within Belgium. Our analysis of the data shows which actors play which part in the formation (or lack thereof) of a multilayered Belgian cultural space and how translation influences the knowledge and image of each other. Our project also provides the necessary data and analysis for stakeholders and policy makers to act upon, according to their views and stakes. Other scholars can use our data, analyses and methods for future research into translation flows in Belgium or other multilingual societies. The project has also generated knowledge about data gathering and management of translation flows and the integration of databases (WP1). This knowledge is useful for other, future projects that intend to put to use existing but not well integrated or fully operational databases.

4.3.2 Economy

Our project intends to have an impact on the Belgian book industry. In WP6 we provided translation policy guidelines for the future by showing which strategies have shown themselves to be the most effective ones in promoting or circulating Belgian authors and their (translated) works and the impact of regional or national branding or cross-cultural cooperation agreements. This way, BELTRANS can help federal, regional and local institutions and organisations to share and adopt effective practices and strategies, create synergies and adjust their policies if necessary. It will also contribute on a permanent basis to the valorisation of Belgian authors and their (translated) works, both within Belgium and abroad.

4.3.3 Civil society

The project's results are not only disseminated in research communities but also among a broad reading audience (see 'Valorisation'). It is our aim to inform Belgian readers about each other's literature in translation and thus ease the mutual access of each other's literatures.

4.3.4 Culture and heritage

WP2-5 have rewritten recent Belgian cultural history by stressing the importance of translations and translators as cultural gateways and gatekeepers within Belgium. Belgian literary heritage does not only consist of Dutch or francophone 'original' texts but also of translations into both languages: they are the marks of Belgian cultural interaction and an often forgotten but crucial layer of Belgian literary production. Making this dimension of Belgian cultural heritage visible was quintessential for this project.

4.3.5 Policy and public services

WP6 especially was concerned with informing policy. In WP6 we provided translation policy guidelines for the future by showing which strategies have shown themselves to be the most effective ones in promoting or circulating Belgian authors and their (translated) works and the impact of regional or national branding or cross-cultural cooperation agreements. We did this through a stakeholder meeting (21 November 2025) and by means of an Info Booklet (forthcoming). This way, BELTRANS can help federal, regional and local institutions and organisations to share and adopt effective practices and strategies, create synergies and adjust their policies if necessary. The public institutions, organisations or book professionals in our follow-up committee will benefit from our research in this way.

4.3.6 Collection management and conservation

WP1 has helped KBR to identify the gaps in the legal deposit collection ('the Belgian Bibliography') and to collect the missing editions, either via the legal deposit or via purchase (of new editions or second-hand for older works). In this way, BELTRANS contributed to the collection, preservation and accessibility of the national publishing heritage, for present and future generations.

5. DISSEMINATION AND VALORISATION

A range of specific valorisation, dissemination and exploitation activities was undertaken during the project:

5.1. Websites

As soon as BELTRANS started, all three partners announced the project on their research webpages; and as KBR was leading the dissemination activities, the KBR webpage on BELTRANS contained the most comprehensive information about the project:

- Research @ KBR (NL/ENG/FR): <https://www.kbr.be/en/projects/beltrans>
- KU Leuven Research Portal (NL/ENG): <https://research.kuleuven.be/portal/en/project/3H210331>

- UCLouvain INCAL Projets de recherche financés (FR/ENG) : https://www.uclouvain.be/fr/instituts-recherche/incal/grands-projets-subsidies?pk_vid=5f905198e13510601782865883a25ccf#collapseExample856

Newsletter INCAL, nr. 18, June 2021: https://cdn.uclouvain.be/groups/cms-editors-incal/newsletters/Newsletter%2018_0.pdf

5.2. Social media

We have used the social media accounts of our institutions and research groups (primarily LinkedIn) to announce our activities and events.

5.3. Open data repositories

As regards the yearly status reports, these were published annually on ORFEO, the institutional Open Access repository for Federal Science Policy funded research:

- First year (March 2022): <https://orfeo.belnet.be/handle/internal/10738>
- Second year (March 2023): <https://orfeo.belnet.be/handle/internal/10860>
- Third year (February 2024): <https://orfeo.belnet.be/handle/internal/11293>
- Fourth year (May 2025) <https://orfeo.belnet.be/handle/internal/14051>

Furthermore, in keeping with the principles of open science, the development of the linked database, the integration of data from various sources, the pipeline for generating an Excel export and the high-level statistics on the corpus were fully documented on GitHub: <https://github.com/kbrbe/beltrans-data-integration>. GitHub is an online platform and social network where software developers can store and manage their programme code and collaborate in teams.

Last but not least, bibliographical and authority data of contemporary intra-Belgian translations were made accessible both for scientific exploitation and social valorisation. The BELTRANS corpus is available under the CC-BY 4.0 license via the open repository Zenodo and the SODHA platform <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20668316>

To facilitate human discovery, visualisations, and selected exports, we also gave access to the linked database via a SAMPO User Interface on <https://beltrans.kbr.be>.

5.4. Presentations

The project and the research results were presented at national and international conferences, both within the academic field (e.g. the International Conference of the Association for Low Countries Studies in Edinburgh 2022 or the DH Benelux 2022 in Luxembourg) and in the book industry (e.g. the Foire du Livre de Bruxelles on 30 March 2023).

Brems, Elke (2024, 1-5 July), Book circulation through translation in a multilingual state: the case of Belgium. Paper at the SHARP conference Global Book Cultures in Reading (UK).

Brems, Elke and Vanasten, Stéphanie (2025, 29 August), “Boek, vertaling en meertaligheid in het transnationale literaire veld”. *Nederlands in meertalige contexten*, 22ste Colloquium Neerlandicum (25-29/08), Internationale Vereniging voor Neerlandistiek, VUB, Brussels.

Brems, Elke; Folie, Clara; Goethals, Ewoud; Lieber, Sven; Moors, Marianne; Sirjacobs, Timothy; Vanasten, Stéphanie; Van Camp, Ann (2025, november 21), “Vertalingen tussen Vlaanderen en Franstalig-België 1970-2020”, Stakeholder meeting over BELTRANS, KBR.

Folie, Clara (2022, July 12), ““For the Homeland’?: Two books by Max Deauville and their translations at the heart of the memorial and identity knot of the Great War in Belgium”. 14th International Conference of the Association for Low Countries Studies, University of Edinburgh.

Folie, Clara (2022, October 21), “Une revue comme trait d’union ? Transfert et réception des ouvrages néerlandophones dans les comptes-rendus de la Revue du Nord (1970-2020)”. Franco-Belgian University Relationships in Historical Context From the 19th to the 21st century, University of Lille, laboratoire IRHIS.

Folie, Clara (2024, 11-14 September), Building Walls or Building Bridges? Exploring the Impact of Belgian federalization on Translation Policies and Literary Translations (1970-2020). Paper at the HTN conference History, Translation, Politics.

Folie, Clara (2024, 1-5 July), Colonial Memories in Translation: A Case Study on Intra-Belgian Translations from 1970 to 2020, Paper at the SHARP conference Global Book Cultures in Reading (UK).

Folie, Clara and Sirjacobs, Timothy (2024, 29 November), “Are Translation Policies the Blind Spot of Literature? Translation Policies in a Federalizing State (1970-2020), International conference BELTRANS “Book translation in multilingual states (1945-2024), 29 November 2024.

Folie, Clara (2024), “Building Walls or Building Bridges? Exploring the Impact of Federalization on translation policies and Belgian-Literary Translations (1970-2020)” HTN 2024 conference “History-Translation-Politics”, Graz, 11-14 September 2024.

Folie, Clara (2025), “Défis, opportunités et enjeux méthodologiques de l’histoire du Temps Présent. L’expérience du projet BELTRANS”, UCLouvain, 21 mars 2025.

Goethals, Ewoud (2022, July 12), “A Belgian children’s classic? Casterman’s Martine Children’s Book Series and its Dutch Translation Tiny in the Transnational Publishing Field”. 14th International Conference of the Association for Low Countries Studies, University of Edinburgh.

- Goethals, Ewoud (2022, May 11), "BELTRANS. Literaire vertaalstromen tussen Vlaanderen en Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles 1970-2020". SEL-workshop 'Nederlandse Literatuurstudie in de steigers', University of Ghent.
- Goethals, Ewoud (2023, 22-23 August), Pastel Unicorns. Intra-National Translation Flows of Belgian Children's Literature. Paper at Children's Literature and Translation Studie (CLTS) conference in Stockholm.
- Goethals, Ewoud (2023, 24-26 August), "Van controversieel feministisch media figuur tot 'leading lady des lettres flamandes': de opvallend positieve receptie van Kristien Hemmerechts in Franstalig België", International symposium on diversity in the transnational circulation of Dutch Language Literature, Stockholm.
- Goethals, Ewoud, 'Veldtheorie in een meertalige en transnationale context. Literaire uitwisseling en vertalingen van romans en jeugdliteratuur tussen Vlaanderen en Franstalig België (1970-2020)', Velden en wegen. Achter de verhalen, Radboud Universiteit, Nijmegen 30/10-1/11/2024
- Lieber, Sven (2022, January 18), "The BELTRANS project, Linked Data and Wikidata". Vorlesungsreihe "Praxis der Digital Humanities" at University of Trier, online.
- Lieber, Sven (2022, September 14), "The Benefits of International Standards for Research Data Management". Zenodo.
- Lieber, Sven (2025) 'Presentation on BELTRANS', Book History @ KBR, Royal Library of Belgium, Belgium, 17 September 2025.
- Lieber, Sven and Birkholz, Julie (2021, October 19), "Linked Data and Cultural Heritage". TNT LECTURE SERIES at UCLouvain, online.
- Lieber, Sven and Van Camp, Ann (2022, May 5), "Open Science and Linked Data to Create a FAIR Corpus of Intra-Belgian Book Translations 1970-2020". DH Benelux 2022 – ReMIX: Creation and alteration in DH (hybrid), Belval Campus, Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg and online.
- Lieber, Sven; Van Camp, Ann and Lowagie, Hannes (2022, November 28), "A LITL more quality: Improving the correctness and completeness of library catalogs with a Librarian-In-The-Loop Linked Data Workflow". Semantic Web in Libraries (SWIB) 2022.
- Meylaerts, Reine (2026, April 20), "Diversity or Fragmentation? Studying Literary Translation Policies as Entangled Practices", Keynote for the international conference "Cultural Diversity and Funded Translations: Between Institutional Gatekeeping and the Market, Past and Present" 20th-22nd April 2026, Barcelona.

- Sirjacobs, Timothy and Goethals, Ewoud (2022, June 10), "National poet, national poetry? The production and reception of *Lavis à l'encre*, an intra-belgian translation, by Charles Ducal". Binnenlandse Vogels, Buitenlandse Nesten.
- Van Camp, Ann (2021, June 8), Presentatie van BELTRANS in "Labs & DH Onderzoeksprojecten bij KBR", Onderzoekseminarie KULeuven Bibliotheken, online.
- Vanasten, Stéphanie & Vandepontseele, Sophie (2022, March 30), "Les auteurs-traducteurs dans les traductions du livre intra-belges 1970-2020: le projet BELTRANS". Foire du livre, Brussels. Report by Adrien Verdebout on: <https://traduqtiv.com/2023/05/02/8eme-journee-de-la-traduction-de-la-foire-du-livre/>.
- Vanasten, S., Brems, E., (2024). "Introduction to the conference Book Translations in Multilingual States", BELTRANS-colloquium, 28-29/11/2024, KBR, BRussels.
- Vanasten, S. (2025, 29 August), "Meertalige, transnationale literaire ruimtes als significant geographies. Over de bestudering van Nederlandstalige literaturen vanuit vertaling en cultuurtransfer", Keynote lecture, Nederlands in meertalige contexten (25-29/08/2025), 22ste Colloquium Neerlandicum, Brussels, VUB.
- Vanasten, S. (2025, 23 October), « Dynamiques transnationales de traduction littéraire en pays plurilingues », Workshop « Small Countries facing Big Neighbours », International Workshop UCLouvain-NCCU Taiwan, UCLouvain, Louvain-la-Neuve.
- Vanasten, S. & Folie, Cl. (2025, November 5), « Femmes-traductrices des romans de Jef Geeraerts sur le Congo : dessous d'archives d'une « bibliothèque coloniale » en traduction française », International Symposium *Putting translators on the map*, UGent, 4-5/11/ 2025.
- Vanasten, S., (2026, January 19) "Towards a large-scale Translation History : integrating quantitative and qualitative research on intra-Belgian book translations 1970-2020", Workshop *Circulation des textes et des idées dans l'Europe littéraire et intellectuelle du 20e siècle* », UCLouvain, Louvain-la-Neuve.
- Vanasten, S. (2026, May 28), ""Intermedial connectivity from the angle of intra- and transnational dynamics", Round Table Research Center L/T UCLouvain, 8th Biennial Conference of the International Society for Intermedial Studies: the Politics of Intermedial Connectivity, VUB, Brussels, 27-29 May 2026.

5.5. Teaching and workshops

Folie, Clara (2024, April), presentation about archival work, institutional policies and translation flows, Atelier de l'Historien, UCLouvain.

Goethals, Ewoud (2023, 9 May), "Tiny en haar Franstalige tweelingzus", KU Leuven, Master literair vertalen, vertalen van jeugdliteratuur.

Goethals, Ewoud (2024, 26 April), Wanneer komt Joachim Stiller naar Parijs? De Franse vertalingen van Hubert Lampo. Guest Lecture in master's course 'Nederlandse literatuur en interculturele transfer' at UCLouvain.

5.6. Master's theses

Biard, Juliette (2023), Willy Vandersteens Blauwe collectie en La collection bleue: een vergelijkend, intra-Belgisch onderzoek naar vertaling en sociale klassen, UCLouvain

Deleuze, Charlotte (2023), Nederlandse vertaling en hervertaling van Le Bourgmestre de Furnes van Georges Simenon, KU Leuven

Egels, Silke (2023), Chat va, alles kats? Een vergelijkende vertaalanalyse van de humoristische, Franstalig-Belgische strip Le Chat van Philippe Geluck, KU Leuven

Hermal, Gauthier (2024), Analyse van de leesgewoonten van Nederlandstalige literatuur bij Franstalige Waalse adolescenten van 14 tot 16 jaar, UCLouvain

de Montpellier d'Annevoie, Kathleen (2025), Stefan Hertmans en Caroline Lamarche als hedendaagse intra-Belgische culturele burggenbouwers. Op zoek naar de spanning tussen postuur en literair werk, UCLouvain

Van Brussel, Ulrike (2024), La traduction et la promotion littéraires intrabelges Le rôle des institutions publiques pour favoriser l'échange littéraire entre la Belgique francophone et néerlandophone, illustré par l'histoire croisée des écrivaines Lize Spit et Adeline Dieudonné, ULiège

De Waele, Margot (2024), Bart Moeyaert als vertaler uit het Frans, KU Leuven

5.7. International conference

An international conference "[Book translation in multilingual states \(1945-2024\)](#)" was organized by KBR, KU Leuven and UCLouvain on 28-29 November 2024. This academic conference explored how books circulate through translation in multilingual states, raising a number of sub-questions related to this central topic:

- What are the flows of book translation in a multilingual state (direction, evolution)?

- How can we collect and map data on intra-state translation flows? What databases and sources are available for this purpose and what are their advantages and disadvantages?
- What role do branding and positioning play in translation flows in multilingual states, particularly as it relates to different genres, themes, authors and mediators?
- Do hierarchies or other kinds of relationships between languages play a role in intra-state book translation flows?
- What is the relationship between book translation in a multilingual state and language proficiency?
- What is the relationship between book translation and (cultural) policy in multilingual states? Which institutions play a role and to what political ends?
- What is the role of third actors (such as other regions, linguistic or cultural communities, or states) in shaping the translation flows of a multilingual state? Can translation flows be isolated in the context of a single state or should a transnational context be taken into account?
- What is the relationship between book translation and identity formation or cultural memory creation in multilingual states?
- Does it make sense to speak of national literatures in multilingual states?
- What are the usefulness and limits of a 'national bibliography' and national 'legal deposit'?
- Do translated books that emerge in multilingual states or circulate via intra-state translation flows exhibit specific paratextual features?
- What kinds of intra-state translation flows typify the (literary) cultures of multilingual states besides book translations? Do more translations take place outside the medium of the book, e.g. in theatre, magazines, websites,...?

Members of the BELTRANS-team delivered the welcome address, gave an introduction, chaired the panel sessions, presented the concluding remarks and also gave two presentations.

The keynote by Tristan Leperlier was co-sponsored by CETRA – Centre for Translation Studies and was offered as the 2024 CETRA Fall Lecture:

Tristan Leperlier, “The Plurilingual Local at Large”, Recording Keynote Opening Lecture at the international conference “Book translations in multilingual states (1945-2024)”, KBR, Brussels, 28 November 2024 (MILL, UCLouvain, 2026).

5.8. Presentation of policy guidelines

The policy guidelines developed in WP6 were presented to stakeholders with the purpose of sharing best practices and creating synergies between institutions at all levels. An Info Booklet is forthcoming:

BELTRANS-project, Belgique traduite/ België vertaald. Des livres d'auteurs belges traduits en français et en néerlandais 1970-2020. Boeken van Belgische auteurs vertaald naar het Frans en het Nederlands 1970-2020. Info Booklet , design & print Alto Alto, 2026, forthcoming.

6. PUBLICATIONS

The research results were published in scientific and professional publications that are linked to the different fields of expertise (Belgian literature, cultural identity and history, translation, reception, FAIR data, policy).

6.1. Articles

Brems, E., Meylaerts, R., & Vanasten, S. (2025). "Book Circulation through Translation in a Multilingual State: The Case of Belgium". *Journal of Foreign Languages and Cultures*, 9(1), 107-119. doi:10.53397/hunnu.jflc.202501011

Brems, E., Meylaerts, R. & Vanasten, S. (forthcoming, submitted), "Numbers and Narratives: Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Research in Translation History", in: D'hulst, L. & Gambier, Y. (ed.), *Present and future challenges in large-scale translation history*, John Benjamins (forthcoming, submitted).

Brems, Elke (2021) "[Bien Étranger: De gebrekkige doorstroom van literaturen in België](#)". In: *FILTER. tijdschrift over vertalen*, 27 (4), 2021, p. 36-44.

Brems, Elke and Vanasten, Stéphanie (2024), "Une nouvelle vague littéraire flamande en Wallonie". In *Septentrion* (9), 2024.

Brems, Elke and Verschaffel, Tom (2024), "Culturele Transfer". In *Digitale Encyclopedie van de Vlaamse Beweging*, 2024. <https://encyclopedievlaamsebeweging.be/nl/culturele-transfer>

Brems, Elke (2022), "[An inalienable part of the Flemish artistic heritage](#)". *The global and local circulation of Maurice Maeterlinck's L'Oiseau Bleu*. In: *Interférences littéraires*, 27 (2), 2022, p. 162-173.

Brems, Elke; Mus, Francis and Sepp, Arvi (2024), "Translation and World Literature – a Belgian Perspective". Special Issue of *Perspectives Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, to be published in 2024.

Folie, Clara (2022) "[La Grande Guerre en traduction \(1970-2020\) : une littérature au coeur des disciplines et des enjeux mémoriaux](#)". In: *Contemporanea* (october 2022).

- Folie, Clara (2024) "Une revue comme trait d'union ? Transfert et réception des ouvrages néerlandophones dans les comptes-rendus de la Revue du Nord (1970-2020)". In: [La Revue du Nord \(Hors série Histoire n° 47\)](#), 2024, p. 231-256.
- Folie, Clara and Toisoul, Guillaume (2025) "Les archives inédites du Service général des Lettres et du Livre : une chasse aux trésors au Ministère de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles", Contemporanea, 2025.
- Folie, Clara; Goethals, Ewoud and Sirjacobs, Timothy (2023) "[La Belgique en traduction : des textes traversant les frontières ou des frontières traversant des textes](#)". In: *Les Plats Pays* (avril 2023).
- Folie, Clara; Goethals, Ewoud and Sirjacobs, Timothy (2023) "[België in vertaling: taal als grens, literatuur als brug](#)". In: *De Lage Landen* (july 2023).
- Folie, Clara; Goethals, Ewoud and Sirjacobs, Timothy (2024). Les politiques contemporaines de traduction seraient-elles l'angle mort de la littérature belge? In *Septentrion* (9), pp. 120-125.
- Folie, Clara; Goethals, Ewoud & Sirjacobs, Timothy (2027) "Literary translation policies in a federalizing multilingual country : the Case of Belgium (1945-2025)". In *Revue Belge de Philologie et d'Histoire*. (Accepted, forthcoming).
- Goethals, Ewoud (2023), "Een rebels kind in Gent: Suzanne Lilar, Une enfance gantoise (1976)". In: *Rebellie in de Gentse Letteren: literaire stropendragers van de middeleeuwen tot nu*. Lannoo, 2023, p. 87-96.
- Goethals, Ewoud (2023), "[Entre-deux, van twee kanten : la posture intra-belge de Caroline Lamarche](#)". In: *Textyles* (64), 2023, p. 103-118.
- Goethals, Ewoud (2022), "[Over grenzen. Drie Nederlandse vertalingen van Caroline Lamarche](#)". In: *De Reactor* (februari 2022).
- Goethals, Ewoud (2024), Qu'est-ce qu'un intermédiaire mondial ? Compte rendu de Gisèle Sapiro, Qu'est-ce qu'un auteur mondial ? Le champ littéraire transnational, Paris, ehess ; Gallimard ; éditions du Seuil, « Hautes Études », 2024, 480 p. Contextes.
- Gonne, Maud ; Roland, Hubert ; Vanasten, Stéphanie ; Smeyers, Elies ; Crombois, Julie (2022), [Paradoxes and Misunderstandings in Cultural Transfers / Paradoxes et malentendus dans les transferts culturels](#). In *Interférences littéraires*, 26 (1), 2022.
- Sirjacobs, Timothy and Goethals, Ewoud (2026), "Translating "A Noble Stranger". The Belgian National Poet Charles Ducal and Intra-national Poetry Translation Flows from Dutch to French in a Multilingual Country" In: McMartin J., Gentile P. & Nelissen E. (ed.), *Literary Translation*

Lifecycles. The Vital Networks behind the Circulation of Dutch Literature. Routledge, 2026, p. 156-177.

Sirjacobs, Timothy ; Vanasten, Stéphanie and Biard, Juliette (2025), "L'historique blauwe collectie/collection bleue de Willy Vandersteen : une étude comparative intra-belge d'une aventure de Suske en Wiske/Bob et Bobette « née traduite » " In *Comicalités*, La bande dessinée en traductologie : approches sociologiques actuelles, published online 15 October 2025, <https://doi.org/10.4000/155vi>

Vanasten, Stéphanie ; Roland, Hubert ; Gonne, Maud ; Smeyers, Elies (2022), "[Introduction. On paradoxes, failures and misunderstandings in cultural transfers](#)". In: *Interférences littéraires*, 26 (1), 2022, p. 24-45.

Vanasten, Stéphanie ; Roland, Hubert ; Gonne, Maud (2022), "[A propos des paradoxes, échecs et malentendus dans les transferts culturels](#)". In: *Paradoxes and Misunderstandings in Cultural Transfers/ Paradoxes et malentendus dans les transferts culturels*, 26 (1), 2022, p. 1-23.

Stéphanie Vanasten & Guillaume Toisoul (forthcoming), "Over schrijvers-vertalers in de vertalingen van boeken geschreven door Belgische auteurs tussen 1970-2020 », *Filter*, forthcoming.

Stéphanie Vanasten (forthcoming), "Meertalige, transnationale literaire ruimtes als significant geographies. Over de bestudering van Nederlandstalige literaturen vanuit vertaling en cultuurtransfer", *Internationale neerlandistiek*, forthcoming.

Stéphanie Vanasten & Clara Folie (forthcoming), "Femmes-traductrices des romans de Jef Geeraerts sur le Congo : dessous d'archives d'une « bibliothèque coloniale » en traduction française », *TTR*, forthcoming.

Van Camp, Ann and Lieber, Sven (2022), "[ISNI, a top tool for quality enhancement, smooth data flows and efficient internal processes](#)". Presented on 28th July 2022 at the 87th IFLA World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) / 2022 in Dublin, Ireland, published as <https://repository.ifla.org/handle/20.500.14598/2008>.

6.2. Book Publications

Folie, Clara; Goethals, Ewoud; Sirjacobs, Timothy; Brems, Elke and Vanasten, Stéphanie (forthcoming) (ed.). *Book translation in multilingual states (1945-2024)*. Leuven University Press, forthcoming.

6.3. PhD

Goethals, Ewoud (2026). *A travers champs. Intra-Belgische vertalingen van romans en jeugdliteratuur 1970-2020*. <https://lirias.kuleuven.be/4394304?&lang=en>

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