EMT – Challenge 2026 – Three-minute thesis contest for translation students and/or recent graduates of the EMT

The Three Minute Thesis (3MT) contest designed specifically for translation students or recent graduates of the EMT network is based on one of the EMT Board Member's proposals for a "best thesis award". Organising a full academic contest to grant a best thesis award at the European level would be very cumbersome and time-consuming. Combining the idea of such an academic award with a dynamic competition is more engaging for both the participants and the audience. It presents the advantage of potentially giving more visibility to the translation profession, as the core idea of the contest is that the contestants present their translation-related research in just three minutes to a non-specialised audience. The goal is to effectively communicate the significance and impact of their research in a clear, engaging, and concise manner.

This contest not only celebrates the achievements of translation students but also underscores the ongoing relevance and adaptability of the translation profession in an ever-changing world.

Potential benefits of the 3MT contest:

- **Give Visibility to Translation Studies**: Highlight the importance and relevance of translation studies in today's globalized world.
- **Showcase Evolving Skills and Competences:** Highlight how the skills and competences of translators, such as linguistic expertise, cultural awareness, and technological proficiency, are evolving and remain crucial not only for translation but also for related professions like localization, content creation, and language technology. Emphasize that these competences are highly valuable and transferable to various fields.
- **Showcase Academic Rigour**: Demonstrate that translation is an academic field with a strong research component, particularly when translation-related research is interdisciplinary, combining translation with other academic fields.

Participating in the 3MT contest offers numerous benefits for the participating students/ recent graduates, including:

- **Enhanced Communication Skills**: Develop the ability to distil complex research into a brief, accessible format, improving public speaking and presentation skills.
- **Increased Visibility**: Gain exposure for their research and ideas, potentially attracting interest from academics, industry professionals, and potential employers.

- **Networking Opportunities**: Connect with peers, faculty, and industry experts, fostering valuable professional relationships.
- **Confidence Building**: Boost self-confidence by presenting research to a diverse audience and receiving constructive feedback.
- **Career Advancement**: Showcase their talents and competencies, enhancing their resumes and career prospects.
- **Prize**: the top three awardees will be invited to an **award ceremony** at the DGT's **Translating Europe Forum**, held annually in early November, and will each receive a **tablet as a prize**.

Outline for the 3MT Contest in translation:

1. Contest Structure

- **University Nomination**: Each of the 81 EMT study programmes is entitled to nominate one contestant from their translation study programme, following a call on the EMT Teams channel. It is up to the nominating university to decide which topic they consider particularly relevant to the current state of translation practice and the EMT objectives (see evaluation criteria below). The nominee can be a master's student who has submitted or is about to submit their thesis for assessment or a recent graduate from the previous academic year.
- **Video or Podcast Submission**: Nominated contestants submit a link to a video recording of their 3-minute presentation. Visually impaired contestants may send in a link to an audio recording (audio podcast). Email address for submissions: DGT-EMT@ec.europa.eu. For more information on expected format of video/podcast see section "Rules" below.
- **Shortlisting Round**: Multiple jury groups (including academic staff from the EMT Board or network, industry professionals from the [LIND expert group](#), DGT staff and/or trainees) review and score the video submissions to shortlist the top 10 contestants. If there are more than ten contestants qualifying for finalist positions, a second round of evaluation will follow for contestants of equal ranking.
- **Final Round**: The top 10 contestants present live in a web-streamed virtual event open to the public. They are judged by a single jury group set up of members of the EMT Board, LIND group experts and DGT staff/trainees.

2. Rules

- **Time Limit**: Presentations must not exceed 3 minutes, regardless of the format (live, audio, or video submission). Exceeding this time results in disqualification.
- **Slides**: Contestants are required to use one to three static slides in their presentations. No animations, transitions, or movement of any kind. The contestants should take care to make good use of visual aids. When recording their presentation, they should pay attention to the face-to-slide ratio, ensuring that their face is visible and engaging while not being overshadowed by the slides. This helps maintain a personal connection with the audience and ensures that the presentation is both visually appealing and effective.
- **Media and Props**: No additional electronic media (e.g., sound or video files) or props (e.g., costumes, instruments) are permitted.
- **Spoken Word**: Presentations must be spoken word. No poems, raps, or songs.
- **Language**: Contestants may use their mother tongue, provided it is one of the EU's official languages. English subtitles must be included in all cases for accessibility reasons, even if the presentation is in English. For audio recordings, the submission should be accompanied by either a speech-to-text translation in English or an English audio interpretation.

3. Evaluation Criteria

Comprehension and Content:

- **Clarity of Explanation**: How well does the presentation explain the research question and its significance?
- **Methodology and Research Results**: Is there a clearly defined and applied methodology in place? Are the research results and their impact clearly described?
- **Logical Flow**: Is the presentation logical and easy to follow?
- **Appropriate Language**: Is the language suitable for a non-specialist audience?
- **Relevance**: Are the ideas presented relevant to the current state of translation practice?
- **Extra Criterion**: Relevance of the research to the EMT objectives.

Engagement and Communication:

- **Audience Engagement**: Does the presentation make the audience want to know more?
- **Enthusiasm**: Does the presenter convey enthusiasm for their research?
- **Presentation Skills**: Is the presenter's stage presence, eye contact, and vocal range effective?
- **Slide Quality**: Do the slides enhance the presentation?
- **Innovativeness**: Does the presentation offer innovative thinking and creative ideas?

4. Timeline:

- **Launch of the contest:** 15 October
- **Nomination Deadline:** Universities submit their nominated contestant by 30 November 2025
- **Video or Podcast Submission Deadline:** Contestants submit their video presentations or podcasts by 15 January 2026
- **Composition of jury groups:** by 30 January 2026
- **Shortlisting Round:** Jury groups review video submissions from 1 February to 15 March 2026
- **Announcement of Finalists:** Finalists are announced on 30 March 2026
- **Final Round:** Live virtual presentations and final judging on 7 May 2026
- **Award Ceremony**: during Translating Europe Forum (TEF) in November 2026

Note: The jury will use a dedicated [Channel on TEAMS](#) for their deliberations.

By accepting their nomination to the contest, participants confirm that they have read and agree to the contest rules, including the applicable data protection provisions as outlined in [DPR-EC-00620.5](#).