

*This is a collective volume dedicated to national and international experiences of community interpreting. It is well-known that both Northern European countries, with Scandinavians as leaders, and Australia, Canada and the USA, which were major immigrant destinations, developed the necessary structures quite early to serve allophone citizens while other countries have been following, each one at its own pace.*

*However, delays have been noted in the development of community interpreter training programmes. It should also be pointed out that community interpreting is a specialized kind of communication conducted in special circumstances under which the interpreter activates his/her linguistic, cultural and cognitive skills. Especially in Greece, apart from some sporadic efforts of non-governmental organizations, such training programmes do not exist and, as a result, most usually community interpreters are bilingual people with, often, good knowledge of two languages but without further training. It is obvious that training and certification are required. To this end, demographic data and related sociological, psychological and sociolinguistic studies should be taken into account.*

*Therefore, in the first place the number of languages must be taken into consideration so as to determine the number of language pairs demanded.*

*Moreover, public services should become aware of the need for providing interpreting services to non-native speakers so as to facilitate communication, and inform their employees on the aspects of communication with the use of an interpreter. Particular attention should be paid to the linguistic and intercultural training of interpreters, as they will need to handle specialized vocabulary when communicating with people from different cultural background. In order to launch and achieve all the above, the sine qua non is that states must realize the importance of equal treatment of citizens and, consequently, full access to all services, so that community interpreters will be convinced, in their turn, of their social mission and contribution to social normality and prosperity of the country.*

*Most of the above issues are addressed in the articles of this volume.*