Rates Survey 2026: Full Report

The survey ran from 2 March to 17 April 2026 and received 612 complete responses from members working in the UK. Figures are medians unless stated. Competition law prevents the Society from recommending rates; this report describes what members say they charge.

Who responded

Region	Share of respondents
London and South East	31%
North of England	17%
Scotland	9%
Midlands	12%
South West	10%
Wales	6%
Northern Ireland	3%
Outside the UK	12%

72% of respondents work full-time as translators or interpreters. The median annual turnover was £34,500.

Translation rates by language pair (into English)

Source language	Median rate per word
French	£0.10
German	£0.11
Spanish	£0.10
Italian	£0.10
Polish	£0.09
Arabic	£0.12
Chinese	£0.13
Japanese	£0.14
Norwegian	£0.13

Rates for translation out of English were on average £0.01 per word higher than rates into English.

Specialist work

Respondents specialising in legal or medical translation reported rates about 20% above the median. Literary translators were mostly paid per 1,000 words, with a median of £95 per 1,000 words.

Interpreting

Setting	Median hourly rate	Typical minimum
Business meetings	£50	Half day (£160)
Medical	£40	2 hours
Court and police	£38	3 hours
Conference (per day)	£450	Full day
Remote (video)	£45	1 hour

Across all settings the median hourly rate was £45 and the typical half-day minimum was £140.

Post-editing and AI

41% of respondents had post-edited machine translation in the last year, up from 29% in 2025. Most charged between 60% and 80% of their full rate. 18% said they refuse all post-editing work.

Payment and late payment

The median payment term offered by agencies was 30 days, but 37% of respondents said at least one agency regularly paid late. 11% had an invoice of more than £1,000 unpaid for over 90 days in the last year.

Changes since 2025

The median translation rate into English was unchanged at £0.11. The median interpreting hourly rate rose from £43 to £45.

About this report

Prepared by the Professional Practice team. Questions to practice@sfti.example. The next survey will run in spring 2027.