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Translation Companies
DEFINING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

House of Lords Court Interpreting Inquiry

24 March 2025

The House of Lords' Public Services Committee has published its report and recommendations on interpreting services in the courts. Entitled "*Lost in translation? Interpreting services in the courts*", the report outlines the results and recommendations following the Public Services Committee's inquiry into interpreting and translation services in courts, which are provided under contract by the Ministry of Justice.

The inquiry focused on the procurement of interpreting and translation services in the courts, the working conditions and terms and conditions for translators and interpreters, quality assurance and policy recommendations, and the potential role of technology in enabling interpreting and translation services.

In the report, the Public Services Committee identified various areas of concern in the procurement and provision of interpreting services for the courts, and urged the Government to pause the current Ministry of Justice tender to address these concerns and implement improvements.

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During the course of the inquiry, the Committee invited written evidence from stakeholders, and heard oral evidence from representatives from the Ministry of Justice, HM Courts and Tribunals Service, translation and interpreting service providers, associations and organisations representing translators and interpreters, language services technology providers, and legal societies.

The ATC's CEO and Public Sector Procurement Ambassador gave both written and oral evidence to the Committee, focusing on identifying and promoting best practices and key recommendations for sustainable development of the complex landscape within the provision and procurement of language services for the public sector.

The ATC welcomes the Committee's key recommendations and the recommendations, and looks forward to continuing to work with all stakeholders to build a sustainable long-term ecosystem for the procurement and provision of language services for the UK's public sector.

In this ecosystem, the ATC represents language service companies from micro enterprises and SMEs to large companies providing the widest range of services in over 300 languages, using modern technologies for scheduling and managing a complex service provision for translation and interpreting.

The ATC actively works together with its member companies and stakeholders across the entire ecosystem, specifically with public sector commissioning organisations, and the associations and organisations representing translators and interpreters.

In its public sector engagement, the ATC identifies and promotes best practice, embracing the Government's strategies around digitalisation, while acknowledging and appreciating the challenges for those responsible for procuring and providing public services in the current economic climate, following a prolonged time of austerity and in the future.

[The ATC's Public Sector Manifesto](#), published in 2019, set out the ATC's objectives towards sustainable development within the procurement and provision of language services in the UK's public sector. In 2023, it was followed by [Working Together](#), a joint white paper with the organisations under PI4J, Professional Interpreters for Justice, with recommendations for tackling the immediate issues facing procurement and provision of language services for the public sector.

In [Working Together](#), the leading language services industry associations and organisations in the UK outlined challenges and proposed solutions for resolving pressing issues in a dynamic, continuously changing landscape where public sector commissioning and buying organisations, language service companies, and freelance interpreters and translators form an interdependent ecosystem where each stakeholder plays a crucial role in sustainable development. Many of these recommendations were also recognised in the House of Lords Public Services Committee's report.

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