

# UK Language Services Pricing Study 2020

by Nimdzi Insights

**97** survey respondents

**5%** outside the UK

**65%** rest of the UK

**28%** Greater London



**Two thirds** of the companies surveyed:

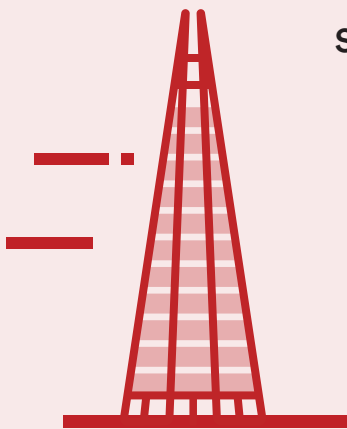


were **small businesses** with up to 9 employees



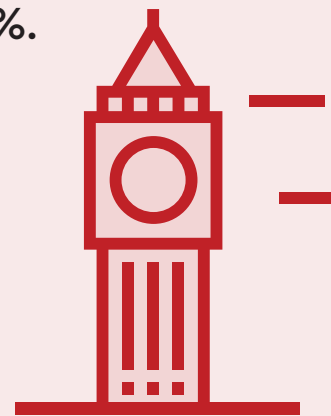
had revenues **below £1 million**

The split between **private** and **public** sector work in the UK is 80% to 20%.

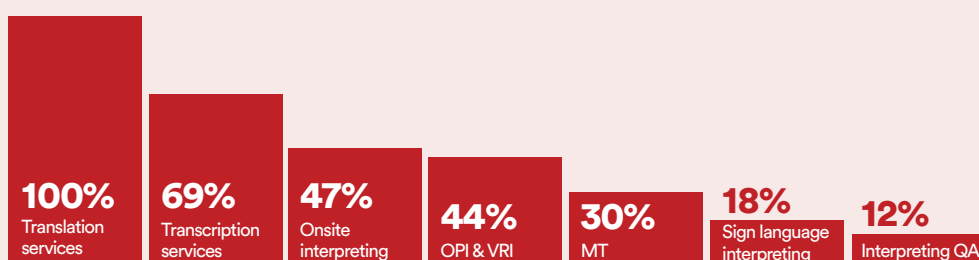


**80%**

**20%**



**Smaller companies** tend to focus on core services (translation/transcription/interpreting) before expanding into **specialised services**.



Price pressure is higher in the public sector and rates are roughly

**20-30% lower**  
than in the private sector.

Generally, prices in the UK are constant or decreasing slightly - prices for traditional language services have been trending downwards for the past 20 years.



**On average, smaller companies charge 21% higher rates than large ones.**

This is likely because bigger companies have more channels to generate revenue, allowing them to offer more competitive rates. Also, they might have larger clients and contracts and are able to operate on smaller margins.

Average translation rates from English for general translation types:

Western Europe	Eastern Europe	Asian, Arabic & Oriental	African	Rare languages
0.121	0.120	0.134	0.140	0.157



The average rate for translations to English is **£0.132**.

Translation rates for marketing and legal content are on average **10% higher**.



Transcription rates per minute go up to **£6.3**, depending on the language.



The average rate for **over-the-phone interpreting (OPI)** is **£1.4/minute**.

Onsite interpreting rates are charged at **£30-75** per hour.

For British Sign Language (BSL) interpreting, **2-3 hour minimum rates** are the standard.

Charges are higher if the work is **urgent** (+22% on average) or **falls outside of normal working hours** (+42% for transcription and +20% for VRI).



Prices in **Greater London** are on average up to **20% higher** than in the rest of the UK, for all types of interpreting.



**Machine translation post-editing (MTPE)** is the most common MT-related service.

It is followed by **raw MT** and **MT quality evaluation services** (both 64%).

**Billing per word** is the dominant pricing model for MT.



The average price for MTPE from English is **£0.079 per word**, irrespective of the domain or language pair.

LSPs dictate discounts for MTPE: these range from **0** to **80%** of the full word rate, depending on the level of editing that is required.



## About Nimdzi Insights

**Nimdzi Insights** helps clients successfully navigate international expansion through market research, consulting, education, M&As, and geocultural intelligence. Nimdzi's expertise in the translation and localisation industry and range of customised services attracts language service providers and buyers looking for the insight and data they need to confidently make business decisions.

## About the ATC

The **Association of Translation Companies (ATC)** is a professional membership association representing the interests of its members in the UK and internationally. It is the voice for companies operating in the UK's language services industry.



The ATC provides authoritative advice about matters relating to multilingual communication, and working with legislators and other stakeholders, lobbies on behalf of its members, promoting the value of language skills, translation and interpreting. The ATC is also at the forefront of the development of international standards for translation and interpreting.

The ATC defines standards of excellence for language service companies by promoting quality-driven language services and best practice to create recognition and trust to stakeholders. ATC membership is recognised at government and international levels as the mark of quality-managed translation services.

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