

Developing Quality Cost Effective
**Interpreting &
Translating Services**

FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICE
PROVIDERS IN IRELAND



NCCRI



Oifig an Aire d'Imeachta
Office of the Minister for Integration Policy



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 **FGS** FGS Consulting

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 University of Essex

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FOREWORD

Over the past few years, the NCCRI has been involved in working with Government bodies to improve services to members of minority ethnic groups. This work has ranged from involvement in drafting the National Action Plan Against Racism (2005–2008) (NPAR) and in contributing to intercultural strategies arising from commitments in the NPAR, such as the Health Services Executive’s National Intercultural Health Strategy 2007–2012; to managing cross-border research on improving services to minority ethnic groups in Ireland, Scotland and Northern Ireland.¹ Throughout this work, a recurring theme has been the need for professional, accurate, high quality interpreting and translating services for people with low proficiency in English; this was confirmed in the NCCRI Advocacy Paper² *Interpreting, Translation and Public Bodies in Ireland: The Need for Policy and Training* in 2007.

Many migrants to Ireland speak some English or attend English language classes; however, this does not necessarily mean they have sufficient English to interact effectively with Government bodies; this is particularly true in stressful and critical situations, for example in a health care or justice setting.

The increasing diversity in languages spoken in Ireland today means that provision of interpreting and translating has become a pressing need if people with low proficiency in English are to experience equality of access and outcomes in their interaction with key Government services such as health, justice, education and housing.

Recognising that there had been little research on the need for, and experiences of, interpreting and translation services in Ireland to date, the NCCRI approached the Office of the Minister for Integration seeking support for the current study. The Office recognised the need for reflection on this issue and was supportive of the need for the research. Similarly, a high level of interest and commitment was expressed by representatives from key Government service providers, linguistic experts, NGOs, and minority ethnic groups who were approached to join an Advisory Group for the project. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those involved for their contribution to the project, (Advisory Group members are listed at Appendix B of this report). I would also like to acknowledge the valuable input made by the NCCRI’s Research and Policy Officer, Fiona McGaughey,

¹Watt, P & McGaughey, F. (eds) (2006) *Improving Government Service Delivery to Minority Ethnic Groups*, NCCRI.

²Written by Mary Phelan from Dublin City University.

who recognised the need for a focus on this area based on her experience of working with NGOs and Government bodies in the anti-racism and refugee area in Australia and who was instrumental in setting up the project.

The research finds that best practice international models for interpreting and translating services indicate that certain minimal requirements should to be met in order to have a coherent, high quality service for Government, including the existence of policies, standards, and training, as well as promotion of services to end users. The absence of the foregoing in the Irish context gives rise to a number of concerns, including variability in quality, a lack of coherence across Government, gaps in service, a lack of professional advisory services, a lack of training, and poor pay and conditions of employment in the sector. All of these impact on service quality and delivery.

A key recommendation from the research is the development of a national policy framework for the provision of interpreting and translating services, to be developed in conjunction with Government Service Providers and other stakeholders. It is also recommended that a code of practice, accredited training (including anti-racism and intercultural training), and standards be developed and that arrangements be put in place to develop a register of accredited interpreters and translators which Government Service Providers can use to source practitioners.

An encouraging finding from the research is that a key strength is Government service providers' openness and awareness of the needs of clients and adapting to their needs. The NCCRI wishes to acknowledge and thank the Minister for Integration, Mr Conor Lenihan TD, and senior officials within his Department, in particular Diarmuid Cole, John Haskins, and Martina Glennon for supporting this initiative. The NCCRI is working with the Office of the Minister and key stakeholders to actively follow up on key recommendations within the report in order to improve equality of access and outcomes for people with low proficiency in English in their interaction with key Government services such as health, justice, education and housing.

Philip Watt
Director NCCRI
September 2008

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

NCCRI:	National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism
RIA:	Reception and Integration Agency (now part of the Office of the Minister for Integration)
NPAR:	National Action Plan Against Racism
ITIA:	Irish Translators and Interpreters Association
GSP:	Government Service Provider
CILT:	National Centre For Languages (UK)
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
I&T:	Interpreting and Translating

Interpreting:

Interpreting, is an activity that consists of establishing, either simultaneously or consecutively, oral or gestural communications between two or more speakers who are not able to use the same set of symbols or language.

Interpreter:

the practitioner who orally translates for and between parties conversing in different languages. Interpreters should convey all elements of meaning, and the intentions and feelings of the original, source language speaker. The end result is an intermediate stage of spoken communication, which aims to allow target language listeners to hear, perceive, and experience the message in a way that is as close as possible to the experience of those who understand the original, source language.

There are different types of Interpreting:

- **Face to Face Interpreting:** All parties are present at the session. This type of interaction is essential for some for situations.
- **Consecutive Interpreting** is when the interpreter translates or summarises (in total or in sections) after each of the speakers' contributions to a conversation. It is appropriate for one-to-one and small informal group interpreting and requires no specialised equipment. It is a relatively slow process, since all contributions to the conversation are repeated in real time.
- **Telephone Interpreting:** Telephone interpreting is useful for emergency situations and for setting up appointments. It should not be used for counselling sessions or giving bad news.
- **Relay Interpreting:** In some cases it is impossible to locate an interpreter who speaks both English and the required language. Therefore a bridge language is required.
- **Simultaneous Interpreting** is when the interpreter's version is delivered almost at the same time as the original source, with a delay only as long as it takes for the interpreter to digest the meaning of the source.
- **Whispered Simultaneous Interpreting:** Is used particularly in legal cases where the interpreter whispers the translation to the defendant.
- **Sight Translation:** The translation of a document by an interpreter; for example a patient could have a document about medication which an interpreter would be asked to read into English.
- **Community Interpreting:** is provided face to face and / or over the phone in the spheres of health, law, education, social and other government related services.

Translation:

Translation is an activity comprising the interpretation of the meaning of a text in one language – the source text – and the production of a new, equivalent text in another language – called the target text, or the translation, that communicates the same message.

- **Literal translations** follow very closely the grammatical and lexical forms of the source text language.
- **Idiomatic translations** are concerned with communicating the meaning of the source text using the natural grammatical and lexical items of the receptor language.
- **Unduly free translations** add to the source text or change certain information for a specific affect.

Translator:

The translator decodes the meaning of the source text and re-codes this meaning in the target language. In order to decode the complete meaning of the source text, the translator must consciously and methodically interpret and analyse all its features requiring a thorough knowledge of the grammar, semantics, syntax, idioms and so forth, of the source language, as well as the culture of its speakers. The translator needs the same in-depth knowledge to re-encode the meaning in the target language.

1. Overview of the Study

1.1 | Introduction

This is the executive summary of the report *The Development of Quality, Cost-effective Interpreting and Translation Services for Government Service Providers in Ireland*. This report was prepared jointly by FGS Consulting, CILT (the National Centre for Languages in the UK), and Dr. Jacqueline Turton of the University of Essex.

The research project was managed by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) and funded by the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA), as a result of recent policy change in 2007, it should be noted that the main functions of RIA are now part of the Office of the Minister for Integration. The research was guided by an Advisory Group drawn from key Government departments and agencies, representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and from academic and professional bodies in the area of interpreting and translation. A list of Advisory Group members is presented in Appendix B.

It is important to note that the provision of interpreting and translation services is only one part of the overall approach to integration in Ireland. The provision of English language education and training is another important part of Ireland's overall policy response. Around the time this study was commissioned the Department of Education and Science commissioned a separate review on the development of a National English language training policy and framework for legally-resident adult immigrants.

1.2 | Specific Research Objectives

The Terms of Reference for this study set out four overall research objectives as follows:

1. To map the current provision of interpreting and translating services by Government service providers in Ireland;
2. To identify aspects of current service provision that work well or are unsatisfactory from the perspective of service users and other stakeholders (including availability of service, actual levels of usage of service when provided, reasons for non-usage where that occurs);
3. To describe models of 'good practice' based on international review;
4. To develop preferred options for quality cost effective interpreting and translating services for Government service providers in Ireland, taking into account the policy, structural and financial dimensions of these options.

FGS Consulting delivered research objectives 1, 2 and part of 3. The international case studies undertaken in relation to Terms of Reference point 3 were produced by CILT (the National Centre for Languages in the UK), and by Dr. Jacqueline Turton of the University of Essex. FGS Consulting, CILT and Dr. Jacqueline Turton jointly developed research objective Point 4.

1. Overview of the Study

1.3 | Study Scope

Interpreting is the conversion of speech from one language to another. For the purpose of this study it does *not* include the various forms of sign languages (this topic is dealt with by Comhairle – now the Citizens Information Board in the report *Review of Sign Language Interpretation Services and Service Requirements in Ireland, 2006*). In addition, this study is focused on interpreting in English and foreign languages and the scope of the study does *not* include the Irish language.

Translation is the conversion of written texts from one language to another. For purpose of this study translation does *not* include Braille and other tactile forms of writing. In addition, this study is focused on translation of English and foreign languages and the scope of the study does *not* include the Irish language.

1.4 | Study Methodology

The key methods used during this study are summarised below. More detailed discussions of our methodology are provided in individual chapters as relevant. The four key methods used are as follows:

Literature Review: As part of this study we undertook an extensive review of Irish and international literature. The methodology for the review of literature is described in more detail in Chapter 6.

Consultations: As part of this study we undertook demand side consultations with organisations and people who use interpreting and translating services, specifically Government service providers, NGOs and representative bodies of people in need of these services. We also undertook supply-side consultations with stakeholders on the supply side, namely those who supply interpreting and translation services to the Government service providers. A range of consultation methods were used, including a standardised written questionnaire and a number of face to face and telephone interviews. Our methodology for consultations are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 and Appendix B lists people and organisations consulted during the study.

Focus Groups: We undertook four focus groups with members of minority ethnic groups who had no English or a low proficiency in English. Focus group participants were drawn from four countries identified as likely to have the greatest number of people living in Ireland with no English or low proficiency in English. These were members of the Polish community; members of the Lithuanian community; members of the Latvian community; and members of the Chinese community. Our methodology for the focus groups is discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

Case Studies: We undertook a number of case studies. The case studies were based on a review of available literature and a series of telephone and email consultations. Additional details on our methodology are provided in Chapters 8, 9 and 10.

1. Overview of the Study

1.5 | Report Structure

The remainder of this report is structured around the key study issues and is divided into four parts as shown below.

Part B: Background

Chapter 2 discusses the Legislative Provision and the Policy context in Ireland. It also highlights some key demand side issues and a number of supply side issues. In addition, it briefly discusses some of the key findings from previous Irish research in the area.

Part C: Provision of Interpreting and Translation Services in Ireland

Chapter 3 presents our mapping of professional interpreting and translation services provided by key Government service providers. It also discusses their experiences of provision, their views on key strengths and weaknesses and their views on future improvements.

Chapter 4 discusses the views of suppliers of interpreting and translation services to Government service providers, their views on key strengths and weaknesses along with their views on future improvements.

Chapter 5 presents our findings on the experiences of members of minority ethnic groups on using interpreting and translation services along with their views on future provision of interpreting and translation services.

Part D: International Experiences of the Provision of Interpreting and Translation Services

Chapter 6 summarises the key findings from the international literature on the experiences of minority ethnic groups and of public service providers of interpreting and translation services.

Chapter 7 presents key findings from the international literature on country level interpreting and translation policies and practices. It provides a discussion of practices in Australia and Sweden and also provides a review of the cross country ‘Aequitas’ research on legal interpreting.

Chapters 8, 9 and 10 present three case studies examining provision of interpreting and translation provision in England, in the Netherlands and in Northern Ireland.

Part E: Conclusions and Recommendations for the Future

Chapter 11 presents the conclusions from this review, and recommendations and proposals for future options for the provision of interpreting and translation services by Government Service Providers (GSPs) in Ireland.

2. Key Findings

2.1 | Part B: Background

2.1.1 | Legislation & Policy

- There is some legislation around interpreting and translation provision in Ireland arising from obligations under: the European Convention on Human Rights which must be adhered to with regard to the legal process; The Refugee Act 1966; and more generally, the Equal Status Acts 2000–2004;
- The National Action Plan Against Racism (NPAR) aims to provide strategic direction to combat racism and to develop a more inclusive and intercultural society in Ireland. Interpreting and translation services are related to the achievement of Objective 3 of the NPAR which refers to “Accommodating diversity in service provision”. Other Government bodies are developing their own intercultural strategies which are likely to address the issue of interpreting and translating, for example the Health Services Executive’s *National Intercultural Health Strategy 2007–2012*;
- There is no specific provision for the provision of interpreting and translation services for Government service providers in the Programme for Government but there are references to supporting those minorities with little or no English, in the context of workers rights, asylum and integration; and education policy;
- The National Development Plan 2007–2013 does not have specific investment priorities aimed at the provision of interpreting translation and communication support services but does provide for integration of migrants and language support;
- A number of previous reports in Ireland have highlighted the barriers facing migrants as a result of low-English proficiency and the gaps in current interpreting and translation services.

2.1.2 | Demand Side Issues

- There has been an unprecedented rise in the number of people whose nationality is not Irish now living in Ireland, up to 413,000 or 10% of the population according to the last Census, although the actual numbers are likely to be higher. According to the 2006 Census, EU countries accounted for 66% of the population whose nationality was not Irish. The UK accounted for 27% and three new EU member states accounted for 21% (Poland with 15%, Lithuania with 6% and Latvia with 3%). People from Asia accounted for 11% of the population whose nationality was not Irish, and Africa accounted for 8%;
- An estimated 200 languages are spoken in Ireland;
- There has been little research on the need for and experiences of interpreting and translation services. What has been done suggests lack of interpreting and translation services is a barrier and there are issues with aspects of current service provision.

2.1.3 | Supply Side Issues

- There are no written regulations or legislation governing the industry; nor are there any accreditations, standards, or qualifications;
- The industry is characterised by a number of professional agencies and large number of freelance interpreters and translators. There are no official figures on the numbers of interpreters or translators operating in the market.

2. Key Findings

2.2 | Part C: Provision of Interpreting & Translation Services in Ireland

2.2.1 | Provision of interpreting & translation services by Government Service Providers (GSPs)

Key Findings

- Key areas of service provision were identified for the purposes of this research – Moving to Ireland; Engaging in the Labour Market; Accessing Education; Interacting with the Justice System; Accessing Health, Housing; and Emergency services. The majority of GSPs in these areas did not report providing professional interpreting services on a systematic basis. Where it is reported to us as being provided, it is primarily in the area of immigration, policing and the judiciary, and health;³
- The majority of GSPs providing translated materials were those organisations in the areas of immigration, asylum and justice. Almost all of the GSPs identified under the heading “Engaging in the Labour Market” reported providing translated material. However, very few of the other GSPs reported having translated information available for non-English speaking users of their services;
- As regards satisfaction with interpreting services, the response was mixed. Some GSPs expressed concern over quality, availability and costs incurred when providing interpreting services to clients. With translation provision, all GSPs were either satisfied or very satisfied with the translating services provided;
- A key issue of concern was that of the lack of quality checking, or the means to do it;
- The main problems faced when establishing interpreting services in the organisation were budgetary constraints; estimating the level of service provision required; and persuading frontline staff of the benefits. As regards translation, most reported problems were to do with time delays in getting work done;

- A key strength is that GSPs are displaying an openness and awareness of the needs of clients/customers and adapting to their needs;
- Outsourcing the provision of interpreting and translation services was perceived to work well;
- Key weaknesses identified were the absence of a coherent overall policy; lack of quality control; lack of appropriate training for staff; lack of awareness; and costs and delays;
- Changes for the future focussed on developing a code of practice and accreditation standards for professional interpreters and translators; similarly, appropriate training for GSPs on using languages services but also anti-racism and intercultural training; learning from best practice examples in other countries especially vis-à-vis accreditation, qualifications, and standards; performance and quality monitoring; development of working group and establishing an overall government policy.

2.2.2 | Views of stakeholders of interpreting & translation services to public service providers

Views of NGOs and Representative Groups on Interpreting and Translation Services

- NGOs felt that there are not enough professional interpreting and translation services provided by/for GSPs to help non-English speakers and those with low English proficiency access public services in Ireland. The impact of this lack of availability in most cases limits and prevents those with low English proficiency to benefit fully from public services. There can be a high use of children and friends, and especially where limited services are available;
- An absence of quality control; a lack of independent monitoring; and no measurable standard or basis for selecting interpreters, are viewed as

³It should be noted that not all GSPs provided responses to the questionnaires.

2. Key Findings

key weaknesses. The approach of GSPs is poorly coordinated, with over-reliance on outsourcing to private suppliers;

- The views of NGOs on future changes focussed on quality control; developing a measurable standard or set criteria that interpreting and translation staff/professionals must achieve before being utilised by GSPs; designing procedures and training for GSP staff that engage with both clients and interpreting and translation professionals;
- Having a more cohesive holistic approach across the public service is needed as well as publicity around availability and access to interpreting and translation services, via information/awareness campaigns through minority ethnic groups and associations, and the media.
- As regards the industry itself, the key strengths are that in Ireland it is a growing industry and that there is access to a large potential pool of interpreters and translators to work from;
- Without relevant legislation or government bodies taking responsibility for training, accreditation, and evaluation; no binding industry standards or best practice models exist and the overall lack of standards and accreditation in the industry is leading to poor quality work;
- The work is poorly paid, and the attrition rate is high. There is also a lack of appropriately trained and qualified people working as interpreters and translators;
- There is a need for the design and delivery of accredited training for interpreters and translators and having formal standards in place would prevent the contracting of companies and individuals providing low quality service.

Views of Suppliers

- There is a mixed view on the tendering and contracting process. It is seen as a key strength by some suppliers and subject to criticism by others as the tendering process can lead to suppliers being chosen on the basis of cost rather than ability to provide quality services;
- GSPs are not fully aware of the limitations and complexities of providing interpreting and translation services, in terms of time and availability of interpreters and translators for rare languages and specialist areas;
- GSPs are using interpreting services without making any changes in the processes to accommodate for that added service;
- Key improvements needed across the public service provision of language services concern quality control including introducing standards and recognition of qualifications; changes in the processes whereby GSPs engage with professional interpreting and translation suppliers; and the training of GSPs;

Commonality on:

- The need for a cross-departmental collaborative approach involving all stakeholders to devise a policy framework;
- The need for standards and accreditation and devising a Code of Practice for interpreting and translation professionals;
- Need for training for interpreting and translation professionals and for GSP front line staff engaging with those with low English proficiency; training should involve cultural competency.

2. Key Findings

2.2.3 | Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

Key findings from our focus groups are as follows:

- Language is a barrier for many members of different minority ethnic groups when trying to access public services. Barriers in accessing services can arise due a complete lack of English competency or due to limited English competency. In the case of the latter technical or specialised terminology is a particularly acute barrier;
- There is a high incidence of people with low English proficiency using friends or family members or making do by themselves when trying to overcome language barriers;
- There is low awareness of the right to and availability of interpreting and translation services. There is also a perception among many of the participants that using professional interpreting and translations services to help them access and use public services would be expensive for them⁴;
- The service experience of those who used interpreting and translation services is mixed. Some report good service and well translated material. Some indicate they had no way of telling if the service was good or not, while others could point to poor and very poor quality of interpreting services or translation of written material;
- Cultural factors prevented some participants reporting poor translation of materials. Therefore, reliance on “customer feedback” alone as a means to judge the quality of interpreting and translation services is problematic.

Key issues from the point of view of members of minority ethnic groups with regard to the future development of interpreting and translation services are as follows:

- It is felt that it is important to prioritise the key public services where interpreting and translation services are provided. Key priority areas include health, justice (Garda, Courts etc), taxation, and employment rights and conditions;
- The need to ensure that interpreting and translation services for key public services is provided at no monetary cost to people who need these services;
- Participants indicated a need to use a range of methods for the provision of interpreting services. While face to face interpreting services were felt to be preferable in most cases, it was also felt that the availability of a dedicated telephone service (in the case of emergencies or to assist in routine queries) would be very helpful;
- The importance of developing information and awareness campaigns specifically targeted at minority ethnic groups was widely stressed. It was felt that information and awareness campaigns need, in particular to explain the role of the interpreter, convey the benefits of using an interpreter and provide clear information on costs, availability, how to access interpreting services and on the availability of translated material;
- Participants also stressed the importance of ensuring that front line public service staff have friendly and positive attitudes so that members of minority groups are not discouraged from using available services;
- The need to think about the overall service process and the role of interpreting and translation services to assist in this process was stressed. In particular, it was felt that interpreting and translation services should not be viewed as an “add on” to key public services, but rather they should be integrated into the service provision processes.

⁴NOTE: not all public bodies provide interpreters and in some cases clients would have to provide and pay for their own interpreter – for example in the Labour Court.

2. Key Findings

2.3 | Part D: International Experiences of the Provision of Interpreting & Translation Services

2.3.1 | Key findings from the international literature

Key findings from the international literature on the experiences of minority ethnic groups and of public service providers of interpreting and translation services are as follows:

- There is a strong unmet need for interpreting and translation services especially in health, housing, asylum seeker support, and education. Across all public services difficulties with language can be a significant deterrent to members of minority communities in their communication with officialdom, in either the voluntary or state sector;
- Provision of interpreting and translation tends to focus on provider rather than user. There is very little literature representing the service user perspective. Even representative groups can be more concerned with policy matters, so often literature from them does not provide direct access to the experiences, concerns and interests of the groups they serve;
- Users are not an homogenous group and their diverse and individual requirements need to be addressed in the provision of services;
- Understanding the rationales for choosing informal help rather than seeking professional assistance can aid the tailoring of interpreting and translation services more closely to users' needs. For example, users can be reluctant to engage with professionals because of feelings of guilt, blaming themselves for the language barrier. However, disadvantages and concerns over the use of informal interpreters remain;
- There is limited research on users' views of services but a range of issues have emerged from the research. Also, users often prefer informal interpreters because they are readily available and do not require payment; the user/can trust someone they already know and they will have a history of shared understandings and obligations;
- A number of delivery models for interpreting and translation provision in public bodies exist including: in-house services; outsourcing to private sector or not-for-profit organisations; partnership/shared resources; having a managed database of providers; brokerage services; and 'bring your own' interpreter;
- A useful distinction is between "high stakes", where the consequences of mis-communication are very serious to "routine context" everyday activities such as form filling; with professional help more appropriate for the former and informal more acceptable in relation to the latter;
- Under use of available professional interpreting and translation services when provided is common across providers due to low levels of awareness amongst people with low English proficiency and difficulties in accessing professional interpreters for those who know how to access them. Often when information is available, users need to have some knowledge of English in order to seek interpreting assistance;
- Difficulties in assessing the quality of professional interpreting services in the public sector prevail and much literature draws attention to the need for standards, appropriate training and quality control.

2. Key Findings

2.3.2 | International literature on country level interpreting & translation policies & practices

AUSTRALIA – Key Findings

- With regard to being an example of “best practice”, Australia has quite clearly defined policies and practices in place, through both the Federal, and State and Territorial Governments, providing language services to individuals with little or no English language proficiency. The progress towards having such a comprehensive policy has been underway since the middle of the last century;
- The state of Victoria has developed a framework for the provision of language services with a particular focus on enhanced access and continuing quality improvement through the provision of language services in the areas of: the supply and quality of interpreters, including in regional areas and emerging languages; client services through awareness training for government agency staff; data collection to enable reliable assessments of need; and funding and purchasing administration to improve the availability of interpreters;
- The Queensland Government Language Services Policy represents a whole-of-Government commitment to the development of communication strategies to inform eligible clients of services and their entitlements and how they can obtain them. These strategies include the engagement of professional interpreters in circumstances where clients have difficulties communicating in English;
- In New South Wales (NSW), the Language Services Division within the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW provides a wide range of interpreting and translating services in over 75 community languages. The main functions of the Language Services Division are: to act as the principal provider of interpreting for State Government agencies, health interpreting services, and legal interpreting services in NSW, providing services to Courts, Legal Aid, Community Legal Centres, the Director of Public Prosecutions and legal practitioners; and to provide on-site interpreting services to private organisations and individuals, including personal documents, transcription of tapes, technical and complex materials and multilingual documents;
- The Western Australian Government Language Services Policy requires Government agencies to develop policies, programmes and services that are equally accessible to all Western Australians and to implement strategies that are responsive to their diverse clientele including people who require assistance in English from the Indigenous (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) community and people with impaired hearing. The Office of Multicultural Interests provides advice to both the Government and NGO sectors on issues relating to this policy. The Language Services Policy is a resource for Government agencies, introducing strategies for more effective communication with clients;
- Training and accreditation for translation and interpreting professionals in Australia is set by the National Accreditation Authority for Translation and Interpreting (NAATI). NAATI accreditation is the only credential officially accepted for the profession of translation and interpreting in Australia. All government translation and interpreting services require translators and interpreters to be NAATI accredited where possible;
- The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) which operates nationally, is the Commonwealth Government language service provider and is part of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). The services offered by TIS include: telephone interpreting and on-site interpreting (face-to-face interpreting); an automated telephone interpreter service (ATIS); and a service suitable for clients with a high interpreter need which is designed to allow English speaking clients to access an interpreter in 18 high demand languages without assistance from a TIS Contact Centre operator.

2. Key Findings

SWEDEN – Key Findings

- The Swedish interpreter service started in the late 1960's when there was an influx of migrants. State authorisation of community interpreters has been in existence since 1976, and in 1978 a law was established that any administrative branch of the Government should provide interpreting for those who needed it, leading to the establishment of an organised profession with specific functions and accreditation systems;
- In the 1990's the Interpreter Service in Sweden was de-regulated leading to a number of private service providers entering the market, and to many municipal agencies being privatised, or closed down. The number of interpreter service agencies in Sweden is about 60; the majority, 40, are run by towns and municipalities, and 20 are privately owned;
- It is estimated that there are 5,000 community interpreters in Sweden, in over 100 working languages. To provide interpreters in an acute situation, an on-call service has been set up in the largest municipalities. There are also a number of agencies that offer remote interpreting by telephone or video. It is also estimated that every day, 3,000 hours of interpreting are provided, mainly in medical care and social welfare services. The yearly cost of interpreting amounts to over €45m, mainly financed by public funds;
- There are two types of interpreter training programmes in Sweden, academic courses at Swedish universities, and vocational training courses at adult education centres and voluntary educational associations. These are overseen by the Institute for Interpreting and Translation Studies at Stockholm University which is responsible for all interpreter training in Sweden, including community, conference and sign language interpreting.
- The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency publish the *God Tolksed (Good Interpreting Practice)*. These rules are similar to

those for international conference interpreters: only accept a commission one is competent for; remain neutral and impartial; observe the obligation to secrecy; strive to maintain and develop one's ability as an interpreter and perform one's commissions conscientiously and accurately.

CROSS-COUNTRY LITERATURE – the Aequitas Project on Legal Interpreting

- **The Aequitas project:** This project concerned the analysis of the provision of legal translators and interpreters in the EU. Four member-states participated in the project – the UK, Spain, Denmark and Belgium – and the findings were published in 2001 (Hertog, E., Ed, 2001, *Aequitas: Access to Justice across Language and Culture in the EU*, Antwerp, Lessius Hoogeschool);
- **Language Rights:** Across all four countries defendant have the right to use their own language in criminal proceedings;
- **Costs:** In both Belgium and Denmark the cost of interpreting is borne by state in criminal cases but by the plaintiff or defendant in civil cases;
- **Lists of interpreters:** Most of the countries operated national, regional or local registers of interpreters;
- **Quality Control:** Quality control was generally not very sophisticated.

2. Key Findings

2.3.3 | CASE STUDY 1: Provision of interpreting & translation provision in England

Overall Policy and Sector Wide Factors – Key Findings

- While England has a number of pieces of domestic legislation and statutory instruments relevant to the provision of interpreting and translation services specific requirements are particularly detailed under The Human Rights Act 1998 which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 (ECHR) into English law. Interpreting and translation is essentially unregulated in England; however, England has considerably more highly developed standards and guidelines than Ireland and these are discussed below;
- England has had a National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) since 1994. The NRPSI aims to provide public service organisations with access to a bank of appropriately qualified and experienced interpreters, capable of working in public service contexts such as health, local government and the legal sector. The NRPSI is maintained by NRPSI Ltd, a not for profit subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Linguists, the UK's largest professional body for linguists. It is not mandatory for public bodies to use the NRPSI, even within the criminal justice system, but it is recommended good practice, to which the majority of criminal justice system agencies have voluntarily committed;
- England has established National Occupational Standards (NOS) in interpreting and translation. CILT, the National Centre for Languages is the UK's Standards Setting Body for languages and has since the 1990s developed and maintained NOS in languages for the workplace, interpreting and translation. These have been created in collaboration with professional bodies, practitioners and end-users, to provide up-to-date definitions of competent performance, and

the skills and knowledge needed, as well as accompanying information on the role of the interpreter/translator and principles of professional practice;

- England has more highly developed education and training routes than Ireland. Much of the professional training in interpreting and translation is provided by the Higher Education sector, while the Chartered Institute of Linguists' (IoL) Educational Trust's Diploma in Translation (DipTrans) and Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) are the most significant alternatives to university Masters qualifications. The DipTrans is a postgraduate-level qualification regarded by many as the "gold standard" in translation awards. However, although Lord Justice Auld in 2001 recommended the central funding of courses for interpreters, in particular in the DPSI (Lord Justice Auld, Review of the Criminal Courts, of England and Wales, 2001. Available at: <http://www.criminal-courts-review.org.uk>), individuals are frequently obliged to fund provision themselves; the expense is undoubtedly a deterrent for some would-be interpreters. The reported shortages of interpreters and translators outside London indicate a shortfall in appropriate and accessible training provision;
- England also differs from Ireland in that there is a written National Agreement since 1997 setting out detailed guidance on the use of interpreters, (and to a lesser extent, translators) in criminal justice investigations and proceedings. The National Agreement has no legal status but appears to be widely recognised in the sector.

2. Key Findings

Metropolitan Police Service, London, UK – Key Findings

- The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) has developed clear guidance for its staff on commissioning and working with interpreters and on arranging translation. It has also produced guidance on agreed standard rates, and guidance on payment of travel expenses;
- The MPS operates a dedicated MPS Official List of interpreters and translators. To get on the list interpreters must be on the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) and pass additional selection and vetting criteria. The MPS Official List is available electronically 24 hours a day and includes the days/times when interpreters are available for work;
- On being accepted onto the MPS Official List, interpreters are given an induction to MPS work;
- A process has been put in place to avoid repetition of the same piece of translation work in different units;
- There are systems for capturing data on interpreting and translation, including expenditure, number of assignments, languages, and percentage of interpreters and providers used who are on the MPS Official List;
- Two consultative groups, composed of relevant stakeholders and representatives of sign and spoken language interpreting, meet on a quarterly basis to advise Language Services on developments;
- There is ongoing independent review and assessment to improve future provision.

Her Majesty's Courts Service, England and Wales – Key Findings

- Operational issues are handled locally/regionally, but the central Crime and Enforcement Directorate of Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) has policy responsibility for the day-to-day running of criminal courts, including provision of interpreting services. This has involved the introduction and maintenance of systems for encouraging best practice in the use of interpreters. These are summarised below.
- Procurement of interpreters is devolved to individual courts. The HMCS has produced a Good Practice Guide for court staff, working in the criminal courts, which provides clear and detailed guidance on appointing and working with interpreters;
- All courts have access via intranet and a dedicated password to the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI). Where it proves impossible to identify an interpreter with the right language combination from the NRPSI, staff follow the steps outlined in the National Agreement. Where these also fail, staff may approach the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal Service, which employs a central team to handle interpreter requests and maintains its own list;
- The Good Practice Guide stipulates that the court should not appoint any interpreter used by police during investigations unless absolutely necessary (in which case, all parties must be made aware and agree to the appointment).
- The courts use the Terms and Conditions for Providing Face-to-Face Interpreting Services, which outlines minimum daily payments. They also set out all details of costs payable to interpreters, including travel time and cancellation fees;
- Face-to-face interpreting is used exclusively in courts. In the case of speeding offences, ...

2. Key Findings

where a summons is issued automatically and there is no advance personal contact to establish language needs, telephone interpreting might be used to rearrange the hearing;

- Where examination of witnesses or defendants is concerned, interpreting in courts is consecutive. All Crown Court proceedings, conducted in open court, are audio recorded. Video-recording is not used routinely. When a non-English speaking defendant is in the dock for sentencing, the interpreter will generally sit beside him/her and give a whispered, simultaneous interpretation but this is not recorded;
- Where the defendant is not required to attend court and is being held in custody, it is common practice for the interpreter to travel to the prison where the defendant is being held and for the court to communicate by video link. This may also be used in the case of witness interviews;
- Ongoing systematic monitoring of the quality of interpreting delivered is not regarded as feasible. Data on the number of assignments, languages involved and interpreters appointed are not routinely recorded. No information is available on the percentage of interpreters used in court assignments who are NRPSI registered.

2.3.4 | CASE STUDY 2: The Netherlands

Overall Policy and Sector Wide Factors – Key Findings

- Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) remains the main basis for the provision of interpreting in courts. Article 6 states that everyone charged with a criminal offence has the right to be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him; and to have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court.
- It is reinforced by domestic case law related to ECHR Article 8 on the right to privacy and family life, which requires the court to appoint an interpreter as required in cases related to family law, including protection of children and divorce. The Immigration Act makes it a requirement for an interpreter to be used in the case of any individual applying for the right to remain in the Netherlands. New legislation – the Dutch Act on Sworn Interpreters and Translators – is currently being reviewed by parliament and should be implemented during 2008;
- There has to date been no statutory mechanism for ensuring the quality or value for money of interpreting and translation provided in public services. In the mid 1990s, the Ministry of Justice came under criticism from the National Ombudsman for failing to monitor satisfactorily the performance of interpreters during follow-up interviews in asylum procedures. This led to the introduction in 2000 of a quality programme, which included proposals for the assessment of all practising interpreters. This was not well received by languages professionals for a number of reasons;
- A National Register has existed since late 2001 and is accessible without charge to any employee of a Dutch court, the police or Immigration Services. There is no compulsion to use the register, however, and many courts and police

2. Key Findings

services maintain their own lists, using these as the first point of reference;

- The new Dutch Act on Sworn Interpreters and Translators has been created to provide a firm legal basis for tackling issues of quality and transparency in the justice sector. It plans to make the use of the *National Register for Qualified Legal Interpreters and Translators* mandatory for specific justice agencies – police, courts and immigration services – and sets out a number of conditions for its implementation, with the aim of ensuring both quality of service and value for money;
- A new Quality Institute is to be established, which will advise the Ministry of Justice on policy, the development of professional training programmes and other aspects of interpreting and translating. The Institute will include representation from language professionals and public service providers.

Courts, Police and Immigration – Key Findings

- The Ministry of Justice was, until 2005, responsible for translation and interpreting provision across public services in the Netherlands, including health and social care. Its remit is now limited to provision in the courts, police and immigration;
- The immigration service appears to have the most developed system. The service is delivered regionally, by four dedicated co-ordinators, to whom investigating officers refer requests for translators or interpreters.;
- There is no centralised system for courts or police; they tend to maintain their own lists of interpreters and translators. Geographical location of interpreters, rather than quality, has been found to be the biggest consideration for court officials when appointing professionals;
- There is currently no guidance for those working in the justice system on working with language professionals. It is recognised that such guidance is needed, as currently individuals are largely

left to make independent decisions (for example, on whether to appoint separate interpreters for investigation and trial) which may well have an impact on the quality of provision;

- There have to date been relatively few complaints from public service providers about translation and interpreting provision. Where complaints have been made the bulk of these relate to scheduling difficulties, delays etc. The absence of formal monitoring systems could mean that problems are simply not being identified by public service providers as interpreters have expressed serious concerns about the quality of interpreting;
- No reliable information exists about the number of practising interpreters and translators nor the number of assignments. In the 2003 calendar year, almost €54m was spent on interpreting and translation. Of this, €9m was spent by the immigration service and €21m by the courts and police. The remainder was paid to TVCN, the intermediary organisation responsible for provision in other public services (e.g. health-care, housing, education);
- A total budget of €720,000 has been earmarked for the running costs of the National Register and Quality Institute in 2008. This will cover development of the website, testing, online learning and registration;
- Fees for interpreting and translation are set centrally, by the Ministry of Justice. Interpreters are paid a rate of €43.89 per hour. For certain types of immigration work only, interpreters with less than six months' experience may be appointed at an hourly rate of €30.22. Travel costs are reimbursed at €1.55 per km. Rates of pay are highly contentious. They are reported not to have increased over a number of years;
- While there are differences in how each service currently handles translation and interpreting, the new Dutch Act on Sworn Interpreters and Translators seeks to harmonise provision in all services under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice.

2. Key Findings

2.3.5 | CASE STUDY 3: Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Interpreting Service (NIHSSIS), Northern Ireland – Key Findings

- NIHSSIS provides a 9 to 5 face-to-face interpreting service. There is no provision for either telephone interpreting or sign-language. Although this is about to change, currently there is no out-of-hours service provision. Interpreters are employed on a sessional basis;
- Preparation time is allocated to interpreting staff in complex cases. Professional development sessions have been provided for interpreting staff. It has a code of ethics for interpreters that needs to be agreed as part of the employment package. It employs a computer system that aligns requests with interpreter availability;
- All interpreters are required to undertake a Pre-employment Consultancy Service Check (PECS). All interpreters registered with NIHSSIS have ONC (Ordinary National Certificate) in community interpreting level 3.
- This interpreting service is managed by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSC). The organisation is guided by an advisory group representing all interested parties. The administration and management of the service is funded by the Department of Health Northern Ireland. Interpreter costs are invoiced to the service provider and paid via the appropriate health and social care board;
- It ensures a good audit trail using a robust booking and invoicing system. Professional users and interpreters are required to return a monitoring form after each assignment as part of the service evaluation. An interpreter survey run in 2005 provided invaluable feedback about the service.
- The booking system is time consuming since much of this is undertaken by the administrative staff to ensure the most appropriate interpreter

is assigned to the event;

- There are geographical issues; there may be no interpreter local to the request, thus involving longer travel time and costs. Training interpreters in a variety of locations is helpful but does not overcome the availability problem;
- There is considerable investment in training interpreters although they are not employees but sessional workers so may not be available for the interpreting service when needed;

Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM), Northern Ireland – Key Findings

- This interpreting service is managed by a charitable, non-profit making organisation NICEM. The service is a self-sufficient business operating in profit through its social economy company CONNECT-NICEM. This is a 24-hour, face-to-face service – so good availability for professional users avoiding problems for out-of-hours events. NICEM makes no provision for either telephone interpreting or sign-language;
- Only interpreters on the NICEM register are used, all interpreters are “police-checked” and all interpreters have to sign the NICEM code of ethics – so there is knowledge, at least at service-provider level, about the standard of service on offer. Interpreters are independent of the PSNI – this independence is very important for police and court service provision. NICEM runs an ONC accredited certificate of community interpreter training level 3;
- NICEM has produced a handbook of good practice for both police officers and interpreters. Guidelines for working with interpreters is available for the PSNI users as a single download sheet from the NICEM website (www.nicem-interpreting.org.uk/pdfs/Guidelines.pdf). The PSNI has a point of contact to resolve complaints and breaches of professional conduct;

2. Key Findings

- The interpreters are employed on a sessional basis. Staff are paid by the hour and for travel expenses – this avoids paying for “waiting” time and full-employment overheads but does have disadvantages. In particular NICEM makes a considerable investment in training its interpreters but they are not employees and as sessional workers, may not be available for the interpreting service when needed;
- The service has a very good audit trail. Requests for interpreters have to be made on a booking form; the time sheets and invoices are computer generated for each assignment. Interpreters are “hand-picked” from a computer held data base in order to ensure the most appropriate choice. Although not yet in general use, an important addition to the service monitoring and evaluation is the development of an anonymous feedback form for non-English speakers. This is currently in the pilot study phase;
- The booking system is time consuming since much of this is undertaken by the administrative staff to ensure the most appropriate interpreter is assigned to the event. The invoicing and payment systems are also time-consuming and paperwork heavy;
- Not all assignments can be met – especially when emergencies arise. In addition, there are geographical issues; there may be no interpreter local to the request involving longer travel time and costs. Training interpreters in a variety of locations is helpful but does not overcome the availability problem;
- The most important issue is to do with training and ensuring that interpreters have the appropriate level of training to offer the Government service provider as well as the opportunity for career development;
- Interpreters are not able to be fully employed especially for the less “popular” languages and take on other employment thus limiting their availability. Arrangements for briefing and de-briefing interpreters prior to and after assignments are very limited.

2. Key Findings

2.4 | Part E: Conclusions & Recommendations

The research findings in this report point to a number of key issues requiring attention by government. These are:

- Best practice international models for I&T services indicate that there are certain minimal requirements to be met in order to have a coherent government regime. These include the need for an overall policy context, the setting of standards and the maintenance of a register in respect of the education and training of interpreters and translators, the development of a framework agreement for service standards and service provision to which GSPs would subscribe and the provision of promotional and awareness services to ensure that end users are aware of their entitlements and of the means to access services;
- The absence of the foregoing in the Irish context gives rise to a number of consequent concerns. These include demand exceeding supply, variability in quality, a lack of coherence across government as GSPs evolve their own systems and procedures, gaps in service (e.g. absence of access to a telephone service, poor mechanisms for a meeting out of hours requirements etc), a lack of professional advisory services to GSPs, lack of training (including training in related cultural and religious dimensions) for staff in GSPs, poor pay and conditions of employment in the sector and a variety of other issues which are impacting on service quality and service delivery;
- At the heart of the issues to be addressed is the fact that, under current arrangements, there is no single “owner” of the agenda in relation to I&T services. Therefore, a variety of different arms of government and a multiplicity of GSPs find themselves dealing with the different aspects of the problems which arise.

Our role in conducting this research project was essentially to study the situation in Ireland, to identify options for dealing with the issues arising. It seems to us that the following steps should be taken:

- A national policy framework for the provision of I&T services should be developed in the context of the contextualisation issues raised earlier in this chapter. The policy framework would, we believe, have to be developed in conjunction with GSPs and with other stakeholders;
- Arrangements should be put in place to develop a register of accredited practitioners and for GSPs to use that register for the purposes of sourcing I&T service providers. Work would need to be done with the education and training sectors in order to develop the standards which would underpin the register;
- Similarly, a framework agreement needs to be developed for standards of service provision to which the GSPs would subscribe. Again, work would need to be done in conjunction with service providers, the education and training sector and with the GSPs in order to evolve such a framework agreement incorporating appropriate standards for service provision.

2. Key Findings

There are a variety of options for government in terms of who should take the lead role and where the unit to undertake the necessary work should reside within the State structures. We believe that a small, professional unit could undertake this work. In order to avoid confusion and duplication, the unit thus established could also take on the following functions:

- Providing promotion and awareness services;
- Providing professional advisory services to GSPs on meeting their I&T needs;
- Monitoring trends in supply and demand and providing advice to government on coherence across the State services;
- Monitoring compliance with standards;
- Developing a pilot test for a telephone, emergency and out-of-hours service which could service the needs of multiple GSPs.

In the light of the nature of the conclusions and recommendations arising from our research it is not possible, at this stage, to produce anything useful or definitive on the cost implications. These will be highly dependent on the option chosen for meeting the requirements identified. In very broad terms, the main potential cost elements might be:

- The creation of a small policy and advisory unit, as recommended, where the bulk of the cost would be the staffing cost involved;
- The costs associated with the creation and maintenance of the register;
- The costs of piloting (and, perhaps, subsequently rolling out) the telephone emergency and out-of-hours service;
- The costs associated with promoting the services and of raising awareness;
- Potential additional education and training costs.

There are obviously a variety of means by which such costs could be met and it is too early in the process to estimate the likely extent of such costs. However, it is clear from the work we have undertaken that any deliberations on cost arising from our research will have to take account of the following:

- Budgetary constraints are already imparting on service provision by GSPs;
- Training and education costs are a potential barrier to entry which could impact on supply;
- Concerns as to potential cost are a barrier to end users accessing services.

2. Key Findings

The overall aims of our recommendations are as follows:

- To enhance service provision through putting in place a national standards and regulatory framework with a light touch approach;
- To support GSPs with a small professional advisory unit which would have a policy advisory role to government on interpreting and translation issues;
- To ensure that GSPs continue to own the service delivery agenda;
- To ensure that training and education provision is delivered in line with overall policy and service provision needs; and
- To provide for a small central competency pool of expertise in developing an appropriate national response in a key area of the overall policy agenda in relation to integration and interculturalism.

In our view, the next steps in the process are as follows:

- Our report on the outcomes from the research undertaken should be considered by the NCCRI and by the Office for the Minister for Integration;
- The report should be circulated to the key stakeholders for comment within a defined timeframe;
- Once feedback has been received the Office for the Minister for Integration should consider the issue of establishing the small professional unit recommended and where within the overall machinery of existing bodies such a unit should be located; and
- The unit, once established, should be charged with developing an implementation plan for giving effect to the recommendations arising from the research.



1. Introduction

1. Introduction

1.1 | Background

This is the final report *The Development of Quality, Cost-effective Interpreting and Translation Services for Government Service Providers in Ireland*. This report was prepared jointly by FGS Consulting, CILT (the National Centre for Languages in the UK), and Dr. Jacqueline Turton of the University of Essex.

The research project was managed by the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) and funded by the Reception and Integration Agency (RIA), as a result of recent policy change in 2007, it should be noted that the main functions of RIA are now part of the Office of the Minister for Integration. The research was guided by an Advisory Group. The Advisory Group was drawn from key Government departments and agencies, representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and from academic and professional bodies in the area of interpreting and translation. A list of Advisory Group members is presented as Appendix B.

It is important to note that the provision of interpreting and translation services is only one part of the overall approach to integration in Ireland. The provision of English language education and training is another important part of Ireland's overall policy response⁵.

1.2 | Specific Research Objectives

The terms of reference for this study set out four overall research objectives as follows:

1. To map the current provision of interpreting and translating services by Government service providers in Ireland;
2. To identify aspects of current service provision that work well or are unsatisfactory from the perspective of service users and other stakeholders (including availability of service, actual levels usage of service when provided, reasons for non-usage where that occurs);
3. To describe models of 'good practice' based on international review;
4. To develop preferred options for quality cost effective interpreting and translating services for Government service providers in Ireland, taking into account the policy, structural and financial dimensions of these options.

FGS Consulting delivered research objectives 1, 2 and part of 3. The international case studies undertaken in relation to Terms of Reference point 3 were produced by CILT (the National Centre for Languages in the UK), and by Dr. Jacqueline Turton of the University of Essex. FGS Consulting, CILT and Dr. Jacqueline Turton jointly developed research objective Point 4.

⁵The development of a National English Language Policy and Framework for legally resident Adult immigrants is being carried out jointly by the Department of Education and Science and the Office of the Minister for Integration.

1. Introduction

1.3 | Study Scope

Interpreting is the conversion of speech from one language to another. For the purpose of this study it does *not* include the various forms of sign languages (this topic is dealt with by Comhairle – now the Citizens Information Board in the report *Review of Sign Language Interpretation Services and Service Requirements in Ireland*, 2006). In addition, this study is focused on interpreting in English and foreign languages and the scope of the study does *not* include the Irish language.

Translation is the conversion of written texts from one language to another. For purpose of this study translation does *not* include Braille and other tactile forms of writing. In addition, this study is focused on translation of English and foreign languages and the scope of the study does *not* include the Irish language.

1.4 | Study Methodology

The key methods used during this study are summarised below. More detailed discussions of our methodology are provided in individual chapters as relevant. The four key methods used are as follows:

Literature Review:

As part of this study we undertook an extensive review of Irish and international literature. The methodology for the review of literature is described in more detail in Chapter 6;

Consultations:

As part of this study we undertook demand side consultations with organisations and people who use and demand interpreting and translating services, specifically Government service providers, and NGOs and representative bodies of people in need to these services. We also undertook supply-side consultations with stakeholders on the supply side i.e. those who supply interpreting and translation services to the Government service providers. A range of consultation methods were used, including a standardised written questionnaire and a number of face to face and telephone interviews. Our methodology for consultations are discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 and Appendix B lists people and organisations consulted during the study;

Focus Groups:

We undertook four focus groups with members of minority ethnic groups who had no English or a low proficiency in English. People from four countries were identified as likely to reflect the four countries with the greatest number of people living in Ireland with no English or low proficiency in English namely members of the Polish community; members of the Lithuanian community; members of the Latvian community; Members of the Chinese community. Our methodology for the focus groups is discussed in detail in Chapter 5;

Case Studies:

We undertook a number of case studies. The case studies were based on a review of available literature and a series of telephone and email consultations. Additional details on our methodology are provided in Chapters 8, 9 and 10.

1. Introduction

1.5 | Report Structure

The remainder of this report is structured around the key study issues and is divided into four parts as shown below.

Part B: Background

Chapter 2 discusses the Legislative Provision and the Policy context in Ireland. It also highlights some key demand side issues and a number of point supply side issues. In addition, it briefly discusses some of the key findings from previous Irish research in the area.

Part C: Provision of Interpreting and Translation Services in Ireland

Chapter 3 presents our mapping of professional interpreting and translation services provided by key public service providers. It also discusses their experiences of provision, their views on key strengths and weaknesses and their views on future improvements.

Chapter 4 discusses the views of suppliers of interpreting and translation services to public service providers, their views on key strengths and weaknesses along with their views on future improvements.

Chapter 5 presents our findings on the experiences of members of minority ethnic groups on using interpreting and translation services along with their views on future provision of interpreting and translations services.

Part D International Experiences of the Provision of Interpreting and Translation Services

Chapter 6 summarises the key findings from the international literature on the experiences of minority ethnic groups and of public service providers of interpreting and translation services.

Chapter 7 presents key findings from the international literature on country level interpreting and translation policies and practices. It provides a discussion of practices in Australia and Sweden. It also provides a review of the cross country Aequitas research on legal interpreting.

Chapters 8, 9 and 10 present three case studies examining provision of interpreting and translation provision in England, the Netherlands and Northern Ireland.

Part E Future Options

Chapter 11 presents the conclusions and recommendations emanating from this review. This section also includes proposals for future options for the provision of interpreting and translation services by government service providers in Ireland.



2. Irish Policy & Context

2. Irish Policy & Context

2.1 | Introduction

This Chapter discusses Irish policy, and the legislative context with regard to the provision of interpreting and translation services across the public sector in Ireland. Section 2.2 gives an overview of the Irish legislative position. Section 2.3 discusses the Irish policy context including the National Action Plan Against Racism, the current Programme for Government and the current National Development Plan. Section 2.4 presents demand side issues shaping the current context, focussing on the numbers of migrants currently living in Ireland, and the numbers of languages spoken in Ireland today. Section 2.5 discusses the main characteristics of the professional interpreting and translation industry in Ireland. Section 2.6 presents the key chapter findings.

2. Irish Policy & Context

2.2 | The Irish Legislative Position

In Ireland, unlike countries such as Australia that have specific written guidelines in place for interpreting and translation provision by GSPs, there is a lack of written policies for Government departments and agencies and a lack of guidelines for staff on when and how to use interpreters.

This is not to say however, that there is an absence of policy provision altogether, as there are obligations under: the European Convention on Human Rights which must be adhered to with regard to the legal process; The Refugee Act, 1966; and more generally, the Equal Status Acts 2000–2004.

2.2.1 | European Convention on Human Rights Act, 2003

The European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental freedoms was incorporated into Irish law with the European Convention on Human Rights Act 2003. Under the Convention, two key Articles (Articles 5 and 6) provide a legal basis for the provision of interpreters in the legal process. Article 5 of the Convention guarantees the right to liberty and security, and states that everyone who is arrested shall be informed promptly in a language which understands, of the reasons for his arrest, and of any charge against him.

Article 6 states that everyone charged with a criminal offence has the right to be informed promptly, in a language which he understands and in detail, of the nature and cause of the accusation against him; and to have the free assistance of an interpreter if he cannot understand or speak the language used in court (Council of Europe, The European Convention on Human Rights, 1950).

European Court of Human Rights case law has clarified requirements around provision of written translation and of interpreting both during hearings and in pre-trial proceedings. More detailed summaries of international requirements can be found on the website dedicated to three projects on Access to Justice across language and culture in the European Union (www.legalinttrans.info/).

2.2.2 | The 1996 Refugee Act

The 1996 Refugee Act was implemented in full by the Irish government in 2000. This Act provides that an asylum interview, where necessary and possible will be conducted with the assistance of an interpreter.

The current Immigration, Residence and Protection Bill 2008 also provides for the right to an interpreter in various settings within the immigration and asylum process.

2.2.3 | The Equal Status Act, 2000 & the Equality Act, 2004

The Equal Status Acts 2000–2004⁶ prohibit discrimination in service provision across nine grounds (including ‘race’). These nine grounds are: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, ‘race’ and membership of the Travelling community.

Failure to appoint an interpreter could contravene the Equal Status Acts. However, so far no case has been taken on this issue. The Equality Tribunal would be the final arbitrator on such a case.

⁶The Equal Status Act, 2000 was amended by the Equality Act 2004. They are known together as the Equal Status Acts 2000–2004.

2. Irish Policy & Context

2.3 | Irish Policy Context

2.3.1 | Office of the Minister for Integration

In 2007 a new Office of the Minister for Integration was established under the auspices of Mr Conor Lenihan, TD, Minister of State for Integration. This represented a change in the political structure of the Department of Justice, with the new Office incorporating the main functions of the Reception and Integration Agency. The Office of the Minister for Integration is also the lead Government agency for the implementation of the National Action Plan Against Racism (see 2.3.2). The Office has responsibility for the development and implementation of the Government's integration strategy and the Minister of State has cross-departmental responsibility in the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform; the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

2.3.2 | The National Action Plan Against Racism

In Ireland, Government commitment towards interculturalism is driven by the National Action Plan Against Racism (NPAR) 2005–2008. The main aim of the plan is to provide strategic direction to combat racism and to develop a more inclusive and intercultural society in Ireland. The importance of linking the plan with equality policy, public service modernisation, and anti-poverty measures is also highlighted in the plan.

The pluralistic approach of the NPAR is reflected in the intercultural framework which underpins it.

This intercultural framework is based on five key objectives set out below:

-
1. **PROTECTION**
Effective protection and redress against racism
 2. **INCLUSION**
Economic inclusion and equality of opportunity
 3. **PROVISION**
Accommodating diversity in service provision
 4. **RECOGNITION**
Recognition and awareness of diversity
 5. **PARTICIPATION**
Full participation in Irish society
-

Source: Planning for Diversity: The National Action Plan Against Racism 2005–2008, Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, 2005.

2. Irish Policy & Context

Interpreting and Translation services are related to achievement of Objective 3 “Accommodating diversity in service provision”. In particular Service Provision Common Outcome Number 5 under that Objective which explicitly states that an outcome under this part of the plan is to develop targeted initiatives focussing on access to key public services, for Travellers, refugees and migrants. Interpreting and Translation provision is central to the development of this outcome.

Following on from the NPAR, a number of Government service providers have developed or are developing their own intercultural strategies; for example the Health Services Executive (HSE) launched its Intercultural Strategy in 2008 and the Department of Education and Science is currently planning for its strategy. The HSE’s Intercultural Strategy contains two key recommendations of interest to this study:

- There will be coordinated development of guidelines for the production and application of translated material. These guidelines, advised and validated by stakeholders, will be based on evidence of good practice and should focus on aspects of standards, quality and standardisation in relation to the production and use of translated information. Guidelines will include direction around the type of information that should be provided, languages in which these should be available, and to whom and how the information should be circulated.
- A thorough audit and evaluation of existing systems of facilitating interpretation should be undertaken to inform the nature and design of a national interpretation service. This will include consideration of current models and practices in this area and some evaluation of their effectiveness. Recommendations regarding appropriate models for this service should take place within the context of a consultation forum with all key stakeholders, including service users, health professionals, interpreters and relevant academic groups.

The strategy also recommends that due regard be given to the outcomes from the current study.

2.3.3 | Previous Research Findings in Ireland

Research published by the NCCRI in 2006 on the delivery of public services to minority ethnic groups in Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland focuses on the challenges facing government service providers, primarily by considering the key areas of health, education, employment, and policing. Across all sectors, the issue of language and communication difficulties was highlighted as one of the key challenges facing service providers. (Watt, P & McGaughey, F. *Improving Government Service Delivery to Minority Ethnic Groups*, NCCRI, 2006). In considering the question of how to improve Government services for minority ethnic groups, a key finding from the research was that effective communication is essential in improving service provision (*Ibid*, p.155). The report concludes that language barriers have emerged repeatedly in the research, predominantly from service providers but also from NGOs and people from minority ethnic groups. It recommends that clients should have access to professional (preferably accredited) interpreters and translators:

- to ensure accurate communication between people of different languages while taking into account cultural sensitivities and confidentiality;
- because it is well known that in times of crisis or in traumatic or emotionally-charged situations, second language competency may decrease dramatically;
- as effective professional practice is dependent upon the worker’s ability to understand the client’s situation, through verbal and non-verbal communication;
- because some interpreting requires specific technical terminology, which is a specialised skill; and because people have right to equality in service delivery and interpreters are an important tool in allowing people who do not speak English well to achieve that right.

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The report found that by 2006 some proactive steps have been taken by service providers, resulting in an improved level of interpreting and translating, with specific case examples from Northern Ireland and Scotland. However, it found that in the Republic of Ireland at that time, provision of interpreting and translating services is piecemeal and depended on the individual service provider; sometimes interpreters are simply not used and there are little or no standards in place, casting doubt on the quality of service when interpreters and translators are used.

A number of other reports have also referred to the importance of accurate communication between Government service providers and members of the public from minority ethnic backgrounds, including the importance of providing quality interpreting and translation services.

Two reports from the NCCRI's Community Profiles Series found that language barriers were the biggest issue facing two of the largest migrant communities in Ireland – Polish and Chinese. A report on *Polish Migrant Workers in Ireland* (Kropiwiec, K. & King-O'Riain, R. *Polish Migrant Workers in Ireland*, NCCRI Community Profiles Series, 2006) found that the biggest problem Polish migrants face is with regards to language skills, and in particular that a lack of language skills makes migrants more vulnerable and exposed to difficulties. Seemingly simple daily activities, such as getting a PPSN (Personal Public Service Number), become extremely difficult. Also, a lack of language skills and lack of information on employment rights also contributes to their inability to defend their rights when faced with discrimination and exploitation in the workplace.

The Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI) have also highlighted the fact that migrant workers have little access to language appropriate information about their rights and entitlements in the workplace and they often do not know where to go to get such information, making it makes it impossible to seek recourse when their rights are abused (for example, MRCI, *Realising Integration Creating The Conditions For The Economic, Social, Political And Cultural*

Inclusion Of Migrant Workers And Their Families In Ireland, 2006).

Migrant workers' ability to seek redress in cases of workplace exploitation is also undermined by the fact that not all redress bodies (for example the Labour Relations Commission (LRC) and the Employment Appeals Tribunal) provide interpreters, and the sourcing of an independent competent interpreter can be a difficult and a costly exercise (MRCI, *Accessing redress for workplace exploitation: The experience of migrant workers*, 2006). People often rely on friends and family; in one of the cases profiled in the report, the son of a person pursuing a case interpreted at the LRC hearing. When asked about this experience he said, "I was doing my Leaving Cert and had to leave the exam to translate for my father and then go back to do another exam. I didn't have enough money to buy a bottle of water".

Successfully navigating other Government services, such as immigration, has also been problematic (MRCI, *Realising Integration: Migrant Workers Undertaking Essential Low-Paid Work in Dublin City*, 2007). 63% of those interviewed in the MRCI research believed that they did not have sufficient English when dealing with officialdom, mainly identified as difficulties in dealing with immigration officials. This was an important issue for the participants as difficulties with visas, work permits and family reunification were of the utmost importance to them:

"When you go to get your visa renewed it is difficult. It depends on who is on that day. The last time I had to come back three times with different things they wanted. You never know what they are going to ask you for. I get nervous and can't remember the English words." (Cleaner L)

Lack of language skills and access to interpreting and translating can also result in social isolation and act as a barrier to integration. The report on *Chinese Students in Ireland* (Wang, Y.Y. & King-O'Riain, R., *Chinese Students in Ireland*, NCCRI Community Profiles Series, 2006) found some social isolation of the Chinese in Ireland both because of a cohort

2. Irish Policy & Context

effect and due to language limitations. The MRCI acknowledge that the growing number of people living in Ireland whose first language is not English presents a challenge to both the people attempting to access services and for service providers. This is a crucial aspect of the integration process, as without an acceptable level of interpretation provision there is, in effect, a structural barrier in accessing services that are considered essential for normal functioning and participation in society (MRCI, *Realising Integration Creating The Conditions For The Economic, Social, Political And Cultural Inclusion Of Migrant Workers And Their Families In Ireland*, 2006).

Crosscare Emigrant Advice outline major integration benefits when Irish public services are more language accessible, including: easier access to essential services for people whose mother tongue is not English; greater knowledge of rights and entitlements for people whose mother tongue is not English; and closer identification by minority groups with public services and consequently with Irish society as a whole – thus helping to prevent insularity and disconnection from Irish society (Crosscare's *Emigrant Advice Policy Statement: An Integrated Future Ireland*, 2006).

The recent OECD Review of the Public Service (*OECD Public Management Reviews Ireland: Towards An Integrated Public Service*, 2008) found that an increasingly diverse Irish society means that a renewed focus on access to the Public Service is needed for underserved and underrepresented populations, particularly for those citizens who do not have English as their first language. It recommends that access and participation channels that have been tacitly known to-date will now have to be made more explicit. It also acknowledges that some departments have made strides in ensuring that information is now available in languages other than Irish and English (such as Polish or Chinese). However, it finds that challenges still exist in ensuring that composite information is made clear for those who have irregular or sporadic contact with government.

The NCCRI Chinese and Polish reports and the MRCI reports described above recommend that information on rights and entitlements be provided in migrant languages. The MRCI recommends that free interpreting services should be provided for workers seeking redress in employment bodies such as the LRC. It also recommends the creation of a system for interpretation services across the full range of public services; training for frontline service providers in both understanding the need for, and use of, interpretation services (for example, phone services, supports for social economy and community enterprise initiatives in developing translation and interpretation services); and provision of grants to community sector organisations attempting to provide accessible services to migrant workers and their families.

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2.3.4 | The Programme for Government

Under the existing Programme for Government, while there are no specific provisions made for the provision of interpreting translation and communication support for Government service providers, there are references to providing support for those minorities with little or no English, in the context of workers rights, asylum and integration, and education policy.

Under the section on Asylum, Immigration and Integration there is a pledge to:

- Ensure advice and assistance are provided in appropriate languages at ports of entry and that legal aid is provided for immigration cases;
- Support the services offered by ethnic-led non-governmental organisations working with the immigrant community, in particular those that provide for the educational, cultural and linguistic needs of migrant workers.

As regards migrant workers, in the Programme there is also a commitment to ensure that workers are made aware of their rights through initiatives such as printing the minimum wage on the work permit and providing information in a range of languages. (Department of the Taoiseach, Programme for Government, June 2007).

2.3.5 | The National Development Plan & Social Partnership Agreement

The National Development Plan 2007–2013 does not have specific investment priorities aimed at the provision of interpreting and translation services, but Priority V on Social Inclusion includes €848 million to support immigrant integration, language support, the social and economic advancement of members of the Traveller Community, the National Action Plan Against Racism and programmes and measures to combat gender inequality in Ireland.

Similarly, the new Social Partnership Agreement Towards 2016 has no specific references to the provision of interpreting and translation across public services. However, there are specific references to additional teachers for language support – the appointment of an extra 550 language support teachers by 2009 is included as one of the priority actions.

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2.4 | Demand-side Issues

2.4.1 | Migrant Population in Ireland

As mentioned at the outset, there has been an unprecedented rise in the number of migrants living in Ireland. Figures from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) indicate that over the past 10 years more than 750,000 people from 211 countries have come to Ireland. In the most recent results posted by the CSO from Census 2006, 413,223 people (about 10% of the population) usually resident in the state have a nationality other than Irish (see table below). However, the Minister of State for Integration Conor Lenihan has acknowledged that immigration levels were higher than set out in official figures, and that non-Irish nationals could most likely account for up to 13–14% of the population, rather than the 10% recorded in the 2006 Census (*The Irish Times*, Monday September 17, 2007).

Of those whose nationality is not Irish, by far the majority (66%) is from the EU. 27% come from the UK and 39% from other EU member states; 15% are Polish, 6% Lithuanian, and 3% Latvian. Outside of the EU nationalities, 3% of the total migrant population is Chinese; 11% in total comes from Asia with India at 2%, and the Philippines at 2%. Various African nationalities make up 8% of the total migrant population 4% of whom are Nigerian (CSO, Census, 2006).

In 2007, an analysis by Gamma (reported in *The Irish Times*, Wednesday, August 8th, 2007) of recorded populations in District Electoral Divisions (DEDs) from the 2006 Census showed the percentage of the population stating a place of birth as outside Ireland. The national average was 14%. See Figure 2.1.

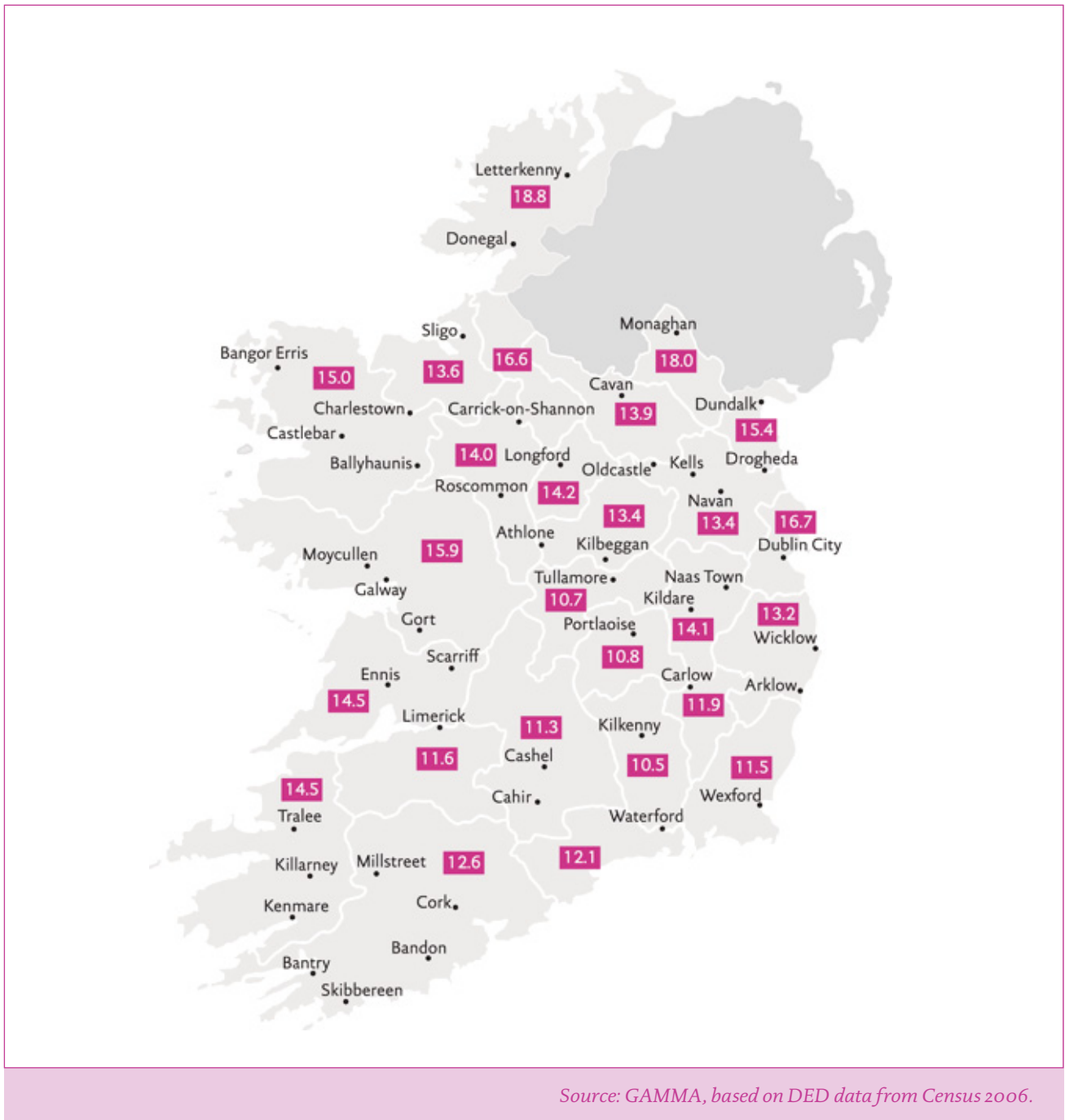
Table 2.1: Nationalities of Non-Irish Persons Usually Resident in the State 2006

Nationality	Population	% of Total Non-Irish Population	Nationality	Population	% of Total Non-Irish Population	Nationality	Population	% of Total Non-Irish Population
Total Non-Irish	413,223	100%						
EU Total	271,974	66%				Asia Total	46,064	11%
Austria	578	<1%	Portugal	1,766	<1%	China	10,967	3%
Belgium	900	<1%	Slovakia	8,046	2%	Philippines	9,327	2%
Cyprus	60	<1%	Slovenia	129	<1%	India	8,329	2%
Czech Republic	5,110	1%	Spain	5,977	1%	Pakistan	4,926	1%
Denmark	712	<1%	Sweden	1,712	<1%	Malaysia	2,920	1%
Estonia	2,250	1%	UK	110,579	27%	Other Asian	9,595	2%
Finland	902	<1%						
France	8,917	2%	Rest of Europe	24,151	6%	Americas Totals	20,771	5%
Germany	10,086	2%	Romania	7,633	2%	USA	12,259	3%
Greece	408	<1%	Russia	4,426	1%	Brazil	4,339	1%
Hungary	3,387	1%	Ukraine	3,097	1%	Canada	2,293	1%
Italy	6,078	1%	Other European	8,995	2%	Other Americas	880	<1%
Latvia	13,183	3%						
Lithuania	24,434	6%	Africa Total	34,564	8%	Australia	3,947	1%
Luxembourg	26	<1%	Nigeria	15,974	4%	New Zealand	1,706	<1%
Malta	138	<1%	South Africa	5,334	1%			
Netherlands	3,922	1%	Other African	13,256	3%	Other Nationalities	7,724	2%
Poland	62,674	15%				Multi Nationality	2,322	1%

Source: CSO census 2006, Volume 4 – Nationalities Table 38A Persons, males and females usually resident (and present in their usual residence on Census Night) in each Province and in the Aggregate Town and Aggregate Rural Areas, classified by nationality, 2006.

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Figure 2.1: Areas with a High % Population Born Outside Ireland⁷



⁷While the percentages reflect an increasing population born outside Ireland, it is not a correlation to the unmet need for I&T services, given that some of that population will have come from other English speaking countries, or have a standard of English that does not require I&T services.

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In Donegal the percentage of the population stating a place of birth as outside Ireland was the highest, at 18.8%, and the lowest was for Laois, at 10.7%. Some DED's in Cork City recorded over 25% of its population stating their place of birth as outside Ireland. However such increases were not confined to urban areas, as parts of Kerry, West Cork, North Donegal, Mayo and Leitrim had over 25% of the population stating a place of birth as outside Ireland.

In Dublin in 2006, the average was 16.7%, up from 11.4% in 2002. In one DED in Dublin, the increase was 120%. In 2002, fewer than 7,000 immigrants lived in Blanchardstown, but in 2006, this figure had risen to more than 15,000 (Irish Times, Wednesday, August 8th, 2007). *The Irish Times* article also reports that South Lucan/Clondalkin electoral division has also seen an increase of 80% in its migrant population since 2002, accounting for 25% of the population at the time of the Census in 2006. Springfield in Tallaght showed a 100% increase in its non-Irish population from 2002 to 2006. In Cork and Limerick, the situation was repeated with Cork City centre's population of migrants doubling from 2002 to 2006, and in Limerick there was a 46% increase (*The Irish Times*, Wednesday, August 8th, 2007).

See Figure 2.1 for details.

2.4.2 | Languages spoken in Ireland

One of the principle consequences of this change in population is the radical increase in the numbers of languages spoken in Ireland, which is estimated to be over 200. As far back as 2001, the Courts Service had a number of 210 languages being spoken (NCCRI, Advocacy Paper, *Interpreting, Translation and Public Bodies in Ireland: The Need for Policy and Training*, 2007). Also the Language Centre in National University of Ireland (NUI) Maynooth, carried out a study to chart the number of languages spoken in Ireland. The languages recorded as part of that study are listed in Table 2.2.

Although the Maynooth study lists 157 languages, the authors believe that somewhere in excess of 200 languages is probably a more accurate figure for a number of reasons: the numbers of speakers of a language is hard to quantify; the distinction between a language and a dialect is often based on political considerations rather than linguistic ones; most of the world's population are bilingual; and minority languages do not always emerge on surveys (Anne Gallagher, Language Centre Maynooth, writing in *The Irish Times*, Tuesday May 23, 2006).

However, there is no systematic information available with which to assess language needs across the board. There is no official specific information (such as that collected by the CSO) on the numbers of languages spoken, or on the English language competencies of migrants. This makes it difficult to assess fully the interpreting and translation requirements of GSPs.

From a service provision perspective the availability of an effective interpreting and translation service to GSPs is an essential requirement to ensure equal participation in society by people from minority ethnic backgrounds who have low English proficiency.

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Table 2.2: Languages Spoken in Ireland

AFRICAN		
1. Acholi (North Uganda/southern Sudan)	55. Runyankole, Runyoro, Rutoro (Uganda)	107. Portugese
2. Afrikaans (South Africa)	56. Shone (Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana)	108. Romani-Balkan (Poland, Hungary)
3. Akamba (Kenya/Tanzania)	57. Somali, Sotho (Lesotho, South Africa)	109. Romani-Carpatguab
4. Akan (Ghana)	58. Soussou (Guinea)	110. Czech Romani-Vlax (Romania)
5. Amharic (Ethiopia)	59. Swahili (English)	111. Romanian
6. Arabic; Bajuni (Kenya)	60. Swahili (French)	112. Norwegian
7. Balanda (Sudan)	61. Temne (Sierra Leone)	113. Polish
8. Bamileke (Cameroon)	62. Teso (Uganda Kenya)	114. Russian
9. Bassa (Liberia, Sierra Leone)	63. Tignnan (Eritrea, Ethiopia, Israel)	115. Serbian
10. Berber (Morocco, Algeria)	64. Tiv (Nigeria)	116. Serbo-Croat
11. Coptic (Egypt)	65. Tshiluba (Congo – DRC)	117. Slovak
12. Creole/Krio from Guinea	66. Tsonga (Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, Zimbabwe)	118. Slovenian
13. Creole/Krio from Mauritius	67. Tswana (Botswana, South Africa)	119. Spanish
14. Dinka (South Sudan)	68. Twi (Sudan)	120. Swedish
15. Dioula (Burkina Faso)	69. Urhobo	121. Turkish
16. Edo (Nigeria)	70. Wolof (Senegal)	122. Ukrainian
17. Ejagham (Cameroon, Nigeria)	71. Xhosa (South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho)	123. Welsh
18. Esan (Nigeria)	72. Yoruba (Nigeria)	
19. Etsako (Nigeria)	73. Zaghawa (Sudan)	ASIAN
20. Ewe (Benin, Ghana, Togo)	74. Zande (Congo-DRC)	124. Azerbaijani
21. Fulfude (West Africa)	75. Zulu (Zulaland, Northern Natal, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi)	125. Bengali (Bangladesh)
22. Fur (Sudan)		126. Bisaya (Philippines)
23. Ga (Ghana)		127. Burmese
24. Guere (Cote d'Ivoire)	EUROPEAN	128. Cantonese
25. Hausa Ibgbo, Idoma Lemboy, Igalala, Igbira, Ika, Itsekiri (Nigeria)	76. Albanian	129. Dari (Afghanistan)
26. Kakwa (Uganda)	77. Armenian	130. Farsi (Iran)
27. Karimojong (Sudan)	78. Basque	131. Filipino
28. Kikongo (Congo – DRC, RoC-Angola)	79. Belorussian	132. Hebrew (Israel)
29. Kintarwanda (Rwanda)	80. Bosnian	133. Hindi (India)
30. Kirundi (Burundi, Central Africa)	81. British Sign Language	134. Japanese
31. Kituba (Congo-DRC)	82. Bulgarian	135. Korean
32. Koonga (Congo, Angola)	83. Catalan (Catalonia Spain/France)	136. Kurdish Kurmanji (Kurdistan)
33. Kotokoli (Togo)	84. Chechen (Chechnya)	137. Malay
34. Krahn (Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia)	85. Croatian	138. Mandarin
35. Krio (Sierra Leone)	86. Czech	139. Mongolian
36. Krumen (Cote d'Ivoire)	87. Danish	140. Nepalese (Nepal, Pakistan, Bhutan)
37. Kuku (Sudan)	88. Dutch	141. Newari (Nepal, India, Bhutan)
38. Lango (Uganda)	89. English	142. Punjabi (Pakistan, India)
39. Lingala (Congo)	90. Estonian	143. Pushto (Pakistan, Afghanistan)
40. Luganda (Uganda)	91. Finnish	144. Saraiki (Pakistan)
41. Mahan (Sudan)	92. French	145. Roma (Indonesia)
42. Malinke (West Africa)	93. Georgian (Georgia)	146. Sindhi (Pakistan, India)
43. Mandingo (Niger)	94. German	147. Sinhalese (Sri Lankan)
44. Mandinka (Senegal)	95. Greek	148. Tamil (Sri Lankan, India)
45. Mende (Sierra Leone)	96. Hungarian	149. Teluga (India)
46. Mina (Cameroon)	97. Icelandic	150. Thai
47. Mono (Congo)	98. Irish	151. Turkment (Turkmenistan, Iran, Afghanistan)
48. Muhas (Sudan)	99. Irish Sign Language	152. Uighur (China, Kazakhstan)
49. Mdebele (South Africa, Zimbabwe)	100. Irish Traveller Cant/Shelta	153. Urdu, (Pakistan)
50. Nuba Nuer (Sudan)	101. Italian	154. Vietnamese
51. Nyanja (Malawi)	102. Latvian	155. Yiddish (Israel)
52. Oromo (Ethiopia, Kenya)	103. Lithuanian	
53. Pedi (South Africa)	104. Maltese	OTHER
54. Pidgin English (Nigeria)	105. Norwegian	156. American Sign Language
	106. Polish	157. Esperanto

Source: *The Irish Times*, May 23rd 2006.

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2.5 | Characteristics of the Industry in Ireland

2.5.1 | Legislation & Regulation

In Ireland, the professional interpreting and translation industry is unregulated. There is an absence of regulation or legislation governing how the industry operates in the market. In other countries, such as Sweden and Australia, there are clearly defined guidelines and standards in place (see Chapter 7). In Ireland however, it is possible, however unlikely, that anyone who can speak two languages can call themselves and “interpreter” or a “translator”, as there are no such written guidelines relating to the industry itself, or for accreditation, a system of standards, or recognised qualifications.

2.5.2 | Suppliers in the Irish Market

In Ireland, the industry is characterised by a large number of professional agencies and several freelance interpreters and translators, however, no official figures on the numbers interpreters or translators are available. However, it is a growing industry and there is access to an increasingly large potential pool of interpreters and translators to work from (given the current absence of set criteria for accreditation or qualifications).

The Irish Translators’ and Interpreters’ Association (ITIA) is the only professional association in Ireland representing the interests of translators and interpreters. It is a not-for-profit organisation, and membership is voluntary. However professional members must meet strict criteria to be included on their register as “professional interpreter”. There is currently a membership of 500 members, 39 of which are Professional Interpreter members.

Pay rates for freelance interpreters vary from between €20–25 per hour, and through our questionnaires and focus groups it was reported that travel and waiting time not always paid. Given the low levels of pay, there are high rates of attrition in the industry, and it is reported by suppliers and the ITIA that many people working in interpreting have little experience

and no third level qualifications. Good interpreters are sometimes working in other jobs and are not available for interpreting work. This is because there is not enough steady work for interpreters and the freelance work is not paid well enough to attract top quality people, and there is little incentive for freelancers to invest in training or continuing professional development.

Chapter 4, Section 4.3 details the views of suppliers on the industry strengths and weakness in Ireland in more detail.

2.5.3 | Training & Qualifications

Very few interpreting and translation professionals working in the Irish Market hold specific qualifications in interpreting or community interpreting. Furthermore, in Ireland there is a limited supply of academic courses on offer for those wishing to qualify as interpreters. Dublin City University and NUI Maynooth do offer Interpreting diplomas. In the case of NUI, there is a part-time course for those wishing to have official qualifications in translation for the Irish Language, the Ard-Diplóma san Aistriúchán. However this qualification is not yet available for other modern languages. DCU however does have dedicated courses on offer: the Graduate Diploma/MA in Translation Studies and the Graduate Certificate in Community Interpreting.

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2.6 | Key Chapter Findings

LEGISLATION & POLICY

- There is some legislation around interpreting and translation provision in Ireland arising from obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights which must be adhered to with regard to the legal process; The Refugee Act, 1966, and more generally the Equal Status Acts 2000-2004;
 - The National Action Plan Against Racism (NPAR) aims to provide strategic direction to combat racism and to develop a more inclusive and intercultural society in Ireland. Interpreting and Translation services are related to the achievement of Objective 3 of the NPAR: “Accommodating diversity in service provision”;
 - There is no specific provision made for the provision of interpreting and translation services for Government service providers in the Programme for Government but there are references to supporting those minorities with little or no English, in the context of workers rights, asylum and integration, and education policy;
 - The National Development Plan 2007–2013 does not have specific investment priorities aimed at the provision of interpreting and translation services but does provide for the integration of migrants and language support,.
-

DEMAND SIDE ISSUES

- There has been an unprecedented rise in the number of people born outside of Ireland now living in Ireland, up to 413,000 or 10% of the population according to the last Census, although the actual numbers are likely to be higher. According to the 2006 Census, EU countries account for 66% of the population whose nationality was not Irish. The UK accounted for 27% and three new EU member states accounted for 21% (Poland with 15%, Lithuania with 6% and Latvia with 3%). People from Asia accounted for 11% of the population whose nationality was not Irish, and Africa accounted for 8%;
 - An estimated 200 languages are spoken in Ireland;
 - Research to date suggests that the lack of interpreting and translation services is a barrier and there are issues with aspects of the current service provision.
-

SUPPLY SIDE ISSUES

- There are no written regulations or legislation governing the industry, accreditation, standards, or qualifications;
 - The industry is characterised by a number of professional agencies and large number of freelance interpreters and translators and there are no official figures on the numbers of interpreters or translators operating in the market.
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3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

3.1 | Introduction

This Section discusses the provision of interpreting and translation services across the public sector in Ireland. Section 3.2 gives an overview of our methodology. Section 3.3 discusses the provision of professional interpreting services, and the nature and type of interpreting services provided by Government Service Providers (GSPs) in Ireland. Section 3.4 presents the views of GSPs on interpreting provision, in terms of their own experience, and for public services overall. Section 3.5 discusses the provision of translation services and translated materials by GSPs in Ireland. Section 3.6 presents the Key Chapter Findings.

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

3.2 | Consultation Methodology

An objective of this study was to “map the current provision of interpreting and translating services by ‘key’ Government service providers in Ireland”. The selection of ‘key’ government service providers was based on two key aspects as follows:

First, all 15 Government Departments were surveyed on interpreting and translation services they use when providing information to the public and/or delivering front line services to the public. The 15 Government Departments are presented in Table 3.1.

Second, a number of key public agencies and organisations that deliver public services were identified and sent questionnaires. The “key agencies/organisations” were identified by developing a list of ten key themes/areas for concern for people from minority ethnic groups when moving to and living in Ireland. The ten key areas identified are as follows:

-
- 1 Moving to Ireland;
 - 2 Engaging in the Labour Market;
 - 3 Accessing Education and Training;
 - 4 Housing;
 - 5 Transport;
 - 6 Interacting with the Justice System;
 - 7 Availing of Social Welfare Payments;
 - 8 Accessing Health Services;
 - 9 Emergency Services;
 - 10 Obtaining Information on Public Service.
-

Under each of the ten headings a series of sub-issues and public service providers were then identified (Government Departments, state agencies and public organisations).

For example, in the case of “engaging in the labour market” the issues involve permission to work (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment), obtaining a Personal Public Service Number (PPSN) (Department of Social and Family Affairs), looking for work (FÁS Employment Services), paying taxes (Revenue), infringement of employment rights (Employment Appeals Tribunal) and resolution of industrial relations disputes (The Labour Court and the Labour Relations Commission). The key issues and organisations under each of the ten headings are presented in Table 3.2, over 40 agencies and organisations (in addition to Government Departments) are identified.

The list of government service providers (Government Departments, public agencies and organisations) sent questionnaires as part of the study is presented in Table 3.2.

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

Table 3.1: Key Service Providers: Government Departments & Agencies

Government Department	Additional Agency/Organisation Questionnaires in Related Area
Justice, Equality & Law Reform, Department of	Department; An Garda Síochána (emergency 999 service, and other); Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC); Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT); Reception & Integration Agency (RIA); Refugee Legal Service (RLS); Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC); Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB); Irish Naturalisation & Immigration Service; Courts Service; The Irish Prison Service, The Probation Service & the Parole Board; The Equality Tribunal; The Legal Aid Board (Civil Legal Aid, Refugee Legal Service, Refugee Documentation Centre).
Enterprise, Trade & Employment, Department of	Department; FÁS, Employment Services; FAS Training Services; Employment Appeals Tribunal; Revenue; The Labour Court and the Labour Relations Commission.
Health & Children, Department of	Department (emergency 999 service, and other); HSE; a number of acute hospitals and maternity hospitals; Mental Health Commission; The General Register Office.
Environment, Heritage & Local Government, Department of	Department (emergency 999 service, and other); Local Authorities; Homeless Agency; Private Residential Residency Board.
Transport and the Marine, Department of	Department; Bus Éireann; Bus Átha Cliath; Iarnród Éireann.
Education & Science, Department of	Department; National Education Welfare Board (NEWB); National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS).
Agriculture Fisheries & Food, Department of	None in addition to the Department.
Arts, Sport & Tourism, Department of	None in addition to the Department.
Communications, Energy & Natural Resources, Department of	None in addition to the Department.
Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs, Department of	None in addition to the Department.
Defence, Department of	None in addition to the Department.
Finance, Department of	None in addition to the Department.
Foreign Affairs, Department of	None in addition to the Department.
Social & Family Affairs, Department of	The Citizens Information Board.
Taoiseach, Department of the	None in addition to the Department.

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

Table 3.2: Key Service Providers: Government Departments & Agencies

1. MOVING TO IRELAND
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The asylum process: Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC); Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT); Reception & Integration Agency (RIA); Refugee Legal Service (RLS); Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC); Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB); • Permission to land: Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB); An Garda Síochána (Local Garda District Headquarters); • Entry visa for non-EEA members: Irish Naturalisation & Immigration Service; • Registration for non-EEA nationals: Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB); An Garda Síochána; • Right to have family members come and live: Irish Naturalisation & Immigration Service.
2. ENGAGING IN THE LABOUR MARKET
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permission to work: the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment; • Obtaining a PPS number: Department of Social & Family Affairs; • Looking for work: FÁS, Employment Services; • Paying taxes: Revenue; • Infringement of employment rights: Employment Appeals Tribunal; • Resolution of industrial relations disputes: The Labour Court and the Labour Relations Commission.
3. ACCESSING EDUCATION AND TRAINING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to education: the Department of Education & Science; • Participation in education: National Education Welfare Board (NEWB); • Psychological services in education: National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS); • Access to training: FÁS Training Services.
4. HOUSING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing: The Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government & Local Authorities • Homelessness: The Homeless Agency • Disputes between landlords and tenants: Private Residential Residency Board
5. TRANSPORT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Driver testing (theory and practical): Department of Transport; • Driver licensing: local authorities (motor tax offices); • Bus transport: Bus Éireann and Bus Átha Cliath; • Rail transport: Iarnród Éireann.
6. INTERACTING WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policing: An Garda Síochána; • Justice: Courts Service; • Detention: The Irish Prison Service, The Probation Service and the Parole Board; • Alleged discrimination under equality legislation: The Equality Tribunal; • Free legal assistance: The Legal Aid Board (Civil Legal Aid, Refugee Legal Service, Refugee Documentation Centre).
7. AVAILING OF SOCIAL WELFARE PAYMENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various social welfare payments: Department of Social and Family Affairs.
8. ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health services: Department of Health & Children, and the Health Services Executive (HSE); • Acute hospital services • Maternity hospitals • Mental health services: Mental Health Commission; • Deaths, Births and Marriages: The General Register Office.
9. EMERGENCY SERVICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulance services: Department of Health & Children • Fire services: Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government; • Police services: An Garda Síochána.
10. OBTAINING INFORMATION ON PUBLIC SERVICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on Public Services: Citizen Information Board.

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

3.3 | Mapping of Provision of Interpreting Services

3.3.1 | Provision of Professional Interpreting Services

To build a picture of the current provision of professional interpreting services across public services in Ireland, we distributed a questionnaire to key Government service providers. (Professional interpreting services in this case refers to instances where industry professionals are used to interpret on behalf of clients, not the friends or family of the client). The methodology behind the selection of these providers is given in Section 3.2 above. In order to comprehensively track which GSPs provided professional services, we also supplemented our findings from the questionnaire with those reported in NCCRI, Advocacy Paper, *Interpreting, Translation and Public Bodies in Ireland: The Need for Policy and Training* (2007). Table 3.3 details the government services providers that provide professional interpreting services in Ireland, as reported to us via the

questionnaire, through consultations, and from the NCCRI’s own findings in their Advocacy Paper.

Under each of the key areas identified, Moving to Ireland; Engaging in the Labour Market; Accessing Education; Interacting with the Justice System; Accessing Health, Housing; and Emergency services, at least one GSP was providing professional interpreting services for its users/clients. The bulk of such services were provided in the “first phase” of a person with low English proficiency’s interaction with public services – immigration, refugee and asylum services. Professional interpreting services were also present for clients with low English proficiency when engaging with organs of the state concerned with the labour market.

All of the Government departments and agencies we distributed a questionnaire to were asked if their organisation provided professional interpreting

Table 3.3: Provision of Professional Interpreting Services by GSPs in Ireland

Key Government Services Providing Professional Interpreting Services to Clients	
MOVING TO IRELAND	ENGAGING IN THE LABOUR MARKET
Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC)	Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment
Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT)	FÁS
Reception and Integration Agency (RIA)	National Employment Rights Authority
Refugee Legal Service (RLS)	Department of Social and Family Affairs
An Garda Síochána*	
Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB)*	
Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service*	
INTERACTING WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM	ACCESSING EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Courts Service	Department of Education and Science
The Irish Prison Service	National Education Welfare Board (NEWB)
The Equality Tribunal	National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)
The Legal Aid Board	
HOUSING	ACCESSING HEALTH
Private Residential Tenancy Board	Department of Health and Children
	HSE
	Mental Health Commission
EMERGENCY SERVICES	
An Garda Síochána*	
NOTE: An Garda Síochána provided a questionnaire that was a compiled response from across all divisions including the GNIB, INIS and Emergency Services	
<i>Source: FGS consultations and Questionnaires to GSPs on the provision of interpreting and Translation Services and NCCRI, Advocacy Paper No. 5. Interpreting, Translation and Public Bodies in Ireland: The Need for Policy and Training, 2007.</i>	

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

services in the first half of 2007, and/or from 2000–2006 to help people with low English proficiency to access and use public services. The responses from the GSPs we surveyed⁸ is presented in Table 3.4.

The majority of GSPs in the key areas of service provision identified – Moving to Ireland; Engaging in the Labour Market; Accessing Education; Interacting

with the Justice System; Accessing Health, Housing; and Emergency services – did not report providing professional interpreting services on a systematic basis. Where it is reported to us as being provided, it is primarily in the area of immigration, policing and the judiciary, and health. As regards the wider public services, very little information was supplied to us through the questionnaires on what was available.

Table 3.4: GSPs’ Responses when asked if organisation provided Professional Interpreting Services in Ireland

Government Department/Agency	2007 Y/N	2000–2006 Y/N	Government Department/Agency	2007 Y/N	2000–2006 Y/N
MOVING TO IRELAND			ACCESSING EDUCATION AND TRAINING		
Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC)	Y	Y	Department of Education & Science		
Refugee Appeals Tribunal (RAT)			National Education Welfare Board (NEWB)		
Reception & Integration Agency (RIA)	Y	Y	National Educational Psychological Service (NEPS)		
Refugee Legal Service (RLS) ¹	Y	Y	HOUSING		
Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC) ¹	Y	Y	Homeless Agency		
An Garda Síochána ²	Y	Y	Private Residential Tenancy Board	N	N
Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB) ²	Y	Y	INTERACTING WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM		
Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service ²	Y	Y	Courts Service	Y	Y
ENGAGING IN THE LABOUR MARKET			The Irish Prison Service		
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment			The Probation Service		
National Employment Rights Authority	Y	Y	Parole Board		
<i>Department of Social & Family Affairs</i>			The Equality Tribunal		
FÁS, Employment Services	*	*	The Legal Aid Board		
Revenue	*	*	ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES		
Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT)	*	*	Department of Health and Children		
Labour Court	*	*	Health Services Executive (HSE)	Y	Y
Labour Relations Commission			Mental Health Commission		
EMERGENCY SERVICES			The General Register Office		
Ambulance services: Department of Health & Children			OTHER GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS/AGENCIES		
Fire services: Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Gov			Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources		
An Garda Síochána ²	Y	Y	Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government	*	*
NOTE:			Department of Finance	*	*
Blanks indicate that no response was given by the GSP to the relevant question(s) on the questionnaire.			Citizens Information Board (CIB)	*	*
*These GSPs returned questionnaires that referred to Translation services only. They did not respond to the interpreting questionnaire.					
¹ The Refugee Legal Service and The Refugee Documentation Centre provided one questionnaire that was a compiled response from both organisations					
² An Garda Síochána provided a questionnaire that was a compiled response from across all divisions including the GNIB, INIS and Emergency Services					

with one of the FGS team.

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

The analysis in Section 3.3.2 to Section 3.3.5 below comes from the information provided by those GSPs who responded to our questionnaire. This analysis attempts to draw out that the nature and type of the interpreting service that is provided, the models of delivery for those interpreting services; expenditure on interpreting; and what policies and procedures are in place.

3.3.2 | Nature & Type of Interpreting Service Provided

Government Service Providers were asked how interpreting services were provided for clients with low English proficiency in 2007, and for the period 2000–2006. Possible options here included: face to face interpreting, telephone interpreting, having a 24 hour phone service, video links. Of those GSPs who responded, a substantial majority provided face-to-face interpreting in 2007. Most provided telephone interpreting also. Significantly less used a 24-hour phone service, with less than half those responding indicating they provided that service. While a number of GSP indicated they used interpreting services on a 24-hour basis, it is important to note that systematic 24 hour on call services are not provided. None of the respondents who provide interpreting services used video links.

This marks an increase in provision from the 2000–2006 period, when an equal number of GSPs – just over half – provided both face to face and telephone interpreting but none provided a 24 hour service. Video links were not being used during that period either.

GSPs were asked which type of interpreting service they provided for clients. The options here were: consecutive interpreting, simultaneous interpreting, whispered (simultaneous) interpreting, relay interpreting and sight translation. The most common type of professional interpreting provided in 2007 was consecutive interpreting, with a substantial majority of the GSPs who responded indicating interpreting services are provided in this manner. The second most

common type of interpreting service provided was simultaneous interpreting. In 2007 a smaller number of the 12 GSPs who responded to this question also provided relay interpreting and sight translation. Nevertheless, this does mark an increase on the 2000–2006 period, when none of those respondents provided this type.

In 2007, none of the respondents to this question provided Whispered Interpreting, and provision had been very low in the preceding six years. One of the GSPs commented that interaction with clients is either on the phone or face to face. The interpreter generally translates sentence by sentence or paragraph by paragraph. In some occasions where there is more than one nationality with different languages, whispered translation is used, but that practice is not the norm.

3.3.3 | Delivery Models

Government service providers were asked to identify which model of interpreting services provision they utilised in 2007. The possible models were in-house staff employed for interpreting; having in-house bilingual staff employed in other sections; centralised government services (i.e. outside the agency/organisation); outsourcing to private sector; outsourcing to not-for-profit organisations; partnership/shared resources with other Department/Agency; using a managed database of providers; and using a brokerage services. The majority of respondents outsourced to the private sector; meaning they used interpreters from private firms. However a substantial number also indicated that they used bilingual in-house staff. For instance, one respondent GSP stated that the interpreting service is generally conducted by outside companies with arrangements being made with local service providers. However, this respondent also stated that where personnel who are proficient are available, they will be used in certain situations.

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3.3.4 | Expenditure

Given the sensitivity of the information, only a very small number of GSPs provided us with some information on expenditure on interpreting by their organisation.

At the time of writing, by far the most expenditure by a single GSP was €2.9m and this organisation has a projected spend of €2.5m in 2008. In 2005, expenditure by this organisation was €1.1m; this indicates a more than 100% increase in expenditure over the past two years. Another GSP also reported quite a substantial spend in 2007 with total expenditure across the organisation exceeding €2m at the time of writing; this is also the projected spend for 2008. Other frontline service providers who furnished us with expenditure details reported a substantially lower spend on interpreting services (i.e. under €5,000 for 2006). Figures for 2007 were unavailable at the time of print.

As regards the unit cost (per hour for interpreting services provided) across the GSPs who responded to this question, the average was €40 – €45 euro per hour. However, in some cases the cost could be as high as €100 per hour. Also one provider brought attention to the fact that travel expenses also had to be factored in.

3.3.5 | Policies & Procedures

Where interpreting services were provided by GSPs, we sought to gauge the policies and procedures in place; in terms of whether a written policy existed, if there was a dedicated expenditure heading, quality control checks, guidelines for staff on how or when to use interpreting services; and training for staff on when or how to use and engage interpreting services. The responses from those who supplied information under this part of the questionnaire were mixed.

The majority of respondents did not have a written policy in place for using interpreting services. A dedicated expenditure heading is also set aside in just under half of the GSPs who responded; in some instances a specific cost code is set aside to cover those expenses and in one case, a dedicated amount is set aside per annum from which those expenses are drawn.

Quality checking was part of the policy and procedures in less than half of the responding GSPs. A similar number of the GSPs who responded to this part of the questionnaire also provided written guidelines for staff on when and how to use professional interpreting. For instance, one organisation has incorporated outline guidelines in its internal code. Another GSP also included guidelines on using interpreting services in its guidelines for staff, which is currently being disseminated. A small number of the responding GSPs indicated they provided training for staff on when and how to engage with interpreting services. Some commented that it was part of the overall training whilst other GSPs provide dedicated training as part of specific projects.

A number of respondents to the questionnaire provided more detailed information on processes to ensure and to check the quality of the interpreting work carried out on their behalf. Of those that indicated “yes”, a number of respondents elaborated further; for example, at a team level, the issues arising in relation to interpreters are discussed, and they endeavour to address these, either with the interpreter or through the interpretation service provider; in other cases, there were quality feedback forms and the GSPs require assurances that the interpreting services company had quality systems in place. A number of GSPs indicated that they did not have a system for quality checking in place. For instance, one organisation stated that there is a quality control mechanism in the contract but they have no specific quality control expertise or procedures in place. This is further explored in Section 3.4.2 below, where GSP views on the weaknesses inherent in current interpreting services provision is discussed.

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

3.4 | Views on Interpreting Provision

3.4.1 | GSPs Experiences of Interpreting Services

GSP Views on Satisfaction with Services

Part of our questionnaire for GSPs dealt with how satisfied the particular organisation was with the interpreting services provided by them, and if there were any issues when engaging with professional interpreters or setting up the service within their department or organisation. In general, the response was mixed. However some GSPs did express concern over quality, availability and costs incurred when providing interpreting services to clients.

One key issue of concern was that of the lack of quality checking, or the means to do it. There was very little feedback from either providers or client-users and one GSP reported huge variances in standards of behaviour and professionalism of interpreters. Related to this was the unavailability of interpreters especially for rare languages, or interpreters arriving late.

A certain number of GSPs expressed concern over ethical issues especially where family members or members of the client's community were being used as interpreters preventing anonymity and the ability of the client to relay their situation fully to GSP frontline staff. Another GSP expressed concern about situations where interpreters took it upon themselves to provide advice or rebuke clients, and circumstances where interpreters relayed only the information they wanted to transmit.

Issues over logistics and administration was another area of concern raised by the responding GSPs in the comments around engaging with professional interpreters, especially as regards billing, time-keeping and as pointed out by one respondent, agencies not providing what they promised.

GSP Views on Challenges when Establishing Interpreting Services

A small number of the responding GSPs relayed that they had problems when establishing interpreting services in their organisation. These challenges centred on:

- Estimating the need or level of service provision required, especially where the GSP had multiple locations or venues that required interpreters.
- Persuading frontline staff of the benefits of using the services of an interpreter to best serve client need; especially in instances where the service provider is under time constraints.
- A certain number of responding GSPs reported budgetary constraints and the lack of availability of funding towards interpreting services as limiting their ability to provide such services.

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3.4.2 | GSP Views on Interpreting Provision across all Public Services

Overview

Government Service Providers were also asked about their views on provision of interpreting services across the public sector in general, in terms of strengths, weaknesses and changes or improvements that could be made in the future.

GSP Views on Strengths

One of the main strengths of interpreting services provision across the public sector, according to GSPs is that through providing interpreting services GSPs are displaying an openness and awareness of the needs of clients/customers and adapting to their needs. For one GSP, having the provision of an interpreting service helped overcome difficult or indigenous Irish cultural issues new to foreign born customers and assisted them to overcome a problem or barrier in their lives, while providing the GSP with new methods and learning about the way their service operated.

Related to this was the fact that according to one GSP that internal Civil Service staff training and education was now being expanded to cover “new” languages like Polish and Latvian for the first time. Outsourcing the provision of interpreting services was perceived by a number of respondents as a strength for a number of reasons, namely that it works well, and because it is viewed as important to have an “independent” interpretation service to ensure that there is not perception of bias amongst clients/users. Also using a professional supplier allows access a wide range of interpreters at short notice.

GSP Views on Weaknesses

Government service providers were also asked to discuss what they saw as weaknesses in the provision of interpreting services across the public service. Of those who replied, there was commonality across some key areas. These are discussed in more detail below, and include the following: lack of quality control; lack of appropriate qualifications and standards for professional interpreters supplied and in some instances a lack of professionalism shown by interpreters; there were issues over the availability

of interpreters, especially after hours; from the side of the GSPs there was often a view that the time taken to hire and use an interpreter was not always perceived as beneficial; a lack of coherence vis-à-vis service provision; there was also a lack of awareness across GSPs as to what was available, and how, or when to use interpreting services.

It is apparent that quality control is an issue of concern for a number of GSPs. There are concerns over the absence of quality checking, mistakes by interpreters often not being spotted, and in certain cases where interpreters are engaged on an ad-hoc basis there is little scope for full quality checking. It is also felt that a key weakness is the fact that organisations are unable to assess the quality of the interpretation other than by ensuring the agency used have appropriate standards for the employment of interpreters

A number of GSPs also expressed concern at the lack of standards and professionalism relating to interpreting service provision and lack of appropriate qualifications of actual interpreters supplied to provide such services. Some GSPs indicated the area of standards and a code of practice is one needing to be urgently addressed, as often the level of English or the level of general education of the interpreter can present problems. Similarly other responding GSPs commented on the lack of professionalism displayed in some instances, with interpreters often just synopsising what had been said, leading to misunderstanding; and on the other end of the scale becoming too involved giving their personal contact details to clients.

Another weakness identified by responding GSPs is the lack of availability of interpreters especially outside regular hours in key public service areas such as health, policing, customs, and immigration. Also as mentioned previously, getting interpreting staff to locations throughout the country can be problematic for GSPs. A number of GSPs also mentioned the lack of availability of interpreters of the more rare languages.

It was felt by some that this weakness is compounded at the level of the public service provider, due to the

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

lack of coherence and coordination of services and there are gaps in services in many locations both service-wise and geographically as the majority of interpreters are Dublin located. At present the lack of an overall agreed policy and service can leave frontline staff at a loss and perhaps in confusing and difficult situations. The lack of co-ordination of interpreting services provision throughout the country leads to many gaps in services.

From the GSPs who responded, a number expressed that there was the feeling that that the time taken to hire and use an interpreter was costly, and it was a challenge to find ways of demonstrating the overall benefits of using interpreting services.

The other fundamental weakness expressed by the responding GSPs was that of a lack of awareness amongst users of the services about what was available, and how to access it. It was felt that clients are often reluctant to use public services, as they do not know that the service can be provided in a variety of languages. Linked to this was the concern about the lack of training for front-line staff on how and when such services should be used.

GSP Views on Future Changes and Improvements

As regards the changes and improvements that could be made in the future, the responding GSPs indicated a number of areas which should be focused on in both the public service and for the interpreting industry.

The suggested changes by the responding GSPs focussed on developing a code of practice and accreditation standards for professional interpreters (and translators); similarly, appropriate training for GSPs on using languages services but also anti-racism and intercultural training; performance and quality monitoring; the development of working group and an overall government policy.

Of the GSPs that responded to this part of the questionnaire, one of the main improvements in future interpreting services provision would be to set industry standards and develop a Code of Practice for Interpreters. The development of an accreditation framework was also mentioned by some responding

GSPs as necessary to help inform decisions as to the choice of supplier/professional used to deliver interpreting services. Such a register or framework would help to address concerns around lack of standards, professionalism and quality and would be useful to purchasers of the service as it would allow bodies to make informed decisions when awarding contracts

Some responding GSPs suggested a focus on training leading to recognised awards for interpreting professionals. Anti-racism and cultural competence training was called for both suppliers and front-line staff and it was felt that service providers need training on how to use interpreters

Relating back to previous sections discussing weaknesses, a number of GSPs highlighted the need in future to provide quality checks and to monitor the performance both of staff members using the service, and the supplier. This would involve:

- Interpreting agencies making real checks and tests around language and interpreting skills, and providing on-going training for interpreter;
- Users of the services (front-line staff) being trained and incentivised to give feedback on the efficacy of the services, allowing the organisation to improve the procurement and deployment of such services;
- Performance monitoring of both the interpreter and staff member.

GSPs also indicated that they would like to see policy being developed on the macro level. Some of the respondents called for public service providers to come together to form a working group or advisory group. This group would share common problems and discuss good practice and work collaboratively, engaging with interpreting companies and minority ethnic groups. They indicated that Government policy needs to stress and highlight the importance of the language issue, discuss the best ways to provide translation and interpreting, and at the same time encourage integration and prevent dependency.

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3.5 | Mapping of Provision of Translated Services/ Translated Materials

3.5.1 | Provision of Professional Translation Services

Our consultations showed that the majority of GSPs providing translated materials were those organisations in the areas of immigration, asylum and justice. Almost all of the GSPs identified under the heading “Engaging in the Labour Market” reported providing translated material. However, very few of the other GSPs we identified reported having translated information available for non-English speaking users of their services.

3.5.2 | Nature & Type of Translation Provided

Government Service Providers were asked how translated materials were provided for clients with low English proficiency in 2007, and for the period 2000–2006. In 2007, the majority of the GSPs who responded displayed the materials in their offices whilst a similar number also provided translated documentation/pages on their website. Apart from the questionnaire, we also looked at the websites of those GSPs who were sent the questionnaire and a substantial majority of those provided translated material via their website. (See Table 3.5 below).

Just under half of the GSPs indicated they also posted material out and provided it on request. This is a little different to the period 2000–2006. The majority displayed materials in their offices but a smaller number responded that they had translated pages and documentation on their websites and/or provided translated work on request. None indicated that they posted material.

Table 3.5: Provision of Professional Translation Services/Translated Materials by GSPs in Ireland

Key Government Services Providing Professional Translations for Clients	
MOVING TO IRELAND	ENGAGING IN THE LABOUR MARKET
Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC) National Employment Rights Authority Refugee Legal Service (RLS) An Garda Síochána* Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB)* Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service*	Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment FÁS Revenue National Employment Rights Authority Department of Social & Family Affairs
INTERACTING WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM	ACCESSING EDUCATION AND TRAINING
Courts Service The Equality Tribunal The Legal Aid Board	Department of Education & Science
HOUSING	ACCESSING HEALTH
Private Residential Tenancy Board	Health Services Executive
EMERGENCY SERVICES	
An Garda Síochána*	

NOTE: An Garda Síochána provided a questionnaire that was a compiled response from across all divisions including the GNIB, INIS and Emergency Services

Source: FGS consultations and Questionnaires to GSPs on the provision of interpreting and Translation Services and NCCRI, Advocacy Paper No. 5. Interpreting, Translation and Public Bodies in Ireland: The Need for Policy and Training, 2007.

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In addition to our questionnaire analysis we also examined the websites of key GSPs to identify translated information. We searched for translated information and recorded information on the titles of translated information/publications, the languages in which translations are provided, and accessibility of the translated material.

Overall there were over 50 publications translated in different languages. See Figure 3.6 overleaf for a list of the translated material.

The most commonly translated languages were Polish, Russian, Lithuanian, Estonian and Latvian with more than 20 publications translated into these languages. The second most common set of languages, with between 12 and 17 publications, were French, Chinese, German, Arabic and Portuguese.

In most cases, accessing the translated material would require people to have prior knowledge of the translated material existed and where to look for it, which could be difficult for people with low English proficiency. This is because the links to the translated material is typically not on the home page of the organisations and the links to the material are typically in English.

3.5.3 | Delivery Model

The majority of the GSPs who responded to this question for 2007 had their translation work outsourced to a private company. One respondent indicated that they had also used a not-for-profit organisation to complete the translation work, and to validate various pieces of translated material. In 2000–2006 the majority of translation work was also outsourced to private companies. However, a couple of respondents also replied that they had used not-for-profit organisations and in one instance, in-house staff where the majority of the work was outsourced to a translation service and a staff member translated some additional material.

3.5.4 | Expenditure

As part of the consultation process GSPs were asked to provide data on expenditure on translation services for the years 2000 to 2007. Very little information indeed was provided by GSPs in response to this question, but where it was provided, the expenditure ranged from €30,000 to €70,000 in the period 2006–2007. Of the GSPs that responded to the question about unit cost of translation that was outsourced to translators, the cost recorded varied depending on the language and the quantity. The cost varied from €150–180 per 1000 words depending on the rarity of the language.

3.5.5 | Policies & Procedures

Where translations were provided by GSPs, our questionnaire sought to gauge the policies and procedures in place around guidelines for staff, staff training, whether there was a dedicated expenditure heading, and what quality control systems were in place.

From the responses to our questionnaire, there are quite low levels of written policies or guidelines. Half of the GSPs who responded indicated they had written guidelines on using translations, but none commented any further. Less than half of those who responded indicated having a dedicated budget for translation work, however, it was not made clear what this budget was, or what the average expenditure was. A small number of GSPs indicated that they provided training for staff on when and how to use professional translation services, however, the content of this training was not specified, and in the case of interpreting, it is likely that such training was part of overall staff training.

Approximately half of the respondents also responded that there was some kind of quality control procedure in place, and a few expanded on what form this took. A small number of organisations get “second opinions” from other professional translators – paying for a second proof and sending a percentage

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

Figure 3.6: Documentation translated into other languages available from the websites of GSPs (2007)

Publication Title (if available)	No. Languages	
MOVING TO IRELAND		
Reception & Integration Agency (RIA)	Education Information Notes – Primary Education	5
	Education Information Notes – Post Primary Education	5
	Information on Mosney	2
	Kerry Orientation Booklet	1
Refugee Legal Service (RLS)	Refugee Legal Status – Leaflet	6
	The Asylum Process – Leaflet	6
	Unaccompanied Minors – Leaflet	6
Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC)	Site contains information for English speakers about refugees.	0
An Garda Síochána*	Charter For Victims of Crime	6
Irish Naturalisation & Immigration Service*	Information on Completing Visa Application Form	5
	Information on Completing Online Visa Application	5
ENGAGING IN THE LABOUR MARKET		
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment	Employment Rights Info Booklet	7
	Foreign Language Employment Info Booklet	7
Department of Social & Family Affairs	Guide to Social Welfare Services	7
Revenue	Translations of common forms	8
Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT)	Information on Employment Law	7
Labour Relations Commission	LRC Role Function	4
	Rights Commission Service	4
	Code of Practice	4
ACCESSING EDUCATION AND TRAINING		
Department of Education & Science	Primary Education - Frequently Asked Questions	6
	Schools and Equal Status Acts	6
	Appeals Process for our Main Services	6
	Information Note on Teaching Support Available for Non-English speaking students – Primary and Post Primary	6
	Revision of Circular 18/79 on Exemption from study of Irish	6
	Revision to Rule 46 of the Rules and Programmes for Secondary Schools in Relation to Exemption from Irish	6
	Guidelines for Countering Bullying Behaviour in Primary & Post Primary Schools	6
	Complaint Procedure – Primary	6
	Parents as Partners in Education	6
	The Senior Cycle in Second Level Schools	6
	Appeals Procedures Under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998	6
	Procedures for the Hearing and Determination of Appeals under Section 29 of the Education Act 1998	6
	Appeals Application Form	6
	Working Together to Make a Difference for Children	6
	Procedures for Lodging Complaints on Bullying – Primary	6
National Education Welfare Board (NEWB)	Don't Let Your Child Miss Out – Parent Information Leaflet	15
HOUSING		
INTERACTING WITH THE JUSTICE SYSTEM		
Courts Service	Information on Bail Refunds	4
The Equality Authority	Information on Small Claims Procedures	4
	The Employment Equality Acts 1998 & 2004	8
	The Equal Status Acts 2000 & 2004	9
The Equality Tribunal	Booklet on Schools and Equal Status Acts	4
	Role of the Tribunal	1
	Customer Charter	1
	Mediation	1
	Making a Complaint under the Employment Equality Acts 1998 & 2004	1
	Responding to a Complaint under the Employment Equality Acts 1998 & 2004	1
	Making a Complaint under the Equal Status Acts 2000-2004	1
Responding to a Complaint under the Equal Status Acts 2000-2004	1	
ACCESSING HEALTH SERVICES		
Mental Health Commission	Your Guide to the Mental Health Act	4
EMERGENCY SERVICES		
Fire services: Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government	Fire Safety in the Home	4
Police services: An Garda Síochána*	Charter For Victims of Crime	6
Other Government Departments		
Citizens Information Board (CIB)	Has translations of many documents in French, Polish and Romanian	3

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

of documents to a different company for quality checking. Relevant NGOs and embassies were also contacted for quality control purposes to check on the translation work. One GSP stated they kept a complaints register which had no serious recorded complaints. However this is not a perfect form of quality control as is clear from our focus groups in Chapter 5, and our review of literature in Chapter 7.

3.5.6 | GSP Experience of Translation Services

In our consultation questionnaire we also asked GSPs if they were satisfied with the translation work that had been done on behalf their organisation, if they had encountered any problems when getting the work done, or in engaging with translation services suppliers.

Of the GSPs who responded to this part of the questionnaire all were either satisfied or very satisfied with the translating services provided. However one of the responding acute hospitals expressed dissatisfaction commenting that they had limited testing of translations through native speaking staff and some of the translations were of poor quality.

As regards problems which occurred when engaging professional translation services, there was a mixed reaction from the respondents to this question. Of those who had experienced problems, they were mostly to do with time delays in getting the work done.

3.5.7 | GSP Views on Translation Provision across all Public Services

Overview

Government Service Providers were also asked about their views on how translations and translated materials were delivered across the public sector in general. The following sub section discusses these in terms of strengths, weaknesses and future changes or improvements that could be made.

GSP Views on Strengths

According to responding GSPs, one of the main strengths of translation provision across the public sector mirrors that for interpreting service. Namely, GSPs have been responsive and open to changing and adapting to serve public need with significant activity in this area in a relatively short space of time.

Also, a number of GSPs felt that an aspect of translation provision which works particularly well was in having a contract with one single professional supplier to deliver translated material with fixed rates that provides a wide range of languages.

GSP Views on Weaknesses

Many of the weaknesses commented upon by the responding GSPs to translation provision echo those identified for interpreting services, and concerned the absence of a coherent overall policy; lack of quality control; lack of awareness; and costs and delays.

A number of the responding GSPs felt that a key weakness in terms of translation provision stemmed from a lack of coherent policy. The current uncoordinated approach, and lack of information sharing can lead to duplication and inconsistencies across agencies and even within organisations.

This weakness is linked to the other key area of concern – a lack of appropriate quality checking and control for translation work, from the side of the GSP and the supplier. GSPs are concerned that there are no meaningful partnerships established with minority ethnic groups in order to test the quality and relevance of the translations and their cultural appropriateness.

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

There is very little consistency around standards and quality of finished material, and no verification processes independent of the service provider.

Another area that is not felt to be working well is the lack of publicity around what translated material is available; and the corresponding low awareness amongst both frontline GSP staff and client users/customers about what is available.

GSP Views on Future Changes and Improvements

As with interpreting provision, a number of the GSPs who responded commented on the changes and improvements they would wish to see in the future provision of translation services and translated materials.

Future changes and improvements that could be made in public service provision concerned having a clear definitive government policy with a cross-departmental approach, that would link with integration policy and have clear budgetary lines; conducting a mapping exercise to best capture current provision and future needs and demands; improving quality controls; learn from best practice examples in other countries especially vis-à-vis accreditation, qualifications, and standards; improving training along with building cultural competency of GSP staff.

As with interpreting, many of the GSPs who responded indicated one of the main improvements that could be made is to have a coherent clearly defined government policy tied in with integration policy, to ensure consistency of provision across all Departments. Having a good practice model that provides direction around appropriate, effective use of translation services, and factors in issues of standards and related aspects was seen as important by a certain number of GSPs. Such a process would involve all stakeholders; including representative service users is an important element to sustainability and credibility. Linked to this is the call for clear dedicated budgetary lines for translation provision.

To determine such a policy/framework, a number of GSPs stressed the need to conduct a mapping exercise to determine current provision and identify where gaps exist.

A number of the responding GSPs also commented that a key improvement in future provision of translation services was quality control. Methods about how this could be achieved concerned instituting quality controls in the tendering process, developing standards, and working from a pool of approved translation service providers.

The importance of developing certification and accreditation is a future improvement endorsed by the majority of the responding GSPs. Without that, it was argued that it is hard to know what the quality of the work is. A “Q” mark, or an accreditation process would be a comfort to those organisations that engage services on behalf of their clients. Developing such accreditation systems or a regulatory/policy context should, according to some responding GSPs, draw upon best practice abroad where similar procedures have been put in place.

Amongst GSPs, training is a key area for future improvement, specifically that dealing with cultural awareness and competence.

As regards improvements they would like to see in the industry, amongst professional suppliers, these were similar to the responses provided in relation to interpreting and included:

- the development of standards/code of practice and having some type of accreditation “Q” mark;
- professional suppliers being more aware of and recognising the very specific needs of public service providers;
- the industry needing to provide professional trained staff remunerated appropriately; and
- the industry having their own quality checks on their staff; and reducing costs.

3. Provision of Interpreting & Translating Services by Government Service Providers

3.6 | Key Chapter Findings

- The majority of GSPs in the key areas of service provision identified – Moving to Ireland; Engaging in the Labour Market; Accessing Education; Interacting with the Justice System; Accessing Health; Housing; and Emergency services – did not report providing professional interpreting services on a systematic basis. Where it is reported to us as being provided, it is primarily in the area of immigration, policing and the judiciary, and health;

 - The majority of GSPs providing translated materials were those organisations in the areas of immigration, asylum and justice. Almost all of the GSPs identified under the heading “Engaging in the Labour Market” reported providing translated material. However, very few of the other GSPs reported having translated information available for non-English speaking users of their services;

 - As regards satisfaction with interpreting services, the response was mixed. Some GSPs expressed concern over quality, availability and costs incurred when providing interpreting services to clients. With translation provision, all GSPs were either satisfied or very satisfied with the translating services provided;

 - A key issue of concern was the lack of quality checking, or the means to do it;

 - The main problems faced when establishing interpreting services in the organisation were budgetary constraints; estimating the level of service provision required; and persuading frontline staff of the benefits. As regards translation, most reported problems were to do with time delays in getting work done;
- A key strength is that GSPs are displaying an openness and awareness of the needs of clients/customers and adapting to their needs;

 - Outsourcing the provision of interpreting and translation services was perceived to work well;

 - Key weaknesses identified were the absence of a coherent overall policy; a lack of quality control; a lack of appropriate training for staff; a lack of awareness; costs and delays;

 - Changes for the future focussed on developing a code of practice and accreditation standards for professional interpreters and translators; similarly, appropriate training for GSPs on using languages services but also anti-racism and intercultural training; learning from best practice examples in other countries especially vis-à-vis accreditation, qualifications, and standards; performance and quality monitoring; development of working group and establishing an overall government policy.



4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

4.1 | Introduction

This chapter presents the views of key stakeholders – Government Service Providers (GSPs), NGOs and representative groups, suppliers, and professional bodies including the Irish Translators and Interpreters Association – on the provision of interpreting and translation services when accessing and using public services. These views were gathered by means of a questionnaire. Section 4.2 relates the experiences reported by the NGOs and representative groups, and Section 4.3 refers to the views expressed by suppliers of interpreting and translation, including those voiced by the Irish Translators and Interpreters Association through our focus group consultation with them. Section 4.4 Key Findings, presents the key findings from each stakeholder group.

4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

4.2 | Views of NGOs & Representative Groups

4.2.1 | Overview

Part of the questionnaire distributed to NGOs and representative groups involved trying to draw out their perception of the current provision on interpreting and translation in Ireland in terms of what they saw as strengths, weaknesses and the improvements that could be made. These findings are discussed in Section 4.2.2 below. The organisations consulted are listed in Appendix B.

Representative groups were also asked to comment on whether language was a barrier, if there was enough access to interpreting and translation services for people with low English proficiency and how the provision or lack of interpreting and translation impacted on their ability to access public services.

The findings are summarised below:

- All of the responding NGOs/representative groups indicated that language was an important barrier for people with poor English language skills.
- Those with low English proficiency typically use a child, or another adult family member or friend to access public services. The majority of respondents reported children being used.
- According to the NGOs/representative groups who replied to this part of the questionnaire, there are not enough professional interpreting and translation services provided by/for GSPs to help non-English speakers access public services in Ireland.
- The impact of this lack of availability in most cases limits and prevents those with low English proficiency from benefiting fully from public services.

4.2.2 | NGO/Representative Groups Views on Interpreting & Translation Provision across Public Services

Overview

This section discusses how the NGOs and representative groups who responded to our questionnaire view the strengths and weaknesses of interpreting and translation provision across public services in Ireland, and also what future changes would improve that provision. It should be noted from the outset, that the respondents mentioned very few strengths, but did provide much more commentary on perceived weaknesses and on how they wish to see provision improved.

NGOs' Views on Strengths

None of the respondents identified a clear strength in service provision, but a number of responding representative groups did comment that it was great to have the acknowledgement that this is an area of growing importance in service provision and any activity in this regard was welcome. There were also comments that provision in health and in the Courts was much improved, and was working well.

NGOs' Views on Weaknesses

As identified by GSPs, a fundamental area of weakness is the limited quality control of interpreting and translation work. Furthermore, there is no independent monitoring and the responding representative groups perceived that there was no measurable standard or basis for selecting interpreters and that GSPs often do not check qualifications.

On a macro level, representative groups point to gaps in supply in specialised fields (particularly in health and the legal system) and geographically. As noted elsewhere in this report, there can be a high use of children and friends, especially where limited services are available.

Furthermore, it was felt that the basis for engaging interpreters/translation services is cost and value for

4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

money, and limited contextual experience was taken into account. The approach of GSPs was perceived by certain respondents as weak, “ad hoc”, “non-standardised”, and “poorly coordinated” with over-reliance on outsourcing to private suppliers. Another weakness perceived by some of the representative groups were the bad attitudes of GSP service staff in certain cases.

A number of representative groups also pointed to a lack of effective promotion of what was available, and where and how to access what is available.

NGOs’ Views on Changes and Improvements

As regards future improvements, the key area for change identified by the respondents is on the issues of quality control over the delivery of interpreting and translation services, such as strategically developing a measurable standard or set criteria that interpreting and translation staff/professionals must have achieved before being utilised by GSPs. Clear procedures should be designed and developed for GSP staff who engage with clients and interpreting and translation professionals. Amongst responding NGOs, it was felt that “quality” needs to include training, supervising, monitoring and evaluating the present interpreting services.

Having a more cohesive holistic approach across the public service was also seen as an area that required improvement to establish effective coordinating mechanisms. Certain NGOs indicated that the mandate for developing such a policy could be given to the Minister for State with responsibility for Integration policy.

Linked to this was the suggestion by one NGO to set up an independent advisory and auditing body/commission which would monitor the development of services and examine a range of issues such as the coordination of services, the criteria for the award of contracts, cost-effectiveness, outcome evaluation, and quality control.

As was mentioned by the GSPs, some of the representative groups also stated that interpreting

and translation costs should be incorporated into GSP budgetary lines, as such services are a necessity when working in any area of public service provision in Ireland today.

To move away from the perceived over reliance on outsourcing, a number of respondents indicated that Government agencies and departments could consider other delivery methods (community, partnership models) or consider hiring native speakers into GSPs to work in interpreting and translation.

In order to raise awareness, an area for improvement in future provision is to raise the publicity around interpreting and translation services available and how to access them, through developing information/awareness campaigns with minority ethnic group associations and the media.

4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

4.3 | Views of Suppliers

4.3.1 | Overview

In order to gain the views of all stakeholders, questionnaires were distributed to professional suppliers of interpreting and translation to gain their views on a) interpreting and translation as it is currently provided by GSPs; and b) views on the industry itself. The following sections discuss these views in terms of the perceived strengths, weaknesses and what future improvements or changes could be made.

4.3.2 | Suppliers' Views on Interpreting & Translation Provision across Public Services

Suppliers' Views on GSP Strengths

Suppliers were asked what they perceived as the main strengths of interpreting and translation provision across the public services. Respondents indicated that having tendering and contracting processes in place was a key strength in provision; and related to this, where there were good systems in place for purchase orders and payments.

A number of suppliers also pointed to increasing awareness amongst GSPs of the need for professional interpreting and translation as a strength, and how better quality translations are being produced by GSPs once they engage with professional suppliers.

Suppliers' Views on GSP Weaknesses

Interestingly, even though the tendering process is viewed as a strength in GSP provision by suppliers, it is also subject to some criticism by other suppliers who responded to our questionnaire. A certain number of suppliers felt that the tendering process can lead to suppliers being chosen on the basis of cost rather than ability to provide quality services, especially in cases where the needs of the GSP were quite diverse both in terms of language and location. It is noteworthy, that each of the stakeholder groups (GSPs, NGOs and suppliers) we consulted with via the questionnaire raised this point.

Quality control procedures are also seen as a part of service provision that does not work well across GSP provision of interpreting and translation. A number of respondents felt that a key weakness was the lack of a statutory body providing training, accreditation, evaluation. Some suppliers focussed especially on the lack of checking of qualifications, especially where there is no contract in place; or in cases where the language is rare.

A number of suppliers also indicated that GSPs are not fully aware of the limitations and complexities of providing interpreting and translation services, in terms of time, availability of interpreters and translators for rare languages and specialist areas. Furthermore, it was felt by a number of suppliers that public bodies are using interpreting services without making any changes in the processes to accommodate for that added service.

Suppliers' Views on GSP Future Changes and Improvements

Unsurprisingly, most of the changes and improvements that suppliers felt GSPs should make in providing interpreting and translation are those that address the weaknesses outlined above. The key improvements needed concerned quality control including introducing standards and recognition of qualifications; changes in the processes whereby GSPs engage with professional interpreting and translation suppliers; and the training of GSPs.

The majority of the responding suppliers highlighted quality control at the level of the GSP as a key area that required change and improvement in future provision through:

- Agreeing to work only with qualified interpreters;
- Putting together a national charter or a national register;
- Ensuring proper vetting of agencies, ensuring that they carry professional insurance and are well known;
- Checking work independently.

4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

In order to improve cost-effectiveness, some of the responding suppliers proposed a number of changes:

- Better planning interpretation requests where possible and so helping to reduce interpreters' waiting time;
- Issuing central invoices by Government bodies for better visibility on charges;
- Using technology, for example booking on line, and accessing reports on line to reduce administration time;
- Using translation memory tools, glossaries and style guides as these language tools can greatly reduce costs by reuse of translated material, and can improve the consistency and quality of translation.

Related to this is the way in which GSPs engage with suppliers, and a number of the suppliers commented that there needed to be changes to this process to improve both quality and cost effectiveness and to bring about cohesion to services provided. Some suppliers felt this could be achieved through simplifying the tendering/procurement process; having centralised management of the service in each government department; and standardising the way in which the GSPs engage with suppliers.

Suppliers also highlighted the need for appropriate training amongst GSPs who are dealing with professional interpreting and translation suppliers and with end-user clients.

4.3.3 | Views on the Industry

Suppliers' Views on Industry Strengths

According to the suppliers who responded, the key strengths of the interpreting and translation industry in Ireland are that it is a growing industry and that there is access to a large potential pool of interpreters and translators to work from. It was also felt that while quality varies across the industry, there are good quality operators in the market.

Suppliers' Views on Industry Weaknesses

A key weakness in the industry according to the suppliers who responded is the lack of appropriately trained and qualified people working as interpreters and translators and the overall lack of standards and accreditation in the industry leading to poor quality work. It was felt by a number of suppliers that without relevant legislation or Government bodies taking responsibility for training, accreditation, and evaluation, no binding industry standards and best practice models exist. Some suppliers had the perception that quality is deteriorating as more and more speakers, rather than professional interpreters, are being hired to work as interpreters or translators.

The view is also expressed that the work is poorly paid, and the attrition rate is high. According to a number of suppliers many people working in interpreting have little experience and no third level qualifications. Good interpreters are sometimes working in other jobs and are not available for interpreting work. This is because there is not enough steady work for interpreters and the freelance work is not paid well enough to attract top quality people.

Suppliers' Views on Industry Future Changes and Improvements

As regards the changes and improvements that could be made in the future, the responding suppliers indicated a number of areas which should be focused on. Namely: training, the introduction of standards, and quality checking.

The majority of suppliers who responded highlighted the need for the design and delivery of

4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

accredited training for interpreters and translators carried out consultation with existing training providers and subject matter experts.

Likewise, bringing standards to the industry to improve quality, and having some kind of regulatory framework was seen by a number of suppliers as a key change for the future of the industry such as quality criteria in alignment with ISO 9001:2000. A number of suppliers felt that having a system of standards in place would prevent the contracting of companies and individuals providing low quality service, which makes accessing public services more difficult and frustrating.

As regards future improvements in the industry, the Irish Translators and Interpreters Association (ITIA) members felt there was a strong need for quality control and set criteria to provide transparency. Also they identified a need for training, accreditation and monitoring and for development of a code of ethics that professional interpreters and translators should follow. They also felt that supports for interpreters “on the ground” need to be put in place.

4.3.4 | Views of the ITIA

As part of this work module, FGS also consulted with members of the Irish Translators and Interpreters Association (ITIA) in a separate focus group. This focus group was attended by approximately 25 ITIA members, and their views form part of this analysis of suppliers of interpreting and translation providers.

At the focus group, ITIA members felt that there was not enough emphasis placed on the skills or language proficiency of the interpreter by GSPs when providing interpreting services. Also, similar to the views expressed elsewhere, the ITIA members felt that GSPs had very little monitoring or quality control in place.

The ITIA members felt that the current approach used by GSPs to engage professional services is causing major problems, and changes in the way services are procured has consequences for individual providers. There is little monitoring or evaluation of services. Members reported that often when they are called upon to provide interpreting services, basic information necessary for the task to be completed is missing or has not been provided by either the interpreting supplier or the GSP.

The ITIA felt that GSPs should also receive training on the role of the interpreter, and how to engage with interpreting providers. They indicated that there is a need for some form of Government structure that can effectively develop partnerships between GSPs and suppliers; look at mapping the needs across public services; and plan for specific languages for specific sectors.

In general, ITIA members felt that the industry is characterised by poor pay and conditions, and that there is a relatively small number of highly skilled providers. However without quality control, or set training, accreditation and monitoring there is limited incentive for providers to train and provide high quality.

4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

4.4 | Key Chapter Findings

Views of NGOs & Representative Groups on Interpreting & Translation Services

- There are not enough professional interpreting and translation services provided by/for GSPs to help non-English speakers access public services in Ireland. The impact of this lack of availability in most cases limits and prevents those with low English proficiency from benefiting fully from public services. There can be a high use of children and friends, and especially where limited services are available;

- An absence of quality control; a lack of independent monitoring; and no measurable standard or basis for selecting interpreters, are viewed as key weaknesses. The approach of GSPs is poorly coordinated, with over-reliance on outsourcing to private suppliers;

- The views of NGOs on future changes focussed on quality control; developing a measurable standard or set criteria that interpreting and translation staff/professionals must achieve before being utilised by GSPs; designing procedures and training for GSP staff that engage with both clients and interpreting and translation professionals;

- It was felt that having a more cohesive holistic approach across the public service is needed as well as publicity around availability and access to interpreting and translation services, via information/awareness campaigns through minority ethnic group associations and the media.

Views of Suppliers

- There is a mixed view on the tendering and contracting process as it is seen as a key strength by some suppliers and subject to criticism by others, as the tendering process can lead to suppliers being chosen on the basis of cost rather than ability to provide quality services;

- GSPs are not fully aware of the limitations and complexities of providing interpreting and translation services, in terms of time, availability of interpreters and translators for rare languages and specialist areas;

- Public bodies are using interpreting services without making any changes in the processes to accommodate for that added service;

- Key improvements needed across the public service provision of language services concern quality control including introducing standards and recognition of qualifications; changes in the processes whereby GSPs engage with professional interpreting and translation suppliers; and the training of GSPs;

- As regards the industry itself, the key strengths are that in Ireland it is a growing industry and that there is access to a large potential pool of interpreters and translators to work from;

- There is no relevant legislation, nor do Government bodies take responsibility for training, accreditation, evaluation. This, together with the absence of binding industry standards and best practice models and the overall lack of standards and accreditation in the industry is leading to poor quality work;

4. View of Stakeholders on Interpreting & Translating Service Provision

- The work is poorly paid, and the attrition rate is high and there is a lack of appropriately trained and qualified people working as interpreters and translators;
-

- There is a need for the design and delivery of accredited training for interpreters and translators.
-

- Having formal standards in place would prevent the contracting of companies and individuals providing low quality service.
-

Commonality on:

NGOs, representative groups and suppliers all agreed on the following:

- The need for a cross-departmental collaborative approach involving all stakeholders to devise a policy framework;
-

- The need for standards and accreditation and devising a Code of Practice for interpreting and translating professionals;
-

- The need for training for interpreting and translating professionals and for GSP front line staff engaging with those with low English proficiency; training should involve cultural competency.
-



5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

5.1 | Introduction

This Chapter presents the views of members of minority ethnic groups in Ireland on interpreting and translation provision in Ireland, and in particular how it impacts on migrants since arriving in this country. This was done through focus groups and interviews.

Section 5.2 describes the methodology used in setting up and carrying out the focus groups. Section 5.3 marks the beginning of the presentation of the findings, and presents the views of non-English speakers on the language barriers they experience when dealing with public services in Ireland. Sections 5.4 and 5.5 detail the participants' use of interpreting and translation services and their experiences of those services. Section 5.6 has the comments and views of the focus group participants on future provision of language services and what changes they would like to see in the future provision of interpreting and translation across public services in Ireland. Section 5.7 lists the key findings from the discussions with the focus groups.

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

5.2 | Methodology

5.2.1 | Choosing Focus Group Participants

As part of this study four focus groups were held with people with no English or a low proficiency in English and hence potentially requiring interpreting and translation services when availing of public services. People from four countries were identified as likely to reflect the four countries with the greatest number of people living in Ireland with no English or low proficiency in English. These are as follows:

- Members of the Polish community. Data on nationality from the Central Statistics Office (CSO) shows that there were 63,276 people from Poland living in Ireland in April 2006, the largest group of migrants;
- Members of the Lithuanian community. Data from the CSO shows that there was an estimated 24,628 Latvians living in Ireland in 2006, the second largest group of migrants;
- Members of the Latvian community.⁹ The CSO estimates that there were 13,319 Latvians living in Ireland in 2006. This is the fourth largest grouping of migrants next to Nigerians where the population is estimated at 16,300. Members of the Nigerian community are not included in the focus group sample as the official language in Nigeria is English and therefore it was felt that a higher number of Latvians than Nigerians in Ireland are likely to have no English or limited proficiency in English¹⁰;
- Members of the Chinese community. The CSO estimates there are 11,161 Chinese people living in Ireland in 2006.¹¹

5.2.2 | Profile of Participants

The profile of the focus group participants was as follows:

- **Age profile:** The age profile of the focus group participants varied, ranging from some in their early 20's to two participants in their late 40's. The majority of participants were in their mid 20's to late 30's;
- **Duration of time lived in Ireland:** The length of time that participants have lived in Ireland also varied. One participant had been here only three months, but another participant had been in Ireland for over eight years. Across all the participants who gave details regarding the length of time they have lived in Ireland, the average was four years;
- **Where participants live in Ireland:** At the time of the focus group, all participants lived in Leinster. The majority lived in Dublin, but there were participants who were also residing in Louth, Meath, Westmeath and Wicklow;
- **Economic Status:** Two were students, but also working part-time. Two were self employed, with their own businesses; and two were working as home-makers, but gave their economic status as unemployed. The other participants were all working in full time employment;
- **Educational attainment:** There was a mix of educational qualifications amongst the participants; ranging from a PhD Graduate to a qualified veterinarian, to those who had finished school after high school, and in two cases, before graduating high school.

⁹ While related, the Lithuanian and Latvian vocabularies vary greatly from each other and are not mutually intelligible.

¹⁰ We recognise that English as written and spoken by different national groups may differ due to cultural and other factors which influence language. Therefore English as spoken and written in Ireland may differ from English as spoken and written by the Nigerian population in Ireland. Nevertheless, given the focus of this study we believe it is most appropriate to select people from the Latvian and Chinese communities.

¹¹ The focus groups were undertaken in Mandarin and not Cantonese nor Hakka or other dialects. Mandarin functions as the official spoken language of the People's Republic of China (Standard Chinese or Putonghua) and is spoken by over 70% of the population in China.

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

5.2.3 | Conducting the Focus Groups

To ensure the validity and consistency of the research the following steps were taken:

- Each of the four focus groups were carried out in the Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian, and Chinese (Mandarin) languages respectively. The focus groups were tape-recorded with the agreement of participants and translated into English subsequently;
- The focus groups were facilitated and the material transcribed into English by professionals who were recommended by the Irish Translators and Interpreter's Association (ITAI).

The focus groups were held in the offices of FGS Consulting in Dublin city centre. The focus groups were promoted through relevant organisations, through information sheets distributed in public outlets by FGS Consulting and by advertisements in relevant newspapers. In a number of cases where participants could not attend the focus groups, interviews were undertaken over the phone and transcribed into English.

The focus groups lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. All four focus groups used the same series of questions in relation to issues such as: experiences of translation and interpretation services, levels of satisfaction with services provided and government service providers, reasons for non-use of services, consequences of poor service provision, and suggestions for changes to the provision of translation and interpretation services. Travel expenses, where applicable, were paid. Overall there were a total of 23 participants.

In each case, participants were provided with an information sheet outlining the study and explaining why the focus group was being held; defining the terms “interpreting” and “translation”, and what was meant by “Government Service Provision” and “Public Services”; and how the information from the focus group would be used. These sheets were translated into the participants’ language. The participants were also required to fill out consent forms, also translated into their own language.

For each focus group the facilitator was asked to give an introduction; re-iterating the content of the information sheet, and also explaining that the information provided would be reported in a way to ensure that comments made could not be traced directly back to the individuals who made them.

The facilitator was also asked to convey that in all cases, participants should speak about experience for which they have first hand experience. These should mean their own personal experience, or the experiences of people in their immediate family (i.e. parents, brothers, sisters and their own children) Only if participants confirm they have no personal or immediate experiences of a specific questions, did the discussion cover the view of participants on “people from their community with no English or low English proficiency”.

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

5.3 | Language as a Barrier

The participants were asked if they perceived language as a barrier for accessing public services; and when or if they used professional interpreters/translators to do so. Across the groups, participants indicated strongly that language barriers presented problems when accessing services, especially when they had to deal with complex situations or deal with technical or specialised terminology.

Yes there are problems always. Without the language I feel like “without hands” (helpless). I cannot manage myself.

Latvian woman, early 40’s

Language has been a barrier to me, as I could not understand what other people were saying to me.

Polish woman, no age given

When I receive a formal letter from some institution I find it very difficult to understand the content because of the technical language used in the letter.

Polish woman, mid 20’s

I think it’s the manner with which they communicate the information. The problem was also the English that they were using was very technical and I would not be familiar with some of the words or descriptions used and secondly people are not able to explain clearly and because they know they are dealing with the immigrants they get more and more irritated.

Polish man, mid 30’s

5.4 | Use of Interpreting & Translation Services

When accessing and using public services, participants were asked whether they made do on their own, asked a friend or family member to help, obtained translated documents from public service providers, or used professional interpreters supplied by public service providers.

A number of participants had used interpreting and translation services, and their experiences are discussed in the next section. However, many participants used friends and family to help or try to get by as best they can by themselves. These findings are illustrated in the quotes below.

I can manage with daily English. But things like going to the hospital are quite a headache. I usually turn to my husband for help.

Chinese woman, mid 40’s

I usually ask my boyfriend to translate from English into English (he is Irish). . . I’ve heard that many people are asking others for help but I’ve never heard anybody asking professional interpreters for help

Polish woman, mid 20’s

My friend who had a baby. . . I had to translate over the phone what the doctor was asking her. I could not understand the names of some diseases and he had to explain the symptoms.

Polish woman, mid 20’s

I try to get information from the person who is giving me the form and then all the information that I should give is more obvious after consulting this person. . .

Polish man, mid 30’s

I invited a friend. My friend knows English, but he is not an interpreter, and he cannot explain some delicate legal or professional matters very well.

Lithuanian man, mid 30’s

Usually I try to manage somehow myself, but I never know if I have understood things correctly.

Latvian man, mid 30’s

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

The participants also demonstrated a lack of awareness of the availability of interpreting and translation services. The selection of quotes below illustrated this point.

Honestly I don't know how to contact professional interpreters.

Chinese man, mid 30's

I don't know anything about such services here in Ireland... I have never seen any information on this and would not even know where to look for it...

Latvian woman, early 40's

Yes. I didn't know any qualified people and there was no information about them in newspapers.

Polish woman, mid 20's

I really don't know how to access interpreting services.

Chinese man, mid 20's

I don't know how to access interpreting services.

Chinese woman, mid 40's

The interpreter for my relative was booked by his solicitor. I really don't know how to access interpreting services if need be.

Chinese man, early 30's

Indeed, even where participants had some experience of using interpreting services they had no idea how to contact interpreters if they needed them in the future:

As for professional interpreting services, actually I'm not very sure. Indeed, when I was at the Garda Station and the Court, the interpreter was already there.

Chinese man, mid 20's

There was also a belief that interpreting and translation services were likely to be expensive. Indeed a number of participants indicated that they post material back to their country of origin to get it translated when required.

I would not know the prices of translating or interpreting services but I think it's expensive and I would try to avoid it if I could sort it myself.

Polish woman, no age given

I've heard of translators translating marriage certificates or something like that, official documents but interpreting services would be considered expensive and people do not like spending money.

Polish woman, mid 20's

I have had a need to get some translation jobs done, but I always do these kinds of things when I am on my holidays in Latvia.

Latvian man, late 30's

Most of the time I would post them to my mum in Latvia. She gets them translated and then posts them to me.

Latvian woman, early 40's

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

5.5 | Experiences of Interpreting & Translation

The focus group participants were asked about their experience of using interpreting services and translated materials provided when accessing public services. For those that had used such services, the experience was mixed.

A number of participants indicated that they were satisfied with the services or material provided.

Quite satisfied. The interpreters have made everything clear.

Chinese man, early 30's

Generally speaking, there were no problems.

Chinese man, early 30's

But I remembered once the court assigned a Cantonese -speaking girl to act as an interpreter. Good as her English was, she didn't speak Putonghua [Note: Commonly known as Mandarin in Ireland]. We wanted to have the interpreter replaced, but the solicitor did not seem to have taken heed of what we said or the interpreter did not get our message across to the solicitor at all.

Chinese man, early 30's

Very satisfactory. Although I'm not in a position to judge the accuracy of their interpretation, their English was very fluent.

Chinese man, mid 20's

The above example relating to Cantonese/Mandarin displays that there is a lack of understanding of the needs of the clients requiring the service – Cantonese and Mandarin/Putonghua are completely different Chinese languages, and in this case the clients needs were not met; despite being provided with a court appointed interpreter. This experience is similar to that discussed earlier in Chapter 5, where interpreters can be contacted to interpret for several languages particularly eastern European languages, even though they are often completely unrelated.

I must say that Polish translations on the official government websites like Citizen Information Centre are well done, the only bad translation that I've seen was the VHI translation, totally incomprehensible.

Polish woman, mid 20's

I read the guide . . . it was a lousy translation full of nonsense. But it was translated by we Chinese. It would be a shame on the Chinese community if I said the quality was poor. Then I told her it was Ok. But to be honest, the quality of some leaflets are good.

Chinese woman, mid 40's

When I had to fill in a form they said, "You can find everything explained at the bottom of the page". But I am from Lithuania, and the explanation was in Polish.

Lithuanian man, mid 30's

It is interesting to note, that even where there was a bad translation, the participant did not complain, as "It would be a shame on the Chinese community if I said the quality was poor". Even where a translation is provided, the quality checking of such material is an issue. Equally certain clients can be adverse to complaining about the quality, in case it brings "shame" on their own community, an important cultural difference between western and eastern cultures.

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

5.6 | Views on Future Provision of Services

When asked in what ways they would like to see the provision of interpreting services and translated material improved in the future, across the focus groups, six main issues were evident.

First, participants indicated that it was necessary to prioritise the key public services where interpreting and translation services are provided.

The essence of the answer lies in the working out of the sequence of priorities. Then, such services should be promoted at the top areas of this sequence of priorities.

Chinese man, no age given

I still think that it is needed in the most common agencies, which are frequented by many people. It will be much easier if more Chinese brochures are provided.

Chinese man, late 20's

Social issues mean issues on maternity leave, how your employees have to treat you, how much and how they have to pay; then, all the benefits in relation to the baby and many other issues which Lithuanians are concerned about. Most often the information is passes by word of mouth, but not by documents or information messages.

Lithuanian woman, mid 20's

I think it should be provided in the most useful sectors.

Chinese man, late 20's

Areas that were felt to be key priorities include health, justice (Garda, Courts etc), taxation and employment rights and conditions.

The health service for sure. It's necessary in my opinion, as you never know when you are going to use it. It's also important to understand what is being said and be able to say what is wrong. I think that Tax Office is also very important, these are the institutions where we need good translation/interpreting services.

Polish woman, no age given

I'd like to say the most important thing is that the government should promote such services in the most frequently used service sectors, such as banks, Garda Stations, or any other service sectors that the general public are exposed to in their daily lives.

Chinese man, no age given

Another area that needs more focus is the translation of important contracts.

Chinese woman, mid 40's

Stronger control of translated materials in different work places.

Latvian man, late 30's

One of my co-workers had a bad injury because he didn't understand the safety procedure that was written in English.

Latvian man, late 30's

Second, the participants indicated that certain front-line public services needed to have definitive interpreting and translation services for clients at no monetary cost to clients.

... the barrier of using such services is the price.

Polish woman, no age given

I pay a lot of taxes..... I think that these services should be for free or should be charged only a token payment. I don't mean simple meetings in the shop or in less significant offices but if it is about the Revenue, school, health service or any other significant department there should be an interpreter appointed from the public service and easy access to such people.

Polish man, mid 30's

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

Third, participants referred to the need to increase the levels of information and awareness about interpreting and translation services. The importance of having more information about what was available, and having that information in a forum or media that was relevant to them or their ethnic group was stressed in all groups.

I used to browse the website of the appropriate organisation and this is how I found out that there were some Polish translations...but if I were a non-English speaking person I would not have known that such documents existed, as it hasn't been advertised yet.

Polish woman, mid 20's

The most important problem is I don't know how to apply for them.....a dedicated Government Interpretation Service should be established. . .

Chinese man, mid 30's

Promotion is quite important.

Chinese man, mid 20's

There should be also a campaign aimed at Polish so they would know where they could turn for help and where they will get help.

Polish woman, mid 20's

Fourth, the importance of ensuring that front line public service staff have friendly and positive attitudes was emphasised to ensure that members of minority groups are not discouraged from using available services.

But one thing which is of paramount importance is the attitudes of the staff.

Chinese woman, mid 40's

Fifth, the need to use a number of delivery mechanisms was promoted. As a number of participants also referred to the way in which such services could be provided: through government service providers employing bi-lingual staff; and also telephone interpreting.

There is a more popular interpreting modality. . . that is, telephone interpreting. I hope the government will set up a 24/7 Chinese-English interpreting hotline.

Chinese man, mid 30's

Government agencies can employ some Chinese operators or set up a Chinese hot line. Then the Chinese community can directly phone these Chinese operators to access relevant information in a more timely manner.

Chinese man, mid 20's

Sixth, the need to think about the overall service process and the role of interpreting and translation services to assist in this process was stressed. In particular, it was felt that interpreting and translation services should not be viewed as an "add on" to key public services, but rather they should be integrated into the service provision processes.

Translated material is available at some places. But the key point is sometimes the whole procedure is not clear enough. Translated material won't be of much help if the procedures of how to get things done are not clear enough. Honestly, some procedures may be quite simple, but translated material may make them more complex than what they should be. Additionally, some forms are quite complex. Even with translated material, I still don't know how to fill in those forms.

Chinese woman, mid 40's

5. Views of Minority Ethnic Groups

5.6 | Key Chapter Findings

Key findings from our focus groups are as follows:

- Language is a barrier for many members of different minority ethnic groups when trying to access public services. Barriers in accessing services can arise due a complete lack of English competency or due to limited English competency. In the case of the latter technical or specialised terminology is a particularly acute barrier;
- There is a high incidence of minority ethnic groups using friends or family members or making do by themselves when to try to overcome language barriers;
- There is low awareness of the right to and availability of interpreting and translation services. There is also a perception among many of the participants that using professional interpreting and translations services to help them access and use public services would be expensive for them;
- The service experience of those who used interpreting and translation services is mixed. Some report good service and well translated material. Some indicate they had no way of telling if the service was good or not. While others could point to poor and very poor quality of interpreting services or translation of written material;
- Cultural factors prevented some participants reporting poor translation of materials. Therefore, reliance on “customer feedback” alone as a means to judge the quality of interpreting and translation services is problematic.

Key issues from the point of view of members of minority ethnic groups with regard to the future development of interpreting and translation services are as follows:

- It was felt that it is important to prioritise the key public services where interpreting and translation services are provided. Areas that were felt to be key priorities include health, justice (Garda, Courts etc), taxation and employment rights and conditions;
- Participants pointed out that interpreting and translation services to support access and usage of key public services should be provided at no monetary cost to people who need these services;
- Participants indicated a need to use a range of methods for the provision of interpreting services. While face to face interpreting services were felt to be preferable in most cases, it was also felt that the availability of a dedicated telephone service (in the case of emergencies or to assist in routine queries) would be very helpful;
- The importance of developing information and awareness campaigns specifically targeted at minority ethnic groups was widely stressed. It was felt that information and awareness campaigns primarily need to explain the role of the interpreter, and also to convey the benefits of using an interpreter and provide clear information on costs, availability and how to access interpreting services and on the availability of translated material;
- The importance of ensuring that front line public service staff have friendly and positive attitudes so that members of minority groups are not discouraged from using available services was pointed out;
- The need to think about the overall service process and the role of interpreting and translation services to assist in this process was stressed. In particular, it was felt that interpreting and translation services should not be viewed as an “add on” to key public services, but rather they should be integrated into the service provision processes.



6. Literature Review

6. Literature Review

6.1 | Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings from international literature on the demand and experiences of minority ethnic groups in using interpreting and translation services when accessing and using public services. Section 6.2 provides a brief description of the methodology used to identify key reports. Sections 6.3 to 6.11 discuss the key findings from the literature. Finally, Section 6.12 summarises the key chapter findings.

6. Literature Review

6.2 | Methodology

In the collection and collation of literature we undertook a systematic and comprehensive search for relevant literature and reports. In doing so we applied a variety of means to identify relevant literature.

We conducted a web-based search of relevant organisations to the sector, and specific national and international websites to examine current issues and developments. Examples of such sites are: Google, Google Scholar, Ireland.com, and the websites of The European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), Critical Link Canada (non-profit organisation involved in the advancement of the field of community interpreting in the social, legal and health care sectors), USA National Association for Interpretation, the website of the International Journal of Research and Practice in Interpreting, the Centre for Ethnicity, Health and Diversity at Warwick University (UK), The Translation Bureau (Canada), NAATI (Australia), TIS (Australia), CILT (UK), Interpreting and Translation Centre South Africa, the Aequitas Project website, and The Migrant Friendly Hospitals Project website. On a European and global level we also looked at the websites and online resources of the European Commission, the Council of Europe, the OECD, the UN and the Department of Immigration and Citizenship in Australia.

We also carried out a library based search of relevant books and journal articles. This involved a search of Trinity College Dublin library for relevant journals, and their database of electronic journals, as well as a search of their catalogue for relevant books, papers and official publications on the topic.

Based on the above we drew up an initial list of key reports, articles and papers. We then examined the summaries or abstracts of these reports to identify reports, papers and articles of most relevance to the issues in our Terms of Reference. In addition to international research, relevant Irish reports were also consulted such as the NCCRI's Advocacy Paper Number 5, *Interpreting, Translation and Public Bodies in Ireland: The Need for Policy and Training*, (2007); the National Action Plan Against Racism, and other NCCRI publications including: *Improving Government Service Delivery to Minority Ethnic Groups*, (2006), issues of the NCCRI's journal – *Spectrum*, and the booklet entitled *Key Considerations for Service Providers*, (2007).

We also provided CILT and Dr Jackie Turton with our list of key reports and asked their opinion on whether additional important reports exist. This provided a check that we had not overlooked relevant material. Appendix A lists the bibliography of reports and articles referenced in this report.

Two key reports reviewed were Scottish Consumer Council, *Is Anybody Listening*, (2005) and Mc Pake et al, *Translating, Interpreting and Communication Support Services Across the Public Sector in Scotland*, Scottish Executive, (2002). Both of these publications summarised quite a substantial amount of previously existing literature published relevant to the provision of interpreting and translation across public sector service providers.

6. Literature Review

6.3 | Unmet Demand for Interpreting & Translation Services

A commonly recurring theme across the literature is the gap between the needs of members of minority ethnic groups and the provision of interpreting and translation services to help access and use public services. The Scottish Consumer Council notes that difficulties in communicating in English emerged repeatedly in the literature as playing a significant role in curtailing access to public access for many

members of ethnic minority groups (Scottish Consumer Council, *Is Anybody Listening*, (2005)). The research highlights a number of areas of public service provision where an unmet demand for interpreting and translation services is reported. These include: health; housing; support for asylum seekers; education; and public services. Figure 6.1 summarises some of the findings from the literature.

Figure 6.1: Summary of Key Findings on Unmet Demand by Area of Public Service Provision

HEALTH
Quite a substantial portion of the research reviewed by the Scottish Consumer Council for the 2005 report concerned interpreting and translation issues in the health field. The main theme arising from that research was that language barriers are a major obstacle to non-English speakers in accessing healthcare. Studies by Gerrish (2001, 2004) and Hampton (2000) both stressed that communication and language difficulties represented the greatest barrier for members of minority ethnic communities accessing and using health services. In focus groups held by Blake Stevenson Ltd (2003) in Edinburgh, participants also indicated that a significant barrier was explaining to health care staff what was wrong or seeking the precise help they required and felt that they were not always gaining access to the same quality of service as others (English speakers). Furthermore, in cases of emergency, the lack of responsive interpreting services was considered a particular issue in Blake Stevenson Ltd (2003).
HOUSING
In research by Lemos and Crane (2004), language barriers were cited amongst the factors making it difficult to access services by homeless people in Glasgow, Lemos and Crane (2004). Amongst the Chinese participants in the study, many felt they would not be able to express themselves adequately to council housing services, and so turned to the voluntary sector and charities instead.
ASYLUM SEEKER SUPPORT
Asylum seekers, upon arrival have several specific demands that need to be met by the recipient country, the Scottish Consumer Council pointed out that in their research, the literature pointed to the fact that such demands are often heightened by the lack of appropriate language help. In 2000, the UK Audit Commission noted that asylum seekers would require a variety of services to support them from arrival to settlement, but ‘but language difficulties... often create insurmountable barriers to services’, Audit Commission (2000). Also Charlaff L et al (2004) described that refugees and asylum seekers perceived a lack of proficiency in English Language as a key barrier to obtaining employment in the UK.
EDUCATION
The Scottish Consumer Council (2002) research indicated that language was a significant barrier for Cantonese speaking parents, and was one of the main barriers they faced to good communication.
OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES
As regards access to, use of and provision of public services to members of minority ethnic and non-English speaking persons, the Scottish Consumer Council (2005) report indicated that translation and interpreting are key elements to equitable services. Difficulties with language can be a significant deterrent to members of minority communities in their communication with officialdom, in either the voluntary or state sector (see Houston and Allen, 2004). Mc Pake et al in their conclusions and recommendations, note that in providing socially inclusive public services, there needed to be a shift away from “language” to the wider concept of “communication”. The social inclusion perspective involves starting from the point of view of those who communicate in forms other than written or spoken English... Solutions will include thinking through multiple communication approaches, rather than seeking to adapt conventional approaches, ...and entail much greater attention to the communication strategies which people currently use to survive and succeed see Mc Pake et al (2002).

6. Literature Review

6.4 | Focus on Service Provider rather than the Service User

Many commentators have highlighted the dominance of the service providers' perspective in much previous research and indeed the way translation and interpretation services are provided. See for example, the report produced for the Scottish Consumer Council *Is Anybody Listening* (2005).

Mc Pake et al (2002) also make the point that very little literature represents the service user perspective in detail. Even those representative bodies and pressure groups are more concerned with policy matters, so literature from them may not often provide direct access to the experiences, concerns and interests of the groups they serve.

In the Scottish case at least, where there is research available from the user perspective the issues raised, and recommendations made are often quite different to those which emerge from studies from the service provider viewpoint. See for example, Bowes and Meehan Domokos (1997), Kyle et al (1996), Mahmood (2000), the Scottish Accessible Information Forum (1999), National Information Forum (2001) and the Scottish Consumer Council (2005).

It is also noted that service providers tend to treat each minority ethnic group as a homogenous group and not account for differences with what are frequently very heterogeneous groups from the point of view of service delivery.

6.5 | The Rationale for Using Informal Interpreters

Across the research, a fundamental aspect of the examination of service provision is naturally that of who actually provides the interpreting/translation service, be that through professionally trained interpreters, or through informal interpreters; such as family members including children, friends, a member of the community or bi-lingual staff. In their review, the Scottish Consumer Council (2005) points out that an understanding of rationales for choosing informal help rather than seeking professional assistance can aid the tailoring of public service translation and interpretation provision more closely to users' needs.

The literature notes that the case for using informal interpreters has perceived advantages, cited by both the service provider and service user. Alexander et al (2004) outlined a number of perceived advantages of using friends or family as informal interpreters, and these are outlined in Figure 6.2.

The Scottish Consumer Council also identified other reasons why users are reluctant to engage with professional interpreters, or request professional help. Such factors were described as:

- The user's feeling of guilt at having to request such services; not wanting to be a burden – as described in Yu's work *Older Chinese People: A Need for Social Inclusion in Two Communities* (2000).
- Users blaming themselves for the language barriers encountered;
- Accepting the status quo rather than seeking assistance. See for example, the Scottish Consumer Council (2005).

6. Literature Review

Figure 6 2:
Perceived Advantages of Using Informal Interpreters

- They do not require payment;
- They are readily available;
- They often can help with other things such as transport;
- The service user/seeker user can trust someone already known;
- They will have a history of shared understandings and obligations;
- They can provide good suggestions and;
- They can provide moral support.

Derived from: Access to services with Interpreters User views, Claire Alexander, Rosalind Edwards and Bogusia Temple with Usha Kanani, Liu Zhuang, Mohib Miah and Anita Sam; Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2004.

A number of authors have also highlighted that using informal interpreters may also be advantageous, in certain circumstances, for government service providers. Such benefits focus in the main on: convenience; the fact that it was cheaper; the perception that the user preferred it. See for example, Gerrish et al (2004), Cohen et al (1999), The Benefit Agency (1998), and the Scottish Consumer Council (2005). According to Alexander et al, often people prefer friends or family to interpret as they trust them, and have an on-going relationship, and an emotional commitment and loyalty for each other (*Access to Services with Interpreters*, 2004).

Despite these perceived advantages, however, a number of disadvantages and concerns over the use of informal interpreters and translators remains. These are presented in Figure 6.3.

Figure 6 3:
Disadvantages of Using Informal Interpreters

- The lack of specialist knowledge regarding procedures and terminology; this can lead to questionable accuracy regarding the information translated, particularly where complex information is being dealt with;
- Within the health context there is a possibility of misdiagnosis (particularly where children are used to interpret for their parents).
- The potential for lack of continuity – the interpreter may be available at the first contact (with the public service) but may not be available at subsequent contacts;
- There is concern over the lack of privacy and embarrassment for the user;
- There is the risk that the interpreter's own views will colour the translation, for example, to protect from bad news;
- Children from minority ethnic backgrounds who act as interpreters may lose school time to help their families with interpreting duties;
- It devalues the skills of professional interpreters and sustains the notion that interpretation does not require particular skills

Derived from: Scottish Consumer Council, Is Anybody Listening, 2005 and Mc Pake et al, Translating, Interpreting and Communication Support Services Across the Public Sector in Scotland, Scottish Executive, 2002.

6. Literature Review

6.6 | Benefits & Experiences of Using Professional Interpreters

The main reasons for using professional interpreters and translators rests on the fact that they are “professional” and as such have certain competencies and capacities not enjoyed by informal interpreters. Alexander et al (2004) lists these potential benefits as:

- Knowledge of the aims, structures and common procedures and processes of the relevant service;
- Enhanced written and spoken competence in the languages worked in, and in formal specialist and competence, especially knowledge of specialist informal terminology;
- Accurate consecutive and simultaneous language-transfer skills;
- Access to continuous professional development;
- Adherence to codes of conduct and good practice, such as Institute for Linguists Code of Professional Conduct.

The same authors however also identified a number of poor experiences (from the user perspective) of the use of professional interpreters. This highlights the need to follow good practice in the use of interpreters. Examples of poor experience include the following:

- The user sometimes did not even know the interpreter’s name;
- The user was not told of the position nor the role of the interpreter;
- The service was unreliable – no interpreter who spoke the user’s language was available at the point of need;
- The interpreter turned up late or not at all; and
- The interpreter was not trusted by the user because of their perceived attitude.

6.7 | Delivery Models

The literature also shows that there are a number of different types of delivery models for providing interpreting and translation services, see for example Turton (2005). Figure 6.4 summarises the main types of delivery models.

Figure 6 4:
Delivery Models for Interpreting & Translation Service

In-House Services
Interpreters are recruited in-house to the public sector organisation.
Outsourced to private sector
Public sector organisations tender for private sector translation companies to provide interpreters and translators at agreed rates.
Outsourced to not-for-profit organisations
Public sector organisations tender for not for profit organisations to provide interpreters and translators at agreed rates. Such organisations can be part-funded by the public sector and provide interpreters and translators from within the local community.
Partnership/shared resources
Government departments agree to share interpreters/translators. These could be either in-house or outsourced personnel.
Managed database of providers
Public sector organisations access a centrally managed database of providers which are pre-assessed and vetted. Users contact the interpreters/translators directly.
Brokerage Services
These do not hire interpreters and translators but source them for the public sector and as such act a clearing house.
‘Bring your own’ Interpreter
Where friends or family members act as interpreter when a person is accessing Government provided services.

6. Literature Review

6.8 | Conceptualising Interpreting & Translation Provision

From their research, McPake et al (2002) identify a “Contextual Continuum”, relating to the context within which interpreting services is needed. The continuum ranges from high stakes to decision-making situations to routine contexts. These can be understood as follows:

- **High stakes:**
where the consequences of miscommunication or misunderstanding are very serious, and could even be life-threatening such as medical emergencies, court cases etc;
- **Decision-making situations:**
contexts where people are seeking information and advice for life choices they need to make such as choosing a school, looking for a home, choosing a healthcare provider, their career prospects etc;
- **Routine contexts:**
routine daily contexts such as form filling, contact with receptionists.

The authors believe that decisions about provision should reflect the context and the implications of failing to provide adequate support for communication in different situations. Furthermore, they argue that those concerned with developing the framework for translation, interpretation and communication support services should consider adopting and developing this continuum (McPake et al, 2002).

6.9 | Under-use of Professional Interpreting & Translation Services

Across the literature, there are concerns over the under-use of available professional interpreting and translation services by public sector providers. Largely this under-use stems from a lack of awareness both in terms of the services that can be accessed by public sector service providers, and of the funding that may be available to public sector bodies to help with the costs associated with interpreting and translation services (Scottish Consumer Council, 2005).

The lack of demand, and under-use of services also stems from the user-side, and

- The apparent lack of, or low levels of, awareness amongst minority ethnic groups about who a professional interpreter was, and how to get access to one. See for example, the Scottish Consumer Council (2005) and Alexander et al (2004);
- Difficulties in accessing professional interpreters, even for those who know how to access them, due to long waits or lack of availability. See for example, Alexander et al (2004);
- The related issue that even when information is available, users need to have a grasp of English in order to book or seek interpreting assistance. See for example, McPake et al, Alexander et al Scottish Consumer Council.

6. Literature Review

6.10 | Quality of Professional Interpreting & Translation Services in the public sector

In the Scottish-based literature, the focus on standards for the most part refers to those in legal and court interpreting. In 1996, research carried out by MVA Consulting on behalf of the Scottish Office Central Research Unit on Foreign Language Interpreters in the Scottish Criminal Courts raised a number of concerns:

- Disparity in competence of interpreters;
- Lack of formal training in interpreting skills of most interpreters;
- Almost one third had received no induction or briefing prior to their first court assignment;
- Many of those felt that they had made mistakes they would not have, if they were properly trained. (Derived from MVA Consultancy, 'Foreign Language Interpreters in the Scottish Criminal Courts', Scottish Office Central Research Unit, 1996).

Much literature on legal interpreting draws attention to the need for standards for interpreters but also for the staff of the various criminal justice agencies that utilise the interpreting and translation services. For example, Ferry et al argue for a set of standards for everyone involved in the process, including and end to ad-hoc arrangements and a commitment to enhanced cultural awareness.

Some efforts have been made in the UK at least to improve this situation through the development of the National Register of Public Service Interpreters. This is discussed in more detail in one of research case studies in Chapter 9.

The literature review carried out as part of *Is Anybody Listening* by the Scottish Consumer Council in 2005 however revealed a concerning mis-match between an increasing emphasis on professionalisation of translation and interpreting services but the lack of a supporting quality assessment framework. Challenges for the development of such a framework also exist, including:

- The inconsistent practice across different local authorities;
- A lack of a detailed and up-to-date knowledge base of the needs of user groups;
- The lack of cross-sectoral co-ordination of service provision which may be complicated due to the involvement of many different agencies (McPake et al, 2002);
- The informal arrangements which may exist between local authority or voluntary agencies to provide services

Stemming from the issues around standards and professionalisation of interpreters and translators in literature reviewed by McPake et al, calls were also made for recognised training for those that wish to work as translators, or interpreters, and continued professional development for those that already work in such capacities (Mc Pake et al, 2002).

6. Literature Review

6.11 | Good Practice in Interpreting & Translating

Figure 6.5: Good Practice in Interpreting & Translation

- Interpreters and the public sector staff with whom they will work both need to be trained;
 - The roles of staff involved in communication need to be understood by all relevant parties;
 - Interpreters should have a good knowledge of the subject in which they are involved;
 - Texts in English to be translated should be especially prepared for this purpose, for example by using short sentences that focus on positive actions in plain English;
 - Jargon should be avoided in texts for translation and circumstances that can challenge the skills of a translator such as abbreviations, colloquialisms, puns, word play and sayings or proverbs should be avoided;
 - Interpreters and translators should be aware that there are no direct equivalents in some languages of some common English language terms such as ‘council/local authority’;
 - Bilingual professionals need to work in partnership to develop information in the language of the target communities and/or work with communities themselves to develop resources in their language;
 - Summary and bilingual versions of written materials are preferred. Bilingual presentation enables people to check nuances of meanings in both languages and can also help when the information is discussed with others; and
 - Leaflets with a strong visual and pictorial element are preferred.
- Derived from: Scottish Consumer Council, Is Anybody Listening, 2005.*

Across the Scottish literature, a number of studies produced recommendations for good practice, based on existing experience and gaps in provision. Examples of this include: the Scottish Translation, Interpretation and Communication Forum *Good Practice Guidelines* (2004); Phelan and Parkman (1995); National Information Forum (1998); National Community Fire Safety Centre Toolbox, (2004). Figure 6.5 presents a summary of good practice taken from the Scottish Consumer Council report.

6. Literature Review

6.12 | Summary of Key Chapter Findings

According to international literature in the area:

- There is a strong unmet need for interpreting and translation services especially in health, housing, asylum seeker support, and education. Across all public services, difficulties with language can be a significant deterrent to members of minority communities in their communication with officialdom, in either the voluntary or state sector;

- Provision of interpreting and translation tends to focus on provider rather than user. There is very little literature representing the service user perspective. Even representative groups can be more concerned with policy matters, so often literature from them does not provide direct access to the experiences, concerns and interests of the groups they serve;

- Users are not an homogenous group and their diverse and individual requirements need to be addressed in provision of services;

- Understanding the rationales for choosing informal help rather than seeking professional assistance can aid the tailoring of interpreting and translation services more closely to users' needs. Users can be reluctant to engage with professionals because of feelings of guilt, blaming themselves for the language barrier;


- There is limited research on users' views of services but a range of issues have emerged from the research. Users often prefer informal interpreters because they are readily available and do not require payment; the user/can trust someone they already know and they will have a history of shared understandings and obligations. However, disadvantages and concerns over the use of informal interpreters remain;

- A number of delivery models for interpreting and translation provision in public bodies exist including: in-house services; outsourcing to private sector or not-for-profit organisations; partnership/shared resources; having a managed database of providers; brokerage services and 'bring your own' interpreter;

- A useful distinction is between "high stakes", where the consequences of mis-communication are very serious, to "routine context", everyday activities such as form filling, with professional help more appropriate for the former and informal more acceptable in relation to the latter;

- Under use of available professional interpreting and translation services when provided is common across providers due to low levels of awareness amongst minority ethnic groups; difficulties in accessing professional interpreters for those who know how to access them; and often when information is available, users need to have some knowledge of English in order to seek interpreting assistance;

- Difficulties in assessing the quality of professional interpreting services in the public sector prevail and much literature on draws attention to the need for standards, appropriate training and quality control.



7. International Literature
Review on Country
Policies & Practices

7. International Literature Review on Country Policies & Practices

7.1 | Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the key research findings from literature on the needs for and experiences of minority ethnic groups in relation to interpreting and translation services to help access/use public services. This chapter presents key findings on country level policies in relation to interpreting and translation to help minority ethnic groups access/use public services.

Our review of literature found that analytical reports describing policies at country level was relatively limited. In particular, policies at an overall country level are only described in any detail for Australia and Sweden, and the only significant piece of research on cross-country policies and practices related to the Aequitas project which looked at practices in the legal sector across four European countries. Therefore, Section 7.2 reviews policies in Australia, Section 7.3 summarises policies in Sweden and Section 7.4 presents the key findings from the Aequitas project. Finally, Section 7.5 presents our key chapter findings.

The methodology for the full literature review is discussed in full in Section 6.2.

7. International Literature Review on Country Policies & Practices

7.2 | Review of Literature for Australia

7.2.1 | Overview

With regard to being an example of “best practice”, Australia has quite clearly defined policies and practices in place, through both the Federal, and State and Territorial governments, providing language services to individuals with little or no English language proficiency. The progress towards having such a comprehensive policy has been underway since the middle of the last century, and is deeply rooted in post-war Australian immigration policy, which sought to bring about significant population expansion as a result of national insecurity experienced during World War II.

As the immigration programme expanded from English-speaking countries to other nations, interpreting and translation services grew; initially in immigrant selection procedures in Europe, to ad hoc/on-demand service provision in hospitals, dealings with administration, legal and police matters.

As mentioned above, all State and Territory Governments provide language services; of those eight, four – New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and the Northern Territory have their own language services, and the ACT, Tasmania and Western Australia purchase languages services from the Commonwealth Government’s Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS). Also, Western Australia, along with Victoria, Queensland, and New South Wales has developed explicit policies on language services. The next sections review policies in these states.

7.2.2 | Policies in Place

Victoria

Victoria has developed a framework for the provision of language services with a particular focus on enhanced access and continuing quality improvement through the provision of language services in the areas of: the supply and quality of interpreters, including in regional areas and emerging languages; client services through awareness training for government agency staff; data collection to enable reliable assessments of need; and funding and purchasing administration to improve the availability of interpreters.

Queensland

The Queensland Government Language Services Policy represents a whole-of-Government commitment to the development of communication strategies to inform eligible clients of services and their entitlements and how they can obtain them. These strategies include the engagement of professional interpreters in circumstances where clients have difficulties communicating in English. According to DIMIA (the Australian Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs, now known as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship – DIAC), this policy is designed to enable clients to access services fairly and equitably and to ensure that service delivery is responsive and of high quality (DIMIA, *Language Services Guidelines for Commonwealth Agencies*, 2002).

New South Wales

In New South Wales (NSW), the Language Services Division within the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW provides a wide range of interpreting and translating services in over 75 community languages. The main functions of the Language Services Division are: to act as the principal provider of interpreting for State Government agencies, health interpreting services, and legal interpreting services in NSW, providing services to Courts, Legal Aid, Community Legal Centres, Director of Public Prosecutions and Legal Practitioners;

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and to provide on-site interpreting services to private organisations and individuals, including personal documents, transcription of tapes, technical and complex materials and multilingual documents. Interpreting and translation services are provided primarily on a user-pays basis, with exemptions granted on a need basis.

Western Australia Overview

The Western Australian Government Language Services Policy requires Government agencies to develop policies, programs and services that are equally accessible to all Western Australians and to implement strategies that are responsive to their diverse clientele including people who require assistance in English in the Indigenous (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) community and people with impaired hearing. The Office of Multicultural Interests provides advice to both the government and non-government sectors on issues relating to this policy. The Language Services Policy is a resource for Government agencies, introducing strategies for more effective communication with clients.

According to the Government of Western Australia, the policy “is a commitment to the development of efficient communication strategies, to enable agencies to deliver services that are responsive and equitable for all clients” (Language Services Policy, Office of Multicultural Interests, Western Australia).

Western Australia Languages Services Policy in More Detail

Additional details on the Languages Services Policy are readily available and a summary of key points is presented here. The main points addressed in Western Australia Languages Services Policy document are presented in Figure 7.1.

The Model Language Services Policy presented by the Western Australia Government may either be adopted in whole as agency policy, or be used as a guide for the development of an agency-specific policy.

Figure 7 1:
Language Services Policy, Office of Multicultural Interests, Western Australia

- Model Language Services Policy
- Adapting the Model to meet Agency requirements
- Guidelines for Working with Interpreters
- Guidelines for Multilingual Information Planning
- Suggested Performance Indicators for Policy Implementation
- Minimum Requirements Checklist
- AUSIT Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators

In **Adapting the Model to Meet Agency Requirements**, an assessment of the services delivered by the agency and its methods of service delivery, together with an analysis of the client base, would need to be carried out. Consultation with the community is considered important in the development of a language services policy. The policy points out that agencies may find it useful to provide guidelines for staff on:

- Situations when qualified interpreters should always be engaged;
- Circumstances where a telephone or on-site interpreter is appropriate;
- Types of information which should be produced in English and languages other than English;
- The manner of production (print, electronic, audiovisual).

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The policy issues a number of **Guidelines for Working with Interpreters**, including:

- Assessing the need for an interpreter;
- Order of preference protocols for engaging interpreters;
- Qualified interpreters versus family and friends/bilingual staff as interpreters;
- Arranging an interpreter;
- Paying for interpreting services;
- Most effective interpreting mode;
- Accountability; and
- Up-skilling staff to work with interpreters.

The suggested **Performance Indicators for Policy Implementation** listed in the Language Services Policy concern identification of client language services needs in the agency; working with interpreters, including having clearly defined procedures in place for obtaining and using appropriate interpreters; multilingual information planning and management; and, the integration of language services policy into organisational processes.

The key principles of the **AUSIT Code of Ethics for Interpreters and Translators**, the national professional association of interpreting and translating practitioners (the Australian Institute of Interpreters and Translators), also influence the model of service provision described in the Western Australian Language Services Policy document. This code covers issues such as professional conduct; confidentiality; competence; impartiality; accuracy; employment; professional development; and professional solidarity.

7.2.3 | Training & Accreditation

Training and accreditation for translation and interpreting professionals in Australia is set by NAATI, the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd. In 1977, NAATI, a national standards body was established. NAATI is owned by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments of Australia and is a company limited by guarantee. NAATI accreditation is the only credential officially accepted for the profession of translation and interpreting in Australia. All government Translation and Interpreting (T&I) services require translators and interpreters to be NAATI accredited whenever possible.

NAATI devised several levels of possible accreditation for both interpreting and translating, and these are set out in Figure 7.2. These levels and descriptions apply to all languages, including sign and Indigenous languages. NAATI accreditation may be obtained in three ways:

1. By passing a NAATI test; or
2. By successfully completing a course of studies at an Australian institution approved by NAATI; or
3. By providing evidence of specialised qualifications in translating and/or interpreting obtained from a recognised training institution outside Australia.

The NAATI accreditation system incorporates bilingual functioning in regular workplaces within a framework of professional interpreting and translating work in both service provision and conference level professional work. The Language Aides category entitles holders to a small salary supplement, called the Language Availability Performance Allowance, for public officials whose regular duties may from time to time require liaison work in their accredited language (*Translating, Interpreting and Communication Support Services Across the Public Sector in Scotland: A Literature Review*, The Scottish Executive, 2002).

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Figure 7.2:
NAATI Accreditation Standards

NAATI Accreditation Standards range from elementary to advanced, depending on the experience and qualifications of the individual:

Language Aide:

This is an elementary level of language use; it is appropriate for persons who are required to use a minimal knowledge of a language for the purpose of simple communications.

Paraprofessional Translator:

This represents a level of competence in translation for the purpose of producing a translated version of non-specialised information.

Paraprofessional Interpreter:

This represents a level of competence in interpreting for the purpose of general conversations, generally in the form of non-specialist dialogues.

Translator:

Translators work across a wide range of subjects and require a sound conceptual understanding of the material being translated. They are qualified to translate into one language only or into both languages, depending upon their accreditation.

Interpreter:

This represents the minimum level of competence for professional interpreting. It may be regarded as the Australian professional standard. Interpreters are capable of interpreting across a wide range of subjects involving dialogues at specialist consultations. They are also capable of interpreting presentations by the consecutive mode.

Advanced Translator:

Advanced Translators handle complex, technical and sophisticated material, compatible with recognised international standards. They may choose to specialise in certain areas, usually into one language only, that being their first language.

Conference Interpreter:

This represents the advanced professional level and a level of competence sufficient to handle complex, technical and sophisticated translation and interpreting.

Advanced Translator (Senior):

This is the highest level of NAATI accreditation and reflects both competence and experience. It represents an international standard together with demonstrated extensive experience and leadership.

Conference Interpreter (Senior):

This is the highest level of NAATI accreditation and reflects both competence and experience. It represents an international standard together with demonstrated extensive experience and leadership.

NAATI is also an advisory body for the translation and interpreting (T&I) industry in Australia providing advice and consultancy services on T&I standards, accreditation, role and conduct of translators and interpreters, and T&I skills in various settings.

The main functions of NAATI are to:

- Set and maintain the standards of translation and interpreting at four accreditation levels;
- Accredite translators and interpreters who meet the specified standards;
- Conduct translator and interpreter accreditation tests in various cities in Australia and New Zealand. It also provides similar tests for overseas candidates who are unable to sit for the tests in any Australian city;
- Approve T&I courses at tertiary institutions in Australia;
- Assess T&I qualifications obtained from overseas tertiary institutions;
- Provide advisory services relating to T & I service delivery; and
- Provide a Directory of Accredited and Recognised Translators and Interpreters available for work.

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7.2.4 | DIMIA Language Services Guidelines for Commonwealth Agencies

In 2002, the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) (now known as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship – DIAC) published a set of Language Services Guidelines to establish a nationally consistent approach aiming to ensure that Government services would be accessible to all peoples living in Australia.

While English is the national language of Australia, DIMIA estimated that almost one fifth of the total Australian population over five years old speaks languages other than English at home. Some Indigenous Australians speak an Indigenous language first, and may have difficulty speaking or communicating in English.

Key aspects of the Language Services Guidelines for Commonwealth Agencies are summarised in Figure 7.3.

Figure 7 3:
Language Services Guidelines for Commonwealth Agencies DIMIA, 2002

DIMIA indicates that Commonwealth Agencies should ensure that they identify and address any language issues relevant to their functions and to the type of services they provide. The Guidelines point out that:

Policy Advisers

ought to factor the need for consultations/interactions with potential clients who cannot read or speak English well into their planning;

Regulators

must devise communication strategies that reach all relevant people, and this would routinely require translated materials;

Purchasers

particularly where out-sourcing is involved, ought to assume that some language barriers will need to be addressed;

Service Providers

will almost always have customers who require help with communication in English;

Employers

have a responsibility to ensure that corporate policies address the needs of all staff.

The Guidelines are a “toolkit”, and provide a checklist against which policy/service provision can be measured; and concern:

- Steps in Achieving Effective Language Services;
- Developing Helpful Resources in the Agency;
- Supporting the Provision of Language Services in Funded Organisations;
- Use of Multi-lingual staff; and
- Effective use of workplace diversity.

Source: *Language Services Guidelines for Commonwealth Agencies DIMIA, 2002.*

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7.2.5 | A Delivery Organisation: Translation & Interpreting Services (TIS)

In 1960, the Australian Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMA), now known as the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), set up a Translation Section to deal with immigrant processing procedures, but it wasn't until much later that any attention was given to standards or professionalism. In 1973, the Department set up the Emergency Telephone Interpretation Service, which eventually grew to cover non-emergency situations, and today the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) has access to over 1,600 interpreters covering over 100 languages, and also offers face-to-face services where needed.

The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) operates nationally, is the Commonwealth government language service provider and is part of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC). The services offered by TIS include:

- Telephone interpreting;
- Pre-booked telephone interpreting and on-site interpreting (face-to-face interpreting);
- An automated telephone interpreter service (ATIS);
- A service suitable for clients with a high interpreter need, designed to allow English speaking clients to access an interpreter in 18 high demand languages without assistance from a TIS Contact Centre operator.

In States that do not have an explicit language policy or service provision per se (ACT and Tasmania), TIS is the primary provider of translating and interpreting services. It also operates where State and Territory services are in place but may be unable to meet particular demands such as interpreting in specific languages or outside standard work hours. The interpreting service is provided 24 hrs a day, 7 days a week. TIS is accessible from anywhere in Australia for the cost of a local call. It offers a priority line telephone number that gives doctors prompt telephone access to an interpreter. It also provides a referral service to Indigenous language interpreting services.

Through TIS, DIAC provides some fee-free interpreting services for settlement assistance and some free translating services for extract translations of personal documents for settlement purposes. These services are available for individuals who are permanent residents during their first two years in Australia. These services aim to reduce communication difficulties that may be a barrier to the settlement of migrants and humanitarian entrants in Australia or to their access to community services. Not-for-profit organisations can also apply for free services from TIS.

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7.3 | Review of Literature on Sweden

7.3.1 | Overview

Like Australia, historically the provision of interpreting and translation services in Sweden is linked to migration. The Swedish interpreter service started in the late 1960's when there was an influx of migrants to Sweden from other Nordic countries, and from Southern Europe. From the 1970's onwards, family-reunion immigration and increases in the numbers of refugee and asylum seekers led to increased demand for services. For a useful summary see Helge Niska (2004), *Community Interpreting in Sweden: A Short Presentation*.

State authorisation of community interpreters has been in existence since 1976, and in 1978 a law was established that any administrative branch of the government should provide interpreting for those who needed it. This led to the establishing of an organised profession with specific functions, accreditation systems and its own union.

Anybody who does not speak Swedish or who is severely impaired in speech and hearing enjoys a statutory right to an interpreter under the Code of Judicial Procedure (rättegångsbalken), the Administrative Court Procedure Act (förvaltningsprocesslagen) and the Administrative Procedure Act (förvaltningslagen). The first two laws deal with interpretation in a judicial context, and the Administrative Procedure Act regulates the way cases are handled by the administrative authorities.

Section 8 of the Administrative Procedure Act (1986:223) provides that a public authority should use an interpreter 'if necessary', when dealing with a person who does not speak Swedish. See for example, Niska (2004).

In the 1990's the Interpreter Service in Sweden was de-regulated. This led to a number of private service providers entering the market, and led to many municipal agencies being privatised, or closed down. According to Niska, the number of interpreter service agencies in Sweden today is about 60; the majority, 40, are run by towns and municipalities, and 20 are privately owned.

It is estimated that there are 5,000 community interpreters in Sweden, in over 100 working languages. To provide interpreters in an acute situation, an on-call service has been set up in the largest municipalities. There are also a number of agencies that offer remote interpreting by telephone or video. It is also estimated that every day, 3,000 hours of interpreting are provided, mainly in medical care and social welfare services. The yearly cost of interpreting amounts to over €45m, mainly financed by public funds.

7.3.2 | Training & Accreditation

The Institute for Interpreting and Translation Studies at Stockholm University is responsible for all interpreter training in Sweden, including community, conference and sign language interpreting. There are two types of interpreter training programmes, academic courses at Swedish universities, and vocational training courses at adult education centres and voluntary educational associations. Also the Institute regularly organises academic training at different universities in Sweden, mostly Stockholm, but the greater part of the training of community interpreters is in the form of short courses at adult education centres and voluntary educational associations.

Non-academic level courses for community interpreters and sign language interpreters are not organised directly by the Institute, but its task is to distribute government grants and to supervise and evaluate the training. The areas of instruction in community interpreter training are social welfare, medical services, labour market and legal interpreting. The basic training can then be supplemented with special courses and further education in, for example, psychology, dental care, or women's diseases.

Niska notes that the majority of those who train community interpreters are immigrants to Sweden. Their educational and professional backgrounds vary a lot, but few of them have had any specific

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interpreter training or professional experience in that field before coming to Sweden. The total number of community interpreter trainers is about 200.

State authorisation of community interpreters in Sweden started in 1976. The number of authorised interpreters was 215 in 1978; in 2003 the number had risen to 825. However the total number of interpreters is estimated to be about 5,000. Authorisation tests are arranged in 37 languages, and this test is for testing community interpreters, the test is not automatically relevant for other types of interpreting, e.g. testing conference interpreters – Niska (2004).

7.3.3 | Good Practice In Interpreting (God Tolksed)

In Sweden, the Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency publish the *God Tolksed (Good Interpreting Practice)*. Niska (2004) points out that these rules are similar to those for international conference interpreters: only accept a commission one is competent for; remain neutral and impartial; observe the obligation to secrecy; strive to maintain and develop one's ability as an interpreter and perform one's commissions conscientiously and accurately.

In addition, there are also a number of rules which apply to community interpreting and these are summarised below:

- The interpreter will inform the parties of what is and what is not included in their job, and how the interpreting will be managed;
- The interpreter will interpret everything;
- The interpreter will use short phrases/clauses and avoid difficult technical terms or professional jargon;
- The interpreter may not give explanations on his own initiative: if either of the parties does not understand words or expressions, that party should ask the other party, via the interpreter;
- The parties must talk to each other and not to the interpreter;
- The interpreting is to take place in the first person ('I'-form);
- The interpreter is neutral and must not be an advocate for either party;
- The interpreter may not assume or be asked to undertake any other function than to interpret;
- The interpreter may not assist by asking questions, acting as a representative or giving expert opinions. It is reported that often great pressure can be placed on the interpreter by both the immigrant and the Swedish representative, so this rule is of great help to the interpreter.

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7.4 | Cross-Country Literature – the Aequitas Project

7.4.1 | Overview

The Aequitas project, set up as a result of the EU Grotius I and II project, concerned the analysis of the provision of legal translators and interpreters in the EU. Four member-states participated in the project – the UK, Spain, Denmark and Belgium. The findings were published in 2001. It is important to note that this information was collected at the end of the 1990's and some new legislative provisions, or updates to the service provision in the individual countries may have come about since that time. Nevertheless, the Aequitas project report from 2001 is the most recent documentation to examine provision on cross-country basis.

7.4.2 | Belgium, the Aequitas Project on Legal Interpreting

Belgium has three official languages and four language regions (Brussels being bilingual). The Belgian Constitution states that in Belgium the use of language is free. The special 'language law' of 1935 has set the main principle 'territoriality' as to the language used by the courts. However, any citizen appearing before a court has the principle of freedom of choice of language.

A free interpreter must be made available at all stages in criminal proceedings (from first interrogation to appearance in court). In all interrogations during the preliminary investigations and the investigation itself, as well as before investigative and sentencing courts, the defendant has the right to use his or her language for all statements and depositions.

Since 1998 lawyers and clients can ask for an interpreter for three hours paid for by the state, in order to prepare their defence, in all legal aid cases and not only in criminal cases as was the case in the past. This legislation applies also in most cases concerning refugee and immigration rights. In Civil and Commerce Courts, the parties present in court can choose the language they prefer for questioning

or argument, even if it is not one of the national languages. If the judge decides on the need for an interpreter, expenses are to be paid by the parties.

Lists of 'sworn interpreters' are usually kept by the Courts of First Instance. At the time the information for the Aequitas project was collected, there was no national system of qualification or registration. There was no national register of all interpreters or translators, let alone legal translators or interpreters. The title of 'translator' or 'interpreter' is not a legally protected title, and at the time of the Aequitas project, the law in Belgium had yet to set "quality" requirements.

7.4.3 | Spain, the Aequitas Project on Legal Interpreting

The Spanish Constitution, the law regulating the judicial system, the code of criminal procedure and case law of the Constitutional Court, all have procedures for the provision of free interpreting in the different stages of proceedings for those facing criminal charges and who do not understand the language normally used in the judicial process. Also Spanish citizens themselves have the right to be assisted by an interpreter when they speak one of Spain's other official languages.

The Minister of Justice is responsible, according to the law, for the provision of interpreters and the translation of all documents needed at all relevant stages of the procedure. In principle the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for setting the standard of interpreting through its accreditation of the 'intérprete' or 'traductor jurado'. For staff interpreters in the courts, the Ministry of Justice sets two translation papers and a general knowledge paper on aspects of Spanish law. There is a National Association of Sworn Interpreters, with local branches, which is a semi-public association. It is not necessary to hold formal qualifications to be admitted as a member.

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7.4.4 | Denmark, the Aequitas Project on Legal Interpreting

The language used in the courtroom in Denmark is Danish. Section 149 of the Danish Administration of Justice Act which regulates the Appointment of Interpreters states: “The questioning of persons who do not master the Danish language must, as far as possible, take place with the assistance of an authorised interpreter. In civil cases, an interpreter need not be appointed, if none of the parties demands it and the court believes that it has sufficient knowledge of the foreign language”.

Consequently, the appointment of an interpreter is not always obligatory, but it is normally requested in criminal cases at all levels. Also the police normally call for an interpreter in interrogation situations. In criminal cases, the Danish court arranges and pays for interpreting services, as well as for the translation of documents submitted as evidence which the judge deems relevant to the case. In civil cases, the plaintiff or the defendant must bear these costs.

Citizens of the Nordic countries have specific rights with respect to interpreting and translation services. These rights are specified in subsections 3 and 4 of Section 149 and in the Nordic Language Convention (Den Nordiske Sprogkonvention, 1981).

Ethical issues are addressed both by a list of rules that accompanies a Proclamation (Kundgoerelse I, No. 11, January 12, 1994), which lays down the overall procedure for the recruitment of interpreters and the administration of their services, as well as by a set of *Instructions for Interpreters* (Instruks for Tolke, 1994). As stipulated in the Danish Administration of Justice Act, interpreters used in the courts should be authorised. The requirements for ‘authorisation’ are: Danish nationality, Danish residence, twenty-five years of age or older, one’s estate may not be under the care of legal guardians and passing the authorisation examination.

Training and examination takes place at the Danish Schools of Business (languages: English, Spanish,

French, German and Italian). The actual authorisation i.e. ‘State-Authorised Translator and Interpreter’, is awarded by the Danish Commerce and Companies Agency, which is part of the Ministry of Industry. For the other languages, the Danish police and the judicial system may have to use interpreters who are not authorised.

Authorised interpreters are automatically admitted on to the list whereas all other interpreters must pass an oral test assessing their knowledge of Danish before they are allowed on to the list. All interpreters are employed on a freelance basis only.

There are two separate pay scales for interpreters in Denmark, with the highest pay reserved for authorised interpreters as well as for those who possess a university degree in a foreign language or equivalent educational background; and a lower pay scale for all other interpreters who appear on the official list.

7.4.5 | UK, the Aequitas Project on Legal Interpreting

The Aequitas project report also provided information on legal interpreting in England, which related to the late 1990s. As part of this review we undertook a case study on interpreting and translation provision in England discussed in detail in Chapter 8. In particular Chapter 8 includes two detailed case studies: one on the Metropolitan Police Service, London, UK (Section 8.5) and a second on Her Majesty’s Courts Service, England and Wales (Section 8.6). This information is more up to date (and detailed) than the information in the Aequitas project so we do not repeat information from the Aequitas project report here and instead direct the reader to Chapter 8.

7. International Literature Review on Country Policies & Practices

7.5 | Summary of Key Chapter Findings

AUSTRALIA – Key Findings

- With regard to being an example of “best practice”, Australia has quite clearly defined policies and practices in place, through both the Federal, and State and Territorial governments, providing language services to individuals with little or no English language proficiency. The progress towards having such a comprehensive policy has been underway since the middle of the last century;
- Victoria has developed a framework for the provision of language services with a particular focus on enhanced access and continuing quality improvement through the provision of language services in the areas of: the supply and quality of interpreters, including in regional areas and emerging languages; client services through awareness training for government agency staff; data collection to enable reliable assessments of need; and funding and purchasing administration to improve the availability of interpreters;
- The Queensland Government Language Services Policy represents a whole-of-Government commitment to the development of communication strategies to inform eligible clients of services and their entitlements and how they can obtain them. These strategies include the engagement of professional interpreters in circumstances where clients have difficulties communicating in English;
- In New South Wales (NSW), the Language Services Division within the Community Relations Commission for a Multicultural NSW provides a wide range of interpreting and translating services in over 75 community languages. The main functions of the Language Services Division are: to act as the principal provider of interpreting for State Government agencies, health interpreting services, and legal interpreting services in NSW, providing services to Courts, Legal Aid, Community Legal Centres, Director of Public Prosecutions and Legal Practitioners; and to provide on-site interpreting services to private organisations and individuals, including personal documents, transcription of tapes, technical and complex materials and multilingual documents;
- The Western Australian Government Language Services Policy requires Government agencies to develop policies, programs and services that are equally accessible to all Western Australians and to implement strategies that are responsive to their diverse clientele, including people who require assistance in English in the Indigenous community and people with impaired hearing. The Office of Multicultural Interests provides advice to both the government and non-government sectors on issues relating to this policy. The Language Services Policy is a resource for Government agencies, introducing strategies for more effective communication with clients;
- Training and accreditation for Translation and Interpreting professionals in Australia is set by NAATI (the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters Ltd.). NAATI accreditation is the only credential officially accepted for the profession of translation and interpreting in Australia. All Government translation and interpreting services require translators and interpreters to be NAATI accredited whenever possible;
- The Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) operates nationally, is the Commonwealth Government language service provider and is part of Department of Immigration and Citizenship. The services offered by TIS include: Telephone interpreting; Pre-booked telephone interpreting and on-site interpreting (face-to-face interpreting); An automated telephone interpreter service (ATIS); and a service suitable for clients with a high interpreter need, designed to allow English speaking clients to access an interpreter in 18 high demand languages without assistance from a TIS Contact Centre operator.

7. International Literature Review on Country Policies & Practices

SWEDEN – Key Findings

- The Swedish interpreter service started in the late 1960's when there was an influx of migrants and State authorisation of community interpreters has been in existence since 1976. In 1978 a law was established that any administrative branch of the Government should provide interpreting for those who needed it, leading to the establishment of an organised profession with specific functions and accreditation systems;

- In the 1990's the Interpreter Service in Sweden was de-regulated leading to a number of private service providers entering the market, and to many municipal agencies being privatised, or closed down. The number of interpreter service agencies in Sweden is about 60; the majority, 40, are run by towns and municipalities, and 20 are privately owned;

- It is estimated that there are 5,000 community interpreters in Sweden, in over 100 working languages. To provide interpreters in an acute situation, an on-call service has been set up in the largest municipalities. There are also a number of agencies that offer remote interpreting by telephone or video. It is also estimated that every day, 3,000 hours of interpreting are provided, mainly in medical care and social welfare services. The yearly cost of interpreting amounts to over €45m, mainly financed by public funds;

- The Institute for Interpreting and Translation Studies at Stockholm University is responsible for all interpreter training, including community, conference and sign language, in Sweden. There are two types of interpreter training programmes, academic courses at Swedish universities, and vocational training courses at adult education centres and voluntary educational associations. Also the Institute regularly organises academic training at different universities in Sweden, mostly Stockholm, but the greater part of the training of community interpreters is in the form of short courses at adult education centres and voluntary educational associations. Non-academic level courses are not organised directly by the Institute, but its task is to distribute government grants and to supervise and evaluate the training;

- Authorisation tests for community interpreters are arranged in 37 languages, the test is not automatically relevant for other types of interpreting, e.g. conference interpreting;

- The Legal, Financial and Administrative Services Agency publish the *God Tolksed (Good Interpreting Practice)*. These rules are similar to those for international conference interpreters: only accept a commission one is competent for; remain neutral and impartial; observe the obligation to secrecy; strive to maintain and develop one's ability as an interpreter and perform one's commissions conscientiously and accurately.

7. International Literature Review on Country Policies & Practices

CROSS-COUNTRY LITERATURE – the Aequitas Project on Legal Interpreting

- **The Aequitas project:** this project concerned the analysis of the provision of legal translators and interpreters in the EU, four member-states participated in the project – the UK, Spain, Denmark and Belgium - and the findings were published in 2001;

- **Language Rights:** Across all four countries defendants have the right to use their own language in criminal proceedings;

- **Costs:** In both Belgium and Denmark the costs of interpreting are borne by the state in criminal cases but by the plaintiff or defendant in civil cases. Information was not provided on this for UK nor Spain.

- **Lists of Interpreters:** England and Spain have national associations or national registers but Belgium and Denmark did not;

- **Quality Control:** quality control was generally not very sophisticated.



8. Case Study 1: Provision in England

8. Case Study 1: Provision in England¹²

8.1 | Chapter Introduction

This chapter presents a case study on the provision of interpreting and translation services in England. Section 8.2 provides a brief description of the methodology used to produce this case study. Section 8.3 describes the legislative and policy context in England. Section 8.4 provides a summary of national agreements, instruments and standards relevant to supporting the provision of interpreting and translation to public services. Two delivery models are then examined in more detail, first the Metropolitan Police Service, London, UK (Section 8.5) and second Her Majesty's Courts Service, England and Wales (Section 8.6). Finally, Section 8.7 summarises the key chapter findings.

¹²This Chapter was produced by CILT, the National Centre for Languages.

8. Case Study 1: Provision in England

8.2 | Methodology

CILT, the UK's National Centre for Languages, identified key individuals involved in developing policy and practice in the provision of interpreting and translation. In collaboration with the project team, CILT developed a detailed set of questions, covering the following aspects: policy framework; nature of services made available; arrangements made by translation and interpreting service providers; practical and financial considerations; management; and good practice. This interview schedule was used as standard in each set of interviews conducted.

Telephone interviews were conducted in the first instance with key policy contacts. All respondents were assured of anonymity, as agreed with the project team, to encourage frank disclosure of facts and opinions. In all cases, it was necessary for CILT to conduct further interviews with contributors introduced by these policy contacts, to ensure that the interview template was completed fully and a comprehensive picture of services formed. These additional contributors included staff working day-to-day with language professionals and representatives of the languages professions.

Contributors supplied relevant supporting documentation as necessary. Following the interviews and review of the documentation, CILT drafted the case studies and sent these to each interviewee for confirmation of accuracy.

Please see Appendix B for a list of people and documents consulted.

8.3 | Legislative & Policy Context

In England a number of pieces of legislation require police forces and the courts service¹³ to provide interpreting to non-English speakers and deaf service-users. These are summarised below.

The Human Rights Act 1998

The Human Rights Act 1998 incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 (ECHR) into English law. The rights to liberty and security, and to a fair trial, are fundamental human rights protected by the ECHR. They include the right to interpretation where needed, both during trials and at point of arrest. European Court of Human Rights case law has reinforced ECHR requirements, in particular clarifying requirements around provision of written translation and of interpreting both during hearings and in pre-trial proceedings. More detailed summaries of international requirements can be found on the website dedicated to three projects on Access to Justice across language and culture in the European Union (www.legalintrans.info/).

The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000

The Race Relations Amendment Act 2000 makes it unlawful for a public authority to discriminate against a person on 'race' grounds in carrying out any of its functions.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995

Section 21.4 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 requires public authorities to take "reasonable steps" to provide "an auxiliary aid or service (for example, the provision of... a sign language interpreter)" where this provision would enable disabled persons to make use of a public service or facilitate their use of the service.

¹³ Some of the legislation also applies to other service providers, however, police and courts are the focus of this case study.

8. Case Study 1: Provision in England

The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999

The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 contains special measures for vulnerable individuals, including those who have a physical disability. These include the video-recording of interviews (sections 27 and 28) and use of an “intermediary” (defined as “an interpreter or other person approved by the court. . .”) in examinations of witnesses (section 29). It is noted that this loose definition creates confusion over roles and the entitlements of Deaf individuals under the Act. The right to an interpreter is undisputed and is guaranteed by the legislation already described; the entitlement to an advocate or other type of “intermediary” is, however, a different issue.¹⁴

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984

The Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 and the accompanying Codes of Practice (see below) constitute a key driver for the Metropolitan Police Service interpreting arrangements (examined in detail later in this Chapter). These provide the core framework of police powers and safeguards around stop and search, arrest, detention, investigation, identification and interviewing detainees.

In terms of provision of translation, most requirements are around “letters of request” to police forces in European countries. These are letters from one police force to another requesting assistance in the investigation of crime. These are described in the European Convention on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters 1959 and the Council of European Convention on Laundering, Search, Seizure and Confiscation of the Proceeds of Crime 1990. Such letters of request should always be translated into the language of the country being asked for assistance.

Of particular relevance to Chapter and in particular case study delivery model 1 is the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) Codes of Practice, which set out to a limited extent the ways in which services should be provided. Code C (revised July 2006),

paragraph 13.1 states that:

Chief officers are responsible for making sure appropriate arrangements are in place for provision of suitably qualified interpreters for people who:

- *are deaf;*
- *do not understand English.*

Paragraph 13.4 (a recent addition) states that the interpreter should record the statement then provide a translation into English. The PACE Codes also include provision for those who do not have reading skills to have the statement read back to them in the language in which it is written.

The Home Office (HO) conducts a rolling review of PACE to ensure it is fit for purpose, through regular public consultations and a permanent feedback mechanism on the HO website. *Revised Codes of Practice* are published every 12–24 months.

¹⁴The professional interpreter is impartial. While s/he promotes effective communication and clarifies language and cultural misunderstandings where appropriate, s/he does not act as an advocate for clients. *National Occupational Standards in Interpreting* (revised 2007), ©CILT, the National Centre for Languages.

8. Case Study 1: Provision in England

8.4 | National Agreements, Instruments & Standards

Overview

Much work has been done in England to enhance the professionalism and status of language professionals, and to improve the understanding of clients and end-users. A number of professional bodies exist, which share similar (though not identical) membership criteria, ethical codes/codes of conduct, etc. Qualifications and training provision are gradually being aligned through the development of National Occupational Standards in almost all sectors of UK employment, including interpreting and translation. Moreover, work is underway to develop a “Chartered Linguist” status for various categories of professional linguist.

Interpreting and translation are still, however, essentially unregulated in England and it is a fragmented field. There is considerable lack of clarity amongst commissioners of language services as to what skills, qualifications or experience they should demand of the provider. The Higher Education sector, where much of the training of interpreters and translators takes place, is subject to separate regulatory arrangements from other provision for those of 16 years of age and upwards. Each Higher Education Institution is autonomous and operates differently; whether they choose to take account of National Occupational Standards is at their discretion.

Yet in the absence of clear and detailed statutory requirements, much progress has been made on setting benchmarks and defining good practice for public service interpreting (and, to a lesser extent, translation) and the field is constantly developing.

These developments are discussed as follows:

- The National Agreement for Criminal Justice Investigations and Proceedings (Section 8.4.2);
- National Register of Public Service Interpreters (Section 8.4.3);
- Education and Training (Section 8.4.4);
- Accreditation and National Occupational Standards (Section 8.4.5).

The National Agreement for Criminal Justice Investigations and Proceedings

A National Agreement has been in place in England and Wales since 1997. The current document *National Agreement on Arrangements for the Use of Interpreters, Translators and Language Service Professionals in Investigations and Proceedings within the Criminal Justice System*, revised in 2007, was produced by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform (OCJR), the cross-departmental team that supports all criminal justice agencies in England, working with key bodies including Her Majesty’s Courts Service and the Crown Prosecution Service. It sets out detailed guidance on the use of interpreters and, to a lesser extent, translators and language service professionals in criminal justice investigations and proceedings. Compared to older documents, it clarifies certain issues, for example, acceptable sources of interpreters; and gives new guidance on others. It refers to new standardised fees and terms and conditions for face-to-face spoken language services, which the National Criminal Justice Board has recommended should be adopted by all criminal justice agencies.

The weighting of the Agreement towards arrangements concerning face-to-face interpreting reflects the preoccupation in the criminal justice system to date; translation has, in comparison, not received as much focus, as it appears to be an issue for fewer criminal justice system agencies.

The National Agreement has no legal status but appears to be widely recognised in the sector. Those interviewed felt that the provisions currently in place were reasonably effective. But there were concerns about the lack of reference in legislation to interpreter competence, qualifications or experience. It is however recognised that meeting ever-changing demand while ensuring quality is a challenge and that new legislation may not be the answer.

A number of stakeholders consulted felt that the National Agreement could in fact be made mandatory, as there is sufficient flexibility built into the document to allow pragmatic decisions to be made, for example in the case of a shortage of registered interpreters.

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National Register of Public Service Interpreters

A National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) was established in 1994, following recommendations made by a Royal Commission on Criminal Justice led by Viscount Runciman. The Register is maintained by NRPSI Ltd, a not for profit subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Linguists, the UK's largest professional body for linguists.

The NRPSI aims to provide public service organisations with access to a bank of appropriately qualified and experienced interpreters, capable of working in public service contexts such as health, local government and the legal sector. Organisations pay an annual subscription fee and obtain access to interpreters' details via an online database. Interpreters are listed and selected according to criteria including location, language combination and specialism.

Successful applicant interpreters are granted a status type dependent on their qualifications and experience; they are required to upgrade to full status within certain timescales. Interpreters must renew their registration annually (this involves proving that at least ten hours' public service interpreting work has been carried out, in the domain of specialism, within the last 12 months). An annual registration fee is payable. Registered interpreters must comply with a Code of Conduct and are subject to disciplinary procedures if this is breached.

Almost 2,000 public service interpreters, covering 100 languages, are currently included on the NRPSI. The various categories of interpreter status (including "rare language") aim to reflect the reality of ever-increasing demand, while also aiming to encourage structured progression. Anecdotal evidence suggests that demand often far outstrips supply in English regions outside the capital. (The National Agreement, in fact, sets out alternative sources of interpreters, though it emphasises that these are only to be used if NRPSI possibilities have been exhausted.)

It should be emphasised that use of the NRPSI by public bodies, even within the criminal justice system, is not mandatory; the National Agreement (which recommends the use of the NRPSI) is recommended good practice, to which the majority of criminal justice system agencies have voluntarily committed.

This has obvious consequences. Interpreters do not need to register in order to secure work, so the pool of registered professionals is not as large as it might be and, in the face of short supply, public service providers find other ways of "getting by" when dealing with a non-English speaker.

Nevertheless, use of the Register seems to be increasing and NRPSI Ltd plans a range of improvements, including expansion of the number, geographical spread and linguistic range of registered interpreters, formal continuing professional development mechanisms and a support network for public bodies.

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8.4.4 | Education & Training

Much of the professional training in interpreting and translation is provided by the Higher Education sector, where there is considerable diversity in the nature and scope of training offered. The Chartered Institute of Linguists' Educational Trust (IoLET) awards a Diploma in Translation (DipTrans) and Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI), which are the most significant alternatives to university Masters qualifications. The DipTrans is a postgraduate-level qualification regarded by many as the “gold standard” in translation awards. The honours degree-level DPSI was created specifically to meet the need for interpreters able to work competently in a range of public service contexts. Candidates choose from a number of specialist options including healthcare and law.

The Langlands report published in 2005 highlighted this diversity and the lack of “work-readiness” displayed by many graduates. In response to this, two major projects have been launched – ‘Gateways into Languages’ and ‘Routes into Languages’ – whose objectives include the collaboration of industry, education and professional bodies to encourage entry to the language professions and increase the quality, consistency and relevance of training provision. For further information on either project see www.cilt.org.uk/research/projects/education/gateways/ and www.routesintolanguages.ac.uk.

8.4.5 | Accreditation & National Occupational Standards

In order to be accredited by the relevant authorities, work-related qualifications in the UK must now have the endorsement of the sector for which they have been developed and should be linked to the relevant National Occupational Standards (NOS). NOS define competence in a particular job role or function and are developed by industry-led Sector Skills Councils or Standards Setting Bodies. This is the overarching structure for all skills development in the UK. For further information see www.ukstandards.org.uk.

CILT, the National Centre for Languages is the UK's Standards Setting Body for languages and has since the 1990s developed and maintained NOS in languages for the workplace, interpreting and translation¹⁵. Created in collaboration with professional bodies, practitioners and end-users, the NOS provide up-to-date definitions of competent performance, and the skills and knowledge needed, as well as accompanying information on the role of the interpreter/translator and principles of professional practice. There are 15 Standards, each filling at least 2 pages. For further information, or to download the NOS, go to www.cilt.org.uk/standards/interpreting.htm.

It is worth noting that, although Lord Justice Auld in 2001 recommended the central funding of courses for interpreters, in particular in the DPSI, this recommendation was not taken up. Individuals are frequently obliged to pay for courses and examinations themselves and the expense is undoubtedly a deterrent for some would-be interpreters.

Testing of language service providers began in the Metropolitan Police Service in the early 1980s; this evolved into the Metropolitan Police Test, which has existed in its current format since 1997. Developed to meet the specific requirements of interpreting work for the Metropolitan Police, the Metropolitan Police Test is regarded for purposes of registration on the NRPSI as equivalent to the DPSI.

¹⁵The National Language Standards (revised 2005), NOS in Interpreting (revised 2006) and NOS in Translation (revised 2007) can be downloaded from www.cilt.org.uk/standards/index.htm.

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8.5 | Model 1: Metropolitan Police Service, London, UK

8.5.1 | Overview

The Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) is responsible for all aspects of police operations in 32 London boroughs plus Heathrow airport. This case study describes language support for officers working in communities and in police stations as well as that required in support of general and specific investigations, evidence gathering etc.

Language Services, a branch of the MPS, manages the Official List of interpreters and translators. The team of five full-time staff is responsible for vetting and registering applicants and for organising any necessary training of successful applicants. They also produce and disseminate policies and procedures both for language professionals and MPS personnel.

Provision of Services

Interpreting

The MPS has produced detailed guidance for staff on working with interpreters. This document is currently being revised and a new version will be published shortly. According to staff interviewed, both in MPS Head Office and a London police station, the guidance is widely understood and followed.

In each instance involving a non-English speaker, the officer in charge is responsible for deciding whether or not an interpreter is called in and for making arrangements. Straightforward front office queries (for example directions, lost property) might be dealt with by officers with requisite language skills, or using telephone interpreting. In the great majority of cases where there is a suspicion or allegation of criminality, however, face-to-face interpreting should be provided for any non-English speaking detainees, suspects or witnesses.

Telephone interpreting is used as a back-up, for example in time-critical procedures such as booking in, risk assessment of detainees (to identify appropriate level of monitoring), drink and drugs driving procedures etc. It is also used to assist individuals in making telephone contact with the police on emergency or non-emergency numbers.

Where telephone interpreting is used, the first preference is to commission an interpreter from the MPS List or NRPSI. Officers have access to interpreters' details via a central MPS Official List and make contact directly. The MPS Official List is available electronically 24 hours a day and includes the days/times when interpreters are available for work. If officers are unable to commission an interpreter with the right language combination from the MPS Official List, they consult the NRPSI.

If an interpreter still cannot be found, officers contact other public service partners (for example Immigration Services) who maintain their own lists and with whom the MPS has a mutual agreement. Some units have contractual arrangements with a telephone

8. Case Study 1: Provision in England

interpreting agency and this is used where an interpreter from the List/Register cannot be identified.

Interpreting is normally consecutive although, where serious offences are concerned (for example involving children or rape) a procedure called “achieving best evidence” may be used, where an individual is asked to relay an event in free recall mode. In this instance interpreting is likely to be simultaneous (whispered). Interpreters are also used to record and translate written statements. They may be asked to do immediate “sight translations” of straightforward, non-complex documents or to give the gist of a written document so that the officer can assess whether or not it is relevant to the case.

The form submitted to the court following the investigation and in advance of the trial contains information about any interpreters/translators used in the investigation so that the court may ensure different individuals are appointed at trial.

In practice, however, it appears that this principle is not rigorously followed. One police officer commented that there was no need for different interpreters to be appointed for investigation and trial, as it would be against the interpreters’ code of conduct to be influenced by anything they had heard during the investigation. Practising interpreters, on the other hand, point out that, where languages are concerned, the situation is much more complex than this: the risk is not of deliberate interference by the interpreter but of subtle differences in choice of words, based on prior knowledge or assumption, which may influence proceedings.

Translation

Some materials are available in pre-translated format. The Rights and Entitlements of detainees, for example, are downloadable from the Home Office website in 48 languages and in some stations available as sound files.

The MPS in its guidance on working with interpreters is careful to emphasise the difference between translation and interpreting and urges officers to

forward documents to the central Language Services team where all but straightforward sight¹⁶ or gist translations¹⁷, or statements, are concerned. There is still some confusion between the two disciplines, however, and the guidance is being reworked to give even greater clarity.

Documents sent to Language Services for translation include appeal posters, letters of request, documents from abroad and any other materials relating to investigations. Most of these are submitted to one of the freelance translators on the MPS List for full translation. Where appropriate translators cannot be identified, the MPS has in place an agreement with several government agencies which host in-house translation services.

In addition, Language Services are visited weekly by a translator who covers a wide range of languages, who scans and gives gist translations of ad hoc documents, pieces of correspondence etc. Whenever there is a request for translation of a standard leaflet, Language Services check their records of translated documents to ascertain whether or not the material has already been translated in any of the 32 London boroughs, plus Heathrow, for which they are responsible. The translation service is offered during office hours only; officers may use interpreters to translate outside these hours, but only in extremis.

Texts of 250 words or under are generally translated and returned within one working day. The turn-around period for longer or complex texts varies, but in negotiating deadlines with officers Language Services estimate an average of 2,000 words per day.

Language Services provide briefing on each assignment and pass the officer’s details to the translator so that s/he may make direct contact to clear up any areas of confusion.

¹⁶ ‘Sight Translation’ is the production of an oral/signed version of a written document.

¹⁷ ‘Gist Translation’ usually refers to a basic sight translation, where the interpreter conveys only the ‘gist’ of the main idea of the document.

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8.5.2 | Nature & Volume of Provision

Interpreting

In the year April 2006 to March 2007, spoken language interpreter bookings totalled 37,603¹⁸, involving 100 languages. The most commonly requested languages were Polish, Arabic, Turkish, Russian, Bengali, Mandarin, French, Punjabi, Portuguese and Tamil. These languages have consistently formed the top ten over recent years, though the order of popularity varies from year to year.

Bookings have increased by an average 5% per annum over the last nine years, although there was a particularly steep rise in 2004-5 due to the expansion of the European Union. Generally, there has been a steady increase in demand for the languages of EU accession states, with Polish being the most commonly requested language over the last three years.

The percentage of bookings handled by interpreters from the MPS Official List (398 spoken language interpreters in all) or the NRPSI is monitored on a monthly basis, though the data have been routinely collected only for a relatively short time. Since August 2006, an average of 98% of completed assignments have been undertaken by interpreters who are either on the MPS Official List and/or the NRPSI. Statistics are, however, based on payment claims made and there is currently no system for recording unfulfilled demand, i.e. situations in which an interpreter cannot be found.

There are, however, some clear problem areas. There are no Danish, Finnish or Twi interpreters registered on either list. The lack of Twi interpreters, in particular, creates regular difficulties. The precise extent to which shortages of interpreters influence police work is, however, unknown.

The experience of the public service provider interviewed was that an interpreter could “always” be found, but that it was sometimes necessary to wait. He noted that Polish/English interpreting was a particular issue, with only 14 of these interpreters on the MPS Official List. Telephone interpreting

was regarded as a last resort – to be used only in non-criminal cases – and, it was claimed, police forces in some boroughs were reluctant to use this service due to the cost.

Translation

From April 2006 to March 2007, a total of 1,406 translation assignments were completed, involving 56 languages. As most of these were linked to cross-border crime, the most commonly requested languages were Spanish, French, German, Dutch, Polish, Arabic, Italian, Turkish, Mandarin and Lithuanian. Although only 52 translators appear on the Official List, 95 individuals were commissioned in this period, meaning that only 55% of translators were sourced via the Official List.

8.5.3 | Management Arrangements

To be included on the MPS Official List, interpreters must meet recruitment criteria which are broadly consistent with the National Occupational Standards (NOS) in Interpreting; must have passed the Metropolitan Police Test; and must be registered on the NRPSI. They must also submit to enhanced levels of security clearance, compared with other NRPSI applicants: counter-terrorism clearance is demanded for both interpreters and translators.

NRPSI Ltd, who maintains the register, is currently lobbying to be allowed to demand higher levels of clearance. But so far have been prevented from doing so by the Criminal Records Bureau, who query the need for this type of information.

Procedures for admitting translators to the MPS list are rather less formal but include scrutiny of qualifications, experience and references. Government agencies co-operate regularly on this and the preference is to list translators who are already “tried and tested”. The MPS acknowledges, however, that systems are in need of improvement. A review being launched in late 2007 will establish minimum

¹⁸The figures relating to numbers of interpreting assignments relate to claims paid in any given year and therefore may not be an entirely accurate reflection of number of assignments actually undertaken.

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standards for the commissioning of translators, drawing on the newly revised NOS in Translation.

On being accepted onto the MPS Official List, interpreters are given an induction to MPS work. Due to their geographical spread across the UK, translators are not offered a physical induction but are kept informed by regular newsletters. Training on issues such as human trafficking is arranged on an ad hoc basis and both interpreters and translators are invited to attend briefings on IT and data security. A DVD may in future be produced for those who are geographically remote.

The application process and, in the case of interpreters, the obligation to re-register annually on the NRPSI, are currently the main form of quality control of interpreting and translation provision; a formal mechanism would prove difficult to implement without overburdening already stretched police officers. Serious complaints are referred to Language Services, a branch of the MPS, where they are dealt with according to set criteria, which may include direction either through the NRPSI (or one of the professional associations), disciplinary procedures or, in the case of translation, by the use of an Independent Assessor (for example, from the Chartered Institute of Linguists). There appear to have been few such problems to date; most complaints received by Language Services concern logistical issues: availability of/access to interpreters, punctuality, waiting times, etc. Ultimate sanctions would be for the MPS to decline to work with an individual in the future.

Two consultative groups, composed of relevant stakeholders and representatives of sign and spoken language interpreting, meet on a quarterly basis to advise Language Services on developments.

8.5.4 | Funding & Costs

Overview

Interpreting and translation provision is funded from budgets held locally by Boroughs and HQ units, which are allocated according to a set formula. As with all MPS activity, funding comes from a Home Office grant plus a proportion of the locally gathered council tax.

Interpreting

In the financial year April 2006 to March 2007, £8.9 million was spent on interpreting (NB this does not include telephone interpreting using the agency, which is contracted and paid for locally). The average cost per assignment was £237.88.

Hourly rates vary according to the day and time of the assignment. On a Monday to Friday during the hours 08:00 to 20:00 the rate per hour is £34.26. On a Monday to Friday during the hours 20:00 to 08:00 and all day Saturday that rate is £51.39 per hour, and on Sundays and bank holidays the rate is £68.52. The same rate is paid irrespective of language. Travel time is paid at 80% of the relevant rate and waiting time is paid as for interpreting. Travel expenses are reimbursed on production of receipts. A full breakdown of rates is presented below. The rates paid to the telephone interpreting agency are commercially sensitive therefore unavailable.

Translation

In relation to translation, data for the same period (April 2006 to March 2007) shows a total of £681,000 was spent on translation, giving an average unit cost of £484.47.

A complex system of fees is in place, according to the language involved, level of complexity of the text and urgency of the assignment. A sample of the translation rates that apply for translation from English per 1,000 words is presented below.

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Table 8.1: Interpreting Rates

Hours	Day 0800–2000	Night/Saturday 0800–2000	Sunday/Bank Hol 24 Hours
0.5	£17.13	£25.70	£34.26
1.0	£34.26	£51.39	£68.52
2.00	£68.52	£102.78	£137.04
3.00	£102.78	£154.17	£205.56
4.00	£137.04	£205.56	£274.08
5.00	£171.30	£256.95	£342.60
6.00	£205.56	£308.34	£411.12
7.00	£239.82	£359.73	£479.64
8.00	£274.08	£411.12	£548.16
9.00	£308.34	£462.51	£616.68
10.00	£342.60	£513.90	£685.20
MINIMUM*	£68.52	£102.78	£137.04

Source: Metropolitan Police Service Language Services

Table 8.2: Translation Rates per 1,000 Words

Category	A1	A2 £	B1 £	B2 £	C1 £	C2 £	D £
Basic	46.00	51.50	58.00	63.50	74.50	112.00	112.00
Technical	73.50	81.00	89.00	95.00	113.50	165.50	167.50

A1: French Spanish, Italian; A2: Portuguese, Welsh, German, Dutch, Afrikaans, Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Flemish; B1: Russian, Polish, Romanian; B2: Slavonic Languages other than those in groups B1; C1: All Lanaguages not falling within A1, A2, B1, B2, C2 & D; C2: Arabic, Farsi; D: Chinese Languages, Japanese, Korean.

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8.6 | Model 2:

Her Majesty's Courts Service, England and Wales

8.6.1 | Overview

This case study deals with interpreting provision in criminal courts in England and Wales. This includes provision in approximately 79 Crown Courts and for criminal cases in around 350 magistrates' courts. Courts are grouped in 24 areas (including two in London) across seven regions of England and Wales.

Operational issues are handled locally/regionally, but the central Crime and Enforcement Directorate of Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) has policy responsibility for the day-to-day running of criminal courts, including provision of interpreting services. This has involved the introduction and maintenance of systems for encouraging best practice in the use of interpreters.

HMCS has produced a guide, *Interpreters and Language Service Professionals in the Criminal Courts: A Good Practice Guide*, for court staff, working in the criminal courts.¹⁹ This provides clear and detailed guidance, including: how and when interpreters should be appointed, and by whom; contracting and payment arrangements; identity checking and security clearance; and how interpreters should be treated on their arrival for assignments (for example having a separate waiting area, to avoid impartiality being compromised, etc); how interpreters should be briefed; and other aspects.

The Guide directs staff to two further documents – the *National Agreement* (discussed earlier in Section 8.5) and the *Terms and Conditions for the Provision of Face-to-Face Interpretation Services*. Some public sector organisations with direct or indirect relationships with the Home Office have introduced standardised terms and conditions for service providers. HMCS uses the standard *Terms and Conditions for Individuals Providing Face-to-Face Interpreting Services*.²⁰ These set out, among other things:

- Rates of pay for the attendance of the interpreter at court;

- Rates of pay for the interpreter's travel time to and from court;
- Provisions for cancellation of the booking by either the interpreter or the court;
- The ethical and professional conduct required of the interpreter while at court.

These documents are reportedly understood and followed by the majority of staff and awareness continues to increase, particularly following the launch of the revised National Agreement.

8.6.2 | Provision of Services

Appointing Interpreters

Depending on the timing of the hearing, the responsibility for arranging an interpreter falls either to the police/prosecuting agency or to the court, usually to administrative staff who arrange court lists. This is detailed in the HMCS guide, *Interpreters and Language Service Professionals in the Criminal Courts: A Good Practice Guide* for court staff working in the criminal courts discussed earlier in Section 8.6.1.

All courts have access via intranet and a dedicated password to the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) discussed in Section 8.4.3. Where possible, courts appoint interpreters who are geographically close, to minimise travel costs. Where it proves impossible to identify an interpreter with the right language combination from the NRPSI, staff will follow the steps outlined in the National Agreement. Where these also fail, staff may approach the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal Service²¹, which employs a central team to handle interpreter requests and maintains its own list.

Some courts have informal agreements with interpreting agencies and may use these in the event that an interpreter cannot be found through any of the recommended channels. It is the court's responsibility

¹⁹ Available at <http://deposits.parliament.uk/>.

²⁰ Available at [www.hmcs-service.gov.uk/docs/infoabout/interpreters/Interpreters-Standardised-FTFI-Terms-Conditions-\(CJS\).pdf](http://www.hmcs-service.gov.uk/docs/infoabout/interpreters/Interpreters-Standardised-FTFI-Terms-Conditions-(CJS).pdf).

²¹ The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) is a tribunal which hears appeals against decisions made by the Home Secretary and his officials in asylum, immigration and nationality matters. The Asylum and Immigration Tribunal is part of the Tribunals Service, a service delivery group within the Ministry of Justice.

8. Case Study 1: Provision in England

to demand that the agency supply an interpreter with the requisite qualifications and background. The NRPSI appears to be widely used by individual courts and adherence to the recommendations set out in the National Agreement is reported to be “improving all the time”. On the other hand, shortages of interpreters is reported to an issue, particularly in rural areas, and failure to appoint an interpreter from an approved source does not necessarily result in adjournment of the case.

The *HMCS Good Practice Guide* stipulates that the court should not appoint any interpreter used by police during investigations unless absolutely necessary (in which case, all parties must be made aware and agree to the appointment). Practising interpreters point out that use of the same interpreter opens up risks, not of deliberate interference by the interpreter, but of subtle differences in choice of words, based on prior knowledge or assumption, which may influence proceedings.

It is reported that the above good practice guidance is generally followed. But despite guidance to the contrary, ID cards are not regularly checked by court staff when interpreters arrive for assignments. This is a matter of concern.

Delivery of Interpreting

Face-to-face interpreting is used exclusively in courts. In the case of speeding offences, where a summons is issued automatically and there is no advance personal contact to establish language needs, telephone interpreting might be used to rearrange the hearing. Where examination of witnesses or defendants is concerned, interpreting in courts is consecutive. All Crown Court proceedings, conducted in open court, are audio recorded. Video-recording is not used routinely. When a non-English speaking defendant is in the dock for sentencing, the interpreter will generally sit beside him/her and give a whispered, simultaneous interpretation. This is not recorded.

Where the defendant is not required to attend court and is being held in custody, it is common practice for the interpreter to travel to the prison where the defendant is being held and for the court to communicate by video link. This may also be used in the case of witness interviews.

The NRPSI and National Agreement are relied upon to ensure that those appointed are competent to interpret in courts. Where there are concerns over the performance of an interpreter, these are raised with the judge or magistrate who may decide to replace the interpreter. The complaint may be referred to the NRPSI for investigation. Ongoing systematic monitoring of the quality of interpreting by public service providers is not regarded as feasible.

8.6.3 | Nature & Volume of Provision

Data on the number of assignments, languages involved and interpreters appointed are not routinely recorded. A steady increase in demand for Eastern European languages has been noted though this cannot be quantified (unlike the case of the MPS – as seen in Section 8.5.3). No information is available on the percentage of interpreters used in court assignments who are NRPSI registered.

8.6.4 | Funding & Costs

An estimated £25m is spent by HMCS per annum on interpreting. Of this, approximately £18-19m is spent in magistrates’ courts; £750k in the county courts (not included in this case study as they do not deal with criminal cases); and the remainder in the Crown Court. The costs of interpreting provision are met from “Central Funds” – i.e. paid by the Treasury.

Budgets are not set in advance as the demand for interpreting is believed to be unpredictable. Courts are however under the same obligations as any public sector body to make best use of tax payers’ money by, for example, appointing interpreters whose travel expenses will not be high.

Some public sector organisations with direct or indirect relationships with the Home Office have introduced standardised terms and conditions for service providers. HMCS uses the standard *Terms and Conditions for Individuals Providing Face-to-Face Interpreting Services*, which outlines minimum daily payments. These set out all details of costs payable to interpreters, including travel time and cancellation fees.

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8.7 | Summary of Key Chapter Findings

OVERALL POLICY AND SECTOR WIDE FACTORS –

Key Findings

- While England has a number of number of pieces of domestic legislation and statutory instruments relevant to the provision of interpreting and translation services, specific requirements are particularly detailed under The Human Rights Act 1998 which incorporates the European Convention on Human Rights of 1950 (ECHR) into English law. From a legislative perspective England is broadly similar to Ireland as interpreting and translation is essentially unregulated in England. However, England has considerably more highly developed standards and guidelines;
- England has had a National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) since 1994. The NRPSI aims to provide public service organisations with access to a bank of appropriately qualified and experienced interpreters, capable of working in public service contexts such as health, local government and the legal sector. The NRPSI is maintained by NRPSI Ltd, a not for profit subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Linguists, the UK's largest professional body for linguists. It is not mandatory for public bodies to use the NRPSI, even within the criminal justice system, but it is recommended good practice, to which the majority of criminal justice system agencies have voluntarily committed;
- England has established National Occupational Standards (NOS) in Interpreting and Translation. CILT, the National Centre for Languages is the UK's Standards Setting Body for languages and since the 1990s has developed and maintained NOS in languages for the workplace, interpreting and translation. These have been created in collaboration with professional bodies, practitioners and end-users, to provide up-to-date definitions of competent performance, and the skills and knowledge needed, as well as accompanying information on the role of the interpreter/translator and principles of professional practice;
- England has more highly developed education and training routes than Ireland. Much of the professional training in interpreting and translation is provided by the Higher Education sector, while the Chartered Institute of Linguists' (IoL) Educational Trust's Diploma in Translation (DipTrans) and Diploma in Public Service Interpreting (DPSI) are the most significant alternatives to university Masters qualifications. The DipTrans is a postgraduate-level qualification regarded by many as the "gold standard" in translation awards. However, although Lord Justice Auld in 2001 recommended the central funding of courses for interpreters, in particular in the DPSI, individuals are frequently obliged to fund provision themselves; the expense is undoubtedly a deterrent for some would-be interpreters. The reported shortages of interpreters and translators outside London indicate a shortfall in appropriate and accessible training provision;
- England has a written National Agreement since 1997 setting out detailed guidance on the use of interpreters and, to a lesser extent, translators and language service professionals in criminal justice investigations and proceedings. The National Agreement has no legal status but appears to be widely recognised in the sector.

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METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE, LONDON, UK –

Key Findings

- The MPS has developed clear guidance for staff on commissioning and working with interpreters and on arranging translation. It also has produced guidance on agreed standard rates, and guidance on payment of travel expenses;
- The MPS operates a dedicated MPS Official List of interpreters and translators. To get on the list interpreters must be on the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI) and pass additional selection and vetting criteria. The MPS Official List is available electronically 24 hours a day and includes the days/times when interpreters are available for work;
- On being accepted onto the MPS Official List, interpreters are given an induction to MPS work;
- There is a process for avoiding repetition of the same piece of translation work in different units;
- The MPS has systems for capturing data on interpreting and translation, including expenditure, number of assignments, languages, percentage of interpreters and providers used who are on the MPS Official List;
- Two consultative groups, composed of relevant stakeholders and representatives of sign and spoken language interpreting, meet on a quarterly basis to advise Language Services on developments;
- There is ongoing independent review and assessment to improve future provision.

METROPOLITAN POLICE SERVICE, LONDON –

Stakeholders' Views on Future Developments

- Although the provisions described in Sections 9.3 and 9.4 set out a broad framework for interpreting and translation in the public services, their alignment into one single piece of legislation would, it is felt, increase clarity and coherence. Reinforcement of particular aspects of the legislation, for example, the quality of interpreting and translation (to date dealt with almost uniquely by European case law) would also be welcomed by those interviewed;
- The MPS is in many ways leading the field in England in terms of arrangements for provision of translation and interpreting in the public sector. Nevertheless, due to increasing costs and the need for greater rigour and consistency around recruitment and quality control, a major review of language support services was to be launched in late 2007 to challenge the presumption that a 'one size fits all' model is appropriate. A toolkit of solutions is needed, taking account of the following: better use of technology (the MPS is currently engaged in a pilot of 'virtual courts'; it is hoped that the results will help inform development of videoconference interpreting); use of officers who have proven (i.e. assessed) language skills and the relevant professional skills in appropriate situations; officer training on how to handle situations involving non-English speakers;
- The establishment of a dedicated 24-hour service, to handle all communication support requirements, would, it is felt, constitute a major saving of police time as officers would no longer have to contact interpreters directly. If manned by communication specialists, the service would provide accurate advice and assistance, allowing officers to use their time and expertise more appropriately;

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- At the same time a separate, more targeted review will take place of the specific processes undertaken within Language Services in the handling of translation assignments. This will focus on three core issues. First, standards and recruitment namely: training qualifications and criteria, taking account of the National Occupational Standards and professional registration; a gap analysis of current the skills base and development of enhanced recruitment and contractual processes; a tightening of commissioning processes. Second, more robust processes for recording and storing of translations. Third, quality assurance.
- The *Good Practice Guide* stipulates that the court should not appoint any interpreter used by police during investigations unless absolutely necessary (in which case, all parties must be made aware and agree to the appointment). It is reported that the above good practice guidance is generally followed.
- The Courts use the *Terms and Conditions for Providing Face-to-Face Interpreting Services*, which outlines minimum daily payments. They also set out all details of costs payable to interpreters, including travel time and cancellation fees;

HER MAJESTY'S COURTS SERVICE, ENGLAND & WALES –

Key Findings

- Operational issues are handled locally/regionally, but the central Crime and Enforcement Directorate of Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) has policy responsibility for the day-to-day running of criminal courts, including provision of interpreting services. This has involved the introduction and maintenance of systems for encouraging best practice in the use of interpreters. These are summarised below;
- Procurement of interpreters is devolved to individual courts. The HMCS has produced a *Good Practice Guide* for court staff working in the criminal courts, which provides clear and detailed guidance on appointing and working with interpreters;
- All courts have access via intranet and a dedicated password to the National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI). Where it proves impossible to identify an interpreter with the right language combination from the NRPSI, staff will follow the steps outlined in the *National Agreement*. Where these also fail, staff may approach the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal Service, which employs a central team to handle interpreter requests and maintains its own list;
- Face-to-face interpreting is used exclusively in courts. In the case of speeding offences, where a summons is issued automatically and there is no advance personal contact to establish language needs, telephone interpreting might be used to rearrange the hearing;
- Where examination of witnesses or defendants is concerned, interpreting in courts is consecutive. All Crown Court proceedings, conducted in open court, are audio recorded. Video-recording is not used routinely. When a non-English speaking defendant is in the dock for sentencing, the interpreter will generally sit beside him/her and give a whispered, simultaneous interpretation but this is not recorded;
- Where the defendant is not required to attend court and is being held in custody, it is common practice for the interpreter to travel to the prison where the defendant is being held and for the court to communicate by video link. This may also be used in the case of witness interviews;
- Ongoing systematic monitoring of the quality of interpreting delivered is not regarded as feasible. Data on the number of assignments, languages involved and interpreters appointed are not routinely recorded. No information is available on the percentage of interpreters used in court assignments who are NRPSI registered.

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HER MAJESTY'S COURTS SERVICE, ENGLAND & WALES –

Stakeholders' Views on Future Developments

- The introduction of a new National Agreement and clear guidance on good practice has undoubtedly led to greater levels of consistency and quality in the provision of interpreting in courts. Individual courts are, however, still left to make their own arrangements and there are serious interpreter shortages in some areas;
- The absence of a centralised system for collecting data such as volume of demand, nature of interpreting requests and proportion of assignments carried out by registered interpreters may arguably be making it harder to identify – and therefore resolve – problems;
- Current arrangements may not be wholly cost-effective. Currently, interpreters submit claims to the court clerk, who processes each one individually. If bookings were handled centrally, interpreters could instead, for example, be paid on a monthly basis. (The Immigration and Tribunal Service has a centralised system in place, which may merit investigation.) In some cases, where there is sufficient demand, it is felt it could be worth considering employing staff interpreters to minimise costs;
- It is recognised that better use could be made of technology; court rooms are currently not designed to facilitate professional interpreting. The use of soundproofed booths and headphones would, for example, enable interpretation to be simultaneous, recorded and efficiently relayed to all parties;
- There is a desire to increase the volume of registrations on the NRPSI and it is felt that subscription fees are undoubtedly a deterrent to some interpreters registering. There are concerns amongst some in the field that the registration criteria need to be updated.

The background features a complex arrangement of overlapping geometric shapes. On the left, there are several curved, semi-circular shapes in various shades of pink, ranging from light to dark. These overlap with a solid grey area that occupies the top and right portions of the page. In the lower half, there are more rectangular and curved shapes in shades of pink and grey, creating a layered, architectural feel. The overall composition is modern and minimalist.

9. Case Study 2: The Netherlands

9. Case Study 2: The Netherlands²²

9.1 | Chapter Introduction

This chapter presents a case study on the provision of interpreting and translation services in the Netherlands. Section 9.2 provides a brief description of the methodology used to produce this case study. Section 9.3 describes the legislative and policy context in the Netherlands. Section 9.4 provides a summary of national standards and instruments to supporting the provision of interpreting and translation to public services. Section 9.5 describes the delivery of interpreting and translation services across the courts, police and immigration. Finally, Section 9.6 summarises the key chapter findings.

²²This chapter was produced by CILT, the National Centre for Languages.

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9.2 | Methodology

CILT identified key individuals involved in developing policy and practice in the provision of interpreting and translation. In collaboration with the project team, CILT developed a detailed set of questions, covering the following aspects: policy framework; nature of services made available; arrangements made by translation and interpreting service providers; practical and financial considerations; management; and good practice. This interview schedule was used as standard in each set of interviews conducted.

Telephone interviews were conducted in the first instance with key policy contacts. All respondents were assured of anonymity, as agreed with the project team, to encourage frank disclosure of facts and opinions. In all cases, it was necessary for CILT to conduct further interviews with contributors introduced by these policy contacts, to ensure that the interview template was completed fully and a comprehensive picture of services formed. These additional contributors included staff working day-to-day with language professionals.

It should be noted that interviews and correspondence were conducted in English as resources were not available for translation or interpreting. While the English language skills of Dutch contributors were generally excellent, this necessarily limited pursuit of certain lines of enquiry.

Contributors supplied relevant supporting documentation as necessary. Following the interviews and review of the documentation, CILT drafted the case studies and sent these to each interviewee for confirmation of accuracy.

Please see Appendix B for a list of people and documents consulted.

9.3 | Legislative & Policy Context

The last decade has seen significant changes both in Dutch immigration policy and in arrangements for the provision of translation and interpreting in the public services. More changes are on the horizon, with the introduction of new legislation – the Dutch Act on Sworn Interpreters and Translators – which is currently being reviewed by parliament and should be implemented during 2008.

Until the new legislation is enacted, Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) which provides (inter alia) for the right to be informed promptly in a language one understands of the nature and cause of the accusation in the case of being charged with a criminal offence, and for the free assistance of an interpreter if one cannot understand or speak the language used in court, remains the main basis for the provision of interpreting in courts. This is reinforced by domestic case law related to ECHR Article 8 relating to the right to privacy and family life, which requires the court to appoint an interpreter as required in cases related to family law, including protection of children and divorce.

The key piece of domestic legislation which deal with the provision of interpreting and translation is the Immigration Act, which makes it a requirement for an interpreter to be used in the case of any individual applying for the right to remain in the Netherlands. In 2001, the number of immigrants was 2.9m out of a total population of 16m. This figure includes both first and second generation immigrants. There has, however, been a decline in recent years in the number of asylum seekers (from 55–60,000 per annum in the early and mid 1990s to 7–8,000 per annum).

The Netherlands has a long tradition of providing free interpreting to immigrants across the public services, in order to encourage the retention of distinct languages and cultures. This is now giving way to new, tougher immigration policies and an emphasis on acquisition of Dutch language skills as a key factor in successful social integration. Individuals who wish to move to the Netherlands from outside the European Union are now required to do a language test before they enter the country and

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a citizenship test (with a language element) on entry. There is some political debate around expenditure on interpreting and translation, particularly as the cost of education provision has increased with the shift in policy.

There has to date been no statutory mechanism for ensuring the quality or value for money of interpreting and translation provided in the public services. This has been a matter for concern particularly in the justice sector, where approaches to provision across and within the different agencies involved are reported to be highly variable and lack transparency.

In the mid 1990s, the Ministry of Justice came under criticism from the National Ombudsman for failing to monitor satisfactorily the performance of interpreters during follow-up interviews in asylum procedures. This led to the introduction in 2000 of a quality programme, which included the assessment of all practising interpreters. This proved difficult to implement: interpreters objected to undergoing tests which they felt had been imposed on them; the training curriculum was deemed to be insufficiently robust; and rates of pay for professionals were criticised. It was striking that these interpreters were often supported by their clients in their objections to compulsory testing. An interpreters' strike in the law courts was given wide support by the judiciary.

Moreover, controlling budgets proved difficult: public service providers were not confronted with the financial consequence of their decisions to engage interpreters so there was a limited direct control mechanism for monitoring quality and efficiency.

In light of this experience, the policy has been refocused. It is recognised that, without some legal basis, agencies will continue to make their own arrangements, resulting potentially in wasted resources and a failure to drive up standards. At the same time, policymakers acknowledge the need to involve interpreters and end-users in the process so that all have a stake in its success.

An Interdepartmental Policy Review on interpreters and translators was conducted in 2003. This resulted in the creation of the new Dutch Act on Sworn Interpreters and Translators and the delegation of budgets for interpreting and translation to public sector agencies, to ensure greater financial accountability. Furthermore, the review led to a tendering exercise for the running of the Netherlands Interpreting and Translation Service (Tolk-en Vertaalcentrum Nederland or TVCN). TVCN is a central handling agency, fully financed by the Ministry of Justice, which provides interpreting services to the (semi) public authorities within but mainly outside the justice sector. The centre functions as a sort of 'broker', and its main task is to match supply to demand. The Netherlands Interpreting and Translation Service can call on the services of a pool of some 900 interpreters, who work in approximately 100 languages and dialects.

The new Act has been created to provide a firm legal basis for tackling issues of quality and transparency in the justice sector. It makes the use of the National Register for Qualified Legal Interpreters and Translators (the register is discussed in more detail in Section 9.4) mandatory for specific justice agencies – police, courts and immigration services – and sets out a number of conditions for its implementation, with the aim of ensuring both quality of service and value for money.

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9.4 | National Agreements, Instruments & Standards

9.4.1 | Overview

There are currently no national competence standards or statutory professional requirements for interpreters and translators in the Netherlands. Nevertheless, a national register has existed since late 2001 and is discussed in Section 9.4.2.

9.4.2 | National Register

A National Register²³ has existed since late 2001 and is accessible without charge to any employee of a Dutch court, the police or Immigration Services. There is no compulsion to use the Register, however, and many courts and police services maintain their own lists, using these as the first point of reference, largely because this is what they have always done. It is acknowledged that there needs to be a campaign to raise awareness of the existence of the Register but that this needs to be coupled with a statutory requirement to use it.

For the purposes of compiling their own lists, justice agencies tend to judge competence on the basis of Dutch language proficiency and production of a 'certificate of good conduct', supplied by the Ministry of Justice if the individual is found to have no criminal record. Some courts conduct interviews, take up references or demand that applicants go through assessment by the Institute for Court Translation and Interpreting before appointing interpreters; others are much less rigorous in their approach.

Applicants to the national register may be awarded 'full' or 'preliminary' (interim) status. Interpreters are awarded full registration status if they combine an interpreting qualification with appropriate experience. Having either one of these is sufficient to be granted interim status. Many registrations are now several years old and renewal is based solely on the provision of a renewed certificate of good conduct every three years.

For translators, a law passed in 1874 is the principal basis for an individual being awarded 'sworn translator' status and therefore being eligible for the Register. This legislation refers solely to language ability (and good conduct), as opposed to professional translation skills. It is a matter of some concern that the current registration criteria do not ensure that all working professionals have adequately high levels of competence. The perceived need to improve quality and professionalism is a key driver behind the new legislation.

9.4.3 | Education & Accreditation

The Institute for Court Translation and Interpreting currently offers professional training and assessment in 16 spoken language combinations. With the number of languages covered by the register currently standing at 152, it is clear that training and assessment will be major challenges following enactment of the new legislation.

Sign language interpreting provision is relatively well developed. Interpreters are required to undertake a four-year Masters degree in Sign Language/Dutch interpreting, offered by an Institute in Utrecht. This equips them for automatic registration on the online Register of Sign Language Interpreters. It is a condition of registration that the interpreter invests in continuing professional development. This system appears to work well.

There are a number of associations which represent the professions, but their codes of conduct/ethical codes are not always compatible and in the past they have demonstrated some reluctance to work together.

²³ See www.ktv.rvr.org.

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9.4.4 | New Legislation – the Dutch Act on Sworn Interpreters & Translators

The new legislation, as already noted, makes mandatory the use of the National Register by the main justice agencies. Moreover, it sets out a number of conditions for its implementation, which include registration procedures and criteria; formal vetting of applicants, to support the certificate of good conduct; a procedure for handling complaints; and conditions for renewal of registrations.

A new Quality Institute is to be established, which will advise the Ministry of Justice on policy, the development of professional training programmes and other aspects. The Institute will include representation from language professionals and public service providers. There has recently been some collaboration between professional bodies and it is hoped that this can be built upon in future, to provide a more coherent and credible voice for the professions as well as a source of guidance and support for policymakers and public service providers.

The new legislation identifies seven key competences, which interpreters and translators will have to demonstrate in order to be registered. (Only the current sworn translators are registered automatically; but they will have to demonstrate that they meet the seven competences within five years of the act taking effect.) These are: command of the language, knowledge of terminology, translation skills, written skills, listening skills, objectivity, integrity and professional ethics.

It is anticipated that the Ministry of Justice will set out the outline of the new assessments then work with institutions appointed to develop and implement these. Some consideration is being given to the development of reliable systems for the accreditation of skills and experience already gained, without the need for full assessment. The Quality Institute will moreover be considering how to provide incentives for training institutions to offer provision.

There are no plans to fund professional training, as this is deemed to be the responsibility of the individual, but it is expected that the demand for training will grow as it will be difficult to secure work in the justice sector without being on the National Register. It is recognised, however, that the current relatively low rates of pay for public sector interpreting and translation may present a barrier to would-be registrants.

The new legislation, and the accompanying minor legislation and procedures which will follow, are regarded as an extremely important step on the way to resolving issues of quality and professionalism. It is acknowledged, however, that much work will need to be done to assist their implementation.

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9.5 | Delivery Model Case Study: Courts, Police & Immigration

9.5.1 | Overview

The Ministry of Justice was, until 2005, responsible for translation and interpreting provision across public services in the Netherlands, including health and social care. Its remit is now limited to provision in the courts, police and immigration. While there are differences in how each service currently handles translation and interpreting, the new Act seeks to harmonise provision in all services under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice²⁴. This case study will therefore focus on current arrangements in these three areas and on the anticipated impact of the new legislation.

The services of TVCN, the central handling agency which arranges translation and interpreting for public services outside the justice system, is not included in this case study. There are specific circumstances in which TVCN is used by justice agencies (for example, by immigration, in dealing with non-justice related issues such as housing) but this is the exception, rather than the rule.

9.5.2 | Service Provision

The immigration service appears currently to have the most highly developed system. The service is delivered regionally, by four dedicated co-ordinators, to whom investigating officers refer requests for translators or interpreters, should they decide they are needed.

There is no centralised system for courts or police; they tend to maintain their own lists of interpreters and translators. Geographical location of interpreters, rather than quality, has been found to be the biggest consideration for court officials when appointing professionals. Individual courts and police stations may sometimes be reluctant to share lists with colleagues nearby for fear of hampering their own access to language professionals.

While some larger police regions employ a co-ordinator to deal with requests for interpreting and translation, in most cases this will fall to the police officer involved. Arrangements in the police are further complicated by the fact that there are three different sources of funding for interpreting and translation, requiring different approaches, depending on the activity for which language services are needed.

The general (unwritten) policy in police stations is to employ a telephone interpreter for short interactions, provided that they do not form part of a criminal investigation. This type of interaction might include making appointments, providing advice etc. Face-to-face interpreting is preferred in the vast majority of criminal investigations (apart, perhaps, from the very early stages) and in courts.

Where an interpreter cannot be found via the normal channels, the court hearing or investigation is postponed. In some circumstances, however, officials 'try to find a way'. This might include use of a third, common language or involvement of someone with skills in Dutch and the foreign language, who is not an interpreter. Where poor performance is identified,

²⁴ Although the Military Police in the Netherlands is under the aegis of the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Justice has responsibility for translation and interpreting provision.

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there are no formal disciplinary procedures; the court or police station may simply not offer the individual more work.

There is currently no guidance for those working in the justice system on working with language professionals. It is recognised that such guidance is needed, as currently individuals are largely left to make independent decisions (for example on whether to appoint separate interpreters for investigation and trial) which may well have an impact on the quality of provision. One of the professional associations has recently produced guidelines for commissioners of translation and interpreting services and these may inform the development of the new guidance.

There have to date been relatively few complaints from public service providers about translation and interpreting provision. Where complaints have been made, the bulk of these relate to scheduling difficulties, delays etc. In addition, a shortage of German/Dutch interpreters is sometimes reported (these professionals being attracted to commercial work by the higher rates of pay).

The absence of formal monitoring systems could mean that problems are simply not being identified by public service providers who, not being trained interpreters themselves, are clearly not in a position to be able to make comprehensive judgements about interpreting performance.

Interpreters interviewed as part of a recent research exercise²⁵, however, expressed serious concerns about the quality of interpreting.

Audio or audiovisual recording is not widely used in the Netherlands justice sector and, while some experiments in this have been conducted at the Hague, there are currently no plans to roll this out. This makes it difficult to introduce systems for monitoring interpreting performance.

9.5.3 | Nature & Volume of Provision

No reliable information exists at present about the number of practising interpreters and translators. The only statistics available relate to professionals on the National Register and those listed with TVCN (approximately 90% of whom are also on the National Register). It is anticipated, however, that the new legislation will stimulate professionals to join the National Register, given that justice agencies are unlikely to be able to employ those who are not registered.

Some 2,300 language professionals are listed on the National Register, of which 1,940 are interpreters and 1,578 translators (some perform both roles). A total of 152 languages are covered.

No information is available on the number of assignments undertaken in any given period. Although some estimates were done several years ago, those interviewed considered them to be unreliable and therefore unhelpful in compiling this case study. The most accurate information is that relating to overall costs and rates paid to translators and interpreters (see Section 9.5.5 below).

²⁵*Tolken in Het Domein*, SEO Economic Research, University of Amsterdam, 2007.

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9.5.4 | Management Arrangements

The Ministry of Justice's Legal Aid department, which oversees arrangements for all professionals working in the justice sector, creates policy and leads developments in the provision of translation and interpreting for the courts, police and immigration, including provision for the military police. Formerly responsible also for management of the TVCN, the Ministry has in recent years sought to step back from operational roles. The contract for managing TVCN was awarded after a competitive tendering exercise to Manpower.

The Legal Aid Board, a non-departmental public body, has the mandate from the Ministry of Justice to manage the National Register. It receives its remit and funding on an annual basis from the Ministry. It is, however, an independent body and is able to make pragmatic decisions on how objectives are achieved without undue interference from central government. Within the new legal system the mandate of the Legal Aid Board will be extended to most of the tasks that the legislation mentions.

9.5.5 | Funding & Costs

The most recent statistics available relate to 2003 and are not exclusive to expenditure in the justice sector. In the 2003 calendar year, almost €54m was spent on interpreting and translation. Of this, €9m was spent by the immigration service and €21m by the courts and police. The remainder was paid to TVCN, the central handling agency responsible for provision in other public services (e.g. healthcare, housing, education). If actual expenditure on translation and interpreting turns out to be higher than that forecast, costs are met by central government.

A total budget of €720,000 has been earmarked for the running costs of the National Register and Quality Institute in 2008. This will cover development of the website, testing, online learning and registration. A registration fee is to be charged to help ensure

that only serious applicants apply; the fee has not yet been confirmed but is likely to be in the region of €25–50.

Fees for interpreting and translation are set centrally, by the Ministry of Justice. Interpreters are paid a rate of €43.89 per hour. For certain types of immigration work only, interpreters with less than six months' experience may be appointed at an hourly rate of €30.22. Court interpreters are additionally paid a one-off fee of €20.23 to compensate for time spent travelling and/or waiting. (This fee is fixed, irrespective of actual waiting time.)

Travel costs are reimbursed at €1.55 per km. In the immigration service, no call-out fee is paid and the interpreter receives only €0.28 per km towards travel costs. Interpreters are, however, reported to prefer immigration assignments as interviews tend to be longer – and therefore more lucrative – than court hearings.

Translations from or into French, German and English are paid at €0.79 per line. For other languages, a rate of €0.14 per word (target language) is paid, or €0.28 per character for oriental languages.

Rates of pay are highly contentious. They are reported not to have increased over a number of years and compare poorly to rates paid in the commercial world. It has also been noted that, although hourly rates paid for TVCN provision are comparable, the agency have no statutory obligation to pay the interpreters the full amount. Moreover, while it may be more practical for courts to appoint an intermediary organisation such as TVCN to handle interpreter bookings, they have no source of funding to pay the intermediary; these costs reportedly have to be met from the monies set aside to pay interpreters.

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9.6 | Summary of Key Chapter Findings

OVERALL POLICY & SECTOR WIDE FACTORS –

Key Findings

- Article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) relating to a fair trial remains the main basis for the provision of interpreting in courts. It is reinforced by domestic case law related to ECHR Article 8 on the right to privacy and family life, which requires the court to appoint an interpreter as required in cases related to family law, including protection of children and divorce. In domestic law, the Immigration Act makes it a requirement for an interpreter to be used in the case of any individual applying for the right to remain in the Netherlands. New legislation – the Dutch Act on Sworn Interpreters and Translators – is currently being reviewed by parliament and should be implemented during 2008;
- There has to date been no statutory mechanism for ensuring the quality or value for money of interpreting and translation provided in the public services. In the mid 1990s, the Ministry of Justice came under criticism from the National Ombudsman for failing to monitor satisfactorily the performance of interpreters during follow-up interviews in asylum procedures;
- This led to the introduction in 2000 of a quality programme, which included proposals for the assessment of all practising interpreters. This was not well received by language professionals for a number of reasons.
- A National Register has existed since late 2001 and is accessible without charge to any employee of a Dutch court, the police or Immigration Services. There is no compulsion to use the register, however, and many courts and police services maintain their own lists, using these as the first point of reference;
- The new legislation on interpreters and translators has been created to provide a firm legal basis for tackling issues of quality and transparency in the justice sector. It plans to make the use of the National Register for Qualified Legal Interpreters and Translators mandatory for specific justice agencies – police, courts and immigration services – and sets out a number of conditions for its implementation, with the aim of ensuring both quality of service and value for money;
- Furthermore, a review led to a tendering exercise for the running of the Tolk-en Vertaalcentrum Nederland (TVCN), a central handling agency which provides interpreting and translation for public services, mainly outside the justice sector;
- A new Quality Institute is to be established, which will advise the Ministry of Justice on policy, the development of professional training programmes and other aspects of interpreting and translation provision. The Institute will include representation from language professionals and public service providers.

9. Case Study 2: The Netherlands

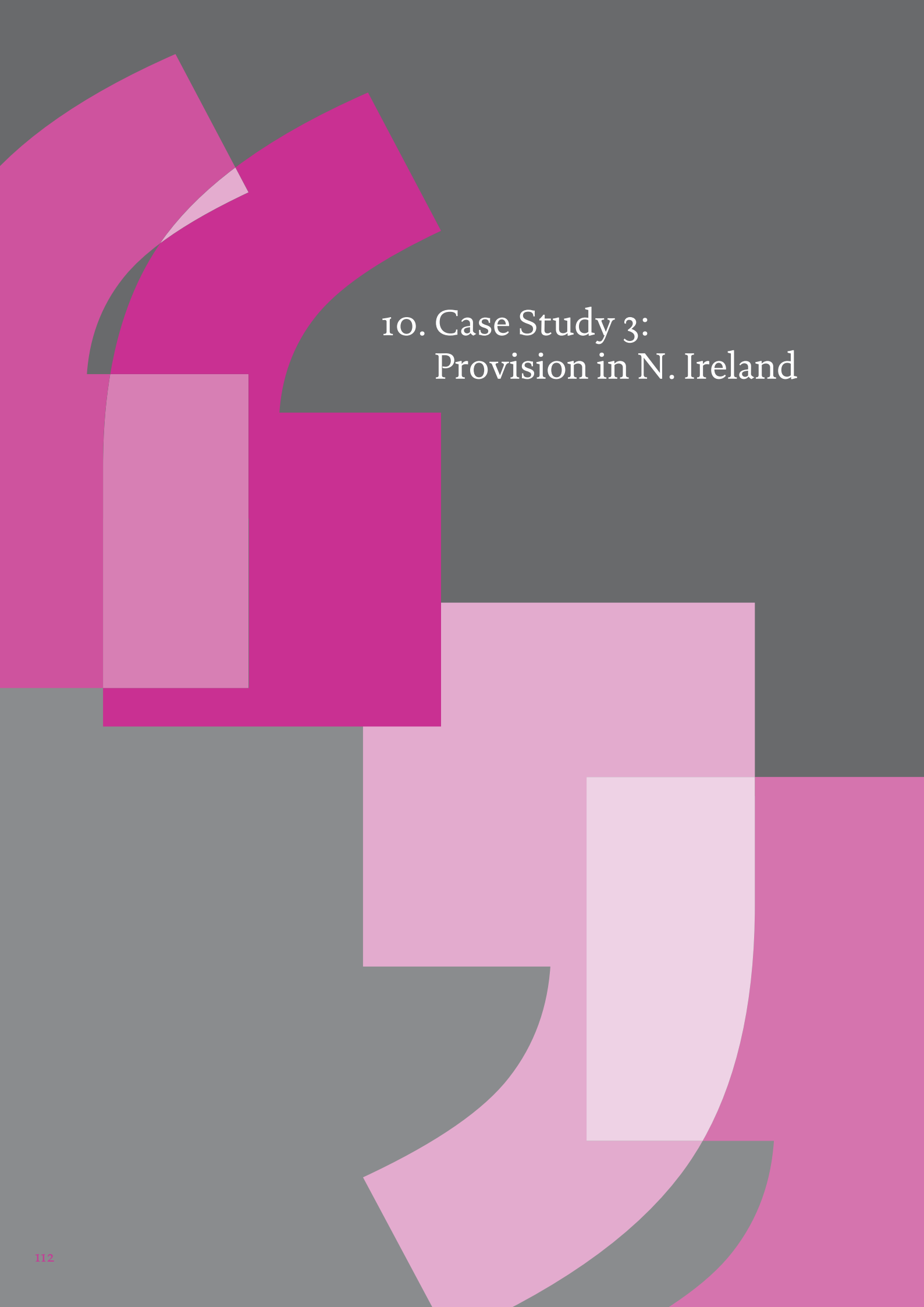
COURTS, POLICE & IMMIGRATION – Key Findings

- The Ministry of Justice was, until 2005, responsible for translation and interpreting provision across public services in the Netherlands, including health and social care. Its remit is now limited to provision in the courts, police and immigration;
- Of these three areas, the immigration service currently appears to have the most developed system. The service is delivered regionally, by four dedicated co-ordinators, to whom investigating officers refer requests for translators or interpreters;
- There is no centralised system for courts or police; they tend to maintain their own lists of interpreters and translators. Geographical location of interpreters, rather than quality, has been found to be the biggest consideration for court officials when appointing professionals;
- There is currently no guidance for those working in the justice system on working with language professionals. It is recognised that such guidance is needed, as currently individuals are largely left to make independent decisions (for example on whether to appoint separate interpreters for investigation and trial) which may well have an impact on the quality of provision;
- There have to date been relatively few complaints from public service providers about translation and interpreting provision. Where complaints have been made the bulk of these relate to scheduling difficulties, delays etc. The absence of formal monitoring systems could mean that problems are simply not being identified by public service providers as interpreters have expressed serious concerns about the quality of interpreting;
- No reliable information exists about the number of practising interpreters and translators or the number of assignments. In the 2003 calendar year, almost €54m was spent on interpreting and translation. Of this, €9m was spent by the immigration service and €21m by the courts and police. The remainder was paid to TVCN, the intermediary organisation responsible for provision in other public services (for example, healthcare, housing and education);
- A total budget of €720,000 has been earmarked for the running costs of the National Register and Quality Institute in 2008. This will cover development of the website, testing, online learning and registration;
- Fees for interpreting and translation are set centrally, by the Ministry of Justice. Interpreters are paid a rate of €43.89 per hour. For certain types of immigration work only, interpreters with less than six months' experience may be appointed at an hourly rate of €30.22. Travel costs are reimbursed at €1.55 per km. Rates of pay are highly contentious as they are reported not to have increased over a number of years;
- While there are differences in how each service currently handles translation and interpreting, the new Act seeks to harmonise provision in all services under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Justice.

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THE NETHERLANDS EXPERIENCE – Stakeholders' Views on Future Developments

- A top-down approach is needed, at least in terms of stipulating minimum quality and delivery requirements. There are many different, often conflicting interests and a laissez faire approach does not produce consistent, high quality service provision;
- At the same time, it is essential that experts (language professionals and public service providers) are involved in developments, if they are to be relevant, acceptable and, ultimately, if they are to work. There should also be sufficient flexibility for different agencies to operate according to their needs and the contexts in which they are working;
- The perfect system cannot be introduced overnight; a period of transition is needed, and sufficient flexibility should be built in to allow for modification and growth;
- The fact that use of the Register will be mandatory for justice agencies means that there will be an incentive for professionals to join the Register, therefore more likelihood that standards will be driven up across the board;
- There are varying degrees of familiarity with the National Register amongst public service providers; concerted efforts will be needed to raise awareness of the new legislation and its consequences for end-users of interpreting and translation services;
- A system for monitoring the quality of interpreting and translation provided is needed, to ensure that risks to clients and public service providers are minimised, and to avoid duplication of effort by different players within the system. At the very least, there should be rigorous systems for vetting and registration of language professionals, including demonstrable competence standards and a complaints and disciplinary procedure. This should be accompanied by investment in professional training.

The background features a complex arrangement of overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of pink and grey. The shapes include large curved forms, rectangles, and semi-circles, creating a layered, architectural feel. The text is positioned in the upper right quadrant of the page.

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland²⁶

10.1 | Chapter Introduction

This chapter presents a case study on the provision of interpreting and translation services in Northern Ireland. Section 10.2 provides a brief description of the methodology used to produce this case study. Section 10.3 describes the legislative and policy context in Northern Ireland. Section 10.4 provides a summary of other frameworks and instruments. Accreditation, training and arrangements for professional standards are discussed in Section 10.5. Two delivery models are then examined in more detail, first the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Interpreting Service (Section 10.6) and the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities which provides interpreters for the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI), (Section 10.7). Finally, Section 10.8 summarises the key chapter findings.

²⁶This chapter was produced by Dr. Jacqueline Turton, University of Essex.

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

10.2 | Methodology

The purpose of this study has been to map the current provision of interpreting and translation in the public sector to identify cost effective services offering models of good practice. In order to ensure some parity across the chosen case studies a standard series of questions were discussed and agreed between the research team. The questions identified a number of key areas for analysis from the policy and legislation driving the service provision, through to the financial considerations, training concerns and areas of good practice. The relevant literature and documentation was used to inform the analysis.

Three key stakeholders, including the manager of the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Interpreting Service (NIHSSIS) and the co-ordinator of capacity building from the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM), were interviewed on at least two occasions to gather sufficient data for the analytic process. The third interviewee had been a trainer and development officer from the inception of the NIHSSIS until Autumn 2007 and, therefore had considerable background knowledge of the progress of this interpreting and translation service over its initial three year period. Draft analyses of the interviews were sent to the respondents for verification and comment prior to inclusion in the report.

Please see Appendix B for a list of people and documents consulted.

10.3 | Legislative & Policy Context

10.3.1 | Overview

The requirement to provide interpreting and translation services in Northern Ireland are embedded within several pieces of legislation.

10.3.2 | Race Relations Order (N.I.) Order 1997

This legislation carries similar provisions to the 1976 Race Relations Act (UK) and makes it unlawful to discriminate on racial grounds both directly and indirectly. As far as interpretation and translation is concerned this Act places a legal duty on public providers to ensure that their services are non-discriminatory. Treating clients less favourably on racial grounds through direct discrimination, segregation and victimisation are clearly labelled as unlawful by this act.

The act also holds public providers responsible for the sometimes less obvious indirect discrimination that occurs. For instance, *“the need to communicate in languages other than English is often implicit rather than explicit. Nevertheless failing to provide interpreting facilities in relation to service provision, when it is known that there is a language barrier, could be construed as unlawful racial discrimination.”*²⁷ The Race Relation (NI) Order 1997 was amended and updated in 2003 by the Race Relations Order (Amendment) Regulations (NI) to comply with new EU directives giving greater protection against unlawful racial discrimination.

10.3.3 | Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 75

The NI Act 1998 forms the main backbone of the equality legislation in Northern Ireland. It was set up as part of the Good Friday Agreement to provide equality opportunity for all under the law. Section

²⁷ Code of practice and procedures for health and social services staff and practitioners, Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Interpreting Service, June 2004.

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

75 of this Act in particular placed an obligation on public service providers to take a proactive role in the promotion of equal opportunity.

There are a number of named categories for consideration including ‘race’ and disability and this legislation dictates a right to information about and access to public services. *“So information should be produced in different ways for example in different languages or on audio cassette or video or Braille. By having information in all these formats, everyone will have the same opportunity to know about public service and their right to the services that they need.”*²⁸

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission was created as part of the commitment by the British Government to the NI Act. Its role is to promote human rights, to review current legislation and advise the Government and Assembly on ways to ensure human rights in Northern Ireland. It was the NI Act 1998 that established an independent commission to report on policing.

10.3.4 | Human Rights Act 1998

This Act came into force in 2000 making the European Convention on Human Rights enforceable within the Northern Ireland jurisdiction and places positive obligations on public authorities. So such practices as policy making, rules and regulations, methods of interacting with the public and the treatment and conditions of service for the staff all need to be considered and implemented from a human rights perspective as a proactive process. *“It is unlawful for a public authority to violate Convention rights unless it has no choice because of an Act of Parliament.”*²⁹

Public authorities include: Government departments, local authorities, courts and tribunals, police, prison and immigration.

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) oversees implementation of the Human Rights Act. The PSNI consult regularly with the commission on matters relating to training and before drafting new recommendations for policy and practice.

10.3.5 | The Single Equality Bill

The development of single Equality Bill for Northern Ireland remains a work in progress. Without allowing any of the current legislation to be downgraded, this Bill would incorporate all of anti-discrimination and equality law in one piece of legislation. The legislation aims to harmonise existing anti-discrimination and equality legislation as far as is practicable and will update and extend existing provisions where appropriate.³⁰

A report summarising the responses to a consultation document on options was produced in 2005.

10.3.6 | A Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) was established by the 1998 Belfast Agreement to consider the on-going process of human rights within NI. One aspect of work undertaken by the commission is the consultation process regarding the possible Bill of Rights. *“The NIHRC intends that the Bill of Rights will contribute significantly to equality of opportunity and to outcomes for people, regardless of ethnicity, living in Northern Ireland.”*³¹

The Bill of Rights Forum is expected to produce recommendations to the NIHRC in 2008. Alongside the legislation there are a number of other frameworks that influence principles behind the ways in which both the NIHSSIS and police interpreting services function.

²⁸ Equality Vision, Eastern Area Equality Best Practice Group, April 2005.

²⁹ Get in on the Act, learning about the Human Rights Act, the Equality and Human Rights Unit, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, Northern Ireland: www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/equality/human-rights.htm.

³⁰ More information from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister NI: <http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/equality/single-equality-bill.htm>.

³¹ A *Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland, 2005–2010*, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, July 2005, www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk.

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10.4 | Other Frameworks

10.4.1 | Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

The commission offers guidance about duties under legislation concerning unlawful discrimination. It was set up to promote and keep under review the workings of the Race Relations Order 1997.³² In relation to policing, the Equality Scheme for the Police Service of Northern Ireland was submitted to the Equality Commission in 2002 and describes how the police intend to fulfil Section 75³³ duties and obligations. It is an effective plan for mainstreaming equality issues within their policy and decision-making.³⁴

The Equality Scheme aims to disseminate information and make arrangements to provide information in Braille, large print, audio cassette as well as minority ethnic languages. *Every attempt will be made to remove barriers to consultations by ensuring accessibility of language and appropriate format.*³⁵

10.4.2 | A Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland³⁶

The development of an equality strategy arose from the Belfast Agreement and the Government has claimed that its priority for 2005–2008 is to “*put into place co-ordinated actions to tackle racism and racial inequalities.*”³⁷ This strategy recognises the need for service providers to be proactive by suggesting, “*racial equality is not an optional add-on for public services.*” It is a statutory duty that needs to be “mainstreamed” into all departments responsible for service provision if institutional racism³⁸ is to be avoided.

The strategy has six shared aims³⁹: elimination of racial inequality; equal protection; equality of service provision; participation; dialogue and capacity building. These are all important for any service delivery but for the purposes of interpreting, the equality of service provision stands out if an ‘ethnic penalty’ is to be avoided. The strategy highlights research findings⁴⁰ identifying a number of issues that need to be addressed, including the language barrier, because they “*disproportionately affect the minority ethnic population*” and restrict access to service provision. The positive action and recommendations within the *Racial Equality Strategy for NI* falls in line with the proposals of the EU Racial Equality Directive.

10.4.3 | Policing with the Community

The other document that has influenced police strategy towards communication is *Policing with the Community in Northern Ireland*.⁴¹ This lays out the vision of policing within the community for the PSNI and defines the key principles of the strategy. These are as follows:

- Service delivery;
- Partnerships;
- Problem solving;
- Empowerment;
- Accountability.

Policing with the Community further emphasises the police commitment to human rights, consultation and communications.

³² For more information see: www.equalityni.org. ³³ That is Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

³⁴ The updated version of the *Equality Scheme for the Police Service of Northern Ireland* can be found at: www.psni.police.uk/equalityschemenov2005.pdf. ³⁵ *Equality Scheme for the Police Service of Northern Ireland* PSNI, 2005, page 15.

³⁶ *A Racial Equality Strategy for NI, 2005–2010*, Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister, July 2005 www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk.

³⁷ Priorities and Budget, 2005–8, www.pfgni.gov.uk/fulldoc.pdf. ³⁸ Institutional Racism is defined within the Lawrence Inquiry as “*the collective failure to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin*” it goes on to suggest that this behaviour may be “*unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping...*”. ³⁹ Aims developed in consultation with minority ethnic representative. ⁴⁰ *Race and Racism in NI: a review of the research evidence*, Paul Connolly, 2002.

⁴¹ For more information see: www.psni.police.uk/index/about_psni/pg_policing_with_the_community.htm.

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10.5 | Accreditation, Training & Professional Standards

10.5.1 | Northern Ireland Health & Social Services Interpreting Service

To be registered as an interpreter for the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Interpreting Service (NIHSSIS) requires a Certificate in Community Interpreting. The Certificate in Community Interpreting is a twelve week course that has been tailor-made for Health and Social Services in Northern Ireland. It is accredited at level three by the Northern Ireland Open College Network and is delivered to suitable candidates free of charge by NIHSSIS training staff.

Alongside the community interpreter training, the NIHSSIS offers 4 or 6 day conversion courses which are primarily for those interpreters who have already successfully completed other community interpreting courses or have considerable appropriate experience⁴².

In addition, a number of ad hoc professional development sessions are offered to registered interpreters throughout the year covering topics such as immigration, domestic violence, breaking bad news and mental health. These sessions not only update registered staff but provide opportunities for interpreters to liaise with core staff members and colleagues.

The NIHSSIS also offers training to professional users and has an accompanying leaflet and DVD “Working Well with Interpreters”. This training covers the legislation behind the use of interpreters, demographics and language spread and the practical issues of using interpreters.

With regard to professional standards these are organised around a number of themes as follows:

- A substantial code of ethics has been developed for registered interpreters, agreement to which form part of the terms and conditions of employment;
- Commitment to confidentiality, professional practice and standards are included within the code of ethics;
- All registered interpreters are required to undertake Pre-employment Consultancy Service Checks (PECS);
- Interpreters obtain consent for interpreting as part of their introduction at all assignments;
- Monitoring forms for professional users and interpreters are requested from each interpreting assignment;
- The code of practice and procedures developed by the NIHSSIS for all health and social services practitioners is currently being rewritten to ensure the maintenance of high; professional standards;
- Awareness sessions have been provided for staff to ensure that they understand the duty to provide interpreters to non-English speakers.

⁴²For more information about the training provision see: www.interpreting.n-i.nhs.uk/training.php

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10.5.2 | Police Interpreting, Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities

To be registered as an interpreter at full status with the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) requires completion of Certificate in Community Interpreting course accredited by the Open College Network (OCN). In 1999 NICEM introduced the OCN Certificate in Community Interpreting to Northern Ireland, with Making Training Work, a London based training agency. It is a level three unit course accredited by the Northern Ireland Open College Network and is delivered to suitable candidates. Until recently the training has been heavily subsidised by NICEM, however, this is currently under consideration since there are no specific resources available.

In 2003 NICEM became registered with the OCN NI (to level three) to deliver the Community Interpreting course, together with a 120 hour course on Advocacy and Mediation in health for bi-lingual workers. They also offer a level 3 accredited programme on interpreting within the criminal justice system with units on Police, Courts and Immigration. NICEM employ a full-time trainer to deliver the courses.

Many of the interpreters for NICEM are trained to deal with assignments from the criminal justice system. There are guest speakers delivering input on the Community Interpreting course from public sector services including, immigration, welfare benefits, education, housing, and health and social services.

Professional standards are organised around a number of themes as follows:

- A code of ethics has been developed for registered interpreters, agreement to which form part of the terms and conditions of employment;
- Commitment to confidentiality, professional practice and standards are included within the code of ethics;
- All registered interpreters are required to undertake police security checks;
- Local police managers are invited to ensure that staff understand the duty to provide interpretation to non-English speakers and that they use the registered interpreters from NICEM;
- A handbook on good practice and procedures for police officers and interpreters has been developed by the PSNI in co-operation with NICEM.

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

10.6 | Delivery Model 1: Northern Ireland Health & Social Services Interpreting Service

10.6.1 | Overview

The regional Health and Social Service Interpreting Project for Black and Ethnic Minority Groups began as a pilot project in 2002. It had two main aims, namely:

- To set up an interpreting service for health and social services in Northern Ireland;
- To significantly improve access to health and social services for members of the black and minority ethnic communities.⁴³

In June 2004 this service model became the Northern Ireland Health and Social Services Interpreting Service (NIHSSIS). NIHSSIS provides the interpreters for the health and social services professionals in Northern Ireland.

10.6.2 | Service Provision

The NIHSSIS provides a face-to-face interpreting service currently running between 9am–5pm; they are about to move to offer an evening service provision until 11pm⁴⁴. The service does not offer any telephone service, sign language interpreting, or translations. The 2005 survey of interpreters undertaken by NIHSSIS indicated the need for 24 hour provision especially for accident and emergency and maternity units.

Requests for booking an interpreter have traditionally been made by fax but this is now changing to email to ensure accuracy and efficiency; 48 hours notice is required for bookings but the service does try to accommodate emergency cases. Considerable detail is required for the booking process in order to match the clients' needs with interpreter skills and location.

All of this detail is recorded since the audit trail is important to follow-up any complaints or errors and for statistical purposes. Preparation time is

offered in complex cases where professionals need to discuss particular issues with the interpreter.

This is a very labour intensive process despite the computer software used which aligns requests with interpreter availability.

10.6.3 | Nature & Volume of Provision

Currently the NIHSSIS have 147 interpreters on their register covering 33 languages. The most popular requests are for Polish interpreters at over 6,000 per annum, Lithuanian at nearly 4,000 and Portuguese at approximately 3,500.

In their first year of service provision the NIHSSIS received 3,777 requests. During the year July 2006–May 2007 the day service received 20,328 requests, 247 were for out-of-hours assignments.

Interpreters are self-employed, work on a sessional basis and are paid by the hour. The pay is a flat rate at £20 per hour or part of an hour and £5 preparation time for each new assignment; this does not account for any waiting time or travel time. Travel expenses are paid. One of the problems is that interpreters have other commitments or jobs and so are not always available to the service.

All interpreters who are employed by the NIHSSIS have to undertake either training or a conversion course to become registered with the service. Only registered interpreters are used for assignments. De-briefing of interpreters following assignments is undertaken as required and regular meetings are arranged with NIHSSIS managers and trainers to support interpreters.

⁴³ Regional Health and Social Service Interpreting Project website: www.interpreting.n-i.nhs/index.php.

⁴⁴ The NIHSSIS did run a 24-hour service for a short period but we understand that this is no longer the case.

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10.6.4 | Management & Monitoring Arrangements

The management and accountability of the NIHSSIS currently rests with the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSC). The service is funded by the Department of Health who underwrite the costs of the management and administration.

The interpreters invoice individual trusts following assignments. These invoices are verified by the NIHSSIS and paid by the health and social care board concerned. The average cost for each assignment is £30. The day-to-day organisation of the service is administered by a local manager and administrative staff guided by an advisory group who meet every two months.

Given the nature of the work the membership of this advisory group is diverse consisting of interpreters, ethnic minority community groups, equality managers from the trusts, the co-director of the BHSC Trust, the manager of the NIHSSIS and service users. The NIHSSIS has undergone several periodic reviews. Currently a major review is being undertaken by the new manager.

Understanding the changing demographics is a problem for the service as there is very little statistical data to use. However, in 2005 the NIHSSIS undertook a survey of interpreters that indicated the spread of language need in NI. For more information see <http://www.interpreting.n-i.nhs.uk/reports.php>.

10.6.5 | Funding & Costs

Despite the increase in workload – now running at approximately 3000 assignments per month – the funding for the NIHSSIS has not increased since its inception in 2002. Unfortunately there was no written report or evaluation published of the pilot project to use in analysing and assessing the budget structure.

The administration costs, which currently include a manager, administration staff and the interpreting training, are met by the Department of Health Northern Ireland. The overheads, such as the accommodation rental, telephone, computers and other on-costs are absorbed within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

A number of savings have been made over the life time of the service to ensure that it remains within the budget. For instance:

- The management of the interpreting service is not a dedicated role it is split 50–50 with the role of equality and diversity manager.
- The administrative staff are employed at a very low graded band – this has created difficulties with recruitment and retention of staff.
- The hourly rate for interpreters, £20, has not changed since 2002 and in fact the payment for preparation time has been reduced from £10 to £5.

There is no management charge made to professional users, trusts or boards for this interpreting service. Interpreters invoice the professional user at point of delivery, all invoices are verified by the NIHSSIS and paid by the relevant health and social care boards.

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

10.7 | Delivery Model 2: The Police Service, NICEM

10.7.1 | Overview

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities (NICEM) provides interpreters for the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) through its social economy company CONNECT-NICEM. The legal rationale behind the requirement to retain an interpreting service is in line with the NIHSSIS but there are some specific policies that apply to the PSNI.

The Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities is a charity organisation that began its capacity building programme for interpreters in 1999. Up until this point there was a limited number of interpreters from the ethnic minority communities and no accredited standards of interpreting. There were two main reasons for building a new service:

- The provision until this point was unreliable and the skills of interpreters often unknown
- Interpreters and the job of interpreting were not viewed as skilled. *NICEM seeks to ensure that those individuals and community organisations providing community interpreting services have the appropriate skills and knowledge to provide a high quality, effective services to the ethnic minority communities in Northern Ireland.*⁴⁵

In 2004 NICEM gained a 4 year contract to provide the PSNI with an interpreting service, which was then transferred to its social economy arm CONNECT-NICEM.

10.7.2 | Service Provision

The NICEM interpreting service offers 24 hour face-to-face delivery. It does not offer any telephone service, sign language interpreting or translations. For these purposes the PSNI use National Interpreting Services (NIS). Requests for booking an interpreter can be made by fax, email or phone. A booking form must always be submitted.⁴⁶

Considerable detail is required for the booking process in order to match the clients' needs with interpreter skills and location. The administration staff have to "work down the list" to find the most geographically appropriate interpreter.

If interpreters are required to travel long distances then this is agreed with the customer beforehand. All of this detail is recorded since the audit trail is important to follow-up any complaints or errors and for statistical purposes.

The computer programme used stores a database of interpreters, generates appropriate time sheets and invoices. The PSNI are invoiced for each separate interpreting session and it is very paperwork heavy involving authorised booking forms, signed time sheets and regular reporting. NICEM invoices each customer for each assignment organised. For examples of the booking form and time sheet used see the NICEM website: <http://www.nicem-interpreting.org.uk/downloads06.html>.

Currently NICEM has 220 interpreters on their register covering 61 languages.⁴⁷ They allocate approximately 4,500 assignments per annum. Interpreters are self-employed, work on a sessional basis and are paid by the hour. The flat rate is £20 per hour or part of an hour but this can be inflated up to £40 per hour according to type of assignment and the time of the session. Travel expenses are paid separately.

All interpreters who are employed by NICEM have to undertake community interpreter training to become registered with the service. Only registered interpreters are used for assignments

⁴⁵ <http://www.nicem-interpreting.org.uk/training06.html>.

⁴⁶ For examples of booking form see: <http://www.nicem-interpreting.org.uk/downloads06.html>.

⁴⁷ For languages covered see: <http://www.nicem-interpreting.org.uk>.

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

10.7.3 | Management & Monitoring

CONNECT-NICEM is a self sufficient business currently operating in profit. The income generated pays for all the running costs of the business, staffing, administration and overheads as well as the costs of interpreter training and interpreter professional development sessions.

The management and accountability of the interpreting service currently rests with the NICEM board of managers in liaison with the police. The day-to-day organisation of the service is administered by five full time staff and two staff on location for the out-of-hours sessions.

NICEM run an annual review of the interpreting service. Professional users are encouraged to comment on each interpreting assignment which is used to monitor the service provision. Any complaints are investigated and recorded. The monitoring of demographics is a problem for the service. For instance, not all migrant workers are registered with the Home Office and there is very little statistical data to use other than the 2001 census.

10.7.4 | Funding & Costs

The turnover of CONNECT-NICEM interpreting service has increased by about 158% in the last five years due to the demand for interpreters. The management, administration, accommodation rental and on-costs are covered by the income generated from this 24-hour service provision.

The charge for interpreters ranges between £20–£40 per hour dependent upon the time of day, language and type of service required. NICEM also levy an administrative fee for each interpreting session the PSNI request. This fee accounts for the profit margin for NICEM.

It is not a cheap service and when we have to compete directly on price we often can't, but the other models of service here and private companies do not provide the back up services to the interpreters and customers, including accredited training, the monthly skills development programme or the opportunity to work with services to develop new courses and units for their particular public service sector. We factor all of these additional things into our commission. (NICEM)

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

10.8 | Summary of Key Chapter Findings

NIHSSIS, NORTHERN IRELAND – Key Findings

- NIHSSIS provides a 9am–5pm face-to-face interpreting service. There is no provision for telephone interpreting. Although this is about to change, currently there is no out-of-hours service provision. The interpreters are employed on a sessional basis;
- Preparation time is allocated to interpreting staff in complex cases. Professional development sessions have been provided for interpreting staff. It has a code of ethics for interpreters that needs to be agreed as part of the employment package. It employs a computer system that aligns requests with interpreter availability;
- All interpreters are required to undertake a Pre-employment Consultancy Service Check (PECS). All interpreters registered with NIHSSIS have ONC certificate in community interpreting level 3. There are practical reasons according to NIHSSIS for not choosing the Diploma in Public Interpreting – it lacks elements of community work and it is very expensive.
- This interpreting service is managed by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSC). The organisation is guided by an advisory group representing all interested parties. The administration and management of the service is funded by the Department of Health Northern Ireland. Interpreter costs are invoiced to the professional users and paid via the appropriate health and social care board;
- It ensures a good audit trail using a robust booking and invoicing system. Professional users and interpreters are required to return a monitoring form after each assignment as part of the service evaluation. An interpreter survey run in 2005 provided invaluable feedback about the service.
- The booking system is time consuming since much of this is undertaken by the administrative staff to ensure the most appropriate interpreter is assigned to the event;
- There are geographical issues, for example there may be no interpreter local to the request involving longer travel time and costs. Training interpreters in a variety of locations is helpful but does not overcome the availability problem;
- There is considerable investment in training interpreters although they are not employees but sessional workers so may not be available for the interpreting service when needed;
- Often the monitoring/evaluation forms are not completed or returned to the interpreting service.

NHSSIS, NORTHERN IRELAND – Stakeholders' Views on Future Developments

- Until recently the administrative staff at NIHSSIS have been agency but a permanent, multi-lingual administration team has just been recruited to replace them which should save on costs and created a more effective team model. A multi-lingual team enables staff to have an understanding of the immediate issues and concerns and deal with minor issues such as cancelled appointments directly from clients. However, there is some concern about the career pathway for these team members and a desire not to treat them as “just a telephone answering service”;
- The service is trying to encourage a move away from fax requests to email, thus saving on keyboard time and mistakes. There will be no more faxed requests taken after 5th November 2007;

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

- Staff are will soon be working a rota system between 9am and 11pm, the quieter evening time allows jobs requests to be processed avoiding back-logs;
- Taking on interpreters of core high-demand languages as full time members of staff, rather than sessional workers could have considerable saving costs. The interpreters could be recruited in appropriate geographical areas avoiding travel time and ensuring their availability. There is some added value in this idea since the interpreters themselves become more “part of the organisation” and less isolated. Furthermore, as employees these interpreters would have the opportunity to develop their careers through training and experience as well as entitlements to holiday and sick pay. Three year contracts could be awarded in the first instance to account for demographic movements and changes in language requirements;
- There is a need for some interpreters to be trained in advocacy, for instance, to follow up missed appointments by phone; providing a gateway to service provision for target populations and to ensure client choice. But this would need to be undertaken with care since there is a distinct difference between the roles of interpreter and advocate; these cannot be undertaken by the same individual at on an assignment as there could be a conflict of interest;
- Plans are in place for training some interpreters to level 5 to enable them to specialise in areas such as mental health or child protection starting in 2008;
- Currently in the development stage is a monitoring form for client users, which would offer an opportunity for non-English speaking clients to assess the service provision anonymously;
- It is reported that it might be useful to encourage Trusts to employ telephone interpreting for short sessions. Currently most Trusts have contracts with Language Line, the Big Word Company or National Interpreting Service for telephone interpreting and/or translation services;
- A limited number of community information sessions have been provided in the past to advertise the service to potential user groups. This needs to be carried forward;
- Practitioner users and interpreters are encouraged to complete Monitoring Forms at the end of all sessions but ways to ensure this happens are to be developed in order to improve the audit trail and evaluation monitoring;
- It is difficult to have regular meetings with the registered interpreters to discuss any problems or concerns about assignments, working practices and any identified training needs. NIHSSIS are considering how to resolve this problem.

POLICE SERVICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND –

Key Findings

- This interpreting service is managed by a charitable, non-profit making organisation – NICEM. The service is a self-sufficient business operating in profit through its social economy company CONNECT-NICEM. This is a 24-hour, face-to-face service, so there is good availability for professional users, avoiding problems for out-of-hours events. NICEM makes no provision for telephone interpreting;
- Only interpreters on the NICEM register are used, all interpreters are “police-checked” and all interpreters have to sign the NICEM code of ethics – so there is knowledge, at least at service-provider level, about the standard of service on offer. Interpreters are independent of the PSNI – this independence is very important for police and court service provision. NICEM runs an OCN accredited certificate of community interpreter training level 3;

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

- NICEM has produced a handbook of good practice for both police officers and interpreters. Guidelines for working with interpreters as available for the PSNI users as a single download sheet from the NICEM website. <http://www.nicem-interpreting.org.uk/pdfs/Guidelines.pdf>. The PSNI has a point of contact to resolve complaints and breaches of professional conduct;
- The interpreters are employed on a sessional basis and are paid by the hour and for travel expenses – this avoids paying for “waiting” time and full-employment overheads but does have disadvantages. In particular NICEM makes a considerable investment in training its interpreters but they are not employees and as sessional workers may not be available for the interpreting service when needed;
- The service has a very good audit trail. Requests for interpreters have to be made on a booking form; the time sheets and invoices are computer generated for each assignment. Interpreters are “hand-picked” from a computer held database in order to ensure the most appropriate choice. Not yet in general use, but an important addition to the service monitoring and evaluation is the development of an anonymous feedback form for non-English speakers. This is currently in the pilot study phase;
- The booking system is time consuming since much of this is undertaken by the administrative staff to ensure the most appropriate interpreter is assigned to the event. The invoicing and payment systems are also time-consuming and paperwork heavy;
- Not all assignments can be met – especially when emergencies arise. In addition, there are geographical issues; there may be no interpreter local to the request involving longer travel time and costs. Training interpreters in a variety of locations is helpful but does not overcome the availability problem;
- The most important issue is to do with training and ensuring that interpreters have the appropriate level of training to offer the Government service provider as well as the opportunity for career development;
- Interpreters are not able to be fully employed especially for the less “popular” languages and take on other employment thus limiting their availability. Arrangements for briefing and de-briefing interpreters prior to and after assignments are very limited.

POLICE SERVICE (NICEM), NORTHERN IRELAND –

Stakeholders’ Views on Future Developments

- NICEM would like to invest more in the skills development of their interpreters. They have been exploring the option of a postgraduate Diploma in Interpreting, to include an MA option, with Queens University Belfast;
- An important scheme that NICEM has developed is the introduction of feedback forms for non-English speakers. This is in pilot study stage and if successful, forms will be available in all police stations so that client users of interpreting services can feedback issues and concerns anonymously.

10. Case Study 3: Provision in N. Ireland

SUMMARY OF USEFUL POINTS FOR IRELAND (general issues)

- The NIHSSIS and NICEM service models have been tested and evaluated. Useful changes have been made and there are more to be set in place. All of these need to be considered by Ireland particularly:
 - The involvement of local migrant groups and other interested parties in the development process and management system;
 - A knowledge of local demographics (who needs what languages where – also useful to have an idea of not just numbers but whether these groups are families, young male workers, children) to understand the demand and type of requirement;
 - It is particularly important for front line staff to develop an understanding of cultural and religious needs. Their experience also highlights the benefit of clear strategies with an emphasis a commitment to valuing people, both those from ethnic minority groups and those who work as interpreters;
 - The importance of knowing the professional organisations who may use the service and their requirements. It also highlights the importance of getting organisations to think about their real needs for interpretation and the benefits of meeting with the client organisations and feedback information for planning;
 - The importance of making sure that professional users are aware about the ways of working with interpreters and the role of interpreters;
 - The dilemma of whether to have sessional or employed interpreters and the advantages and disadvantage of either approach. This relates to the overall need to give careful consideration to the ways in which interpreters are employed and treated, and the importance to recognise interpreting as a profession;
- Their experiences also highlight the need to consider whether to run a centrally based system or have “branches” because the geographical areas have such different and diverse needs. There may be some advantages of employing a multi-lingual team in the central office;
- The levels of training that might be required. (There needs to be a clear indication of the minimum to ensure professional standards). It also highlights the importance and benefits of having a systematic registration and training process for interpreters;
- Whether the funding of such a service is sponsored at Government level or by the various interested parties and ways to secure permanent funding;
- Which service providers are appropriate to “share” provision and how to provide for those professionals/clients who have specialised language needs (for instance, mental health, child protection, complaints processes, immigration, courts and the police);
- How to deal with out-of-hours and 24 hour service provision service provision (this is often a difficult problem – it will be interesting to see whether the new NIHSSIS system works well) as well as ways of dealing with geographical spread of users;
- Staff development of both in-house and sessional interpreting and administrative personnel;
- The advantages of an effective and efficient booking process and audit trail.



11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

11.1 | Introduction

This chapter sets out the Conclusions and Recommendations arising from our research outlined in the foregoing chapters. Section 11.2 sets out the high level considerations that arise from our research into interpreting and translating service provision in Ireland; Section 11.3 outlines the overall context and the factors impacting on interpreting and translating services from the wider societal and government policy arena. Section 11.4 sets out the key modalities to which Government response needs to be addressed in relation to interpreting and translating service provision. Section 11.5 summarises our overall conclusions and recommendations.

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

11.2 | High Level Considerations

Our research report identifies the following key considerations as regards **demand** side issues in relation to interpreting and translation services:

- There has been exponential growth in the demand for these services (quantified in the report);
- There has been major growth in terms of the diversity of demand both in relation to the variety of languages involved and to the situations in which such services need to be provided.

The significant **supply** side issues are that:

- Supply is not keeping pace with demand and there are, therefore, gaps and shortfalls in the aggregate and in relation to specific languages and situational requirements;
- There is a large degree of consensus that there is a major quality issue to be addressed. The quality issue is multi-dimensional and issues have been identified in the report as to the quality of training and education of both providers and users, in relation to access and as regards the standards of the service provided.

Key issues in relation to the **market** are:

- There are a number of dominant service providers (i.e. contractors who service major GSPs);
- The market is also characterised by a large number of individuals who work both on a freelance basis and for the dominant service contractors;
- There is a lot of uncertainty in the stakeholder community because of the lack of policy direction, standards and regulation.

Some of the major matters arising for **government** would seem to be that:

- There are formal European and domestic obligations to provide services (largely in relation to the justice regime);
- There is an implicit service quality and service provision imperative which spreads right across the public sector but has obvious immediate impact on those sectors with high citizen engagement (revenue, health, education, employment, social welfare etc).

The various GSP responses to the need for interpreting and translating services have evolved on an ad hoc basis, are uncoordinated and are, therefore, variable. There is a lack of standardisation of approaches resulting in variable performance.

At a high level, therefore the situation at present is characterised by:

- A lack of regulation and standards (both for accreditation and for service provision);
- Absence of formal and enforceable standards;
- No entity having a whole of government policy responsibility or ownership of the issues involved.

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

11.3 | Contextualisation

Interpreting and translation services are part of a wider societal and government policy arena. They cannot, therefore, be viewed in isolation. Many of the stakeholders, and the issues they raise, tend to have a very narrow focus based on their own particular agendas.

These services, at a whole of government level, are impacted by:

- Policy in relation to immigration and citizenship and the criteria applied in that regard as regards English language proficiency and skills acquisition;
- The role of the education system in meeting the needs of the migrant community;
- Other supports available for English language acquisition;
- The supports provided to migrants in developing language skills;
- The supports provided to the NGO, community and voluntary sector to assist with integration, including language issues;
- The roles of a multiplicity of State agencies.

In the overall context there are obligations both on the individual and on the State. From the perspective of the State, the issue of interpreting and translation services has to be addressed as one intervention in a range of investment decisions which need to be balanced across a broad spectrum. It seems to us therefore, that there is an urgent imperative to set an overall policy context at government level which would address the broader issues as well as the specific interpreting and translating requirements.

In this context, it will be necessary to ensure coherent policy-making at the level of the Office of the Minister for Integration, and at the level of the Department of Education and Science in relation to issues arising from the separate study on English language acquisition and the role of the education sector in general in relation to issues affecting the migrant community as a whole. A key policy imperative in this regard should be the need over time to reduce pressures on interpreting and translation services.

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

11.4 | Response

It seems to us, arising from our research that, against the foregoing background, the Government response needs to be addressed in relation to the following key modalities:

- Policy;
- Standards and Regulation;
- Education and Training;
- Service Provision;
- Monitoring and Oversight;
- Access to Redress.

Our international benchmarking demonstrates that there is no single right model for addressing these issues. There is, however, a greater level of commonality of approach in other administrations in relation to some of the modalities than to others.

We set out below the key issues involved in each modality.

11.4.1 | Policy

We believe that in terms of ownership of the policy agenda the options are:

- To take a whole of government approach;
- To do it at a sector level;
- To leave it to individual GSPs.

On balance, we think that policy should be approached on a whole of government basis. As regards location of the policy function, the choices are to either establish a new body or assign the role to an existing body. Our view is that the latter approach should be adopted.

As regards setting a policy framework, it seems to us that the choices lie between taking a legislative approach, using a White Paper-type approach or developing a negotiated agreement with key stakeholders. We do not favour the legislative approach. However we are of the view that a national policy framework is needed which will guide the approach to accreditation, training, service provision, standards and quality control.

11.4.2 | Standards & Regulations

The key issue in relation to standards and regulations is whether to have a statutory/mandatory regime or to have a regime based on a national policy framework with best practice guidelines. We favour the latter approach.

Potentially the key areas to which standards and regulations might apply are:

- Qualifications;
- Service standards;
- Operation of the market.

We believe that, based on international best practice, as identified in our research, standards and regulations should be set for qualifications and for service standards. We do not believe that there is a need for any additional market regulation.

As regards the issue of responsibility for standards and regulations, the choices lie between:

- Allowing the industry to set and monitor these;
- Establishing a new body to take on the functions involved;
- Assign the functions to an existing body;
- Assign the functions to an existing statutory/expert body which would act as an incubator to develop a new or subsidiary body.

It is our recommendation that one of the last two approaches be adopted.

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

11.4.3 | Education & Training

Within the overall context of standards and regulations a key issue arises as to how best to approach the issue of education (including qualifications) and training.

In order for these functions to be properly addressed there will be a need to have a regime of accredited courses, accredited providers of training and education services and recognised qualifications for those providing I&T services to the public sector. This, therefore, will mean the creation of a register of accredited practitioners.

Key issues arise in relation to the foregoing in that any system put in place must ensure access (addressing geographic considerations inter alia) and affordability.

As regards provision of such services the choices are to have:

- One nationally recognised centre;
- One centre but with geographically dispersed outreach facilities;
- Multiple providers.

On the whole, we believe, based on the research undertaken, that the best model to adopt is one where the functions of setting the policy and standards and of maintaining the register would be assigned to an existing statutory body and where the delivery of education and training would be based on the recognition of multiple suppliers once the standards are met.

The policy and standards body involved would, in our view, also have the function of recognising qualifications gained outside the State and of setting the requirements for both provider and user education and training.

It is also important to note that the debate on training and education tends to focus on the regime applied to translators and interpreters. There is also however an important need to provide training for Government staff and end-users.

Finally, in relation to education and training, it is vitally important to recognise the need to address cultural competence in the provision of education and training services. Cultural competence is a key requirement for the delivery of effective interpreting and translation services, and needs to be strongly factored into the equation along with the technical and other (for example community) skills necessary to achieve accreditation.

11.4.4 | Provision

The choices as to how I&T services should best be provided are as follows:

- A market model with GSPs outsourcing their requirements to contractors/individuals as appropriate;
- A shared services model wherein the bulk of GSPs needs would be met by a single government supplier of I&T services meeting the needs of a broad spectrum of such GSPs;
- A mixed model incorporating general needs being met on a shared services basis and additional very specialist needs (medical for example) being met by GSPs going to the market;
- Having a market model but with a shared services approach in the provision of awareness, advisory, telephone and emergency (out of hours) services.

We favour the latter approach. This would mean that an existing body would provide the awareness, advisory, telephone and emergency access service to all GSPs. This could be funded through grants from key GSPs opting in to the service and then further funded on a volume of usage basis. It is likely that the body with responsibility for this would also be the policy and standards body. Individual GSPs would still have the choice to outsource their service provision component to a national or internationally based provider based on a competitive tendering process.

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

Our view would be that the approach suggested here should initially be pilot tested with one, or with a small number, of key GSPs prior to any wider rollout on a whole of government basis.

However, taking a whole of government policy approach to the issues involved should not be seen as reducing the requirements on GSPs to take ownership of the service provision agenda in their own area of responsibility. In this regard, the development by GSPs of cultural competence in providing services to all client-users remains a key imperative. GSPs may need to examine the extent to which the rationalisation of interpreting and translation services is possible within their own domains. For example, we found in conducting the research many instances of the same or similar documents being translated on behalf of different entities often within the same national organisation and/or sector. This is undoubtedly an opportunity to reduce duplication in this regard.

11.4.5 | Monitoring & Oversight

The areas potentially where monitoring and oversight may be required include:

- The monitoring of demand and supply side patterns and trends and the provision of policy advice based thereon;
- The oversight of the education, training and service standards regime and the monitoring of compliance in that regard;
- The monitoring of resource utilisation and the making of recommendations for improving efficiency, effectiveness and economy in that regard on a whole of government basis.
- The oversight and monitoring of rates and terms of employment in the market.

Our view is that the first three areas covered above should form part of the responsibilities of the policy and standards body. We do not see (other than in

relation to existing mechanisms) a need to establish any separate means for regulating/overseeing the market on matters such as rates of payment, terms and conditions of employment etc.

11.4.6 | Redress

Potentially access to redress may be required in relation to the following areas:

- GSPs having problems with suppliers;
- Service users having problems with GSPs;
- Service providers having problems with the education and training regime and/or with their employer.

We believe that sufficient mechanisms of administrative justice (for example the ombudsman) already exist to cater for the needs likely to arise in these areas. The existing organisms of the State which provide redress and appellate services could call on the policy and standards body for advice as required on specific I&T matter if and when they arise.

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

11.5 | Summary

The research findings in this report point to a number of key issues requiring attention by government. These are:

- Best practice international models for I&T services indicate that there are certain minimal requirements to be met in order to have a coherent government regime. These include the need for an overall policy context, the setting of standards and the maintenance of a register in respect of the education and training of interpreters and translators, the development of a framework agreement for service standards and service provision to which GSPs would subscribe and the provision of promotional and awareness services to ensure that end users are aware of their entitlements and of the means to access services;

- The absence of the foregoing in the Irish context gives rise to a number of consequent concerns. These include demand exceeding supply, variability in quality, a lack of coherence across government as GSPs evolve their own systems and procedures, gaps in service (for example, absence of access to a telephone service, poor mechanisms for meeting out of hours requirements etc), a lack of professional advisory services to GSPs, lack of training (including training in related cultural and religious dimensions) for staff in GSPs, poor pay and conditions of employment in the sector and a variety of other issues which are impacting on service quality and service delivery;

- At the heart of the issues to be addressed is the fact that, under current arrangements, there is no single “owner” of the agenda in relation to I&T services. Therefore, a variety of different arms of government and a multiplicity of GSPs find themselves dealing with the different aspects of the problems which arise.

Our role in conducting this research project was essentially to study the situation in Ireland and to identify options for dealing with the issues arising. It seems to us that the following steps should be taken:

- A national policy framework for the provision of I&T services should be developed in the context of the contextualisation issues raised earlier in this chapter. The policy framework would, we believe, have to be developed in conjunction with GSPs and with other stakeholders;

- Arrangements should be put in place to develop a register of accredited practitioners and for GSPs to use that register for the purposes of sourcing I&T service providers. Work would need to be done with the education and training sectors in order to develop the standards which would underpin the register;

- Similarly, a framework agreement needs to be developed for standards of service provision to which the GSPs would subscribe. Again, work would need to be done in conjunction with service providers, the education and training sector and with the GSPs in order to evolve such a national policy framework, incorporating appropriate standards for service provision.

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

There are a variety of options for government in terms of who should take the lead role and where the unit to undertake the necessary work should reside within the State structures.

We believe that a small, professional unit could undertake this work. In order to avoid confusion and duplication, the unit thus established could, in addition to the functions set out above also take on the following functions:

- Providing promotion and awareness services;

- Providing professional advisory services to GSPs on meeting their I&T needs;

- Monitoring trends in supply and demand and providing advice to government on coherence across the State services;

- Monitoring compliance with standards;

- Developing a pilot test for a telephone, emergency and out-of-hours service which could service the needs of multiple GSPs.

In the light of the nature of the conclusions and recommendations arising from our research it is not possible, at this stage, to produce anything useful or definitive on the cost implications. These will be highly dependent on the option chosen for meeting the requirements identified. In very broad terms, the main potential cost elements might be:

- The creation of a small policy and advisory unit, as recommended, where the bulk of the cost would be the staffing cost involved;

- The costs associated with the creation and maintenance of the register;

- The costs of piloting (and, perhaps, subsequently rolling out) the telephone emergency and out-of-hours service;

- The costs associated with promoting the services and of raising awareness;

- Potential additional education and training costs.

There are obviously a variety of means by which such costs could be met and it is too early in the process to estimate the likely extent of such costs. However, it is clear from the work we have undertaken that any deliberations on cost arising from our research will have to take account of the following:

- Budgetary constraints are already impacting on service provision by GSPs;

- Training and education costs are a potential barrier to entry which could impact on supply;

- Concerns as to potential cost are a barrier to end users accessing services.

11. Conclusions & Options for Future Progress

11.6 | Aims

The overall aims of our recommendations might best be summarised as follows:

- To enhance service provision through putting in place a national standards and regulatory framework with a light touch approach;

- To support GSPs with a small professional advisory unit which would have a policy advisory role to government on interpreting and translation issues;

- To ensure that GSPs continue to own the service delivery agenda;

- To ensure that training and education provision is delivered in line with overall policy and service provision needs; and

- To provide for a small central competency pool of expertise in developing an appropriate national response in a key area of the overall policy agenda in relation to integration and interculturalism.

11.7 | Next Steps

Our views on the next steps in the process are as follows:

- Our report on the outcomes from the research undertaken should be considered by the NCCRI and by the Office for the Minister for Integration;

- The report should be circulated to the key stakeholders for comment within a defined timeframe;

- Once feedback has been received the Office for the Minister for Integration should consider the issue of establishing the small professional unit recommended and where within the overall machinery of existing bodies such a unit should be located; and

- The unit, once established, should be charged with developing an implementation plan for giving effect to the recommendations arising from the research.



12. APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

A | Bibliography

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Tele-interpreting and Health Services Delivery to Aboriginal Clients (Draft Paper); Kevin Coulehan et al, 2006

Telephone Interpreting in Health Care Settings: Some Commonly asked Questions; Nataly Kelly, 2007

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The Use of Jobcentre Plus Telephony and Face-to-face First Contact Services by Customers with Specific Communication Barriers; Research Report No 446; Caroline Hay and Ashfa Slater, 2007

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Working With Health Care Interpreters; Sydney West Area Health Service, 2006

APPENDIX B

B | Organisations Consulted

B1 | Government Service Providers

The following Government Services Providers returned and completed questionnaires:

An Garda Síochána
Citizens Information Board (CIB)
Courts Service
Department of Communications, Marine & Natural Resources
Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government
Department of Finance
Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT)
National Employment Rights Authority (NERA)
FÁS, Employment Services
Garda National Immigration Bureau (GNIB)
Health Services Executive (HSE); HSE South East
Irish Naturalisation & Immigration Service
Labour Court
Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner (ORAC)
Private Residential Tenancy Board
Reception & Integration Agency (RIA)
Revenue
Refugee Legal Service (RLS); Refugee Documentation Centre (RDC)
A Selection of Acute & Maternity Hospitals
A Selection of Local Authorities

B2 | NGOs & Representative Groups

The following NGOs and Representative Groups returned and completed questionnaires:

Immigrant Council Ireland
Irish Chinese Centre
SPIRASI
Lithuanian Association Ireland
International Organisation for Migration
NASC Ireland
Integrating Ireland
Information Centre for Immigrants

B3 | Suppliers

The following interpreting and translation services suppliers returned and completed questionnaires:

Lionbridge
DCU LS (Dublin City University Language Services)
Chartered Translators Ireland
Quid
Albana
Cherry
Context
Aisling
Irish Translators and Interpreters Association

B4 | Focus Groups

People from four countries were identified as likely to reflect the greatest number of people living in Ireland with low or no proficiency in English, based on CSO figures. They were from:

China
Latvia
Lithuania
Poland

B5 | Other Consultants

Listed below are the members of the Advisory Group. All members had an opportunity to input into the consultation process as described in Chapter 1.

MEMBER	ORGANISATION
Alice O’Flynn	Health Services Executive
Diane Nurse	Health Services Executive
Margaret O’Neill / Pat Moynan	Courts Services
Marie-Annick Gash	Dublin City University Language Services
Aisling Nolan	Dublin City University Language Services
Annette Schiller	Irish Translators and Interpreters Association
Bernie Phelan	Department of Justice
Carol McGann	Department Social & Family Affairs
Orla McPartlin	An Garda Síochana
Justyna McCabe	Initially the Northern Ireland Health & Social Services Interpreting Service (NIHSSIS) and then Newry & Mourne District Council
Philip Watt	NCCRI
Fiona McGaughey	NCCRI
Karla Charles	NCCRI
Joe Lenaghan	NCCRI Synergy
John Haskins	Reception & Integration Agency / Office of the Minister for Integration
Martina Glennon	Reception & Integration Agency / Office of the Minister for Integration
Anne Gallagher	NUI Maynooth
Geralyn McGarry	Citizens Information Board
Mary McKenna	Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government
Katherine Chan Mullen	Chinese Information Centre
Jean Pierre Eyanga	Integrating Ireland
Andrew Diggins	Department of Education & Science
Maura Conneely / Jack McDonald	Revenue
Mary Carmody	FÁS
Breda Naughton	Department of Education

B6 | International Case Studies

England:

Key documents reviewed

The Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999
The Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984
PACE Code of Practice C
National Agreement on Arrangements for the Use of Interpreters, Translators and Language Service Professionals in Investigations and Proceedings within the Criminal Justice System, as revised 2007
National Occupational Standards in Interpreting (revised 2007)
Metropolitan Police Service Working with interpreters – Guidelines for Personnel
Interpreters and Language Service Professionals in the Criminal Courts: A Good Practice Guide
MPS standard translation rates
MPS standard interpreting rates
Terms and Conditions for Individuals Providing Face-to-Face Interpreting Services
NRPSI Criteria for Entry, Disciplinary Procedures and Code of Conduct (all downloadable from <http://www.nrpsi.co.uk/applications/index.htm>)

Organisations interviewed

Metropolitan Police Service, London
Her Majesty's Courts Service, England and Wales
NRPSI Ltd
PSIC:Public Service Interpreting Consultancy

Netherlands

Key documents reviewed

Dutch Act on Sworn Interpreters and Translators
Summary in English of recent research conducted by SEO Economic Research, University of Amsterdam
'Experiences in the Netherlands', report produced by Evert-Jan van der Vlis MPM, policy-maker in the Legal Aid department of the Ministry of Justice in The Hague.

Organisations interviewed

Ministry of Justice
Legal Aid Board
SEO Economic Research, University of Amsterdam

Northern Ireland

Interviews Conducted

Maureen Doyle: NIHSSIS Manager and Equality & Diversity Manager for Belfast Health & Social Care Trust
Justyna McCabe: Cross Border Challenge of Change Project. Previously a trainer and pilot project manager for the NIHSSIS
Gabrielle Doherty: Co-ordinator of Capacity Building at CONNECT-NICEM

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More Than Words, second stakeholder conference report, the Regional Health & Social Services Interpreting Project for Black and Minority Ethnic Groups, June 2005, Belfast

More Than Words, third stakeholder conference report, NIHSSIS, May 2007, Armagh

Northern Ireland Act 1998 – section 75, http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/section_75

Policing with the Community in Northern Ireland: problem solving, partnership and quality service;
PSNI, 2007, www.psnipolice.uk/index/about_psnipolice/pg_policing_with_the_community.htm

Priorities and Budget, 2005-8, www.pfgni.gov.uk/fulldoc.pdf

Race and Racism in NI: a review of the research evidence, Paul Connolly, 2002

Race Relations Order (amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland), 2003,
http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/race2003_341.pdf

Race Relations Order (NI), 1997,
http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk/index/equality/race/race_relations_order.htm

Regional Health and Social Service Interpreting Project website, accessed September 2007 – currently being reconstructed <http://www.interpreting.n-i.nhs.uk/index.php>

Shaping More Than Words, the black and minority ethnic perspective, research report to assess interpreting needs for health and social services in Northern Ireland, October, 2004, www.interpreting.nhs.n-i.uk

Shaping More Than Words, the Interpreters' Perspective, research report to assess interpreting needs for health and social services in Northern Ireland,
March 2004, the Regional Health and Social Services Interpreting Project for Black and Minority Ethnic Groups

The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, February 1999, Sir William Macpherson, The Stationery Office, UK

APPENDIX C

C | Additional Case Study Information

C1 | Metropolitan Police Service London (chapter 8)

C1.1 MPS Interpreting Fees 2006

April 2006 Metropolitan Police Service Language Services

7th Floor
Empress State Building
Empress Approach
Lillie Road
London SW6 1TR
Telephone:
Facsimile:

INTERPRETING FEES – payable with effect from 1st April 2006:

HOURS	DAY 0800 - 2000	NIGHT/SATURDAY 2000 - 0800	SUNDAY/BANK HOLIDAY/ 24 HOURS
0.5	17.13	25.70	34.26
1.0	34.26	51.39	68.52
2.00	68.52	102.78	137.04
3.00	102.78	154.17	205.56
4.00	137.04	205.56	274.08
5.00	171.30	256.95	342.60
6.00	205.56	308.34	411.12
7.00	239.82	359.73	479.64
8.00	274.08	411.12	548.16
9.00	308.34	462.51	616.68
10.00	342.60	513.90	685.20
MINIMUM *	68.52	102.78	137.04

* This does NOT include payment for travelling time.

** These rates are only intended as a guide - for periods of less than an hour, proportionate rates are paid.

***Standard Class travelling expenses are reimbursed at cost. Mileage expenses are reimbursed at a rate of 35.7 pence per mile.

****Travelling time will be paid at 80% of the relevant interpreting rate.

Telephone Interpreting – rounded to nearest 15 minutes

15mins	8.57	12.84	17.13
30mins	17.13	25.70	34.26
45mins	25.70	38.52	51.39

C1.2 MPS Translation Fees 2006

April 2007 Metropolitan Police Service Language Services

7th Floor
 Empress State Building
 Empress Approach
 Lillie Road
 London SW6 1TR
 Telephone:
 Facsimile:

TRANSLATION FEES – payable with effect from 1st April 2007:

TRANSLATIONS INTO ENGLISH: (per 1000 words)

CATEGORY	A1 £	A2 £	B £	C £	D1 £	D2 £
BASIC	42.00	42.00	50.50	59.50	50.50	63.50
TECHNICAL	57.50	66.50	74.00	90.00	73.50	91.50

TRANSLATIONS FROM ENGLISH: (per 1000 words)

CATEGORY	A1 £	A2 £	B1 £	B2 £	C1 £	C2 £	D £
BASIC	46.00	51.50	58.00	63.50	74.50	112.00	112.00
TECHNICAL	73.50	81.00	89.00	95.00	113.50	165.50	167.50

MINIMUM CHARGE: £33.00.

TRANSLATIONS INTO ENGLISH:

- A1 FRENCH, SPANISH, ITALIAN
- A2 PORTUGUESE, WELSH, GERMAN, DUTCH, AFRIKAANS, DANISH, NORWEGIAN, SWEDISH, FINNISH, FLEMISH
- B SLAVONIC LANGUAGES and ROMANIAN
- C ALL LANGUAGES NOT FALLING WITHIN A1, A2, B, D1 and D2
- D1 JAPANESE, KOREAN, VIETNAMESE
- D2 CHINESE

TRANSLATIONS FROM ENGLISH:

- A1 FRENCH, SPANISH, ITALIAN
- A2 PORTUGUESE, WELSH, GERMAN, DUTCH, AFRIKAANS, DANISH, NORWEGIAN, SWEDISH, FINNISH, FLEMISH
- B1 RUSSIAN, POLISH, ROMANIAN
- B2 SLAVONIC LANGUAGES other than those in groups B1
- C1 ALL LANGUAGES NOT FALLING WITHIN A1, A2, B1, B2, C2 and D
- C2 ARABIC, FARSI
- D CHINESE LANGUAGES, JAPANESE, KOREAN

SURCHARGES:

For very small jobs a recommended fee equal to the rate for 200 words or characters may be paid. Alternatively a lump sum payment of not more than £32.00 may be negotiated.

Multiple small jobs should be aggregated and paid at the appropriate rate per 1000 words or characters whenever it is economical and reasonable to do so.

A surcharge may be paid for urgent work, when the department both asks for and receives early delivery as follows :

- for urgent work	(within one week)	15%
- for very urgent work	(within 4 days)	25%
- for immediate work	(within 2 days)	35%

The transit allowances are net, i.e. transit time is excluded.

A surcharge of 15%, 25%, 35% may be paid for longer periods if the volume of work means that it must be done under equivalent pressure of time.

A surcharge of up to 40% (according to the time and effort involved) may be paid for work calling for special attention to terminology, style or presentation, where a high degree of polish is essential for reasons of policy or prestige. For translation into English the surcharge should normally be limited to 20% except where the translation is required for publication and in connection with the international conferences or negotiations.

WORDAGE :

The total number of words of the **target language** is accepted as the **wordage** count.

(As a word count of the target language is automatically provided by the computers used by translators, this is more appropriate to use than the source language.)



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