

Report on the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada

This study was made possible by funding from the Department of Justice Canada as part of the Action Plan for Official Languages 2023-2028.

May 2025



AICAPJ

Alliance interuniversitaire
canadienne pour l'avancement
des professions jurilingagères

CIAALLP

Canadian Interuniversity
Alliance for the Advancement of
the Legal Language Professions

Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without the support and collaboration of many individuals and organizations. The members of the Canadian Interuniversity Alliance for the Advancement of the Legal Language Professions (CIAALLP) would first like to warmly thank our partners in Canada's legal language sector, who did not hesitate to distribute the data collection tools and encourage members of their networks and their employees to respond to our requests, and who also agreed to participate in interviews themselves. Some partners are explicitly named in the report. Others, such as the societies and associations of language professionals across Canada, have supported our approach from behind the scenes, but their support has had a real impact. Their expertise and collaboration were essential to the completion of this study.

We would also like to express our deep gratitude to our funder, the Department of Justice's Access to Justice in Both Official Languages Support Fund, whose financial support made this work possible. The Fund team's confidence in our approach was a driving force throughout the process.

Our sincere thanks to the research team for their outstanding professionalism, rigour and dedication. Special thanks to researcher Etienne Lehoux-Jobin, whose diligent work greatly enhanced the quality of this report.

Finally, we would like to thank all those who agreed to take part in this study. Their generosity, time and testimonials have given us a better understanding of the realities on the ground and provided food for thought.

Thank you to each and every one of you!

Table of contents

List of figures	6
The report at a glance	7
1. Overview of the report.....	8
Background	8
1.1 Objectives and research questions	8
1.2 Scope and limitations of the study	8
1.3 Study methodology	9
1.4 Report structure.....	9
1.5 Overview of the survey of legal language professionals.....	10
1.6 Overview of employer interviews	11
2. Analysis of the survey and interviews.....	12
Background	12
2.1 Analysis of the survey of legal language professionals	12
2.1.1 Professional profile	12
a. Types of tasks.....	12
b. Frequency of task performance	13
c. Years of experience.....	14
d. Retirement plans.....	14
e. Career change plans.....	15
f. Working language combination.....	15
g. Employment status	16
h. Employers of salaried workers.....	17
i. Freelancers' clients.....	17
j. Work region.....	18
2.1.2 Sociodemographic profile	19
a. Place of residence	19
b. Age	20
c. Level and field of education.....	21
d. Professional associations	22
2.1.3 Individuals who spend at least about half of their time on legal translation	22
a. Typical career path.....	22
b. Key factors in the choice of legal translation as a career	24
c. Overall satisfaction with legal translation	24
d. Challenges and obstacles	25
e. Recommending this career choice to others	26
f. Required qualities and skills.....	26
2.1.4 Individuals who spend at least about half of their time on court interpreting	27
a. Typical career path.....	27
b. Key factors in choosing court interpreting	28
c. Overall satisfaction with court interpreting.....	28
d. Challenges and obstacles	29
e. Recommending this career choice to others	30
f. Required qualities and skills.....	30
2.1.5 Individuals who spend less than half of their time on legal translation.....	31
a. Key factors in the choice of legal translation as a career	31

b.	Overall satisfaction with legal translation	32
c.	Reasons for not spending more time on it	32
d.	Sources of satisfaction or motivation	33
e.	Challenges and obstacles	33
f.	Factors that might encourage them to allocate more time to this activity	34
2.1.6	Individuals who spend less than half of their time on court interpreting	35
a.	Key factors in choosing court interpreting	35
b.	Overall satisfaction with court interpreting	35
c.	Reasons for not spending more time on it	36
d.	Sources of satisfaction or motivation	36
e.	Challenges and obstacles	37
f.	Factors that might encourage them to allocate more time to this activity	37
2.1.7	Views on the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada	38
a.	General observation on shortages	39
b.	Length of shortages	40
c.	Factors behind shortages	40
d.	Effect of shortages	41
e.	Suggested strategies to alleviate shortages	42
2.2	Analysis of employer interviews	43
2.2.1	The situation regarding regional shortages	43
a.	Current state of affairs	43
b.	Assessment of shortages	44
c.	Shortage forecasts	44
2.2.2	Overview of organizational shortages	44
a.	Ability to respond to demand	44
b.	Vacant positions	45
c.	Gaps in legal language skills	45
d.	Measures to address gaps	45
2.2.3	Organizational recruitment of legal language professionals	45
a.	Recruitment campaigns and strategies	45
b.	Barriers to hiring	46
c.	Solutions to recruitment problems	46
2.2.4	Proposals for a Canada-wide strategic plan	47
3.	Report conclusions	48
Background	48
3.1	Legal translators and court interpreters: two distinct realities?	48
3.2	What is the current picture of the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada?	49
3.3	What can be done to attract more candidates to legal language programs and jobs in Canada?	50
4.	Strategic recommendations	51
Overview	51
4.1	Promote legal language careers to students	51
4.2	Raise the profile of legal language professions	51
4.3	Improve working conditions for legal language professionals	51
4.4	Promote flexibility at work for legal language professionals	51
4.5	Expand and diversify legal language training opportunities	52
4.6	Encourage specialization in the legal language professions among language professionals	52
Conclusion	52

Annex 1: Survey on the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada.....	53
Annex 2: Interview on the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada.	63

List of figures

Figure 1: As part of your professional activities, which of the following tasks do you perform at least occasionally?	12
Figure 2: What proportion of your professional activities corresponds to legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation tasks?	13
Figure 3: How long have you been performing legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation tasks?	14
Figure 4: In how many years do you plan to retire?	14
Figure 5: Do you ever consider leaving the legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation field?	15
Figure 6: What are your working language combinations?	16
Figure 7: Considering only legal language-related tasks, which of the following statements best describes your employment situation?	16
Figure 8: Please specify your employment situation.	17
Figure 9: With regard to freelance work, how many of your direct clients are part of the public service?	17
Figure 10: With regard to freelance work, how many of your indirect clients are part of the public service?	18
Figure 11: Where are your main clients or your public sector employer located?	19
Figure 12: Province or territory of residence.	20
Figure 13: Age.	20
Figure 14: Highest degree or certificate obtained.	21
Figure 15: Field of the highest certificate or diploma obtained.	21
Figure 16: Are you a member of a professional association or society of translators or interpreters?	22
Figure 17: The six main professional associations or societies.	22
Figure 18: The career path to legal translation for individuals who spend at least about half of their time on it.	23
Figure 19: The ten key factors influencing the choice of legal translation as a career.	24
Figure 20: How satisfied are you with your legal translation work?	24
Figure 21: How likely are you to recommend legal translation as a career choice or career change?	26
Figure 22: The path to court interpreting for individuals who spend at least about half of their time on it.	27
Figure 23: The ten main factors in choosing court interpreting.	28
Figure 24: How satisfied are you with your court interpretation activities?	29
Figure 25: How likely are you to recommend court interpreting as a career choice or career change?	30
Figure 26: The ten main factors in the occasional practice of legal translation.	31
Figure 27: How satisfied are you with your occasional legal translation activities?	32
Figure 28: What are the reasons why you do not perform legal translation tasks more often?	32
Figure 29: Is there anything that could prompt you to perform legal translation tasks (including the revision of legal translations) more often?	34
Figure 30: The ten main factors in the occasional practice of court interpreting.	35
Figure 31: How satisfied are you with your occasional court interpretation work?	36
Figure 32: What are the reasons why you do not perform court interpretation tasks more often?	36
Figure 33: Is there anything that could prompt you to perform court interpretation tasks more often?	38
Figure 34: Have you observed labour shortages in the legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) and court interpretation fields?	39
Figure 35: Proportion of individuals who have observed labour shortages, by task performed.	39
Figure 36: For how long have you been observing these shortages?	40

The report at a glance

The Canadian legal sector is facing *a shortage of legal language professionals*, particularly in the fields of legal translation and court interpreting. Given the circumstances, there is a need to gather precise data on the situation in order to develop well-supported recommendations to address it. This report details the results of this process.

Study objectives

1. To obtain *evidence-based data* to strengthen legal language professions.
2. To set out *strategic recommendations* aimed at strengthening the legal language professions.

Study methodology

1. A *survey* of legal translators and court interpreters who work directly or indirectly for the public sector.
2. *Interviews* conducted with clients or employers of legal translators and court interpreters working in the public sector.

What is the current picture of the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada?

Ultimately, it proved difficult to reconcile the accounts of legal language professionals with those of employers. Legal language professionals expressed mixed views, although interpreters more consistently reported shortages in significant numbers. The employers' perspective, which mainly concerns translation in the public service, was largely consistent, if not unanimous: there is no perceived shortage of legal language professionals. In light of these findings, we need to at least bring perspective to the initial premise of the study, which is that the Canadian legal sector is experiencing a shortage of legal language professionals. The situation is nevertheless complex and varies greatly from case to case, depending on a wide range of interrelated factors: task (i.e., legal translation versus court interpreting), region (e.g., one province versus another), language combination (e.g., English to French or vice versa) and so on. So how do we explain the growing number of positions and vacancies in recent years? This clearly points to a shortage. The hypothesis suggested by our study is that large employers of legal translators and court interpreters seem to be spared from the shortages. It tends to show a link between the volume of services, the critical mass of translators, and working conditions. The higher the volume, the greater the number of translators needed, and the more the work is valued, the less difficult it is to recruit qualified people. This hypothesis will be further explored in a subsequent study of environments with lower volumes and less capacity to build up a team of legal translators and court interpreters.

Six key strategic recommendations to attract more candidates

1. Promote legal language careers to students.
2. Raise the profile of legal language professions.
3. Improve working conditions for legal language professionals.
4. Promote flexibility at work for legal language professionals.
5. Expand and diversify legal language training opportunities.
6. Encourage specialization in the legal language professions among language professionals.

1. Overview of the report

Background

The Canadian legal sector is facing a shortage of legal language professionals,¹ particularly in the fields of legal translation and court interpreting. This issue was confirmed by a report commissioned by Université de Saint-Boniface in 2016.² In recent years, this shortage has also been the subject of discussions and conferences within various professional associations, such as the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group on Access to Justice in Both Official Languages (FPT Group), the Réseau national de formation en justice (RNFJ), McGill University's Paul-André Crépeau Centre for Private and Comparative Law, and the Canadian Bar Association. Moreover, the recent adoption of legislation increasing translation and interpretation requirements in both official languages (both at the federal level and in certain regions of Canada) has created additional pressure on an already-limited pool of legal language professionals.

That being said, the details of the shortage remain unclear, and possible avenues to address it are anecdotal. Given the circumstances, accurate data on the situation were needed in order to develop evidence-based recommendations to address it. This report details the results of this process.

1.1 Objectives and research questions

The objectives of this report are:

1. To obtain evidence-based data to strengthen the legal language professions.
2. To set out strategic recommendations aimed at strengthening the legal language professions.

To achieve these objectives, the report addresses the following two main research questions:

1. What is the qualitative and quantitative overview of the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada?
2. What can be done to attract more job applicants, particularly those who occasionally engage in legal language tasks, and more students to programs offering a legal language specialization?

1.2 Scope and limitations of the study

For the purposes of this study, the analysis is limited to two legal language professions, namely, *legal translator* and *court interpreter*. It is understood that these are the two main legal language professions in Canada, and that most other related professions are derived from them (for example, *legal revisers* and *jurilinguists* typically have training in translation, a specialization in law, or both).

To ensure the feasibility of the study, we also limited our analysis to the situation as perceived in the public sector (both by those working in these professions and by their employers). The government is widely regarded as the main client for legal translation and court interpreting services in Canada and the main provider of stable jobs for legal language professionals. Similarly, it is assumed that the public sector generally offers the

¹ In the context of this study, "legal language professional" refers to anyone whose professional activities involve the linguistic processing of legal discourse, in written or oral form. These activities include legal translation, court interpreting, legal revision, legal drafting and co-drafting.

² PRA (2016). *État des lieux relatif à la formation dans les domaines de l'interprétation judiciaire, de la sténographie judiciaire et de la traduction juridique*. Online: <https://www.rnfj.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/EtatlieuxInterpretation-stenographie-traduct.pdf>, accessed on May 15, 2025.

best working conditions (e.g., benefits, compensation, long-term stability) and that, as a result, legal language professionals want to work there as salaried employees or freelancers. Since the private sector ecosystem is essential to meeting the demand generated by the public sector, we also collected data from individuals who indirectly provide services to the public sector, that is, through their employers.

These two constraints are the main limitation of the study. While the findings and analysis offer insight into certain aspects of the situation, they do not present a complete picture of the shortage across Canada, in all sectors and all professions. We are nevertheless of the opinion that the approach was appropriate: in this first exploratory phase of examining the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada, an accurate snapshot of a portion of the situation is preferable to a broad but imprecise overview of the whole country. Moreover, as the analysis and conclusions will show, the portrait of the shortage of these two professions in the public sector is a strong indicator of broader trends in the legal language industry.

1.3 Study methodology

Two data collection methods were used:

1. A survey of legal translators and court interpreters who work directly or indirectly for the public sector.
2. Interviews conducted with clients or employers of legal translators and court interpreters working in the public sector.

The survey, offered in French and English, was conducted using the McGill LimeSurvey³ tool. The interviews were conducted in French or in English, depending on the organization's preference. Similarly, organizations could choose to do a written interview (i.e., an email interview, in a fillable Word document) or an oral interview (i.e., a semi-structured interview, on Teams, with audio-video recording for transcription purposes). Organizations were free to respond to written interviews as they saw fit. With regard to oral interviews, organizations could designate one person to represent them. We asked organizations to set aside approximately one hour for oral interviews (synchronous interviews) and from one to a few hours for written interviews (asynchronous interviews).⁴

We adopted a mixed approach to data analysis, combining quantitative (descriptive statistics for closed-ended survey questions) and qualitative (thematic content analysis for open-ended survey questions and interviews) methods. Other methodological details of the study will be specified throughout the report.

1.4 Report structure

The report is divided into four main sections:

1. The first section, *Overview of the report*, contextualizes the study and presents its foundations.
2. The second section, *Analysis of the survey and interviews*, is by far the most substantial, as it contains all the data from the survey of language professionals and the interviews with their employers or clients.
3. The third section, *Report conclusions*, summarizes the key findings of the study.

³ Ethics Certificate 24-11-043, McGill University Ethics Committee (REB-1). In accordance with ethics requirements, the data obtained are stored on secure McGill University servers that can be accessed only by the project's research team. No personally identifying information was collected (e.g., names, email addresses).

⁴ Ethics Certificate 24-12-050, McGill University Ethics Committee (REB-1). In accordance with ethics requirements, the data obtained are stored on secure McGill University servers that can be accessed only by the project's research team.

4. The fourth section, *Strategic recommendations*, proposes possible solutions to strengthen the legal language field.

1.5 Overview of the survey of legal language professionals

The purpose of the survey was to better understand the shortage of legal language specialists (more specifically, legal translators and court interpreters) in the Canadian public sector. The survey targeted language professionals (1) at least part of whose professional activities consist of legal translation (including revision of legal translations) or court interpreting tasks and (2) at least part of whose tasks are performed for a client or an employer in Canada's public sector.⁵ The survey, which focused on professional experience, enabled us to take the pulse of legal translators and court interpreters on topics such as:

- The key factors influencing the decision to specialize in law
- The barriers and challenges to employment
- Potential solutions to attract more job applicants
- The reasons why some individuals do not engage in legal language tasks full-time

The survey, which included almost 80 questions, was divided into three main sections, as described in Table 1.

Table 1: Structure of the survey

Section 1	<i>Survey eligibility questions</i> <i>Professional profile questions</i>	
Section 2	<i>Translation questions...</i>	<i>Interpretation questions...</i>
	... for individuals who spend <i>at least about half of their time</i> on it	... for individuals who spend <i>at least about half of their time</i> on it
	... for individuals who spend <i>less than half of their time</i> on it	... for individuals who spend <i>less than half of their time</i> on it
Section 3	<i>Shortage questions</i> <i>Sociodemographic profile questions</i>	

The questions that participants were asked to answer varied mainly based on (1) the tasks performed (i.e., translation, interpreting, or both) and (2) the time spent on those tasks (i.e., at least about half of their time or less than half of their time) (see Appendix 1 for the survey template). We considered the question of time spent on tasks to be important, since in a previous study,⁶ we had established that a significant proportion of legal language professionals in Canada (42.6% of respondents to the study in question) do not spend all their working hours on legal work, and that these professionals would no doubt be the ones the industry might initially want to attract to fill shortages. Consequently, the questions directed at the two groups were not necessarily the same.

The survey was open from December 13, 2024, to January 27, 2025, that is, for 46 days. Of a total of 385 surveys started by individuals, 241 (62.60%) were duly completed and submitted. Of the 241 responses submitted, 182 (75.52%) were retained for analysis because they were considered “complete,” although this does not mean that participants answered all the questions. In short, out of a total of 385 responses, 182 (47.27%)

⁵ These individuals may include, for example, a court interpreter, a legal translator employed by the Translation Bureau, a freelance generalist translator who occasionally translates legal or quasi-legal texts for public-sector clients, a lawyer or legal assistant who occasionally translates procedural documents, a professional reviser or editor who sometimes revises or translates legal texts in the public sector, or a jurilinguist who works for the Courts Administration Service (CAS) or Justice Canada.

⁶ Girard, M.-H. (2023). Portrait des professionnels, des professions et de l'industrie du langage du droit au Canada. *Meta*, 68(2), 309–340. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1109340ar>.

were usable. From a linguistic standpoint, we obtained 126 responses in French (69.23%) and 56 in English (30.77%), but we analyzed all responses in the same way, regardless of language.

1.6 Overview of employer interviews

The purpose of the interviews was to gain a better understanding of the shortage of legal language specialists (more specifically, legal translators) in the Canadian public sector. Accordingly, we invited organizations that represent certain key employers or clients of legal translators in Canada’s public sector to participate. The interviews, which primarily explored organizations’ perspectives on the shortages, were intended to collect insights on themes such as:

- Recruitment campaigns and positions vacated or filled in recent years
- Recruitment obstacles and challenges
- Skills gaps
- Potential solutions to attract more job applicants

The interviews were divided into four main sections, as described in Table 2.

Table 2: Interview structure

Section 1: <i>Regional situation</i>	Questions about the current state of shortages in the region where the organization is located, as well as the trends observed in recent years and those anticipated in the coming years
Section 2: <i>Organizational situation</i>	Questions about the legal language work carried out within the organization, including aspects such as demand and needs, staffing levels, the severity of the shortage, and skill gaps among legal language professionals
Section 3: <i>Recruiting within the organization</i>	Questions about the recruitment efforts undertaken by the organization, the results achieved, the challenges and obstacles encountered, the candidates’ skills gaps, and the strategies used to attract more candidates
Section 4: <i>Conclusion</i>	Question seeking suggestions for a strategic plan to address shortages nationwide and question offering interviewees the opportunity to add further details

All organizations answered roughly the same questions, but in the case of the oral interviews, the questions varied somewhat owing to the semi-structured format (see Appendix 2 for the interview template).

A total of seven organizations kindly agreed to participate:

1. The Translation Bureau (federal) for English into French translation
2. The Translation Bureau (federal) for French into English translation
3. The Courts Administration Service (federal)
4. The Office of Legislative Counsel of the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General
5. Yukon’s French Language Services Directorate
6. The Translation Department of the Legislative Translation and Publishing Directorate at the National Assembly of Québec
7. The Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal of Newfoundland and Labrador

While these organizations may not be entirely representative of the broader Canadian context, their input provided us with a rich and diverse perspective on the state of affairs in the country.

In the next section of the report, we present, analyze and interpret the data collected through the survey and interviews.

2. Analysis of the survey and interviews

Background

In this section of the report, we present, analyze and interpret the data collected through the survey of legal language professionals and interviews with employers.

2.1 Analysis of the survey of legal language professionals

In this first part of the analysis, we focus on the survey of legal language professionals.

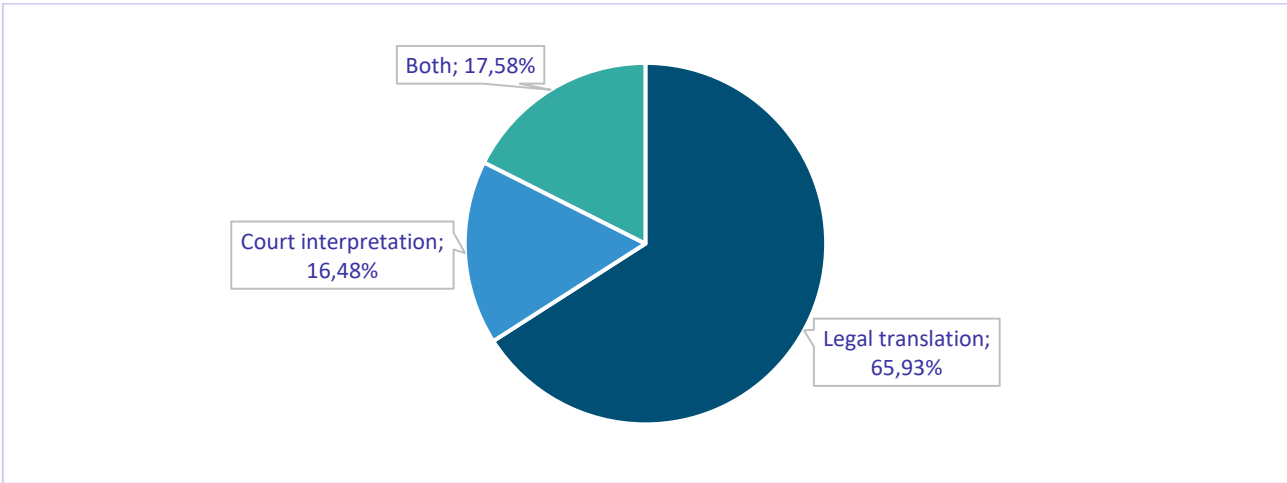
2.1.1 Professional profile

This section focuses on the professional profile of the individuals who responded to the survey.

a. *Types of tasks*

From a professional perspective, in terms of tasks performed, even on an occasional basis, out of a total of 182 responses, 120 people reported legal translation (65.93%), 30 court interpretation (16.48%), and 32 both activities (17.58%) (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: As part of your professional activities, which of the following tasks do you perform at least occasionally?



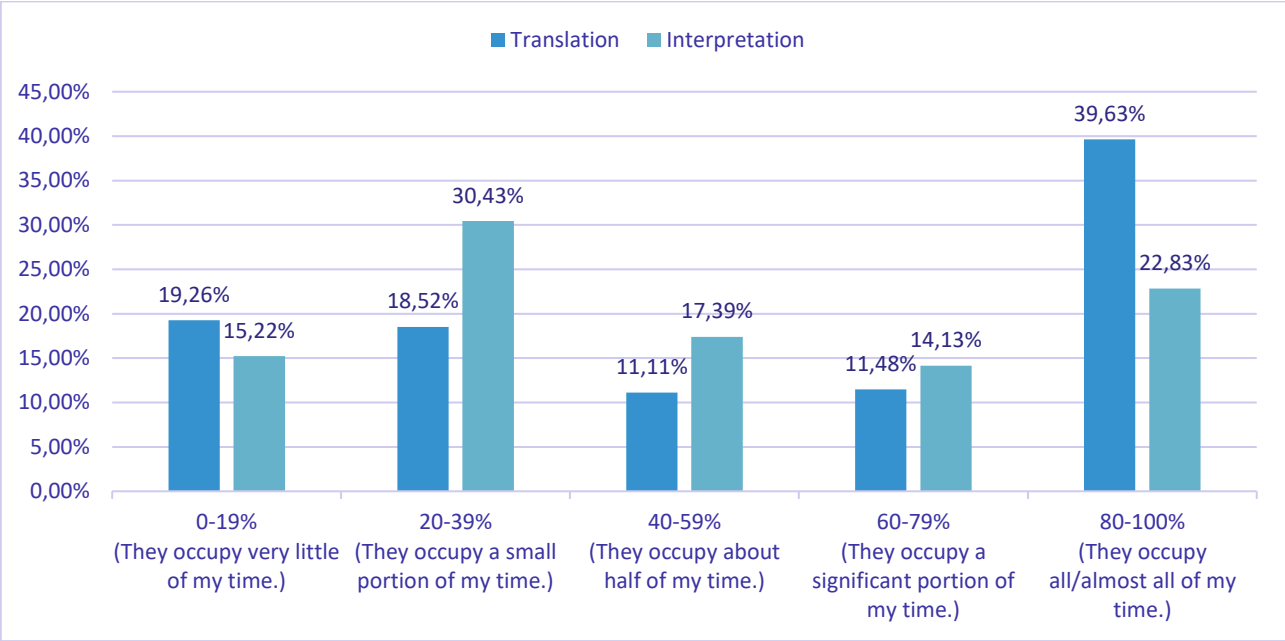
Respondents were then asked to answer the set of questions corresponding to their activity (translation or interpretation). Individuals performing both tasks were therefore asked to answer both sets of questions. Our survey clearly reached more individuals who translate than those who interpret, but it is important to bear in mind that legal translators far outnumber court interpreters in this country.⁷

⁷ For reference, the Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec (OTTIAQ), the main professional society in the field in Canada, has 2,974 members across all three professions, language combinations, and areas of specialization, of which 2,868 are certified translators, 25 certified interpreters, and 27 certified terminologists (47 are certified translators and certified terminologists and 19 are certified interpreters and certified translators).

b. Frequency of task performance

In terms of the time allocated to these tasks, 72 individuals spend less than half of their time (39.78%), and 109 spend at least about half of their time (60.22%) (one person did not answer the question). In Figure 2, data on this subject are first presented in five categories corresponding to the response choices offered in the survey, and are then broken down according to the tasks (translation or interpretation) performed. For each of the five categories, the percentage that the category represents for each task (translation or interpretation) is indicated.⁸

Figure 2: What proportion of your professional activities corresponds to legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation tasks?



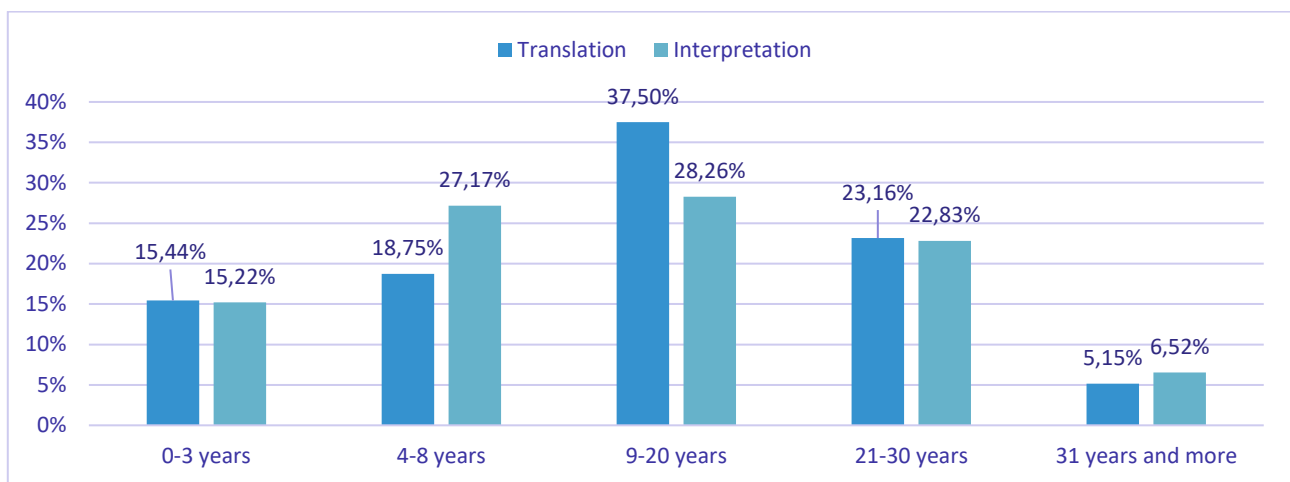
Those who answered “0-19% (They occupy very little of my time.)” or “20-39% (They occupy a small portion of my time.)” were directed to the set of questions aimed at those who spend *less than half* of their time on legal translation or court interpreting, while those who answered “40-59% (They occupy about half of my time.),” “60-79% (They occupy a significant portion of my time.)” or “80-100% (They occupy all/almost all of my time.)” were directed to the set of questions aimed at those who spend *at least about half* of their time on legal translation or court interpreting. Therefore, it appears that among those who perform translation tasks, this activity occupies nearly all or most of their time in a significant proportion of cases (39.63%), whereas conversely, among those who perform interpretation tasks, it tends to occupy only a small portion of their time in a significant proportion of cases (30.43%). In other words, among those surveyed, translators spend more time than interpreters on legal language tasks as part of their job.

⁸ It is important to note that individuals who perform both activities answered this question for both translation and interpreting. To avoid double-counting their input, we assigned a weight of 0.5 to their responses on both activities (translation and interpreting), as opposed to a weight of 1 for those who practice only one of the two activities. The same applies to other questions in the survey, which will refer to this note.

c. Years of experience

When it comes to the number of years of experience in legal translation or court interpreting, the “9-20 years” range received the highest number of responses for both translation and interpreting. In Figure 3, data on this subject are first presented in five categories corresponding to the response options offered in the survey, and are then broken down according to the tasks (translation or interpreting) performed by the respondents. For each of the five categories, the percentage that each represents in relation to the overall task (translation or interpreting) is shown.⁹

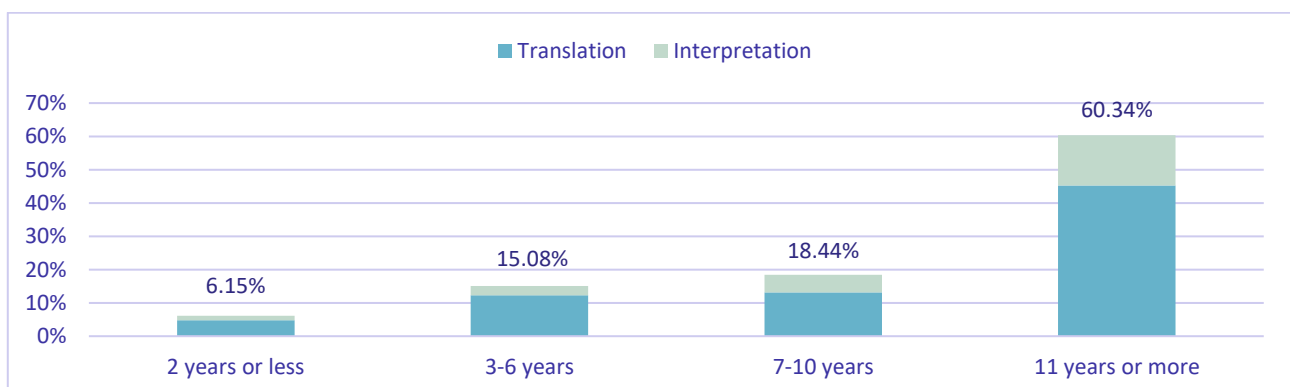
Figure 3: How long have you been performing legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation tasks?



d. Retirement plans

We also asked participants in how many years they expect to retire. Encouragingly, in terms of shortages, more than 60% of respondents said they do not intend to retire for at least 11 years (see Figure 4).¹⁰

Figure 4: In how many years do you plan to retire?



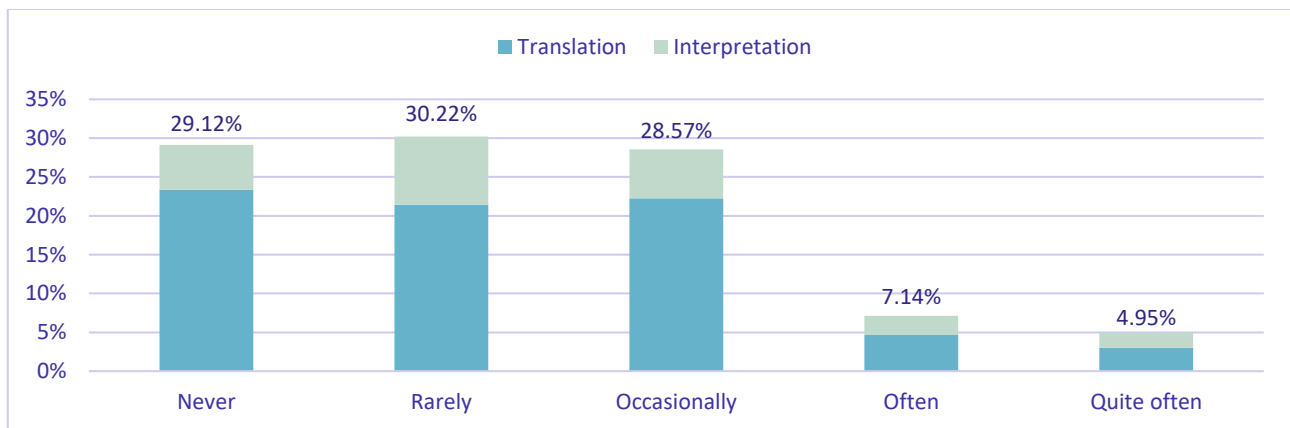
⁹ See note 8.

¹⁰ *Idem*.

e. Career change plans

The next question dealt with a related subject, namely, whether respondents ever consider no longer doing legal translation or court interpreting. Once again, the responses seem reassuring, with almost 60% saying they “rarely” or “never” consider this possibility (see Figure 5).¹¹

Figure 5: Do you ever consider leaving the legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation field?



When asked the reason for their answer, the most frequently cited factor was passion for the field:

- *Parce que c'est un domaine dont je ne me lasse pas.*
- *Because I love this profession.*
- *C'est une profession merveilleuse et le meilleur travail que j'ai fait depuis que j'ai commencé à travailler, point à la ligne.*
- *This has always been my true passion. I am exactly where I wanted to be.*

However, those thinking of leaving these professions cited working conditions in the broadest sense:

- *Heures supplémentaires, surcharge de travail.*
- *Fatigue, stress, hard to have time off, constant challenge.*
- *Mal payé, considéré comme de moins en moins important.*
- *I don't feel like the many years of experience and study that I have invested in this career are particularly well reflected in the working conditions that seem available to me.*

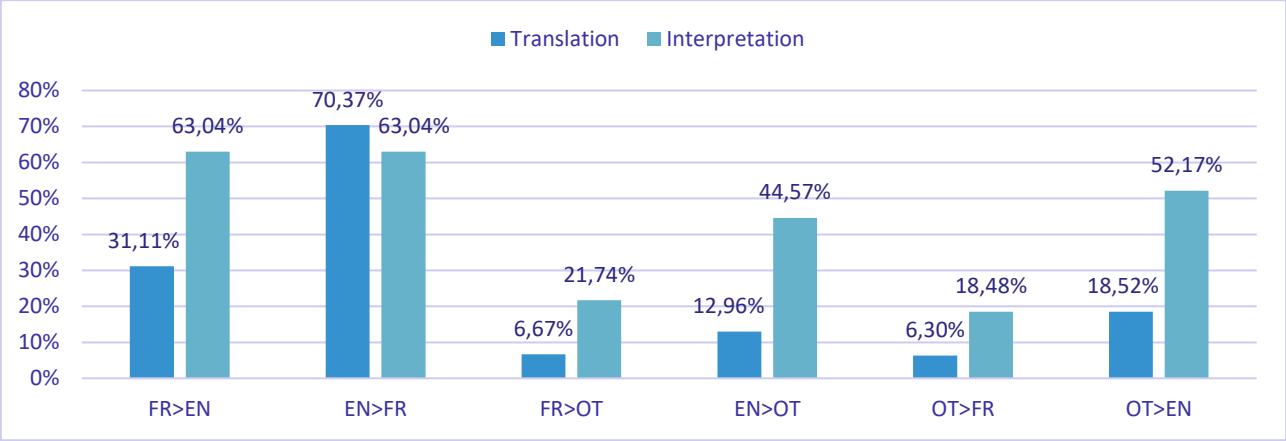
f. Working language combination

In terms of respondents' working language combinations, the English-French pair unsurprisingly dominates in both directions (French into English [FR>EN] and English into French [EN>FR]). In Figure 6, the percentages represent the share of people working in each of the language combinations mentioned, broken down for each of the two tasks (translation and interpreting).¹² For example, 70.37% of participants who do legal translation do so (at least) from English into French, and 52.17% who do court interpreting do so (at least) from another language

¹² See note 8.

into English. These data clearly illustrate the major difference between (legal) translation and (court) interpreting in terms of language combinations: we mainly translate from English into French, but we interpret a lot into English from languages other than French.

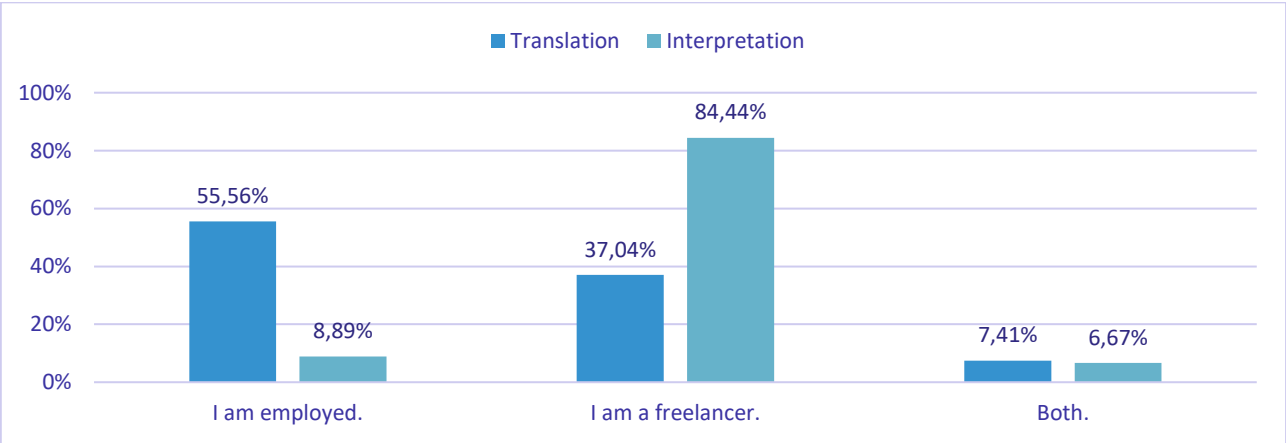
Figure 6: What are your working language combinations?¹³



g. Employment status

With regard to employment status, the data show that while just over half of those who do translation work are employees, the situation is quite different for interpreters, as the vast majority of them are freelancers (see Figure 7).

Figure 7: Considering only legal language-related tasks, which of the following statements best describes your employment situation?

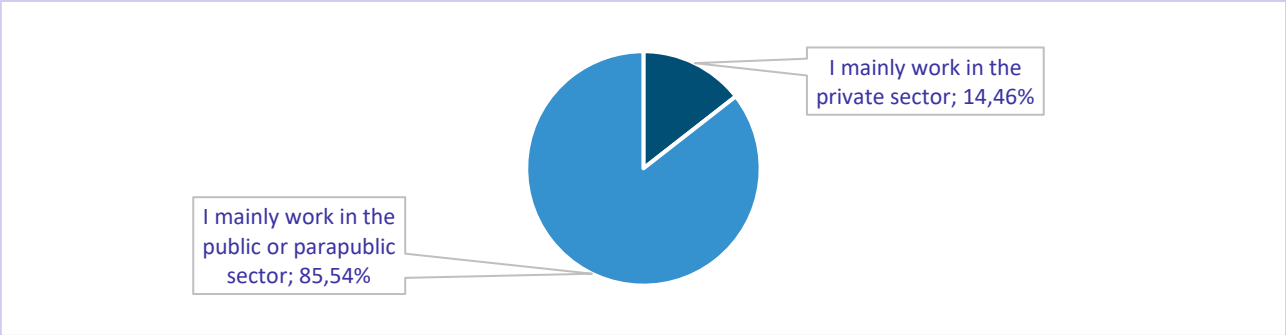


¹³ Participants were given the following response options for this question: FR>EN (French into English), EN>FR (English>French), FR>OT (French into Other language), EN>OT (English into Other language), OT>FR (Other language into French) and OT>EN (Other language into English).

h. Employers of salaried workers

A closer look at the employment status of salaried individuals reveals that the vast majority work primarily in the public or parapublic sector, as opposed to the private sector (see Figure 8).¹⁴

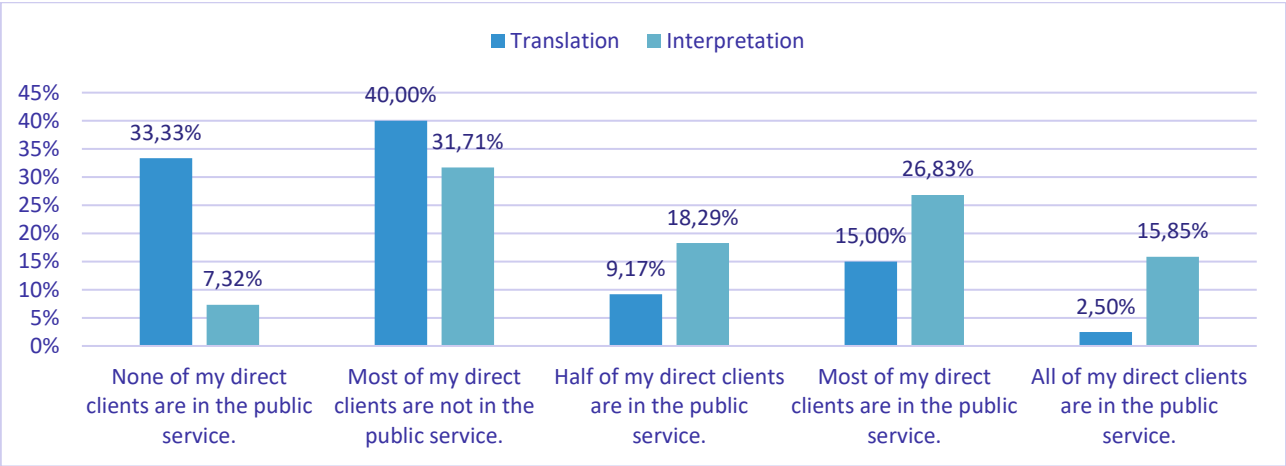
Figure 8: Please specify your employment situation.



i. Freelancers' clients

We asked freelancers how many of their clients are part of public service, either directly (i.e., they have a direct contract with the public service; see Figure 9) or indirectly (i.e., they provide services to an agency that has contracts with the public service; see Figure 10).¹⁵

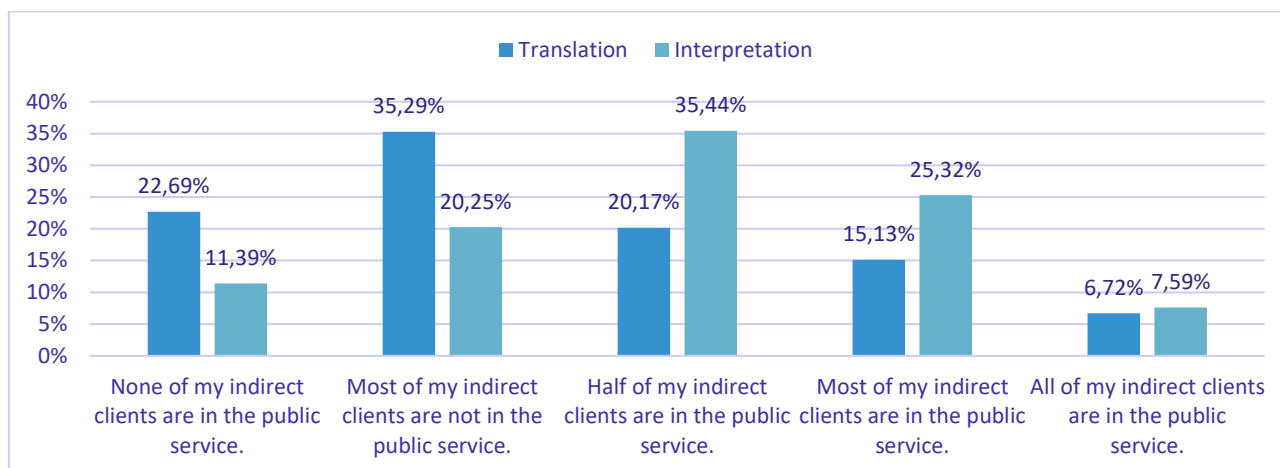
Figure 9: With regard to freelance work, how many of your direct clients are part of the public service?



¹⁴ Note that we did not ask private-sector employees to what extent their legal language tasks are performed for a public or parapublic organization.

¹⁵ See note 8.

Figure 10: With regard to freelance work, how many of your indirect clients are part of the public service?



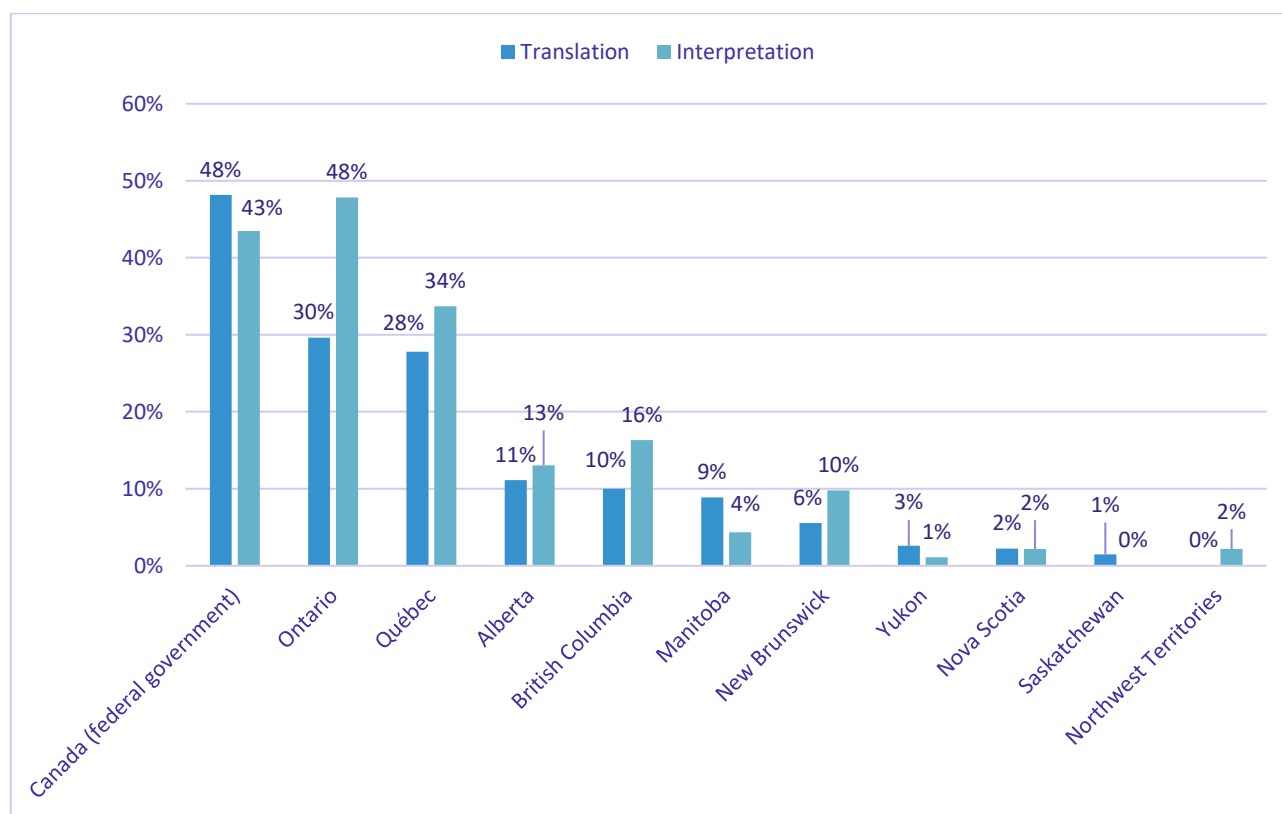
The major trends are similar on both sides: for translators, a significant proportion of their direct and indirect clients are not in the public sector, whereas for interpreters, the opposite is true. In other words, among freelancers, interpreters seem to be more dependent on public-sector clients than translators.

j. Work region

In terms of the regions with the largest public sector employers or contractors, participants' responses are presented in Figure 11.¹⁶ The federal government is the largest employer or client for translation work; 48.15% of those surveyed said that this was one of their main clients or employers. As for interpreting, Ontario comes out on top, with 47.83% of those surveyed saying it is one of their main clients or employers. That being said, as with the other survey questions, it is important to bear in mind that the sample is not necessarily representative of the Canadian situation as a whole.

¹⁶ See note 8. In Figure 11, regions are presented in order of overall prevalence (translation and interpreting combined), from left to right. Provinces and territories not mentioned by anyone do not appear. Values have been rounded to the nearest percentage point for clarity.

Figure 11: Where are your main clients or your public sector employer located?



2.1.2 Sociodemographic profile

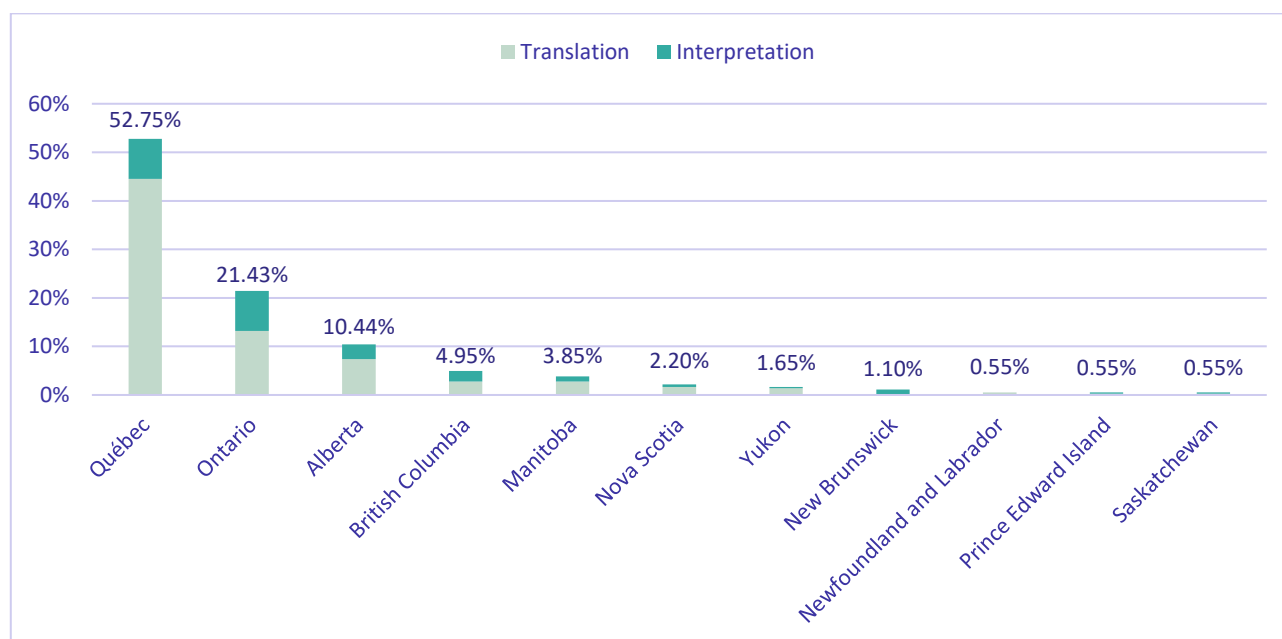
This section looks at the sociodemographic profile of survey respondents.

a. *Place of residence*

From a sociodemographic perspective, the first question asked respondents to specify their province or territory of residence. As Figure 12 shows, the majority of respondents live in Québec.¹⁷

¹⁷ See note 8. In Figure 12, regions are presented in order of overall prevalence (translation and interpreting combined), from left to right. Provinces and territories not mentioned by anyone do not appear.

Figure 12: Province or territory of residence.

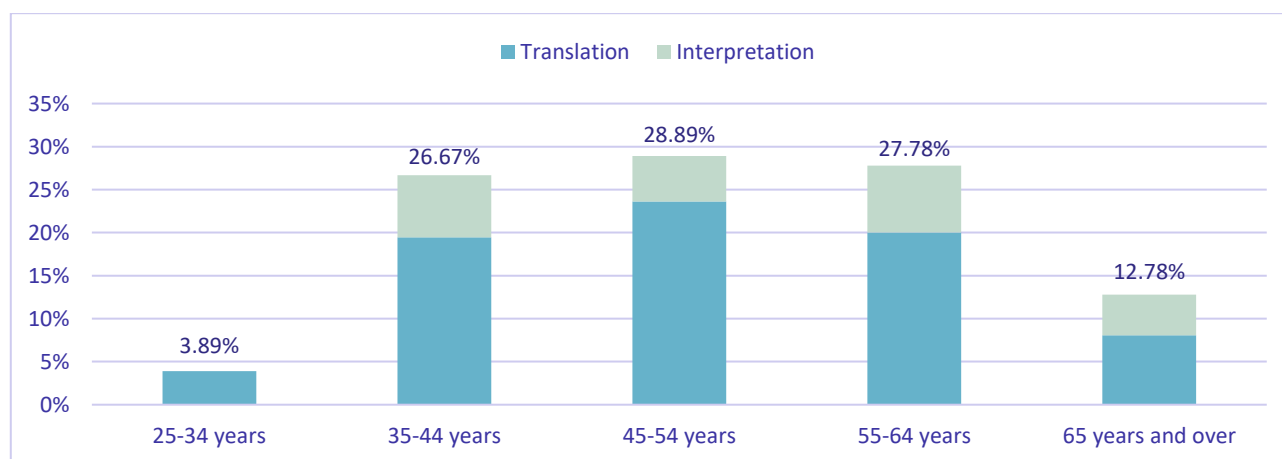


Ontario comes a distant second, followed by Alberta, British Columbia and Manitoba.

b. Age

We then asked respondents to indicate their age. As Figure 13 shows, the three central age groups, ranging from 35 to 64 years old, are nearly tied for first place, accounting for a total of 83.34%.¹⁸ The under-35s account for just 3.89% of the total, compared with 12.78% for the over-65s.

Figure 13: Age.



¹⁸ See note 8.

c. Level and field of education

We then asked participants about the highest degree or certificate obtained in a discipline relevant to their legal translation or court interpreting activities (see Figure 14).¹⁹ Respondents were also asked to indicate the specific field of their studies (see Figure 15).²⁰

Figure 14: Highest degree or certificate obtained.

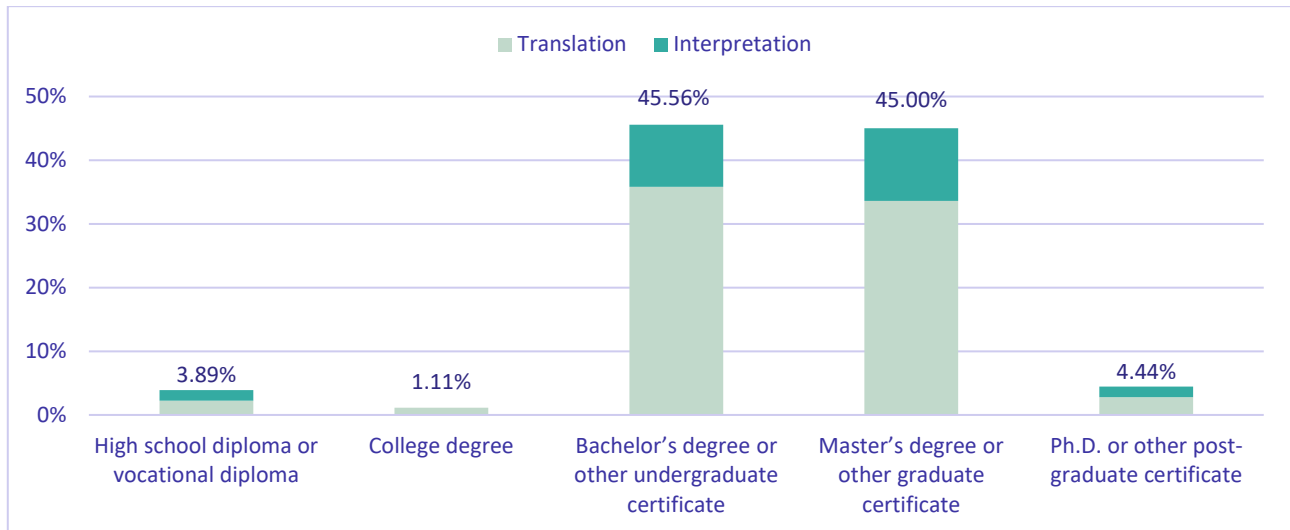
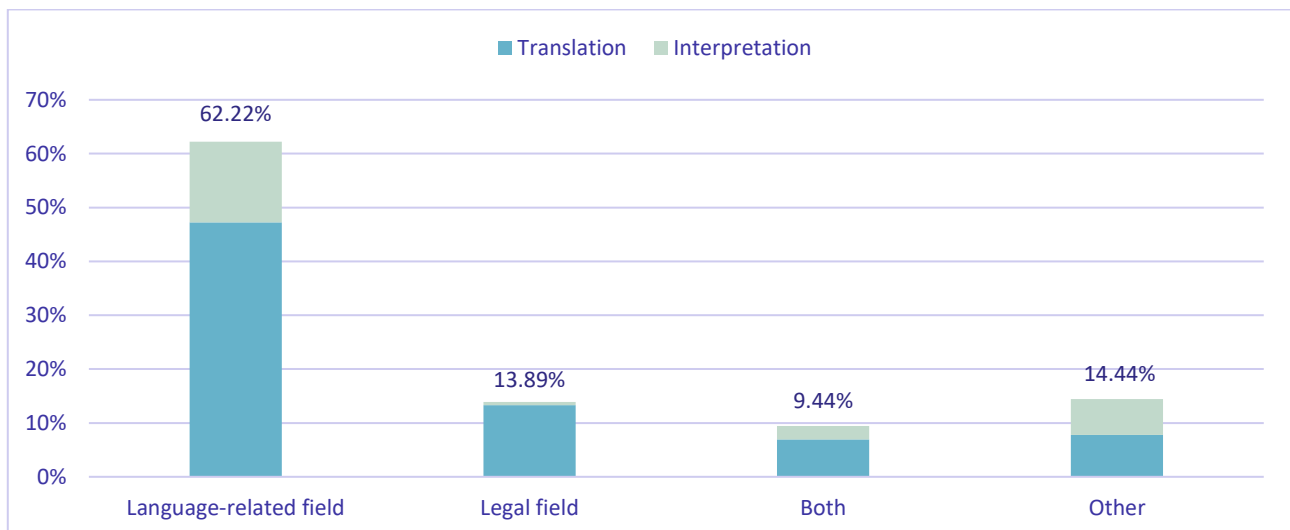


Figure 15: Field of the highest certificate or diploma obtained.



As shown in these two figures, the vast majority of individuals (90.56%) hold either an undergraduate degree (primarily a bachelor's) or a graduate degree (primarily a master's). Moreover, regardless of the degree obtained, for more than 60% of respondents it falls within the language field rather than the legal field.

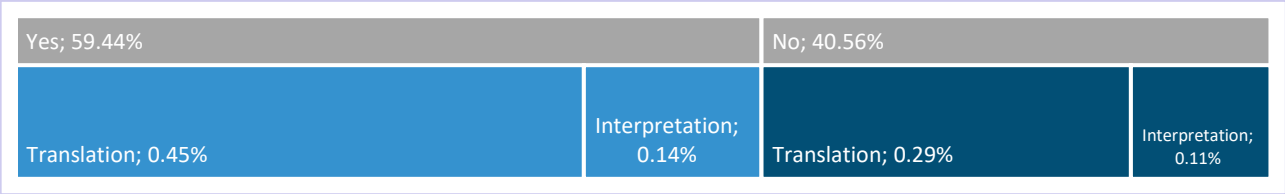
¹⁹ See note 8.

²⁰ *Idem.*

d. Professional associations

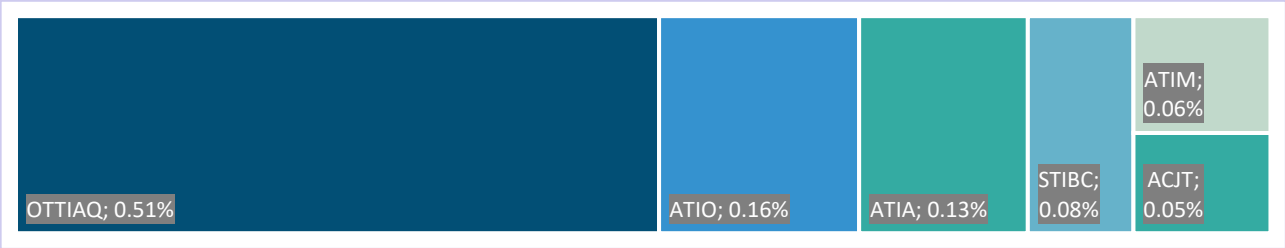
Finally, we asked respondents if they were members of a professional association or society.

Figure 16: Are you a member of a professional association or society of translators or interpreters?



As Figure 16 shows, almost 60% of participants are members of a professional association or society.²¹ We then asked them to identify their professional association or society. Figure 17 shows the six most common answers, along with the proportion of respondents who are a member of each.

Figure 17: The six main professional associations or societies.²²



We asked those who are not members of any professional association or society to explain why. It appears that most of them simply do not see the benefit, although the cost of membership fees, the complexity of the process, and ineligibility for certification were also cited.

This question concludes the first section of the survey, which sought to outline the professional and sociodemographic profile of legal language professionals.

2.1.3 Individuals who spend at least about half of their time on legal translation

This section looks at individuals who spend at least about half of their time on translation.

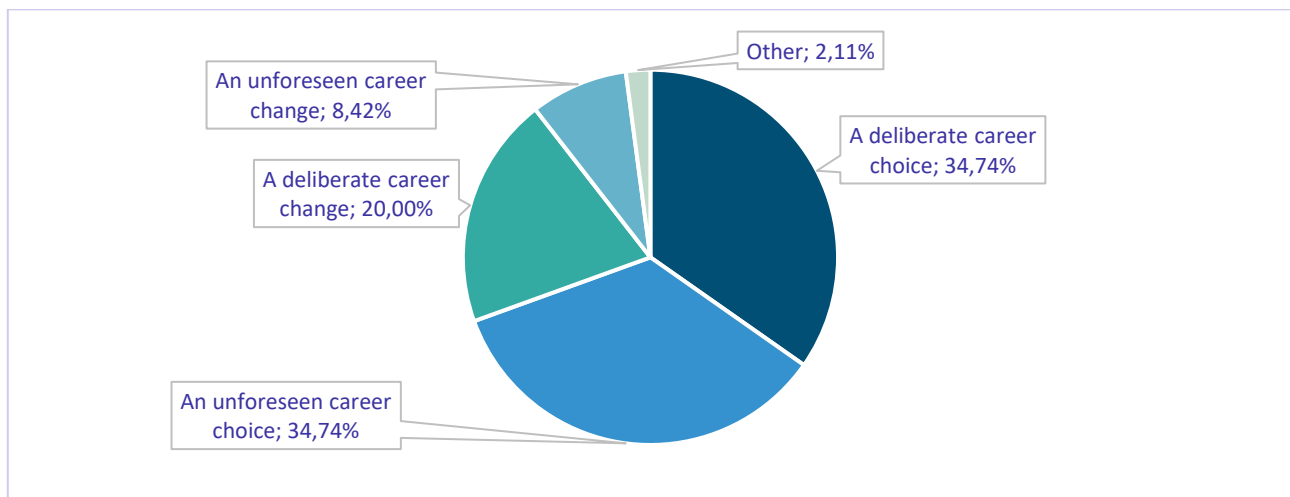
a. Typical career path

The first question in this section looks at the career path of individuals who spend at least about half of their time on legal translation. As Figure 18 shows, the two most frequently selected responses indicate that legal translation is seen as either an unforeseen or a deliberate career choice, in equal proportions, for a total of 69.48%.

²¹ See note 8.

²² In order, they are the Ordre des traducteurs, terminologues et interprètes agréés du Québec (OTTIAQ), the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario (ATIO), the Association of Translators and Interpreters of Alberta (ATIA), the Society of Translators and Interpreters of British Columbia (STIBC), the Association of Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters of Manitoba (ATIM) and the Canadian Association of Legal Translators (CALT).

Figure 18: The career path to legal translation for individuals who spend at least about half of their time on it.



We then asked participants to explain in their own words how they entered the field of legal translation. What is striking about the responses is, firstly, that many people transitioned from “general” translation to legal translation and, to a lesser extent, from law to legal translation. Rather than stemming from a long reflection, translators’ “choice” to specialize in legal translation often seems to be the result of chance circumstances during their studies or early in their career:

- *J’ai commencé ma carrière au Bureau de la traduction et j’ai été envoyé « par hasard » dans la section « Justice » de l’époque. [...] J’ai accepté et j’ai aimé. Je suis restée dans le domaine.*
- *When I was offered the job, I was told I would be placed on the legal team.*
- *I started out as a generalist translator. An opportunity arose to join the legal translation team for a year, and as I enjoyed it and was asked to stay on, I have been doing legal translation and revision ever since.*

In contrast, the transition from law to legal translation seems more like a career change, sometimes motivated by a desire to avoid the stress associated with the legal field:

- *Je n’étais plus à l’aise avec certains aspects de la pratique du droit. J’ai donc décidé « d’essayer » la traduction juridique, et j’ai découvert que la proportion de mes tâches liées « au droit pur » était encore plus élevée que dans la pratique quotidienne du droit [...].*
- *Après quelques années en tant qu’avocate, je me suis rendu compte que je n’étais pas tout à fait à ma place. Je suis retournée aux études pour faire un bacc. en traduction. J’avais hésité entre les deux au début.*
- *J’étais avocate en droit syndical. Je ne voulais pas agir directement en cour ou devant des instances administratives. J’ai décidé de me réorienter vers la traduction, car j’aime la langue et le droit.*

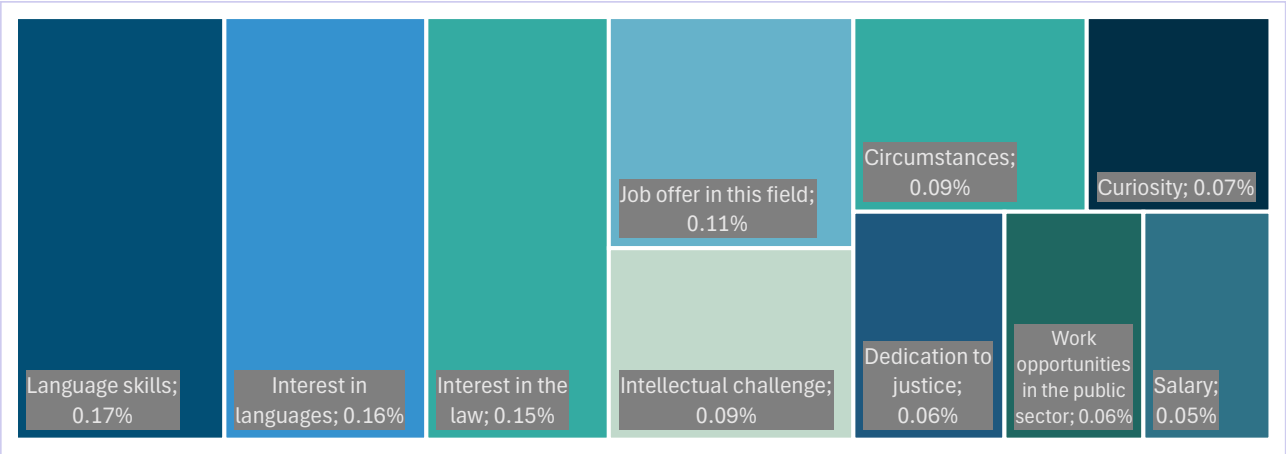
Among those who have genuinely chosen legal translation, many cited their interest in the law:

- *Intérêt pour le droit, mais pas au point de devenir avocate.*
- *Intérêt pour le domaine juridique.*
- *Un intérêt pour le droit. Je traduais des textes techniques et divers avant de découvrir la traduction juridique.*

b. Key factors in the choice of legal translation as a career

Next, respondents were invited to freely select from a list of 24 options the factors that influenced their decision to pursue legal translation. Figure 19 shows the ten factors most frequently selected by respondents, along with the proportion each one represents relative to the total of these ten factors. The first three factors are, in order, “language skills,” “interest in languages” and “interest in the law,” that is, elements that can be considered fundamental to the practice of legal translation.

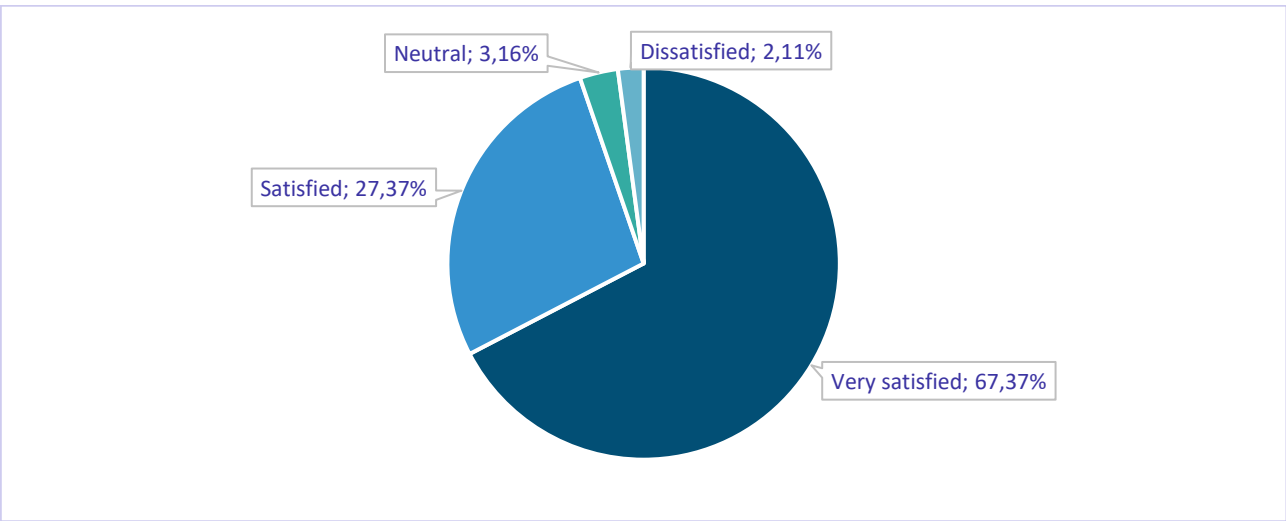
Figure 19: The ten key factors influencing the choice of legal translation as a career.



c. Overall satisfaction with legal translation

The next question asked how satisfied participants are with their legal translation activities. As Figure 20 illustrates, the vast majority of respondents (67.37%) said they are “very satisfied” with these activities.

Figure 20: How satisfied are you with your legal translation work?



When respondents were asked to freely describe their main sources of satisfaction or motivation regarding legal translation, and the reasons they enjoy this work, many mentioned aspects related to personal fulfillment, particularly the legal and, to a lesser extent, linguistic aspects of the job:

- *La traduction de jugements et de décisions administratives est une source infinie d'apprentissage continu. Ce travail me permet d'élargir constamment mon champ de connaissances non seulement juridiques mais aussi générales.*
- *The most satisfying aspect of legal translation is the intellectual challenge of bridging the gap between two legal systems and languages.*
- *C'est un domaine très précis dont la qualité de rédaction est encore meilleure que certains autres domaines de traduction. J'adore apprendre sur le domaine et lire les décisions. Permet une meilleure compréhension des enjeux de société.*
- *I like that I can fall back on my legal training and ensure that legal concepts are translated appropriately.*
- *Je l'aime d'abord parce qu'il touche à mon amour premier : le droit et l'expression du droit.*

Participants' responses also reveal social elements, notably relating to community service and access to justice:

- *Je suis très motivée par le fait de contribuer à la société, à la justice, au respect des droits de la personne et à la défense de la langue française.*
- *I enjoy seeing people being able to achieve their legal status in Canada and become permanent residents and citizens. This is the rewarding part of doing this work.*
- *Le produit final a une durée dans le temps et a le potentiel de servir de manière importante à de multiples personnes, contrairement à une publicité passagère, le roman de la semaine ou un article de magazine mensuel.*

A number of respondents also mentioned the interpersonal aspects of the job:

- *J'aime aussi le fait que je travaille en étroite collaboration avec les rédacteurs des textes que je traduis ou révise.*
- *I like working with lawyers, and legal firms. They are good to work with and they pay well. It is easy to do business with them [...].*
- *J'ai la chance de réviser de très bons traducteurs. Les relations avec les collègues de travail.*

d. Challenges and obstacles

The next question looked at the main challenges or obstacles at work, as well as the aspects respondents enjoy less about their legal translation activities. The elements most frequently cited were related to working conditions, in particular tight deadlines:

- *Ce que j'aime le moins, ce sont les échéances trop courtes pour faire le travail, les heures supplémentaires obligatoires.*
- *I sometimes have to work under pressure and feel that I do not have the time to do as much research as I would like.*
- *Les urgences. La pression exercée par quelques clients.*

Then there are the frustrations stemming from the lack of recognition and understanding of the profession and the work it entails, a problem that seems to be worsened by the rise of artificial intelligence:

- *Le manque de reconnaissance à l'égard de l'importance de notre travail.*

- *Not feeling that I am part of “the team” with lawyers, who often don’t appreciate the actual effort. This is especially true with magical AI, which means we “simply” need to give the 50-page document a “quick” read-through.*
- *Il y a peu d’appréciation ni de considération pour la version française de la loi à tous les niveaux (nos clients dans les divers départements du gouvernement ainsi que les députés élus). Ça donne l’impression que notre travail est peu valorisé.*
- *Les gestionnaires ont du mal à comprendre à quel point un traducteur doit se spécialiser pour chaque domaine de droit et à prévoir suffisamment de personnel.*

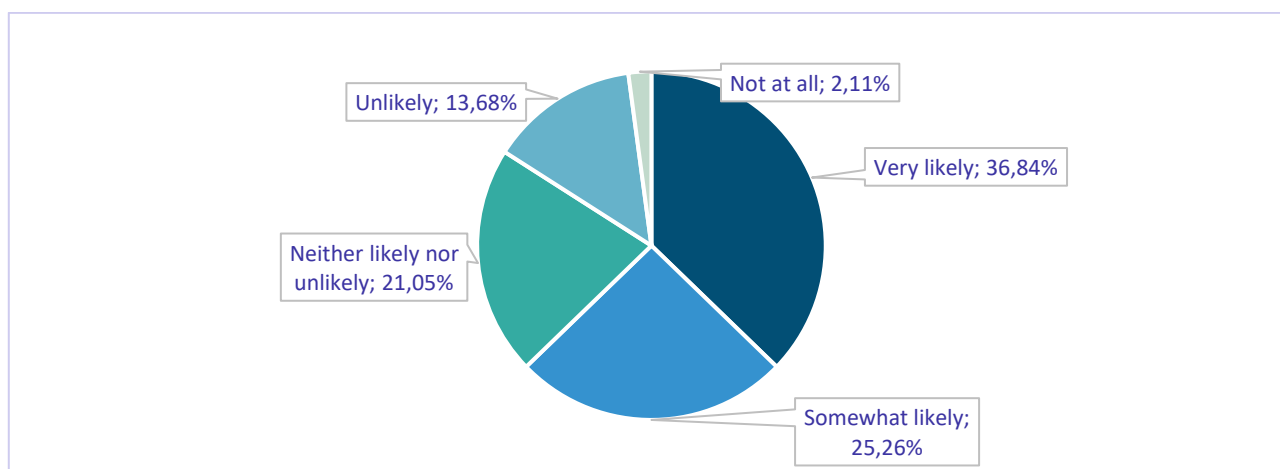
While interpersonal relations were mentioned by many respondents in the previous question on the “positive” aspects of the job, they were also cited as a “negative” aspect of the job, in particular, revision between “jurists” and “language professionals”:

- *J’ai aussi plusieurs collègues qui sont avocates de formation et qui n’ont jamais étudié en traduction. Par conséquent, à mon avis, elles ne connaissent pas les meilleures pratiques en révision, ce qui me crée des frustrations lorsqu’elles me révisent et que je dois finaliser une traduction [...].*
- *I would be more satisfied if we had more professional legal translators here, who not only know the languages but also understand the regional nuances and geographic plus political knowledge with them. When I have to do the revision of translations it gives me frustration to see that some translators do not know the languages or nuances of the culture.*
- *Je dirais que ma pratique de révision de traductions faites par des juristes montre la différence qui existe bien souvent entre des traducteurs juridiques et des juristes traducteurs. Les deux traductrices les plus problématiques que j’ai eues à réviser étaient des avocates [...].*

e. **Recommending this career choice to others**

When asked how likely they are to recommend legal translation as a career choice or career change, 62.10% said they would be “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to do so (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: How likely are you to recommend legal translation as a career choice or career change?



f. **Required qualities and skills**

We then asked respondents which type of person they would recommend legal translation to as a career choice or career change, and why. In response to this question, the participants mentioned a number of key qualities

and skills, including intellectual curiosity, attention to detail, rigour, patience and an excellent ability to research and analyze information, not to mention an interest in translation and law, and skills to match. In addition, a number of people said that you have to enjoy working alone, and therefore that this career is more suited to introverts than extroverts.

Finally, we asked the opposite question, that is, to which type of person would respondents not recommend legal translation as a career choice or career change. In summary, respondents do not recommend this profession to individuals who do not meet the criteria mentioned in response to the previous question. Another clear trend also emerged: participants would not recommend this career to creative or artistic individuals, as legal translation, in their view, requires adherence to established traditions, conventions and norms.

This question concludes the section of the survey on those who spend at least about half of their time on legal translation.

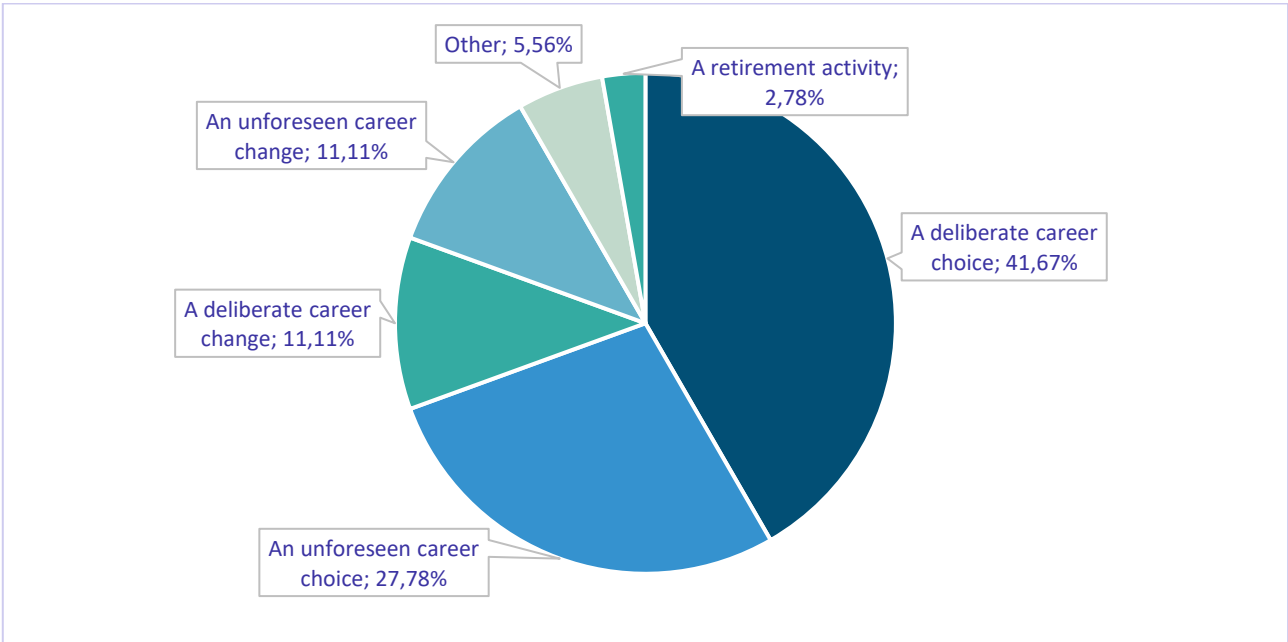
2.1.4 Individuals who spend at least about half of their time on court interpreting

This section focuses on individuals who spend at least about half of their time on court interpreting.

a. Typical career path

The first question in this section focuses on the path that led respondents who spend at least about half of their time on court interpreting to enter the field. As Figure 22 shows, the two most frequently selected responses suggest that, for 69.45% of respondents, court interpreting represents a either a deliberate or unforeseen career choice (compared to 69.48% for translation).

Figure 22: The path to court interpreting for individuals who spend at least about half of their time on it.



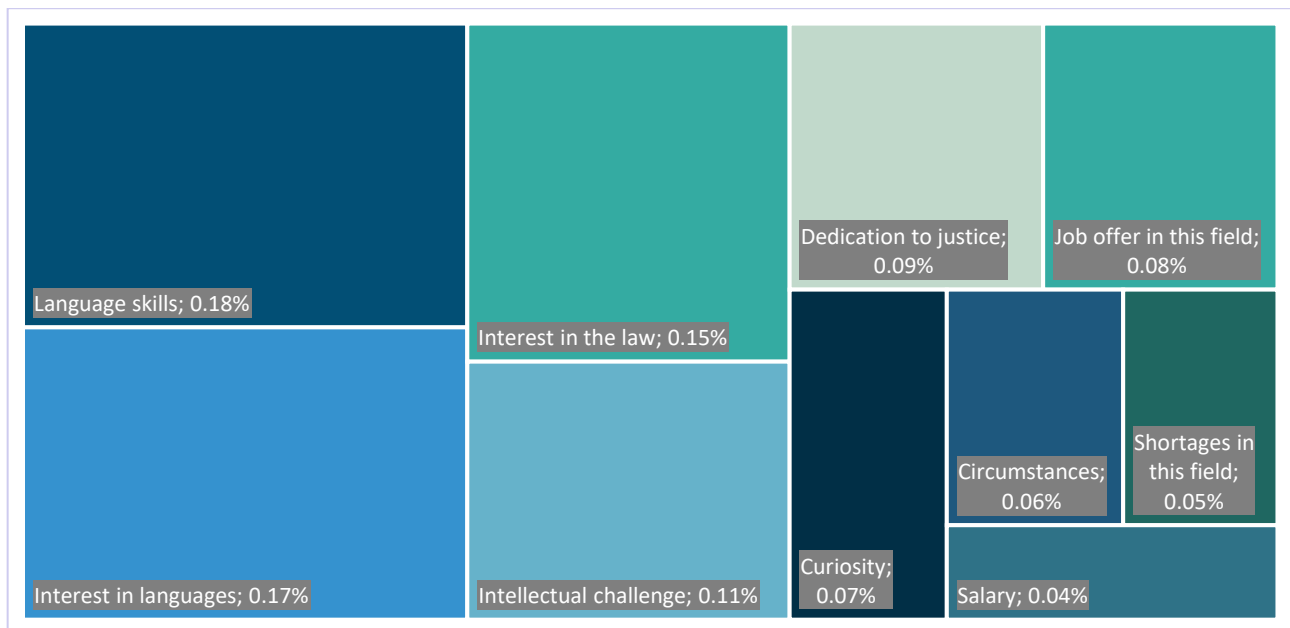
We then asked participants to explain in their own words how they entered the court interpreting field. Unfortunately, the small number of answers does not allow us to draw any satisfactory conclusions in this respect, other than that an interest in languages and law appears to be the main starting point for individuals who perform court interpretation tasks. Here are a few testimonials offered mainly for their anecdotal value:

- *Après une longue et belle carrière derrière un ordinateur, j'ai choisi de traduire de vive voix en faisant équipe avec le juge, les avocats, les parties et les témoins. Mon expérience en traduction juridique et mon grand intérêt pour le domaine m'aident grandement en salle de cour. J'aime faire œuvre utile et faire le pont entre deux langues en direct est aussi gratifiant que c'est exigeant. Ça me semble une suite logique.*
- *I mostly love conference interpreting, but legal interpretation is more sought in the current Canadian market. It was the "best next thing" for me.*
- *J'avais été interprète de conférence pendant une dizaine d'années lorsque s'est présentée à moi une possibilité de devenir interprète judiciaire, ce qui m'a fait découvrir tout un autre pan du domaine langagier.*

b. Key factors in choosing court interpreting

We then asked respondents to freely select from a list of 24 options the factors that played a key role in their choice to become a court interpreter. Figure 23 shows the ten factors most frequently selected by respondents, along with the proportion each one represents relative to the total of these ten factors. The first three factors are, in order, "language skills," "interest in languages" and "interest in the law," that is, elements that can be considered essential to the practice of court interpreting. Note that these three factors are the same, and in the same order, as those selected for translation.

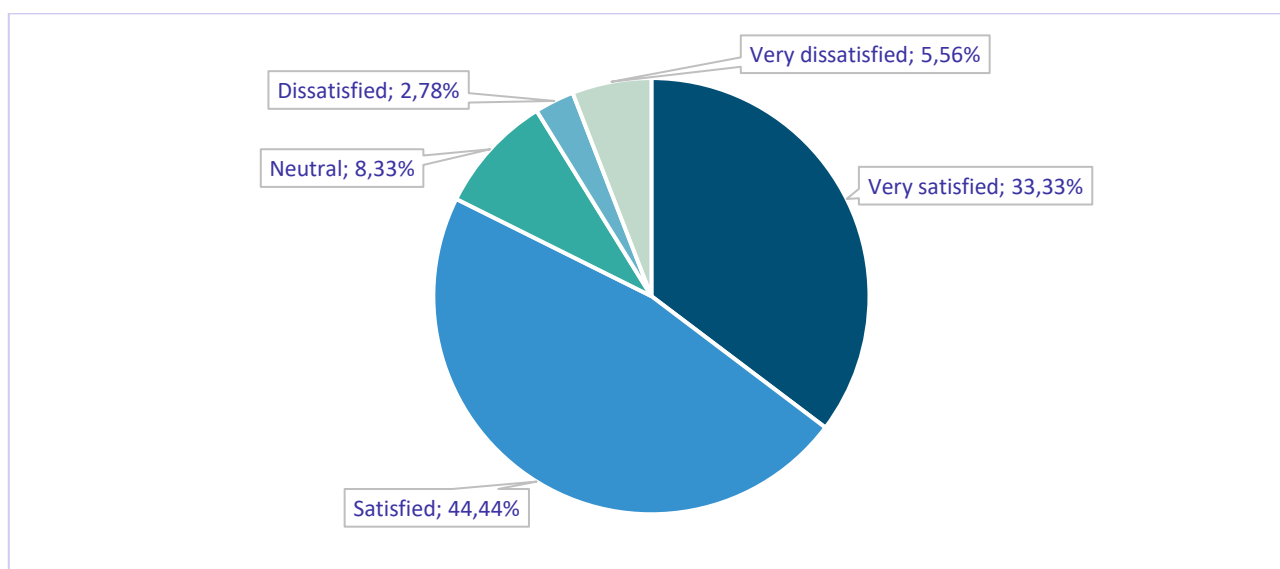
Figure 23: The ten main factors in choosing court interpreting.



c. Overall satisfaction with court interpreting

The next question asked how satisfied participants are with their court interpretation activities. As shown by Figure 24, a large proportion of respondents (44.44%) said they are "satisfied" with these activities. This is where we see the first major difference between translation and interpreting for individuals who spend at least about half of their time on these tasks. While two-thirds of respondents (67.37%) who translate said they are "very satisfied" with these activities, only one-third of respondents (33.33%) who interpret said the same.

Figure 24: How satisfied are you with your court interpretation activities?



However, when respondents were asked to freely identify their main sources of satisfaction or motivation regarding court interpreting—and why they enjoy this work—many, as with legal translation, mentioned factors related to personal fulfillment:

- *J'aime le défi que représente le fait de devoir produire un résultat sur-le-champ, souvent avec très peu de préparation, ce qui me rappelle le trac d'un acteur pendant une pièce de théâtre.*
- *The motivation is the upper hand in different languages, to be an insider in the legal system. I enjoy [it] because I meet different people and get to learn new things.*
- *Différent tous les jours. Certaines causes sont rapides, laissant du temps libre, d'autres causes sont prenantes et demandent de l'attention particulière mais sont toutes intéressantes, voire fascinantes.*

As with the responses concerning translation, socially driven factors also emerged, especially those tied to serving the community and promoting access to justice:

- *Je suis devenue interprète pour soutenir ceux qui sont abusés de façon systémique [comme] les femmes qui tentent de fuir la victime conjugale, les immigrés [...].*
- *I feel that as an interpreter, I am part of the "cleanup crew" after a crime or a civil/family issue: the bad things have already transpired, and I try, in the most discreet and gentle way possible, to assist in making the court portion of the person's experience as smooth and unintrusive as possible.*
- *Le fait de donner la chance à une personne qui ne maîtrise pas les notions de droits et que la personne puisse y avoir accès et mieux ensuite prendre des décisions.*

d. Challenges and obstacles

The next question looked at the main challenges or obstacles at work and the aspects respondents enjoy less about their court interpretation activities. The most frequently cited elements have to do with working conditions, in particular instability, compensation and some of the more demanding aspects of the job:

- *La précarité car nous sommes des travailleurs autonomes et n'avons aucune sécurité en cas de maladie. Une incertitude constante concernant les assignations.*

- *Personally, it is a very tough job. The things one sees/hears/must interpret in court are incredibly difficult on a personal level, and, as freelancers, we do not get any counselling to avoid vicarious trauma.*
- *Le problème majeur concerne la rémunération.*

Next come the frustrations related to the lack of understanding and consideration from the justice system and its actors:

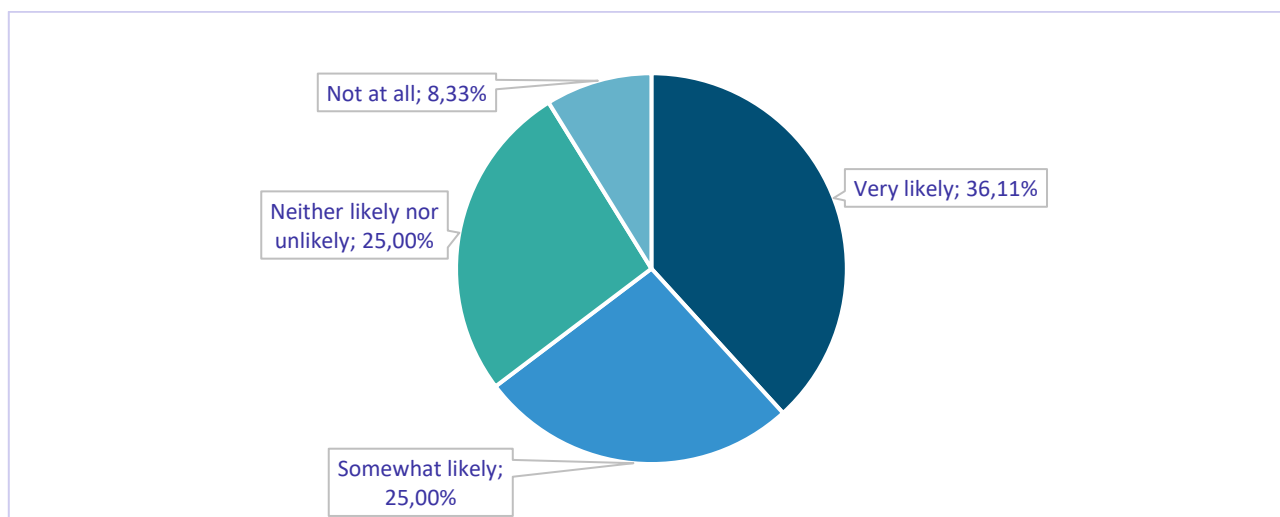
- *Le fait que nos supérieurs, qui ne sont ni traducteurs, ni interprètes, ni même bilingues, ne comprennent pas vraiment ce que nous faisons et donc ce dont nous avons besoin, même quand on tente de leur expliquer.*
- *There is a lack of knowledge about interpretation from the other participants in the justice system. Many think it is an easy job ("Anyone who is bilingual can do it").*
- *Il nous est difficile d'obtenir les documents dont nous avons besoin pour nous préparer adéquatement. Tout le personnel semble débordé et peu enclin à faire une tâche de plus afin de nous transmettre les documents dont nous avons besoin.*

Finally, some participants also mentioned the lack of adequate training in court interpreting.

e. **Recommending this career choice to others**

When asked how likely they are to recommend court interpreting as a career choice or career change, 61.11% responded that they would be "very likely" or "somewhat likely" (see Figure 25), which is almost identical to the results obtained for translation (62.10%).

Figure 25: How likely are you to recommend court interpreting as a career choice or career change?



f. **Required qualities and skills**

We then asked respondents what type of person they would recommend court interpreting to as a career choice or career change, and why. In response to this question, people mentioned a number of essential qualities and skills, including impartiality, the ability to handle stress and pressure, a good dose of empathy (but also

detachment), self-assurance and self-confidence (but not without an ability to question oneself), intellectual curiosity, a taste for challenge and, of course, an interest in interpreting and the law, and skills to match.

Finally, we asked the opposite question, namely, what type of person they would not recommend court interpreting to as a career choice or career change. In summary, respondents do not recommend this profession to individuals who do not meet the criteria mentioned in response to the previous question. Furthermore, the participants would not recommend this career to people who would like to become interpreters without any training, that is, based solely on their command of languages.

This question concludes the section of the survey on respondents who spend at least about half of their time on court interpreting.

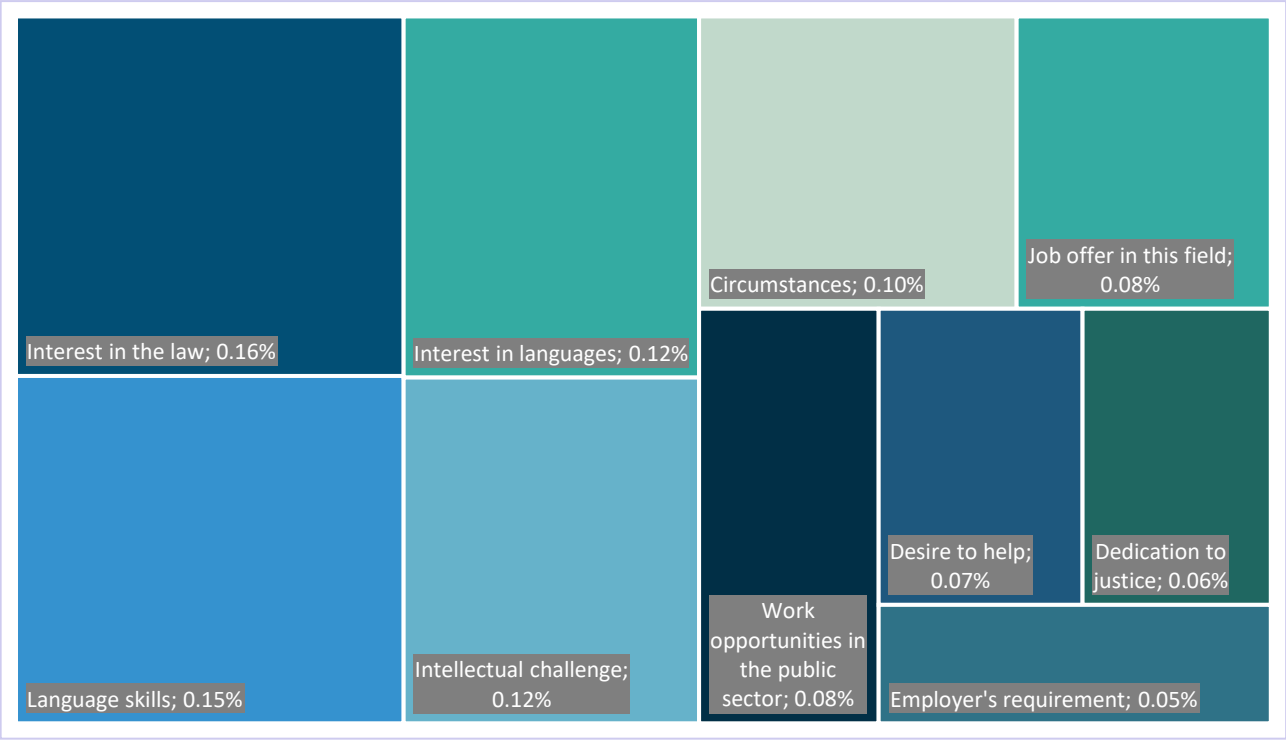
2.1.5 Individuals who spend less than half of their time on legal translation

This section looks at individuals who spend less than half of their time on legal translation.

a. Key factors in the choice of legal translation as a career

First, we asked respondents who spend less than half of their time on legal translation to freely select from a list of 24 options the factors that led or prompted them to occasionally perform this task. Figure 26 shows the ten most frequently selected factors, along with the proportion of respondents who chose each. The first three factors are, in order, “interest in the law,” “language skills” and “interest in languages,” namely, elements that can be considered fundamental to the practice of legal translation.

Figure 26: The ten main factors in the occasional practice of legal translation.

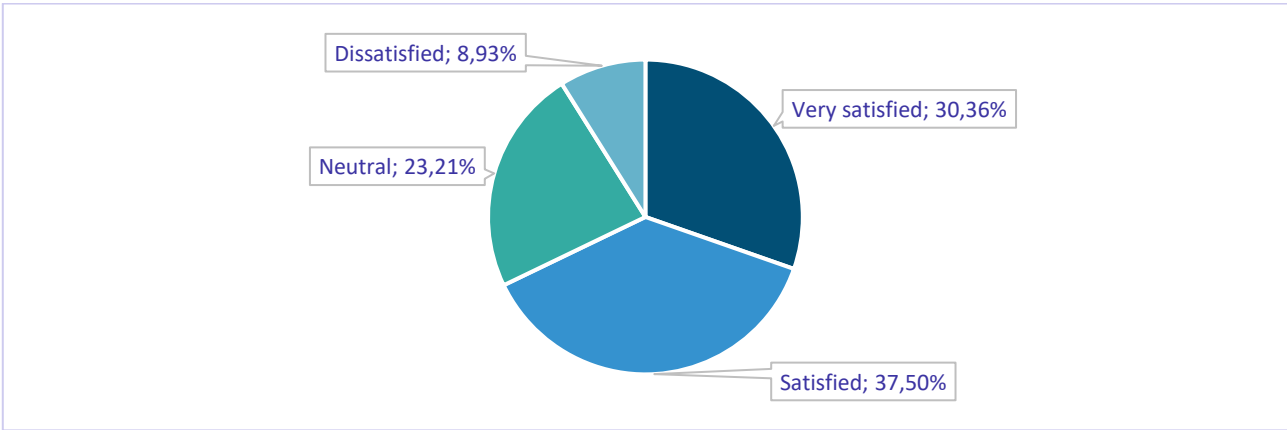


Unlike those who spend at least about half of their time on legal translation, who cite two “linguistic” factors first (i.e., “language skills” and “interest in languages”), those who spend less than half of their time on legal translation cite a “legal” factor first, that is, “interest in the law.”

b. Overall satisfaction with legal translation

The next question asked how satisfied participants are with their legal translation activities. As shown by Figure 27, a significant proportion of respondents (37.50%) said they are “satisfied” with these activities. Here we see the first major difference between those who spend at least about half of their time on legal translation and those who spend less than half of their time. While two-thirds of people in the first group (67.37%) said they are “very satisfied” with these activities, fewer than one-third of those in the second (30.36%) said the same.

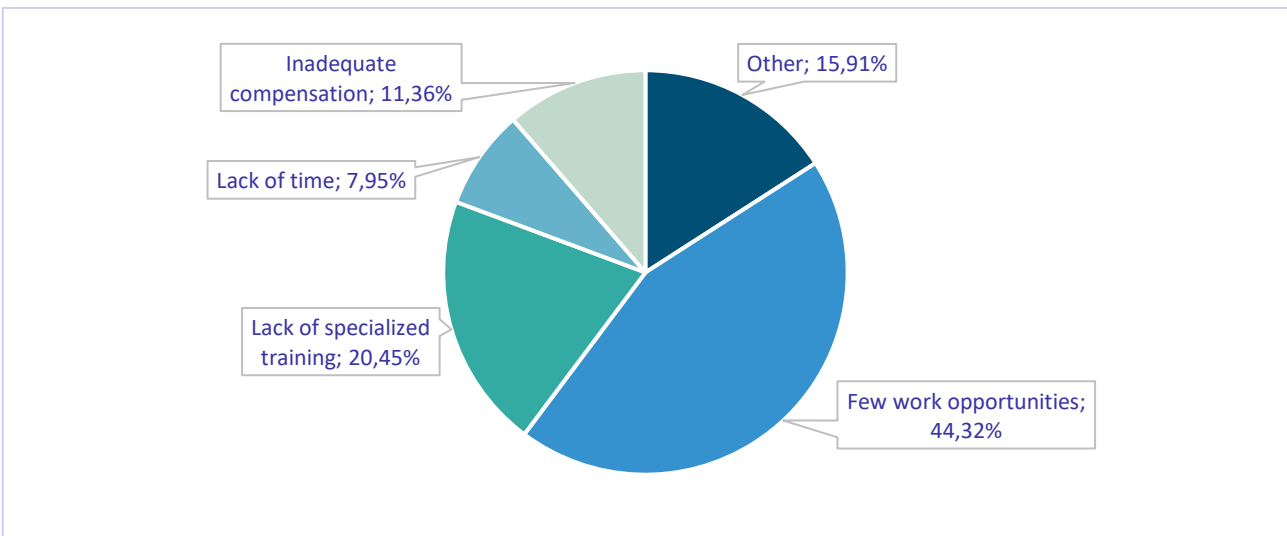
Figure 27: How satisfied are you with your occasional legal translation activities?



c. Reasons for not spending more time on it

We then asked the respondents why they do not perform legal translation tasks more often (see Figure 28). Far ahead of the other response options, “few work opportunities” accounted for 44.32% of all selected factors (chosen by 69.64% of respondents).

Figure 28: What are the reasons why you do not perform legal translation tasks more often?



At first glance, this result appears to contradict the study’s initial premise that there is a shortage of legal language professionals in Canada. That being said, the second reason participants selected was “lack of specialized training” (which accounted for 20.45% of all selected reasons and was chosen by 32.14% of respondents).

d. Sources of satisfaction or motivation

When participants were asked to freely state their main sources of satisfaction or motivation in relation to legal translation, and why they enjoy doing this work, many cited elements having to do with personal satisfaction, in particular with the legal and, to a lesser extent, linguistic aspects of the job:

- *J'aime beaucoup avoir l'occasion de constater, en traduisant des décisions judiciaires, la façon dont les tribunaux appliquent la législation aux affaires qui leur sont soumises.*
- *The research aspect and the opportunity to learn more about the law and legal decisions.*
- *Legal translation/interpretation provides the highest intellectual stimulus of any work I do.*

Furthermore, the participants' answers contained elements of a social nature that touch on community service and access to justice:

- *Ensuring accuracy—legal texts have legal effects on the rights and interests of Canadians. Both francophones and anglophones (and common law and civilian traditions) need to be accurately reflected in these texts. AI is not good enough!*
- *Sentiment de contribuer à la justice.*
- *Access to justice in a language people can understand, to increase fairness in treatment for all citizens.*

e. Challenges and obstacles

The next question looked at the main challenges or obstacles at work, as well as the aspects respondents enjoy less about their legal translation activities. The elements most frequently cited have to do with working conditions, in particular compensation:

- *La rémunération est souvent insuffisante. Les délais sont souvent excessivement courts.*
- *Limited compensation.*
- *Même tarif (de plus en plus bas) qu'un contenu généraliste plus simple et accessible.*

Next come the frustrations stemming from the tedious aspects inherent to this type of work:

- *C'est un domaine très rigide et technique.*
- *La traduction de documents juridiques demande une plus grande concentration et un travail intellectuel soutenu, en raison des nombreuses recherches qui sont souvent nécessaires.*
- *J'ai déjà eu des textes pour des libérations conditionnelles et ils étaient difficiles à lire psychologiquement.*

Next, respondents talked about the lack of understanding of legal translation by the people they deal with:

- *Délais souvent déraisonnables, étant donné l'importance du travail. Les donneurs d'ouvrage ne semblent pas réaliser tout le travail de recherche qui doit être effectué.*
- *Lack of understanding by law professionals of what a certified translator is: which leads to extra unnecessary and costly requirements [...].*
- *Le fait que les clients finaux ne comprennent pas que je ne suis pas avocat.*

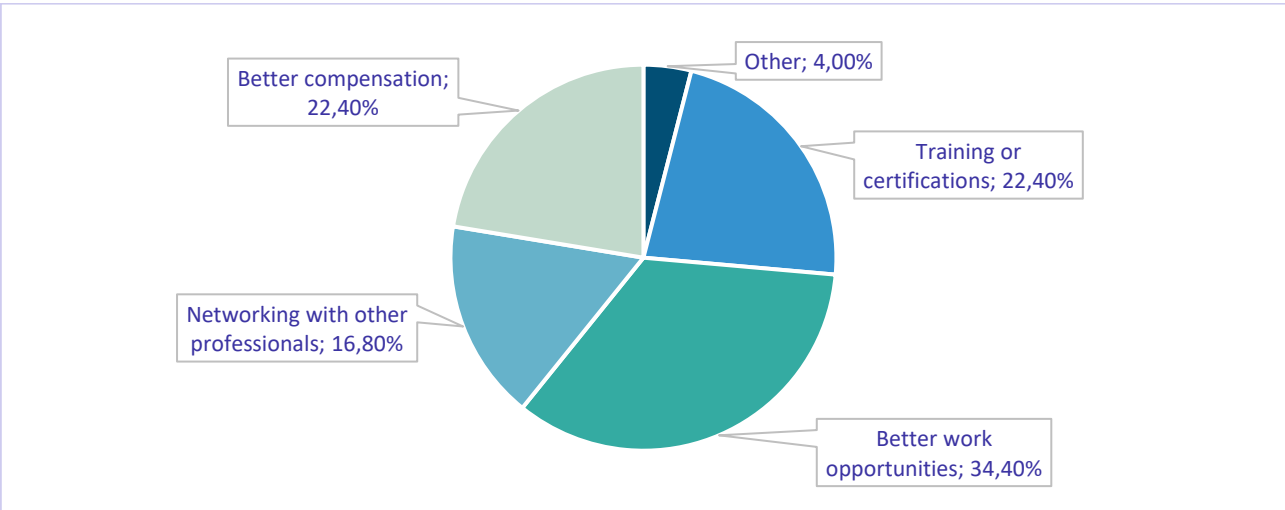
Finally, participants reported lacking confidence in their abilities due to insufficient specialized training or the absence of colleagues able to support them:

- *Manque de formation spécialisée et de confiance.*
- *Lacking training and experience in the field.*
- *J'aimerais avoir la certitude que je fais un bon travail mais personne d'autre n'a la compétence dans ce domaine au travail.*

f. Factors that might encourage them to allocate more time to this activity

When respondents who occasionally perform legal translation tasks were asked what might encourage them to do so more regularly, “better work opportunities” (34.40%) was cited first, followed by “better compensation” and “training or certifications” (22.40% each) (see Figure 29). There therefore appears to be a lack of work opportunities in legal translation, but the issue may lie more in a mismatch between supply and demand, particularly from a geographic standpoint.

Figure 29: Is there anything that could prompt you to perform legal translation tasks (including the revision of legal translations) more often?



Interestingly, when the question was asked in an open-ended format, respondents cited the training factor first, rather than work opportunities:

- *Formations plus courtes ou plus intensives pouvant mener à des reconnaissances officielles.*
- *I'd appreciate some training in specialized areas of law, such as commerce, civil and immigration.*
- *Ateliers ou formations spécialisés en traduction juridique.*
- *I would like more training opportunities (including university studies) outside Quebec [...].*

The second most frequent category, however, was the one that came first in the previous question, namely, work opportunities:

- *Il faudrait que les donneurs d'ouvrage me retrouvent! Ou bien que je postule pour des contrats à la pige.*
- *Savoir qui contacter pour offrir mes services.*

- *Information sur les possibilités de travail à la pige dans ce domaine.*
- *Networking events for law firms or public sector agencies that work with translators, to connect them with language professionals.*

The other responses mainly related to the recognition of the profession and to legal language reference tools.

This question concludes the section of the survey on respondents who spend less than half of their time on legal translation.

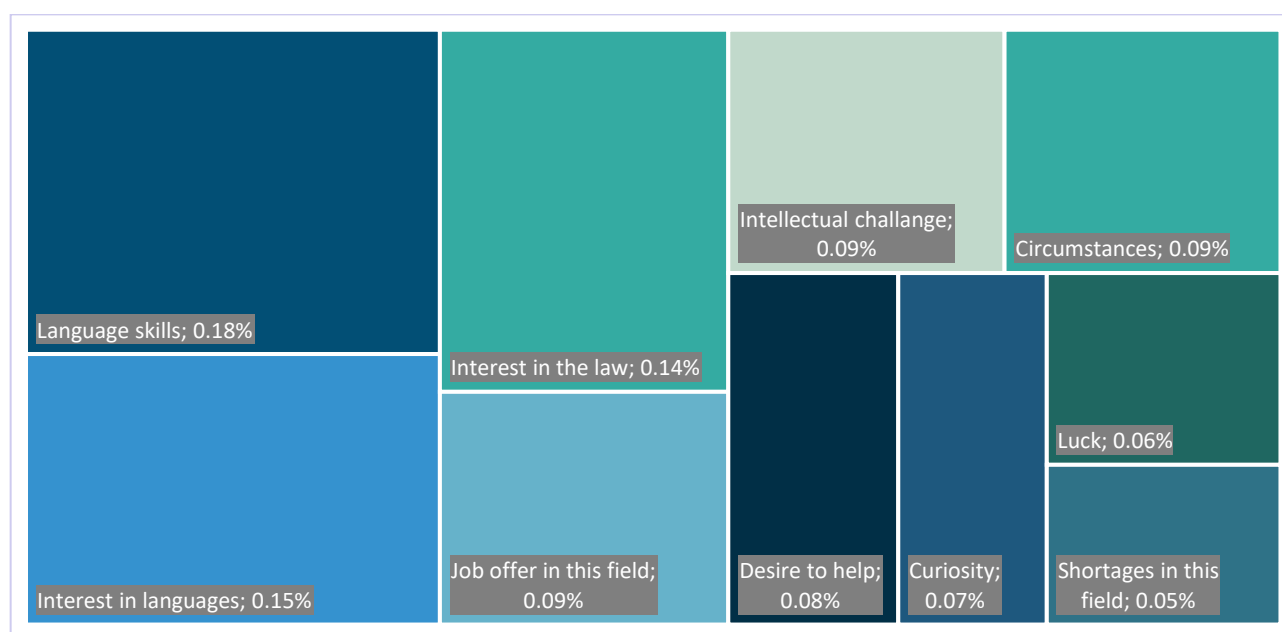
2.1.6 Individuals who spend less than half of their time on court interpreting

This section focuses on those who spend less than half of their time on court interpreting.

a. Key factors in choosing court interpreting

First, we asked respondents who spend less than half of their time on court interpreting to freely select from a list of 24 options the factors that led or prompted them to occasionally perform this task. Figure 30 shows the ten most frequently selected factors, along with the proportion each one represents relative to the total of these ten factors. The first three factors are, in order, “language skills,” “interest in languages” and “interest in the law,” that is, elements that can be considered fundamental to the practice of court interpreting. Note that these three factors are the same, and in the same order, for those who spend at least about half of their time on legal translation or court interpreting.

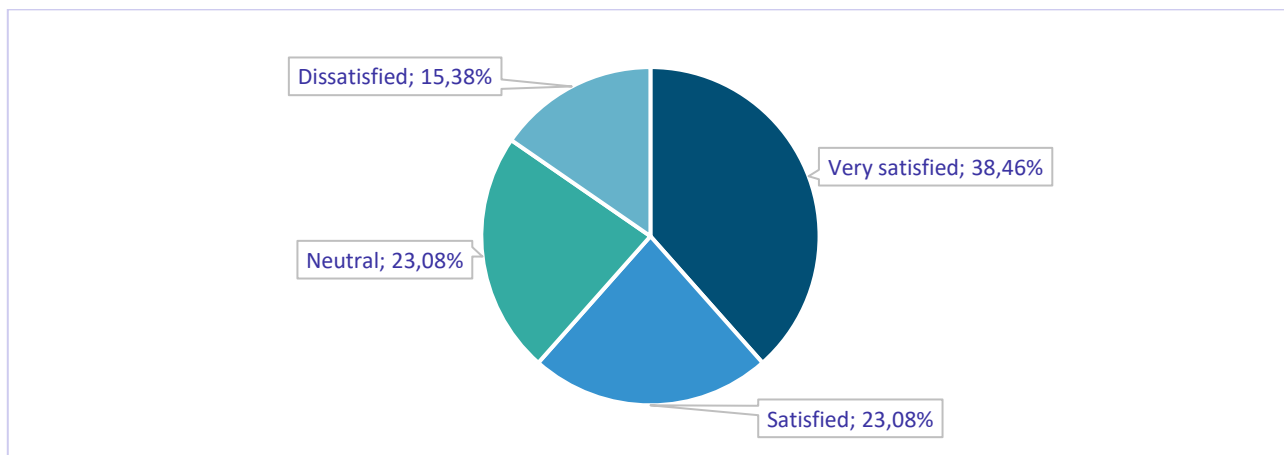
Figure 30: The ten main factors in the occasional practice of court interpreting.



b. Overall satisfaction with court interpreting

The next question asked how satisfied participants are with their court interpretation activities. As shown by Figure 31, a significant portion of respondents (38.46%) report being “very satisfied” with these activities.

Figure 31: How satisfied are you with your occasional court interpretation work?

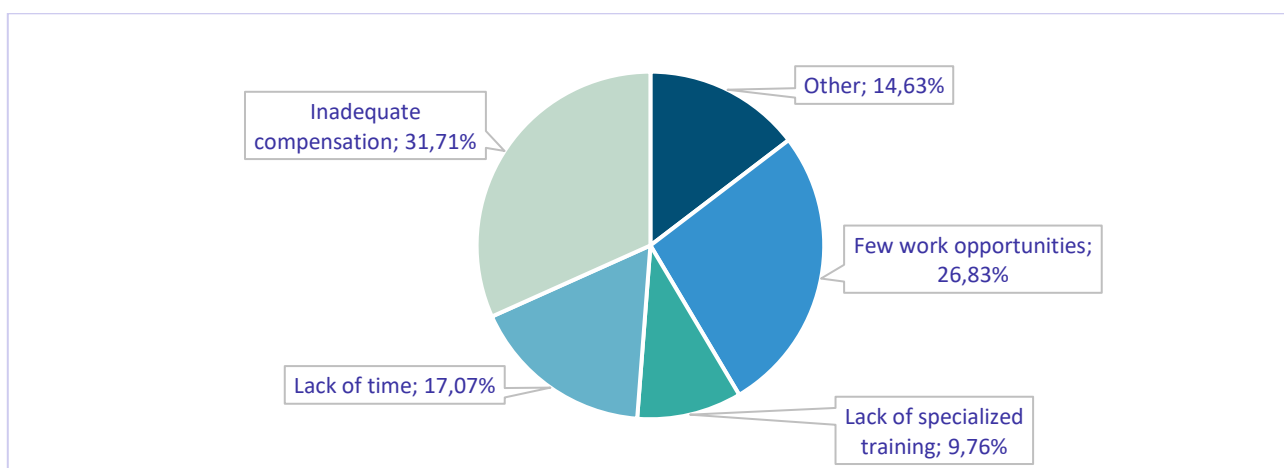


Here we see the first difference between those who spend at least about half of their time interpreting and those who spend less than half of their time interpreting. The most frequent response in the first group was “satisfied,” with 44.44% (versus 23.08% in the second group), and “very satisfied” accounted for 33.33% (versus 38.46% in the second group). In other words, individuals who do less court interpreting seem to be more satisfied with these activities than those who do more.

c. Reasons for not spending more time on it

We then asked respondents why they do not perform tasks related to court interpreting more often (see Figure 32). Among the other response options, “inadequate compensation” accounted for 31.71% of all selected factors (chosen by 50% of respondents). It was followed by “few work opportunities,” at 26.83% (chosen by 42.31% of respondents). With respect to legal translation, this factor came out on top, accounting for 44.32% of all selected factors (chosen by 69.64% of respondents).

Figure 32: What are the reasons why you do not perform court interpretation tasks more often?



d. Sources of satisfaction or motivation

When respondents were asked to freely specify their main sources of satisfaction or motivation regarding court interpreting and why they enjoy doing this work, personal and social sources of motivation were almost equally represented. “Personal” factors mentioned include:

- *Après 25 ans de carrière, l'interprétation demeure une grande source de stimulation intellectuelle pour moi, d'autant plus dans un domaine aussi complexe.*
- *I enjoy the flow state of interpreting.*
- *J'apprends beaucoup, ça me passionne.*

And “social” factors cited include:

- *J'ai l'impression d'aider la personne à comprendre ce qui se passe dans son dossier et communiquer sa version des faits.*
- *Because I help people who need it and also contribute to the community with my knowledge and skills.*
- *Le contact avec les personnes impliquées, le sentiment de faire partie d'une équipe qui aide les infortunés, l'intérêt humain.*

Some participants also mentioned their interest in the law as a source of satisfaction.

e. Challenges and obstacles

The next question looked at the main challenges or obstacles at work, as well as the aspects respondents enjoy less about their court interpretation activities. The most frequently cited elements have to do with working conditions, in particular compensation, work organization, and material and technical aspects:

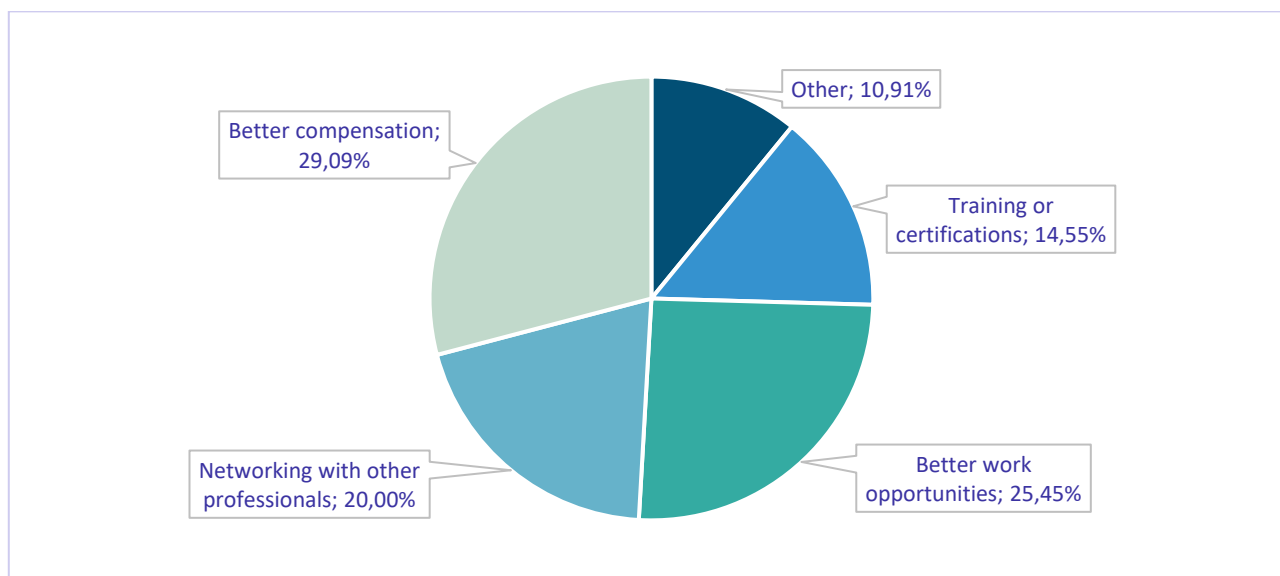
- *Les offres de travail dans ce secteur sont souvent très mal rémunérées comparées à d'autres types d'interprétation, comme l'interprétation simultanée de conférences par exemple, qui occupe la majorité de mon temps.*
- *Court interpretation is often booked for full days or multiple days. Assignments are often cancelled, leaving the interpreter disadvantaged as they have reserved the time in their schedule.*
- *Conditions de travail déplorables et/ou inacceptables : qualité audio déficiente, cabines d'interprétation inadéquates ou non existantes, aucun soutien.*
- *How time consuming it is for the compensation: whether through Courts or through agencies, travel time and parking are never compensated.*
- *La route. Quand je travaillais dans le réseau des Palais de justice, je parcourais de longues distances pour aller aux procès. Le tracas administratif.*

Some people also mentioned the lack of access to case-related information, which prevents them from preparing adequately, and the lack of recognition and understanding of the profession by other players in the legal world.

f. Factors that might encourage them to allocate more time to this activity

When respondents who occasionally perform court interpretation tasks were asked what might encourage them to do so on a more regular basis, the most frequently cited reason was “better compensation” (29.09%), followed by “better work opportunities” (25.45%) (see Figure 33). These figures are not very different from those for legal translation. In short, the crux of the matter is mainly compensation and work opportunities.

Figure 33: Is there anything that could prompt you to perform court interpretation tasks more often?



Interestingly, as with translation, when the question was asked in an open-ended format, participants mentioned training as a factor:

- *Meilleure formation.*
- *Ongoing paid training for interpreters. Opportunities to learn by observing experienced interpreters performing court assignments.*
- *Des formations régulières.*

Respondents also mentioned elements relating to working conditions and work organization, an issue they also raised in response to the question on obstacles to work:

- *L'utilisation de logiciels de transcription pour la prise de notes réduirait grandement le niveau de stress.*
- *More stability in scheduling of the assignments so that I can rely solely on that income.*
- *Respect de normes minimales déjà bien établies dans le domaine, tant pour l'interprétation consécutive que pour l'interprétation simultanée.*

The other answers to this question align fairly well with those selected for the previous one, meaning that respondents mainly mention compensation and work opportunities.

This question concludes the section of the survey on individuals who spend less than half of their time on court interpreting.

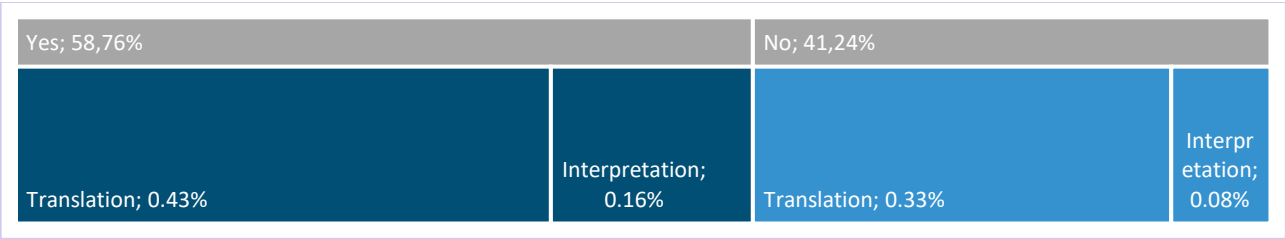
2.1.7 Views on the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada

This section looks at respondents' views on labour shortages in the legal translation and court interpreting sectors, and the effects of these shortages.

a. General observation on shortages

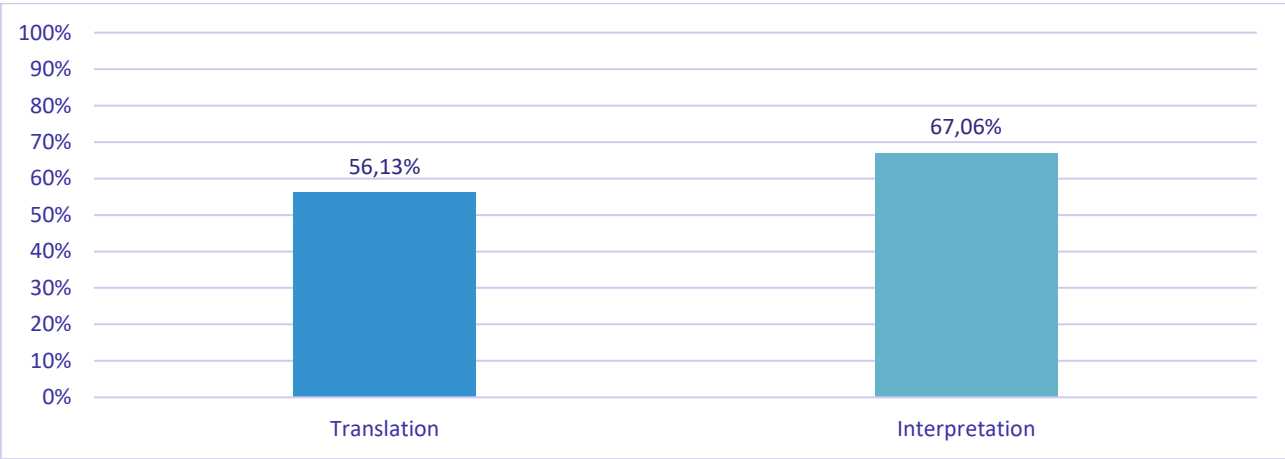
First, we asked participants if they had noticed any labour shortages in the legal translation and court interpreting sectors. As indicated by Figure 34, overall, that is, regardless of the tasks performed by respondents (translation or interpretation), nearly 60% of participants answered in the affirmative.²³

Figure 34: Have you observed labour shortages in the legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) and court interpretation fields?



More specifically, of the affirmative responses (58.76% of the total), 72.60% came from individuals who do translation (42.66% of the total), and 27.40% from those who do interpretation (16.10% of the total). However, when the data are broken down by task, regardless of the number of participants engaged in each activity, 56.13% of those who do translation answered “Yes,” and 67.06% of those who do interpretation did the same (see Figure 35).²⁴

Figure 35: Proportion of individuals who have observed labour shortages, by task performed.



In other words, court interpreters are more likely than legal translators to perceive shortages in the legal language field in Canada.

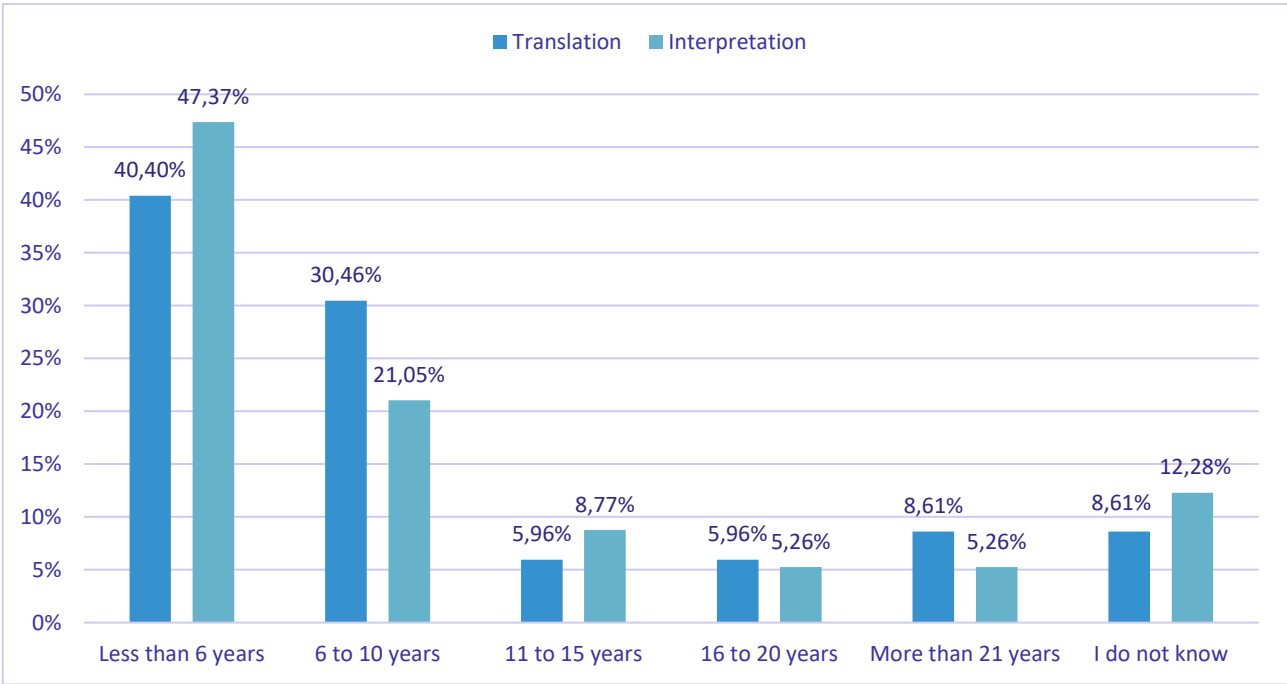
²³ See note 8.

²⁴ *Idem*.

b. Length of shortages

When participants who believe there are shortages were asked for how long they have been observing them, the most common responses were “less than 6 years,” followed by “6 to 10 years.”²⁵

Figure 36: For how long have you been observing these shortages?



c. Factors behind shortages

We then asked participants to what they attributed these shortages. Issues related to working conditions, job insecurity and pay were the most frequently cited:

- *Dans le domaine de l’interprétation consécutive en milieu judiciaire, c’est la rémunération et les conditions de travail en général.*
- *Quant à ceux qui pratiquent le droit, il faut savoir que de se tourner vers la traduction résulte normalement en une baisse de salaire considérable.*
- *The compensation also does not compare well with other countries like United States.*
- *Lack of stable income for the professionals who work in that field. Most are hired as freelancers which gives no stable income or benefits.*
- *La rémunération ne reflète pas l’expertise requise pour faire de la bonne traduction juridique.*

Following that were concerns related to initial and continuing education, especially in terms of the required “dual” training in both language and law:

- *Manque de formation de langagiers spécialisés en droit.*
- *There is a lack or a dearth of any sort of training once you get on the job.*

²⁵ See note 8.

- *Je pense que la traduction juridique nécessite souvent une formation quelconque en droit, ce qui n'est pas si évident [...].*
- *Lack of people trained in both translation and law.*
- *Manque de programmes de formation.*

Participants also expressed frustration at what they see as a lack of recognition of the profession and commitment to the legal language sector from decision-makers and various stakeholders, particularly with regard to investment in the workforce and its training. This category largely aligns with the two preceding ones:

- *Souvent, les palais de justice font appel à des interprètes sans la moindre expérience dans le domaine juridique.*
- *Governments are using unskilled force, no understanding of complexity and importance from [...] court/government structures.*
- *Il y a aussi un manque d'intérêt des pouvoirs publics [...].*
- *Perhaps the invisibility of translation and interpretation work makes it easier to underfund.*
- *[...] investir dans des programmes de traduction ou d'interprétation, cela coûte cher et les résultats ne commencent à être visibles qu'après deux ou trois cycles d'élections.*

Among the other reasons cited by legal language professionals were the aging workforce and lack of succession, a negative perception of the specialization, sometimes seen as tedious and dull, the fear of being replaced by machine translation, especially in the current context of increasingly powerful artificial intelligence tools, and the overall lack of recognition for the field.

d. Effect of shortages

The following question focused on the effects of the shortages on the working conditions of respondents, their team or their employer in general. The first harmful effect of the shortages is the resulting work overload:

- *La situation oblige les traducteurs et réviseurs à l'interne à redoubler d'efforts.*
- *Obligation de faire du travail supplémentaire ou de gérer beaucoup de travail alors qu'on pourrait normalement distribuer les tâches de manière plus équitable.*
- *These shortages can increase workloads, as there are fewer qualified professionals to handle the volume of work.*
- *The shortages are putting a lot of pressure on the rest of the interpreters.*

Respondents also spoke of a deterioration in working conditions as a result of the work overload:

- *Peut avoir un effet démoralisateur ou stressant en raison de la surcharge.*
- *Ça affecte la santé, du moins sur le long terme.*
- *It is stressful to say the least.*
- *Des congés de maladie liés au stress pour certains collègues, la nécessité de sauter d'un projet à l'autre.*

Overwork, in turn, leads directly or indirectly to a drop in quality:

- *Diminution de la qualité du travail puisqu'il faut l'attribuer à des personnes non formées ou non spécialisées.*
- *This affects the quality of the interpreters and their commitment to the work.*
- *La qualité de la traduction en souffre et, comme réviseur, mon travail devient plus difficile [...].*
- *Many times, the unaccredited interpreters perform poorly.*

As noted in the previous section, this decline in quality stems partly from the need to assign tasks to individuals with insufficient experience or skills:

- *Il faut confier des textes compliqués à des traducteurs n'ayant pas beaucoup d'expérience.*
- *On me demande de traduire des textes trop juridiques pour mes compétences.*
- *Temps considérable à passer pour la formation de certains traducteurs.*
- *On a engagé des gens moins compétents en décidant de les encadrer étroitement (ce n'est pas efficace).*

Finally, these shortages also force respondents to turn down work or postpone deadlines:

- *Mon employeur doit de plus en plus souvent refuser des contrats (surtout du français vers l'anglais).*
- *Les agences/cabinets qui reçoivent les demandes ne peuvent pas offrir le service.*
- *This sometimes leads to tighter deadlines.*
- *Difficulté à respecter les délais.*

e. Suggested strategies to alleviate shortages

In the next question, we asked participants what measures could be put in place to alleviate shortages. Training and working conditions were mentioned with nearly equal frequency. First, training-related responses included:

- *Plus grande variété de cours en traduction juridique dans les universités. DESS en traduction juridique offerts selon des horaires flexibles permettant à des traducteurs déjà sur le marché du travail de se perfectionner dans ce domaine.*
- *Maybe having some university courses or even a certificate in legal interpretation so those who might be interested in the field can at least have some preparation before working.*
- *Offrir davantage de formations accessibles en traduction juridique pour les traducteurs d'expérience — pas seulement des formations s'adressant aux gens qui n'ont pas commencé leur carrière encore.*
- *We need more training programs that combine law and translation.*

Next, with regard to working conditions, respondents cited:

- *Offrir un salaire raisonnable et encourageant à ceux qui pratiquent cette profession au Canada.*
- *Better working conditions in aspects such as wages and benefits to those who meet the requirements in experience, training and skills.*
- *Traiter les juristes-traducteurs et traducteurs juridiques comme des professionnels, et non comme de simples producteurs de mots.*
- *Better pay and better working conditions will attract a more skilled pool of candidates who otherwise work in other fields with better conditions.*

Respondents also mentioned the need for recognition and visibility of these professions and the training required to enter them:

- *Mettre de l'avant la traduction juridique comme domaine d'avenir pour la traduction humaine. Valorisation de la spécialité.*
- *Create awareness for the related programs like not only translation and interpretation but also programs imparting knowledge of legal system here.*
- *Plus de sensibilisation au domaine de traduction juridique et de jurilinguistique aux études supérieures.*
- *More awareness about legal translation as a career.*

Finally, we asked participants if they had any additional comments or suggestions regarding the shortage of legal translators and court interpreters in Canada. Most of the comments aligned with the responses gathered elsewhere, but some individuals used this question as an opportunity to challenge the existence of shortages:

- *En ce moment, il s'agit plus d'un manque de travail que d'une pénurie de main-d'œuvre.*
- *I don't believe that there are any labor shortages in the translation/interpretation sector.*
- *Personnellement, je ne savais pas qu'il y avait une pénurie, car au Bureau de la traduction, on a eu une grosse baisse de volume dernièrement.*
- *I have seen shortages at times, but not directly in my own legislative translation team in recent years.*

These last comments, which partly contradict the data presented above, reflect a nuanced situation with regard to shortages. The legal language industry does not appear to be experiencing shortages in the same way. This concludes the section of the report focusing on the survey of legal language professionals.

2.2 Analysis of employer interviews

In this second part of the analysis, we focus on interviews with employers and clients of legal language professionals.

2.2.1 The situation regarding regional shortages

This first part of the interview included three questions not about the organizations themselves, but rather about the regions they serve. The first question focused on the current shortage of legal language professionals in the region; the second aimed to assess the situation over the past few years; and the third looked at forecasts for the years to come.

a. Current state of affairs

Generally speaking, the organization representatives were unable to talk about the situation in their region, that is, to go beyond the specifics of their own organization. However, it is clear from the responses received that these organizations are not really experiencing any shortages at present, at least with respect to the organization's internal needs.

b. Assessment of shortages

In recent years, in some cases, a combination of new hires and a drop in demand have meant that the situation is now stable and satisfactory. However, in other cases, it has been reported that recruiting legal language professionals is now more difficult than before. One of the factors behind this situation appears to be the geographic mismatch between labour supply and demand, combined with often restrictive remote-work policies.

c. Shortage forecasts

With regard to the years ahead, the general feeling is one of confidence. The only drawback is not a shortage of qualified legal language professionals, but rather a potential lack of funding that could jeopardize the ability to offer competitive salaries, or even to maintain existing positions or create new ones.

In short, although the representatives of the participating organizations were not really able to speak for their entire region, the conclusion seems relatively clear: there is no reason to sound the alarm at present, but it is important to remain attentive to certain issues, such as funding and remote-work policies, which could potentially worsen the shortages in the coming years.

2.2.2 Overview of organizational shortages

The second part of the interview focused on the situation within organizations with respect to shortages of legal language professionals.

a. Ability to respond to demand

We first sought to determine whether the organizations were able to meet all the demands or needs for which they are responsible. The responses received indicate that, generally speaking, there are currently no serious problems resulting from shortages. For example, the Translation Bureau reported that it is able to meet all its needs in both French and English. In some cases, when it cannot meet demand internally (which seems to be a rare occurrence), it turns to external suppliers. The National Assembly of Québec reported having access to a subcontractor, although it rarely uses this resource. In other cases, not all needs can be met, but the problem stems from the organization's underfunding, not from shortages. This seems to be the situation at the Courts Administration Service (CAS). Elsewhere, notably at the Office of Legislative Counsel of the Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General, the situation is acceptable for now, but the balance could be disrupted if it becomes difficult to replace retiring staff.

Of course, every organization faces different challenges. For example, in the case of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal of Newfoundland and Labrador, it was noted that "... the lack of data makes it impossible to assess the pool of available legal language professionals and to target appropriate recruitment strategies," which has delayed "... setting up teams capable of meeting immediate linguistic needs during hearings and drafting bilingual legal documents." Moreover, "[t]his lack of data also prevents [their] courts from demonstrating the need for additional resources to ensure the effective implementation of language rights in Newfoundland and Labrador, and thus from making reliable projections to justify budgets or funding to provincial or federal authorities."

b. Vacant positions

Next, we asked representatives whether there were currently any vacant positions within their organization and, unsurprisingly, the answers were in line with those in the previous question: there are no vacant positions at the moment and, in most cases, vacant positions are not a major concern.

c. Gaps in legal language skills

Another question dealt with any gaps in the skills of employees involved in legal language work, if applicable. Although the challenges are limited and hard to generalize, a common issue seems to be insufficient legal knowledge, particularly in specialized fields or case law—something the Translation Bureau has specifically pointed out. That being said, it is generally easier and more effective to train translators in the field of law than to train lawyers in translation. For example, this is the opinion of the Translation Bureau (English into French): “Writing deficiencies among trained lawyers seem harder to overcome than gaps in legal knowledge among translators.” Other challenges include a lack of familiarity with technology tools and the inexperience of some employees. According to the CAS, “[a]nother aspect to monitor is how easy it would be to use translation technology tools, or to do pre-translation and post-editing.” Ontario reported “... there is a certain lack of experience among new translators (due to a lack of quality candidates).”

d. Measures to address gaps

The next question dealt with the actions taken and solutions considered by the organizations’ managers to address the gaps. In all cases, various types of internal and external training were brought up. The proposed solutions include:

- *Paying for university training so that generalist translators can specialize in the field of law.*
- *Offering refresher courses on language-related topics.*
- *Offering introductory courses in legal translation.*
- *Organizing seminars given by various experts.*
- *Implementing mentoring and pairing programs, in particular for the revision of legal translations.*
- *Implementing collaborative initiatives, including with the judiciary.*

In summary, the responses show that organizations are working to the best of their abilities to help their legal language professionals achieve their full potential, and that they are not currently facing any serious problems as a result of shortages.

2.2.3 Organizational recruitment of legal language professionals

The third part of the interview focused on the recruitment of legal language professionals by organizations.

a. Recruitment campaigns and strategies

The first question was whether or not organizations had undertaken recruitment campaigns in recent years, and if so, what strategies they had adopted. Generally speaking, it can be said that organizations use a wide range of approaches to recruit legal language professionals, for example:

- *Hiring students and interns.*
- *Focused recruitment of qualified experts through professional associations and regulatory bodies.*
- *Holding internal and external competitions.*
- *Creating web pages or podcasts.*
- *Advertising on social media.*
- *Participating in various events.*
- *Organizing open houses.*
- *Speaking in specialized forums.*
- *Signing partnership agreements with universities.*
- *Encouraging unsolicited applications.*
- *Personalized support for promising individuals.*

Overall, the representatives reported that the campaigns were successful in that candidates were hired as hoped.

b. Barriers to hiring

We then asked the organizations' representatives about the barriers to hiring legal language professionals. First, as mentioned above, the geographic mismatch between labour supply and demand, combined with strict remote-work policies, sometimes acts as a barrier. In Ontario, for example, it was explained that "... many of the top candidates come from outside the Greater Toronto Area ...," which makes hiring impossible, "... as a government directive requires employees to work three days a week in the office." However, it seems that wages and job security are the main issues. For example, the Translation Bureau (English into French) reported that, "[f]or legal translators, salary and job security (fixed-term rather than open-ended contracts) are barriers to hiring." That being said, to revisit the case of Newfoundland and Labrador mentioned earlier, it was noted that "... the first issue/barrier is the minimum volume needed to justify the recruitment of legal translators and/or court interpreters." Other representatives, notably from the National Assembly of Québec, also mentioned the scarcity of candidates interested or qualified in the legal language field. With regard to candidates' skills, it must also be noted that the range of specialized training available remains limited, which could partly explain the lack of qualified recruits. In fact, the CAS pointed out that "[f]inding a candidate with dual training in law and translation is quite a feat..."

The next question focused on the shortcomings of job applicants. While there appear to be no truly serious issues, it was nonetheless noted that they often lack experience as well as legal language knowledge, and that, due to limited resources, organizations are not always in a position to help address these gaps. For example, Yukon's French Language Services Directorate explained that its organizational structures do not enable it to onboard and train inexperienced candidates.

c. Solutions to recruitment problems

As potential solutions to recruitment problems, the representatives of the organizations proposed various ideas for consideration:

- *Increasing wages.*
- *Improving working conditions.*
- *Conducting targeted candidate searches ("head-hunting").*
- *Offering internships to students.*
- *Improving training programs.*
- *Adopting more flexible remote work policies.*
- *Developing long-term recruitment strategies.*

-
- *Demonstrating to the relevant authorities, with supporting data, that the needs are real.*
 - *Partially circumventing the problem by making greater use of machine translation and artificial intelligence.*

In short, it appears that organizations are not experiencing serious recruitment problems due to shortages, and that they already have a number of effective strategies in place to optimize their hiring processes.

2.2.4 Proposals for a Canada-wide strategic plan

The fourth and final interview section consisted of a question inviting the representatives to take a step back from their organization and region: “If you had to prepare a strategic plan to solve the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada in general, what would you do?”

Among the proposed solutions, one suggestion was to offer current translators or newly hired generalists the opportunity to specialize in the legal field at the organization’s expense. This is what the Translation Bureau (English into French) is recommending, “... because demand is declining in general fields.” It was also proposed to step up efforts to promote the legal language field, focusing on lawyers and even more on law students, who are often unaware of the opportunities in the legal language field. According to the CAS, many people from the legal field “... do not see themselves in traditional fields of practice and would make strong candidates for legal translation programs.” Better wages, benefits and working conditions, including greater flexibility for remote work, also seem essential. For example, Ontario is proposing “more attractive salaries [and] better working conditions (remote work, benefits).” Similarly, enhancing the training offer, particularly by creating shorter programs, is also seen as an unavoidable path forward.

It also appears necessary to strengthen the alignment between educational institutions and professional environments, for example by establishing internship and mentorship programs through partnerships and agreements. More broadly, as the Newfoundland and Labrador representative explained, first and foremost, it is necessary to collect precise data to estimate the needs (and demand) for legal language professionals across different regions. To this end, it was proposed to conduct surveys among legal professionals to identify situations where litigants have faced language barriers, to carry out studies with associations and organizations representing minority language communities, to analyze case studies of legal files where language issues may have slowed down proceedings, and to conduct interviews with litigants to gather testimonials about the obstacles they encountered. Lastly, a final option would be to consider expanding the use of machine translation and AI, while also reassuring prospective legal language professionals about the potential medium- and long-term impact of these technologies on jobs. Overall, the solutions suggested by the organizations here mostly align with those mentioned in response to the previous interview questions.

This concludes the section of the report dedicated to the interviews concerning the shortages. In the next section, we present conclusions based on the data and the findings outlined in this section on the survey and the interviews.

3. Report conclusions

Background

Before summarizing the results of the report, let us first recall the two main objectives of the study:

1. To obtain evidence-based data on the legal language professions that can be used to strengthen them. (What is the qualitative and quantitative overview of the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada?)
2. To establish strategic recommendations aimed at enhancing the value of the legal language professions. (What can be done to attract more job applicants, particularly those who occasionally perform legal language tasks, and more students to programs offering a legal language specialization?)

Throughout the report, we unveiled data from a survey conducted among legal language professionals, as well as interviews with their employers and clients. In this section, we will summarize the results in the form of conclusions, and in the final section of the report, we will develop guidelines based on these findings.

Before going any further, however, it is important to bear in mind that the realities of legal translators and court interpreters are quite different. The following section focuses on this question.

3.1 Legal translators and court interpreters: two distinct realities?

This study has shown that, in certain respects, the situation of legal translators differs significantly from that of court interpreters. For example, among those surveyed, translators generally spend more time on legal language tasks than do interpreters. In Canada, we translate mainly from English to French, but we also interpret a lot into English from languages other than French. Moreover, while just over half of all translators are employees, the vast majority of interpreters are freelancers. When it comes to translation, the country's largest employer or client is the federal government, whereas in interpreting, the top spot is held by a province—Ontario. When it comes to satisfaction with legal language tasks, the situation is complex. For example, among those who occasionally perform legal language tasks, 38.46% of interpreters say they are “very satisfied” compared with 30.36% of translators (see Figures 20 and 24), but the situation is reversed and the gap widens significantly among those who spend at least about half of their time on these activities: 67.37% of translators report being “very satisfied,” compared to only 33.33% of interpreters (see Figures 27 and 31). These few differences between the two professions, presented here by way of example, explain why it is so difficult to offer conclusions that apply to both legal translators and court interpreters.

That being said, there are also commonalities between the two groups of professionals, which are not entirely discrete, as some individuals perform both tasks (in fact, 17.58% of survey respondents report doing both translation and interpreting, as shown by Figure 1). First, among those who spend at least about half of their time on legal language tasks, this area of specialization is seen as either an unexpected or deliberate career choice in nearly equal proportions, whether in translation (69.58%; see Figure 18) or interpreting (69.45%; see Figure 22). Furthermore, the top three factors cited to explain the choice of legal translation or court interpreting were “language skills,” “interest in languages” and “interest in the law,” regardless of the time spent on legal language tasks. In terms of sources of motivation, both translators and interpreters cited elements having to do with personal satisfaction (e.g., a stimulating intellectual challenge), but also with contributing to society (e.g., contributing to access to justice). Similarly, among the sources of frustration, legal language professionals in both categories often mentioned difficult working conditions and the lack of recognition for their professions. Incidentally, among those who spend at least about half of their time on legal language activities, both those

doing translation and those doing interpreting reported, in nearly equal proportions (62.10% and 61.11%, respectively; see Figures 21 and 25) that they would be “very” or “somewhat” likely to recommend their specialization as a career choice or a career change.

In short, although there are many similarities between legal translators and court interpreters in Canada, the remaining notable differences make it impossible to present a unified picture of these two legal language professions. This situation is further compounded by the fact that the employer interviews focused primarily on legal translators, not court interpreters.

3.2 What is the current picture of the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada?

In this section, we examine the first question raised in the study: “What is the qualitative and quantitative overview of the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada?”

First, almost 60% of legal language professionals who responded to the survey said they observed labour shortages in the legal translation and court interpreting sectors in Canada (see Figure 34). More specifically, while just over half (56%) of those who translate held this view, this was the case for two-thirds (67%) of those who interpret (see Figure 35). This result could therefore suggest that the shortages are more significant in court interpreting than in legal translation. It is also worth noting that among individuals who spend less than half of their time on legal language tasks, “few work opportunities” was the most frequently cited reason for not engaging in these tasks more often among legal translators (see Figure 28), and the second most cited reason among interpreters (see Figure 32). Similarly, as a potential motivation for performing legal language tasks more frequently, “better work opportunities” ranked first among translators (see Figure 29) and second among interpreters (see Figure 33). It is therefore worth noting that the issue of limited work opportunities appears less pronounced for interpreters than for translators, which aligns with the views expressed by both groups of legal language professionals regarding the shortages. In parallel, it is worth recalling that more than 60% of survey respondents stated they do not intend to retire for at least another 11 years (see Figure 4), and nearly 60% said they “rarely” or “never” consider leaving legal translation or court interpreting (see Figure 5). These data therefore indicate that a significant proportion of active legal language professionals are not about to retire or switch fields.

As for employers and clients of legal language professionals, who spoke mainly about translation rather than interpreting, most of them said they have neither experienced nor foresee any shortages, at least not with respect to their organization’s needs. Indeed, responses from employers and clients indicate that, generally speaking, there are currently no serious issues arising from shortages of legal language professionals.

Ultimately, it appears difficult to reconcile the statements of legal translators and interpreters with those of employers in order to draw unequivocal conclusions about shortages in the legal translation and court interpreting sector in Canada. Legal language professionals expressed mixed views, although interpreters more consistently reported shortages in significant numbers. The employers’ perspective, which mainly concerns translation, is fairly consistent, if not unanimous: there is no shortage of legal translators or court interpreters. Before going any further, we should point out that the legal language professionals who responded to the survey and the organizations that took part in the interviews are not necessarily representative of the situation across Canada. However, given the above, we must at the very least qualify the study’s initial assumption that the Canadian legal sector is facing a shortage of legal language professionals. The situation is indeed complex, and varies greatly from case to case, depending on a host of interacting factors: task (i.e., legal translation or court interpreting), region (e.g., one province versus another), language combination (e.g., English to French versus the reverse combination), and so on.

3.3 What can be done to attract more candidates to legal language programs and jobs in Canada?

In this section, we turn to the second question raised in the study: “What can be done to attract more job applicants, particularly those who “occasionally engage with legal language,” and more students to programs offering a legal language specialization?”

First, among legal language professionals who do not plan to leave the profession, the most significant category of reasons behind this stance relates to interest in the field. In reading the participants’ answers to the open-ended questions, it is clear that they are passionate about their work. This is certainly a good place to start, especially when promoting these careers to translation and law students. However, among the legal language professionals who are thinking of leaving the field, the issue most frequently cited was working conditions in a broad sense, which includes salaries and concerns about inflexibility, instability and other aspects related to the more tedious parts of the job. In light of these circumstances, it is hardly surprising that, when we directly asked legal language professionals who reported shortages what they attribute them to, the factors most frequently cited were more or less the same: working conditions, job insecurity, compensation, etc. Among the other reasons cited, the first was dissatisfaction with the availability of initial and ongoing training, particularly regarding the “dual” linguistic and legal training seen as necessary to work in this field. Participants also expressed frustration at what they saw as a lack of recognition for their professions and commitment to the legal language sector from legal and judicial actors, decision-makers and other stakeholders. As for translators and interpreters who spend less than half of their time on legal language tasks, they indicated that they would be willing to spend more of their time on these tasks if there were more work opportunities, if working conditions, including compensation, were better, and if specialized training were more accessible. Finally, when all survey participants were asked what measures could be put in place to alleviate shortages, they mainly talked about improving the training on offer and working conditions, but also about raising the profile of the field, in particular by making it more visible.

Among the employers and clients interviewed, a common concern was candidates’ lack of legal knowledge, which highlights the importance of both initial and ongoing training in legal translation (and certainly in court interpreting as well). The geographic mismatch between labour supply and demand is also a problem that needs to be addressed, but it seems that wages and working conditions remain the main issue. As with legal language professionals, we also asked employers and clients for ideas on how to improve the general situation across the country. One of the ideas put forward was to offer language professionals already on staff the opportunity to specialize in the legal field at the organization’s expense. Next, it was suggested to step up efforts to promote the legal language field in educational institutions, making sure not to overlook law students, who are often simply not aware of these career paths. Better wages, benefits and working conditions, including greater flexibility for remote work, also seem essential. Similarly, enhancing the training offer, particularly by creating shorter programs, is also seen as a clear path forward. In this respect, ties between educational and professional environments would have to be strengthened, for example by setting up internship and mentorship programs. Furthermore, it is essential to gather precise data on the supply and demand for legal language services in each region, in order to demonstrate to the decision-makers concerned the need to invest in the legal language field so that members of official language minority communities can have access to the services they need. Finally, it seems we need to consider using artificial intelligence more, while reassuring those considering a legal language career about the risks it could pose to jobs.

This concludes the section of the report devoted to the study’s findings. In the following section, we will outline strategic recommendations aimed at enhancing the value of legal language professions and attracting more candidates to academic programs and jobs in the field across Canada.

4. Strategic recommendations

Overview

In this final section of the report, we propose six strategic recommendations to strengthen the legal language professions and attract more candidates to study and work in the field.

4.1 Promote legal language careers to students

As a first recommendation, we propose taking concrete action to promote legal language careers, primarily to students in language-related fields, but also to law students. Naturally, it makes sense for translation and interpretation students to consider specializing in a promising field. As such, the legal language career path should be highlighted as early as possible in the academic journey, by taking advantage of all relevant opportunities (e.g., legal translation courses, themed events). As for law students, it is a safe bet that some of them would be more interested in a legal language career than a “traditional” legal one. To promote legal language professions, it would be worthwhile to emphasize both personal sources of motivation (e.g., intellectual challenge) and social ones (e.g., contributing to language rights).

4.2 Raise the profile of legal language professions

As a second recommendation, it seems essential to work actively to raise the profile of legal language professions in general, to raise awareness among legal and judicial stakeholders of the realities of the professionals who practise them, and to make the decision-makers concerned aware of the societal importance of these professions. While the perception of these professions is obviously not negative, there is too often a tendency to underestimate the essential role they play in the legal world and within Canadian society. We might also hope that a campaign to promote the legal language field could lead to increased funding to both train and hire the next generation of legal translators and interpreters in Canada.

4.3 Improve working conditions for legal language professionals

As a third recommendation, we urgently need to improve the working conditions and compensation of legal language professionals (particularly court interpreters), as this is one of the main reasons for dissatisfaction and frustration. In fact, if nothing is done to address the situation, some may end up leaving the legal language field, while others may lose the motivation to further commit to it. More specifically, the concerns raised by legal translators and court interpreters relate to several aspects of their work: inadequate tools, tight deadlines, insufficient pay, lack of documentation, unreasonable demands, and more. As a result, it is essential to ensure that legal translators and court interpreters are able to carry out their duties under the best possible conditions, as they rightly deserve.

4.4 Promote flexibility at work for legal language professionals

As a fourth recommendation, we emphasize the importance of adopting policies that encourage remote work, in order to offer greater flexibility both to legal language professionals seeking work and to their potential employers or clients. While there are undoubtedly shortages of legal language specialists in some regions, many legal language professionals say they cannot find enough work opportunities in their area. This reality likely reflects a geographic mismatch between the supply and demand of legal translators and court interpreters. In these

circumstances, greater flexibility with respect to remote work could enable organizations to meet their staffing needs and allow legal translators and court interpreters to broaden their professional horizons beyond purely geographic considerations.

4.5 Expand and diversify legal language training opportunities

As a fifth recommendation, it appears essential that educational institutions expand and diversify their initial and ongoing training courses, both in legal translation and in court interpreting. It appears that the current offer is insufficient, particularly when it comes to advanced and specialized legal language training. Moreover, as with jobs, the geographic mismatch between training supply and demand is sometimes a barrier. In these circumstances, it is important to offer flexible training options that meet the needs of language professionals wishing to specialize in the legal or judicial field, as well as those of students considering a career in legal translation or court interpreting.

4.6 Encourage specialization in the legal language professions among language professionals

As a sixth recommendation, organizations with legal translation or court interpreting needs should encourage their general language professionals to specialize in the legal language field and support them in their efforts. Rather than hiring individuals who would need to adapt to a new environment, organizations would benefit from investing in the professional development of their translators and interpreters who wish to acquire skills and knowledge in the legal and judicial fields. To that end, it is essential that educational institutions and professional environments strengthen their collaboration in order to better align continuing education programs with the needs and realities of organizations.

Conclusion

Implementing these strategic recommendations should make it possible to rectify the shortage of legal language specialists in Canada. In closing, however, it must be noted that more precise data are still required, particularly by region, profession and language, in order to target priority issues and identify possible solutions in greater detail.

Annex 1: Survey on the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada.

ELIGIBILITY

1. As part of your professional activities, which of the following tasks do you perform at least occasionally?

- Legal translation (including the revision of legal translations)
- Court interpretation
- Both
- Neither

2. Do you perform at least part of these tasks, directly or indirectly, for an employer or a client in Canada's public sector?

- Yes
- No

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

3. What proportion of your professional activities corresponds to legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation tasks?

- 80-100% (they occupy all/almost all of my time.)
- 60-79% (they occupy a significant portion of my time)
- 40-59% (they occupy about half of my time)
- 20-39% (they occupy a small portion of my time)
- 0-19% (they occupy very little of my time)

4. How long have you been performing legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation tasks?

- 0-3 years
- 4-8 years
- 9-20 years
- 21-30 years
- 31 years or more

5. What are your working language combinations?

- English to French
- French to English
- Another language to English
- Another language to French
- English to another language
- French to another language

6. Considering only legal language-related tasks, which of the following statements best describes your employment situation?

- I am employed.
- I am a freelancer.
- Both.

6.1 Please specify your employment situation.

- I mainly work in the public or quasi-public sector.

- I mainly work in the private sector, for instance for a legal office which provides services to the public or quasi-public sector.

6.2 How many of your direct clients are part of the public service (i.e., you have a direct contract with a client in the public service)?

- All of my direct clients are in the public service.
- Most of my direct clients are in the public service.
- Half of my direct clients are in the public service.
- Most of my direct clients are not in the public service.
- None of my direct clients are in the public service.

6.3 How many of your indirect clients are part of the public service (i.e., you provide services to an agency that has contracts with the public service)?

- All of my indirect clients are in the public service.
- Most of my indirect clients are in the public service.
- Half of my indirect clients are in the public service.
- Most of my indirect clients are not in the public service.
- None of my indirect clients are in the public service.

7. Where are your main clients or your public sector employer located?

- Government of Canada (federal government)
- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Northwest Territories
- Nova Scotia
- Nunavut
- Ontario
- Prince Edward Island
- Québec
- Saskatchewan
- Yukon

CHOICE OF SPECIALIZATION AND LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

In response to a previous question, you indicated that legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation accounts for at least half of your time. The following questions are designed to find out more about what prompted you to choose this specialization.

The following questions specifically relate to the profile of legal translator (including the revision of legal translations) (Q1a.)

8. Which of the following statements best describes your situation? Legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) was...

- ... a deliberate career choice. (For example, I chose to be a translator who specializes in the legal field.)
- ... an unforeseen, unexpected, forced or other type of career choice. For example, I chose to be a translator, and a specialization in legal translation came about in some way.)
- ... a deliberate career change. (For example, after several years in law, I chose to specialize in legal translation.)
- ... an unforeseen, unexpected, forced or other type of career change. (For example, after several years in general translation, circumstances forced me to specialize in legal translation.)

-
- ... a retirement activity.
 - Other:

8.1 What prompted you to make this deliberate career choice?

8.2 Please explain how this career choice came about.

8.3 What prompted you to make this deliberate career change?

8.4 Please explain how this career change came about.

8.5 What prompted you to pursue this activity in your retirement?

9. From among the following factors, please select those that played a decisive role in your decision to pursue legal translation (including the revision of legal translations).

- Job offer in this field
- Internship in this field
- To help with a surplus of work
- To keep busy
- Desire to help
- Salary
- Curiosity
- Luck
- Circumstances
- Interest in the law
- Dedication to justice
- Interest in languages
- Language skills
- Job security
- Shortages in this field
- Intellectual challenge
- Work opportunities in the public sector
- Influence of a relative
- Influence of a colleague
- Influence of a mentor
- Influence of a teacher or professor
- Advertisements or information sessions
- Employer's requirement
- Circumstances beyond my control
- Other: _____

10. Overall, how satisfied are you with your legal translation work (including the revision of legal translations)?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

11. What brings you the most satisfaction or motivation in the portion of your work related to legal translation (including the revision of legal translations)? Why do you enjoy this work?

12. What are your main challenges or obstacles in the portion of your work related to legal translation (including the revision of legal translations)? What do you enjoy less about this work?

13. How likely are you to recommend legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) as a career choice or career change?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Unlikely
- Not at all

14. In general, to what type of person would you recommend legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) as a career choice or career change? Why?

15. In general, to what type of person would you not recommend legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) as a career choice or career change? Why?

The following questions specifically relate to the profile of court interpreter (Q2a.)

16. Which of the following statements best describes your situation? Court interpretation is...

- ... a deliberate career choice. (For example, I chose to be an interpreter who specializes in the legal field.)
- ... an unforeseen, unexpected, forced or other type of career choice. (For example, I chose to be an interpreter, and a specialization in court interpretation came about in some way.)
- ... a deliberate career change. (For example, after several years in another field, I chose to specialize in court interpretation.)
- ... an unforeseen, unexpected, forced or other type of career change. (For example, after several years in medical interpretation, circumstances forced me to specialize in court interpretation.)
- ... a retirement activity.
- Other:

16.1 What prompted you to make this deliberate career choice?

16.2 Please explain how this career choice came about.

16.3 What prompted you to make this deliberate career change?

16.4 Please explain how this career change came about.

16.5 What prompted you to pursue this activity in your retirement?

17. From among the following factors, please select those that played a decisive role in your decision to pursue court interpretation.

- Job offer in this field
- Internship in this field
- To help with a surplus of work
- To keep busy
- Desire to help
- Salary
- Curiosity
- Luck
- Circumstances
- Interest in the law

- Dedication to justice
- Interest in languages
- Language skills
- Job security
- Shortages in this field
- Intellectual challenge
- Work opportunities in the public sector
- Influence of a relative
- Influence of a colleague
- Influence of a mentor
- Influence of a teacher or professor
- Advertisements or information sessions
- Employer's requirement
- Circumstances beyond my control
- Other: _____

18. Overall, how satisfied are you with your court interpretation work?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

19. What brings you the most satisfaction or motivation in the portion of your work related to court interpretation? Why do you enjoy this work?

20. What are your main challenges or obstacles in the portion of your work related to court interpretation? What do you enjoy less about this work?

21. How likely are you to recommend court interpretation as a career choice or career change?

- Very likely
- Somewhat likely
- Neither likely nor unlikely
- Unlikely
- Not at all

22. In general, to what type of person would you recommend court interpretation as a career choice or career change? Why?

23. In general, to what type of person would you not recommend court interpretation as a career choice or career change? Why?

CHOICE OF SPECIALIZATION AND LEVEL OF SATISFACTION

In response to a previous question, you indicated that legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation occupies only a small portion or almost none of your time. The following questions are designed to find out more about why you do not perform these tasks more often.

The following questions specifically relate to the profile of legal translator (including the revision of legal translations) (Q1a.)

24. From among the following factors, please indicate what led or prompted you to occasionally perform legal translation tasks (including the revision of legal translations).

- Job offer in this field
- Internship in this field
- To help with a surplus of work
- To keep busy
- Desire to help
- Salary
- Curiosity
- Luck
- Circumstances
- Interest in the law
- Dedication to justice
- Interest in languages
- Language skills
- Job security
- Shortages in this field
- Intellectual challenge
- Work opportunities in the public sector
- Influence of a relative
- Influence of a colleague
- Influence of a mentor
- Influence of a teacher or professor
- Advertisements or information sessions
- Employer's requirement
- Circumstances beyond my control
- Other: _____

25. Overall, how satisfied are you with your legal translation work (including the revision of legal translations)?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

26. What are the reasons why you do not perform legal translation tasks (including the revision of legal translations) more often?

- Lack of time
- Lack of specialized training
- Few work opportunities
- Limited interest in law
- Inadequate compensation
- Other

27. What brings you the most satisfaction or motivation in the portion of your work related to legal translation (including the revision of legal translations)? Why do you enjoy these tasks?

28. What are your main challenges or obstacles in the portion of your work related to legal translation (including the revision of legal translations)? What do you enjoy less about this work?

29. Is there anything that could prompt you to perform legal translation tasks (including the revision of legal translations) more often?

- Training or certifications
- Better work opportunities

-
- Networking with other professionals
 - Better compensation
 - Other

30. What types of support or resources would help you to become more involved in this field?

The following questions specifically relate to the profile of court interpreter (Q1b.)

31. From among the following factors, please indicate what led or prompted you to occasionally perform court interpretation tasks.

- Job offer in this field
- Internship in this field
- To help with a surplus of work
- To keep busy
- Desire to help
- Salary
- Curiosity
- Luck
- Circumstances
- Interest in the law
- Dedication to justice
- Interest in languages
- Language skills
- Job security
- Shortages in this field
- Intellectual challenge
- Work opportunities in the public sector
- Influence of a relative
- Influence of a colleague
- Influence of a mentor
- Influence of a teacher or professor
- Advertisements or information sessions
- Employer's requirement
- Circumstances beyond my control
- Other: _____

32. Overall, how satisfied are you with your court interpretation work?

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

33. What are the reasons why you do not perform court interpretation tasks more often?

- Lack of time
- Lack of specialized training
- Few work opportunities
- Limited interest in law
- Inadequate compensation
- Other

34. What brings you the most satisfaction or motivation in the portion of your work related to court interpretation? Why do you enjoy these tasks?

35. What are your main challenges or obstacles in the portion of your work related to court interpretation? What do you enjoy less about this work?

36. Is there anything that could prompt you to perform court interpretation tasks more often?

- Training or certifications
- Better work opportunities
- Networking with other professionals
- Better compensation
- Other

37. What types of support or resources would help you to become more involved in this field?

CHALLENGES AND SHORTAGES

This section is designed to help us understand the effects of labour shortages in the legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) and court interpretation fields on your work.

38. Have you observed labour shortages in the legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) and court interpretation fields?

- Yes
- No

38.1 For how long have you observed these shortages?

- Less than 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- 11 to 15 years
- 16 to 20 years
- More than 21 years
- I do not know

38.2 What do you think is causing these shortages?

38.3 Where applicable, how are these shortages affecting your work, your working conditions, your team, or your employer in general?

38.4 What measures could be put in place to address these shortages?

39. Do you have any additional comments or suggestions about the shortage of legal translators and court interpreters in Canada?

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

40. What province or territory do you live in?

- Alberta
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- New Brunswick
- Newfoundland and Labrador
- Northwest Territories
- Nova Scotia

-
- Nunavut
 - Ontario
 - Prince Edward Island
 - Québec
 - Saskatchewan
 - Yukon

41. How old are you?

- 17 years and under
- 18-24 years
- 25-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55 years and over

42. In how many years do you plan to retire?

- 2 years or less
- 3-6 years
- 7-10 years
- 11 years or more

43. Do you ever consider leaving the legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation field?

- Quite often
- Often
- Occasionally
- Rarely
- Never

43.1 For what reason(s)?

44. Which of the following corresponds to the highest level of education you have achieved in a field related to your legal translation (including the revision of legal translations) or court interpretation activities?

- High school diploma or vocational diploma
- College degree
- Bachelor's degree or other undergraduate certificate
- Master's degree or other graduate certificate
- Ph.D. or other post-graduate certificate

45. In which field did you obtain this degree or certificate?

- Language-related field (translation, linguistics, languages, etc.)
- Legal field (law)
- Other:

46. From which academic institution did you obtain this degree or certificate?

47. Please indicate the name of the degree or certificate.

48. Are you a member of a professional association or society of translators or interpreters (OTTIAQ, ATIO, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

48.1. Please indicate the name of this association or society.

48.2. Why are you not a member of a professional association or society of translators or interpreters?

Annex 2: Interview on the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada.

Background:

Since at least 2009, members of Canada's legal sector have been raising the alarm about the shortage of legal language professionals across the country, particularly in the fields of translation and interpretation. A report commissioned by the federal Department of Justice in 2016 reached the same conclusion. In recent years, numerous organizations (FPT Working Group, RNFJ, Cr peau Centre, Canadian Bar Association, etc.) have acknowledged the urgency of this situation and addressed the issue in their meetings and presentations. To sum up, the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada appears to be an incontestable fact...

PART 1: General situation in your region

1. General situation of the shortage of legal language professionals in your region

First, do you also observe this situation (shortage of legal language professionals) in your region? Can you provide an overview of the general situation in your region?

2. Your observation of the shortage of legal language professionals in your region

What has been the situation in recent years, for example, the past five years? Are you able to quantify the trend in recent years for 1) legal translators and 2) court interpreters? Can you provide details about language combinations (pairs)?

3. Your predictions about the shortage of legal language professionals in your region

What are your predictions for the coming years, for example, the next five years? Are you able to quantify the trend in the coming years for 1) legal translators and 2) court interpreters? Can you provide details about language combinations (pairs)?

PART 2: The situation within your organization

4. Legal language work performed by your organization

Can you estimate, in any way (e.g., word count for translation, number of hours for interpretation, number of requests), the volume of work completed by 1) legal translators and 2) court interpreters (e.g., in a year)?

5. Need/demand within your organization

Are you able to meet all your organization's needs and demands? If not, to what extent are you unable to do so, and for what reasons? Can you provide details about language combinations (pairs)?

6. Legal language professionals within your organization

Currently, how many 1) legal translators and 2) court interpreters does your organization employ? Can you provide details about language combinations (pairs)?

7. Extent of the shortage of legal language professionals within your organization

Are you able to quantify the extent of the shortage of 1) legal translators and 2) court interpreters within your organization, in relative terms (percentage of vacant positions compared to total positions) or in absolute terms (number of vacant positions compared to total positions)? Can you provide details about language combinations (pairs)?

8. Shortcomings of your legal language professionals

Do any of your current legal translators or court interpreters lack skills or experience that prevent your organization from fulfilling its mission? If so, in what areas? Would you be able to quantify or, at least, rank these shortcomings in order of importance?

9. Actions taken to rectify the situation

If you have identified shortcomings, have you taken any actions to rectify the situation? If not, for what reasons? If so, what concrete actions have you taken, and what were the outcomes?

PART 3: Recruiting within your organization

10. Your efforts to recruit legal language professionals

Have you mounted recruitment campaigns in recent years to address the shortage of 1) legal translators and 2) court interpreters? If not, for what reasons? If so, what concrete actions have you taken (e.g., through which channels)?

11. Outcomes of your efforts to recruit legal language professionals

If you have mounted recruitment campaigns, what were the outcomes? More specifically, can you quantify the number of 1) legal translators and 2) court interpreters hired as a direct result of these recruitment campaigns?

12. Challenges and obstacles to recruiting legal language professionals

In your opinion, what are the main challenges and obstacles to recruiting 1) legal translators and 2) court interpreters? Why do you believe these challenges and obstacles are particularly significant? Would you be able to quantify or, at least, rank these challenges and obstacles in order of importance?

13. Shortcomings of candidates for legal language positions

Have you ever had to forgo hiring a candidate because of a lack of skills or experience? If so, in what areas were these shortcomings observed? Would you be able to quantify or, at least, rank these shortcomings in order of importance?

14. Potential solutions to attract more candidates

What potential solutions have you considered to attract more candidates for legal language positions? If you have already implemented some of these solutions, what were the outcomes? How do you explain these outcomes? Are you able to quantify these results?

PART 4: Conclusion

15. Proposals for a strategic plan to address the shortage

If you were to develop a strategic plan to more broadly address the shortage of legal language professionals in Canada, what actions would you take? Do you have any proposed solutions?

16. Is there anything you would like to add, clarify, or correct?

17. Do we have your permission to contact you again by email (within a maximum of one month after the interview) to request further details, clarifications, or more information about the answers you provided during this interview?