# Survey of BSL/English Interpreters' Working Conditions (2015-2016)

## National Union of British Sign Language Interpreters (NUBSLI)

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## Foreword

This is the second annual report on the results of NUBSLI's survey of British Sign Language (BSL) / English Interpreters' Working Conditions. NUBSLI took the decision to collate and publish this data in order to monitor trends and changes in the profession.

The demographic profile of respondents in NUBSLI's 2015 and current survey are similar for gender, age, home region, and percentages of qualified and trainee interpreters.

Through the survey data, NUBSLI has confirmed a trend towards the driving down of interpreters' terms and working conditions by public service providers. This has reached a point respondents often described as unsustainable for them personally, and for the profession. The changes that have already taken place are having a demonstrable impact on interpreters' morale, and this is cited as a key reason for interpreters considering exiting the profession. This area for concern will be a focus for NUBSLI activity over the coming year.

Interpreters expressed fears that Deaf people living in rural or remote areas may find they are no longer able to acquire interpreting services funded by the public purse. Examples were given of fees for short rural bookings being set at a two hour maximum with no travel costs paid. Where the booking location involves 2-3 hours' (return) travel, bookings were therefore unviable, as no further work could be taken that day. Some respondents said that there are bookings they no longer accept for this reason, because they would only receive two hours' pay in a working day.

Another issue identified as problematic was the decreasing recognition of the value of specialist skills and experience, coupled with a reduction in variable remuneration for interpreting professionals with specialist skills. One interpreter pointed out that court interpreters, some of the most skilled and experienced interpreters, are now amongst the lowest paid, having experienced a fee reduction of 25% over the past four years.

Interpreters expressed dissatisfaction that cuts to their fees are offset by the addition of (sometimes substantial) agency fees, bringing no overall savings to the public purse (the purported rationale behind the fee cuts).

"*I think that there are instances where I am paid, and this is a fair rate, but there have been increasingly … times when I am asked to reduce my rate due to contract restrictions etc. However, [I am] finding out that agencies are actually still charging huge fees on top of mine!*"

NUBSLI will work closely with our members to campaign for profession standard fees to be paid, and conditions to be fair, and will work to increase engagement with contract holders and commissioners in order to make clear the detrimental impact of such changes to the profession.

Darren Townsend-Handscomb & Jen Dodds, Co-Chairs of NUBSLI

## Key Findings[1]

1. **Intention to change working hours**
   31% of the respondents indicated an intention to reduce their hours or stop interpreting (a response similar to the 2015 survey), compared to 59% reporting no change and 11% intending to increase their working hours.

2. **Actual changes made to working hours**
   As well as intention to change their working hours, at least two thirds had taken action to realise these changes. Interpreters intending to reduce hours or stop working were most likely to have looked and applied for alternative employment, reduced their interpreting hours, and/or retrained or studied.

3. **Access to Work (AtW)**
   Approximately 85% of respondents to this survey take, or have taken, AtW funded interpreting (workplace-based support for Deaf and Deafblind people funded by Jobcentre Plus). Almost half of those respondents reported that they had reduced or stopped AtW-funded work since 2014, whilst only 10% increased the amount of AtW-funded work that they do. 66% of respondents said that AtW funding is lower than their fee, and in some cases, capped by AtW below market rates.

4. **Delays in invoice payments by AtW**
   Approximately half of respondents said that they had experienced difficulties in obtaining payment from AtW for work carried out. Key concerns raised were significantly delayed payments, part payment of invoices (such as unilateral deduction of travel costs), and non-payment of invoices for work carried out (due to, sometimes retrospective, changes in the customer's award). Resolving these problems was made difficult by the fact that AtW does not recognise any contractual relationship between itself and the interpreter (even where it is paying invoices directly).

5. **Remuneration for travel costs**
   Remuneration for travel has become an issue for 45% of the survey respondents, key issues cited being reductions in payment of travel costs and time from both AtW and agency bookings. The main reported impact of these changes was a reduction in income to a level below sustainable rates, and consequent unaffordability of accepting work in more rural areas. Interpreters were also concerned that in some cases agencies may be billing customers for the interpreter's travel costs, whilst not paying any travel costs to interpreters

6. **Deafblind interpreting**
   The impact of reductions in direct payments and changes in AtW funding for Deaf people have led to reductions in the numbers of people undertaking work with deafblind people. No interpreters reported increasing work with deafblind people.

[1] All figures in this section are rounded to the nearest whole number.

## Recommendations

These recommendations address the issues raised in this, and previous NUBSLI surveys, with the aim of ensuring the long term viability of the profession, and so meeting the needs of customers.

### Government and Commissioners

1) Consult regularly with NUBSLI and other organisations representing BSL/English interpreters on matters of quality, general and specialist standards and independent regulation, and sustainable pay and conditions to ensure the long term viability of the profession.[2]

2) Ensure that frameworks, tenders and contracts include specifications with respect to regulation, quality, relevant specialist skills, monitoring and customer satisfaction.

3) Increase the use of flexible procurement arrangements, for example, booking consortia of interpreters directly[3] and increasing the use of local or specialist agencies.

4) Identify and address the impact of increased travel time and cost on communication service provision for Deaf people in rural areas, ensuring that this group are not disadvantaged.

5) Recognise the need for specialist interpreters to be booked for specific domains, and for those specialist skills to be recognised in variable rates of pay.

### Agencies

1) Pay interpreters in line with NUBSLI's Fees Guidance[4].

2) Publically commit to respecting NUBSLI's Fees Guidance in general and/or for specific contracts[5].

3) Recognise the need for specialist interpreters to be booked for specific domains, and for those specialist skills to be recognised in variable rates of pay.

4) Ensure that contract bids take account of the need to respect NUBSLI's fees guidance when tendering.

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[2] NUBSLI, National Union of Professional Interpreters and Translators (NUPIT) and Professional Interpreters for Justice (PI4J).
[3] Through regional interpreter's websites, for example, http://www.essexinterpreters.co.uk, http://www.kentinterpreters.co.uk, and http://www.northeast-bslenglish-interpreters.co.uk.
[4] http://www.nubsli.com/guidance/interpreter-fees/
[5] http://www.nubsli.com/nub-posts/nubsli-fees-adopted-framework-agency/

## Introduction / Background

This report has been prepared by the National Union of British Sign Language Interpreters (NUBSLI), a branch of Unite. Members of NUBSLI include qualified and trainee British Sign Language/English interpreters, interpreters with deafblind people, Deaf interpreters and British Sign Language/English translators.

A number of significant market interventions and changes have affected the interpreting profession and their customers. These include:

- Access to Work (ATW): caps on hourly pay, problems with payments, inclusion of travel costs into already reduced fees, reduced funding of second interpreters where required[6].

- Tenders for interpreting services increasingly won by agencies who then offer the work to interpreters at below sustainable market rates[7], resulting in downward pressure on fees and less beneficial terms and conditions.

- Growth in the number of agencies offering sign language interpretation, and a particular increase in the involvement of non-specialist spoken language agencies[8] and;

- Changes in statutory support for deafblind people.

There are further changes coming, including the implementation of the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Language Services Framework Agreement[9], and the impact of the cap[10] on AtW awards (particularly on work with deafblind people and Deaf people.

NUBSLI is aware that these changes are having an impact on interpreters and the interpreting profession[11]. Although NUBSLI is aware of these issues via contact from interpreters, discussions in meetings, forums and e-groups, individual and collective boycotts of specific agencies and/or contracts, it has not been previously possible to measure or quantify the impact of these changes over time.

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[6] As described by the Work and Pensions Committee report December 2014. http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/work-and-pensions-committee/news/atw-report-substantive/

[7] As described by the Justice select Committee report February 2013. http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/justice-committee/news/interpreters-and-als-report/ and National Audit Office January 2014. https://www.nao.org.uk/report/the-ministry-of-justices-contract-for-language-services-progress-update/

[8] E.g. in 2002 there were 31 agencies involved in coordinating sign language interpreting services with 372 qualified and trainee interpreters (The Organisation and Provision of British Sign Language/English Interpreters in England, Scotland and Wales, 2002). In 2016 evidence to the DWP Market Review (to be published) lists over 170 organisations coordinating interpreting with 1,255 qualified and trainee interpreters.

[9] http://ccs-agreements.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/files/Tender_docs/Language%20Services%20RM1092%20Contract%20Notice.pdf

[10] https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/what-youll-get

[11] For brevity, throughout the report ‘interpreters’ will be used to refer to all of the categories of professionals participating in the survey, unless otherwise specified.

There is almost no formal data collected about trainee and qualified interpreters, other than the record of the numbers and categories of communication professionals who register with NRCPD[12], RBSLI[13] and SASLI[14].

The NUBSLI annual survey is intended to address this. Developing baseline data will facilitate the identification of emerging trends from the analysis of survey results over time. It is intended that this annual report of survey results provides an increasing evidence base for discussions and action within the interpreting profession and with the commissioners of interpreting services and those that use these services.

## Methods

Data were collected via an online self-report survey. The survey was publicised to BSL interpreters and translators via various organisational and e-group channels including; ASLI[15], e-newsli[16], NRCPD, NUBSLI, SASLI, and VLP[17]. The survey was open for responses from 3rd June to 2nd July 2016.

The 2016 survey was informed by the content and responses to the 2015 survey[18], but designed to be more comprehensive. Wording of questions was designed to avoid bias, and skip logic was incorporated to ensure that respondents were only presented with questions relevant to their previous answers.

Five main criteria were used in selecting question topics:

- Feedback and comments from the 2015 survey;
- The need for basic demographic data;
- The need for baseline data about working patterns and experiences;
- To explore interpreters' concerns, and;
- To identify perceived impact and changes.

The survey also included questions relevant to the DWP[19] market review[20] which are not included within this report.

Appendix three provides a full list of the survey questions, including the format of each question[21].

12 National Register of Communication Professionals with Deaf People.
13 Regulatory Body for Sign Language Interpreters and Translators.
14 Scottish Association of Sign Language Interpreters.
15 The Association of Sign Language Interpreters.
16 An e-group for interpreters.
17 Visual Language Professionals.
18 Conducted 10th December 2014 - 2nd January 2015.
19 Department of Work and Pensions.
20 NUBSLI Market Review evidence.
21 For more information on methods, see Appendix 7: How we did it.

## Data

Of the 340 respondents who started the survey, 250 completed it, by answering the final compulsory question. As it is not possible to identify which, if any, of the 110 respondents who did not complete, took the survey again, only the data of respondents who completed the survey has been analysed[22].

The number of responses to particular questions varies according to whether the questions are compulsory or optional, which respondents are included in the analysis, how many people answered them, the options they selected and any additional comments they provided.

Of the 250 respondents, three had already stopped working as interpreters. Those respondents answered a separate section of the survey. Their responses are not included in the data reported unless otherwise specified.

Three of the respondents were translators, whose responses are not included in the data reported unless otherwise specified.

The three registered deafblind interpreters chose as their main role 'registered BSL interpreter', and therefore these respondents' answers were as interpreters, not as deafblind interpreters. This means the only data reported for deafblind interpreters is demographic.

Given this, for compulsory questions, the response number will be 244 where the data being presented is for qualified and trainee interpreters only, and more where other responses are reported[23].

As this survey is intended to identify issues and trends, questions are wide ranging. There are early indications of trends emerging from responses in the 2015 and 2016 surveys.

Interpreters' comments presented in this report come only from those respondents who gave explicit consent for them to be used in this way. Discussion of the results includes a representative proportion of these written comments.

## Results & discussion

The number of respondents to the 2016 survey was lower than the 485 who responded to the 2015 version. However, the demographic profile of respondents in the two surveys is similar for gender, age, home region, and percentages of qualified and trainee interpreters. So whilst there are fewer respondents, the similar demographic profile suggests that responses should be broadly comparable.

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[22] This means that some of the numbers / percentages given may differ slightly from NUBSLI's evidence to the DWP Market review.
[23] 250 respondents less three who have already stopped working as interpreters, and less three translators, is 244.

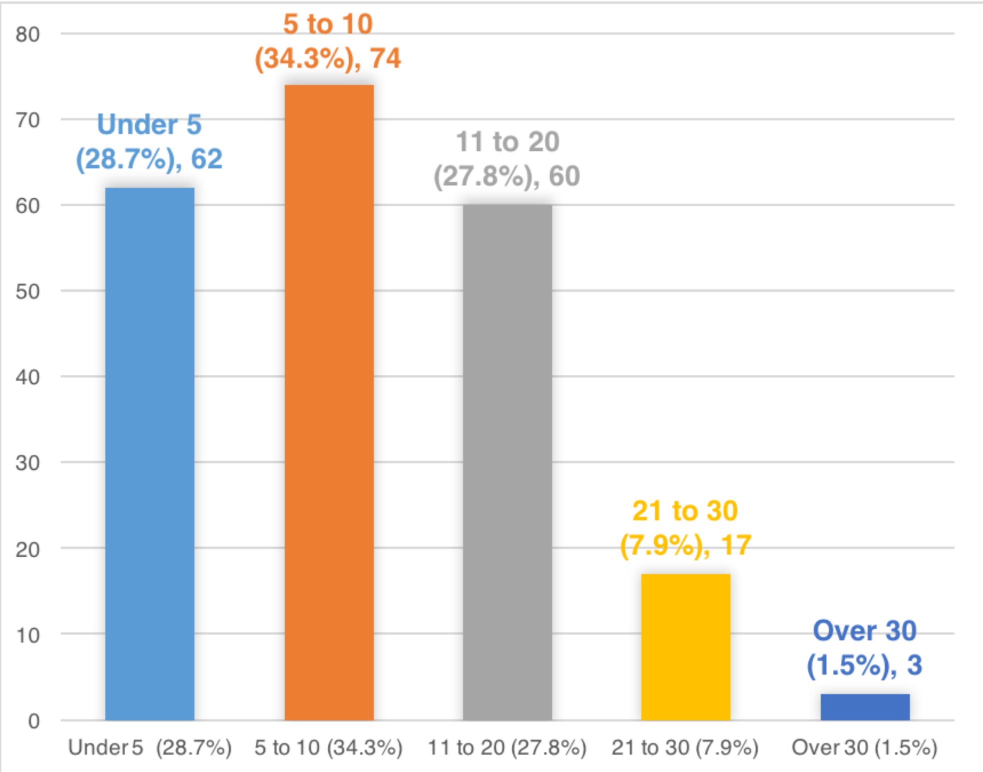
## Demographics

The number of respondents to this survey equates to 21% of registered[24] interpreters and 14% of trainee interpreters in the UK[25].

The breakdown of respondents' professions is; 85.5% qualified interpreters, 13.2% trainee interpreters, 0.8% deafblind interpreters, 0.4% translators, 0.8% trainee translators; which is broadly similar to the 2015 survey[26].

The 214 qualified and registered respondents were asked how many years' experience they had since first registering.

*Chart 1: Years' experience since first registered after qualifying*




The gender of respondents was 84.6% female, 15.4% male, closely matching the profession's gender make up of 83% female, 17% male in 2014[27]. No respondents identified as transgender[28].

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[24] For brevity, throughout the report 'registered' will be used to refer to all of the ways that respondents can be professionally registered or regulated.
[25] See Appendix 1 for breakdown of respondents by region and register (NRCPD, RBSLI, SASLI), and Appendix 5 Table 10 for comparison with 2015 results.
[26] See Table 8, Appendix 5 - 2016 data for more details.
[27] Rachel Mapson, Who Are We – demographics of the interpreting profession, NEWSLI, 2014
[28] See Table 7, Appendix 5, 2016 data for a more detailed breakdown.

*Table 1: What is your age?*

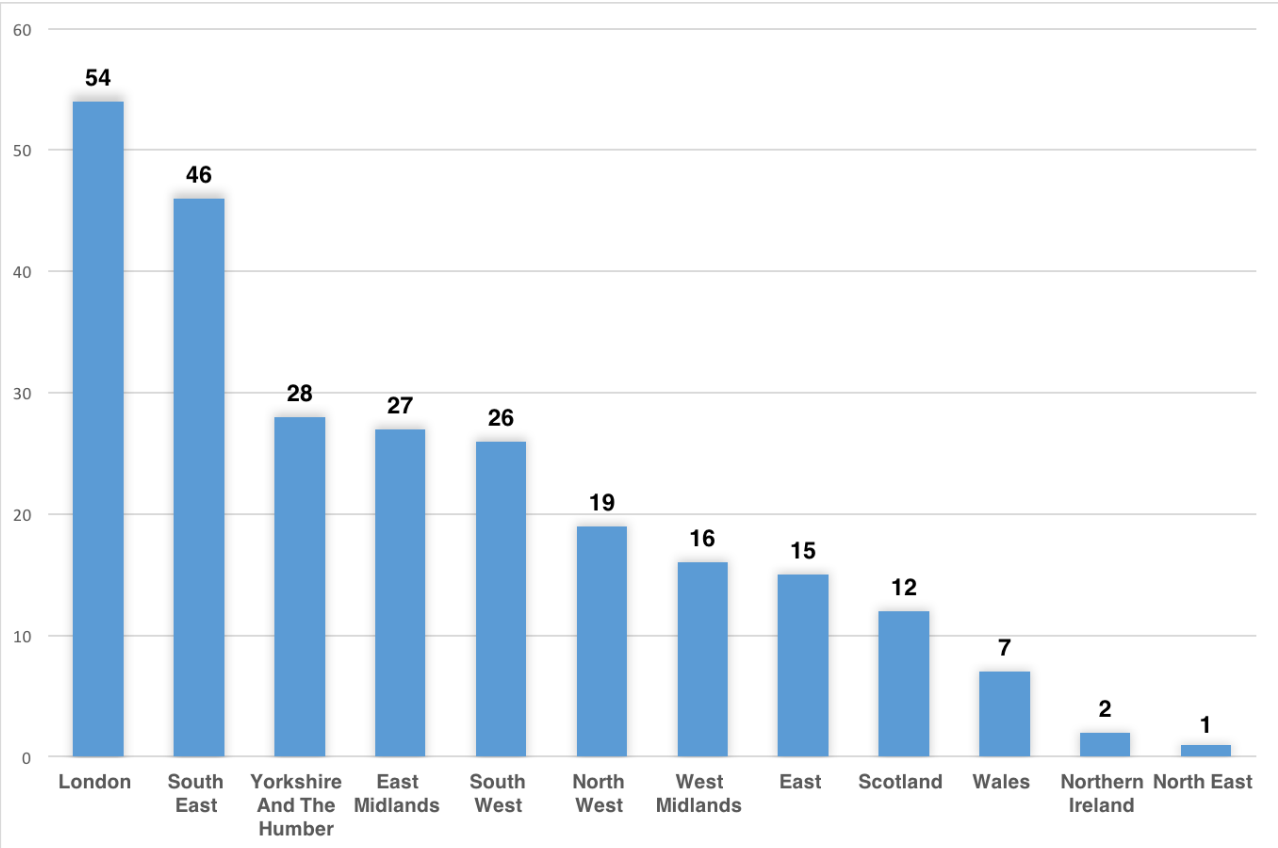
| What is your age? | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Answer Options** | **Qualified Interpreter** | **Trainee Interpreter** | **Deafblind Interpreter** | **SL Translator** | **Response Percent** | **Response Count** |
| 18-20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.0% | 0 |
| 21-29 | 17 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 9.4% | 23 |
| 30-39 | 57 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 26.9% | 66 |
| 40-49 | 75 | 9 | 1 | 0 | 34.3% | 84 |
| 50-59 | 53 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 23.7% | 58 |
| 60 or older | 13 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5.7% | 14 |
| **Totals** | **215** | **29** | **3** | **1** | **100.0%** | **248** |
| **Number respondents answered question** | | | | | | **245** |

Respondents' ages ranged from 21-29 (9.4%), peaking at 40-49 (34.3%) to 60 or older (5.7%). Again closely matching the profession's age profile in 2014.[29]

Two hundred and thirty-eight people identified as hearing, four as Deaf, two as CODAs[30].

The regional breakdown for respondents' home is broadly similar between the 2015 and 2016 surveys[31]. Respondents came from all regions within the UK.

*Chart 2: in what region do you live?*



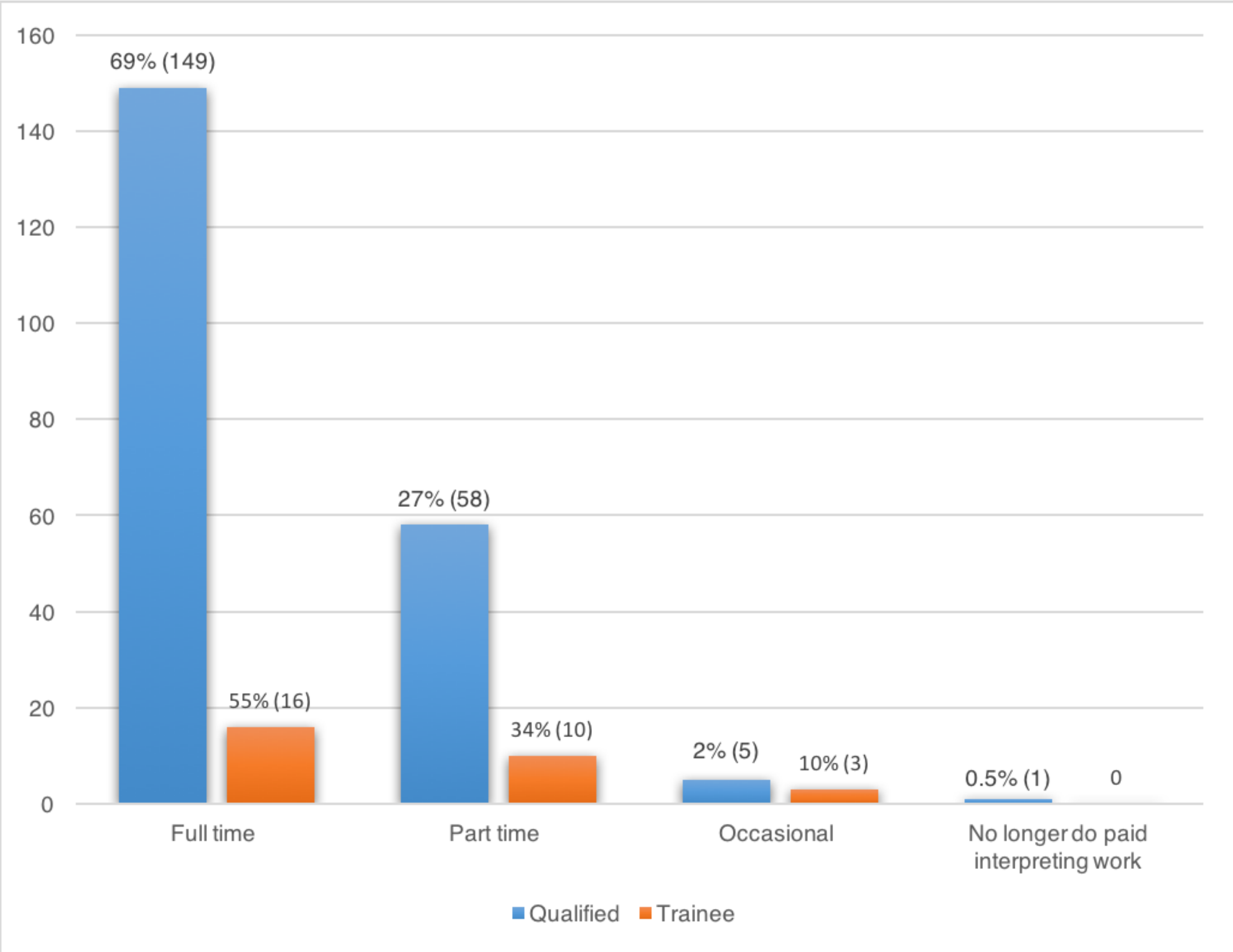

[29] Rachel Mapson, Who Are We – demographics of the interpreting profession, NEWSLI, 2014
[30] Child Of Deaf Adults, refers to a hearing person with Deaf parents.
[31] See Table 10, Appendix 5.

Respondents could optionally tell us whether they were a NUBSLI member or not. Of the 236 respondents who did, 145 (61.4% of those who answered) were, and 81 (34.3%) were not.

## Working patterns

Not all interpreters work full time as interpreters. One possible impact of changing market conditions is that this number could increase.

*Chart 3: What is your normal pattern work (Qualified / Trainee Interpreters)*




Remote interpreting (VRI / VRS[32]) is an emerging area of work. Respondents involved in providing these services were asked about their normal pattern for this work. The majority reported working between one day per week and one day per month. No respondents reported working remotely full time.

The number working as staff interpreters for a VRS/VRI provider either from home or in a call centre, and the number doing the same work on a freelance basis, were very similar.

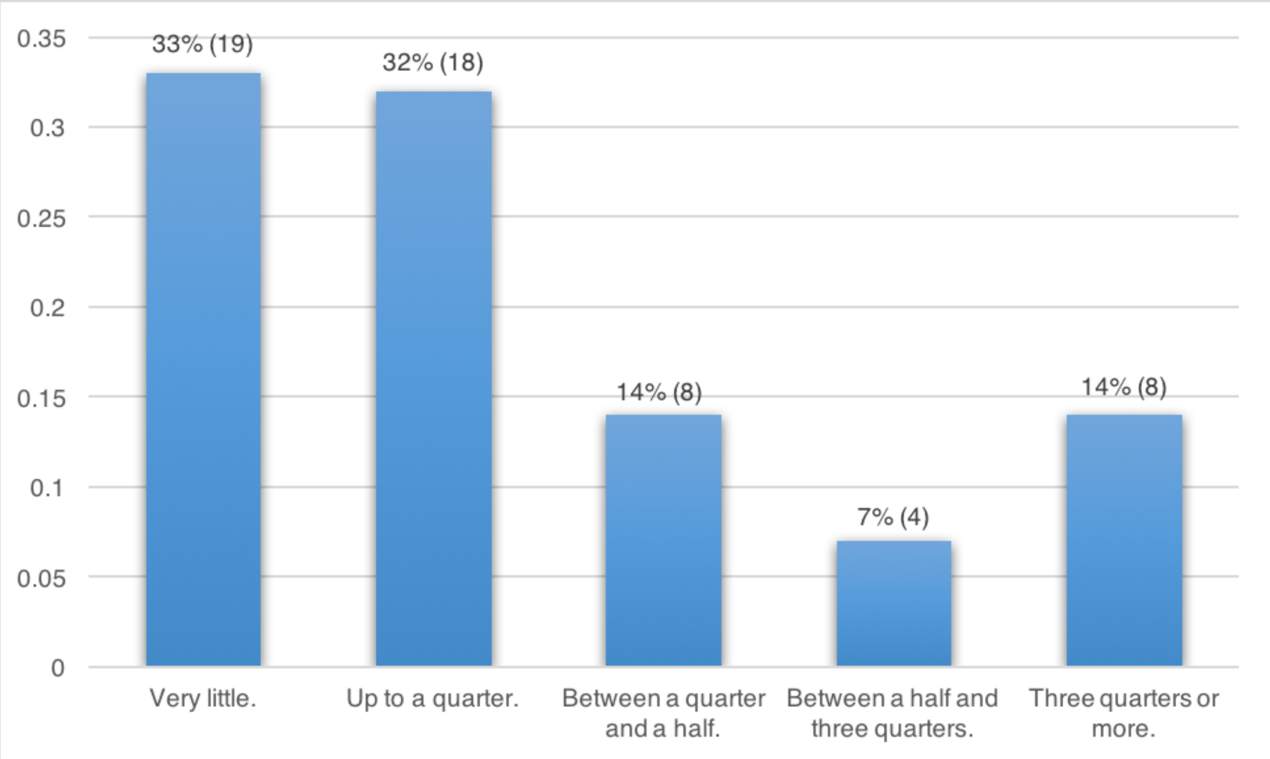
[32] Video Remote Interpreting and Video Relay Service.

Half of respondents said that they work freelance from home using their own computer.

Respondents told us whether they also had paid work that is nothing to do with interpreting; 73% (178) did not, 25.8% (63) did. Those who did were asked roughly what proportion this was of their overall income.

*Chart 4: What percentage of your work is not interpreting?*




## A snapshot of the 'mood of the profession'

One aim of this NUBSLI survey is to judge the impact of changes to working conditions on the '*mood of the profession*'. Three questions were designed to cover these key areas[33]. The intention is to include these questions in future surveys to help us better understand changes over time. Interpreters indicated their responses to these three statements using a 7 point Likert scale from Strongly Agree (7) to Strongly Disagree (1). Data is presented first as weighted average scores, then as a comparison of the percentage of responses of qualified and trainee interpreters[34].

[33] The model used for this question structure is that of the Subjective Wellbeing Scale (SWS). However, whilst the NUBSLI questions have been piloted they not been in any statistical sense validated.
[34] For the weighted average formulae see Appendix 5.

*Chart 5: Snapshot of the mood of the profession*


*Chart 6: I would recommend to someone starting a career as an interpreter*

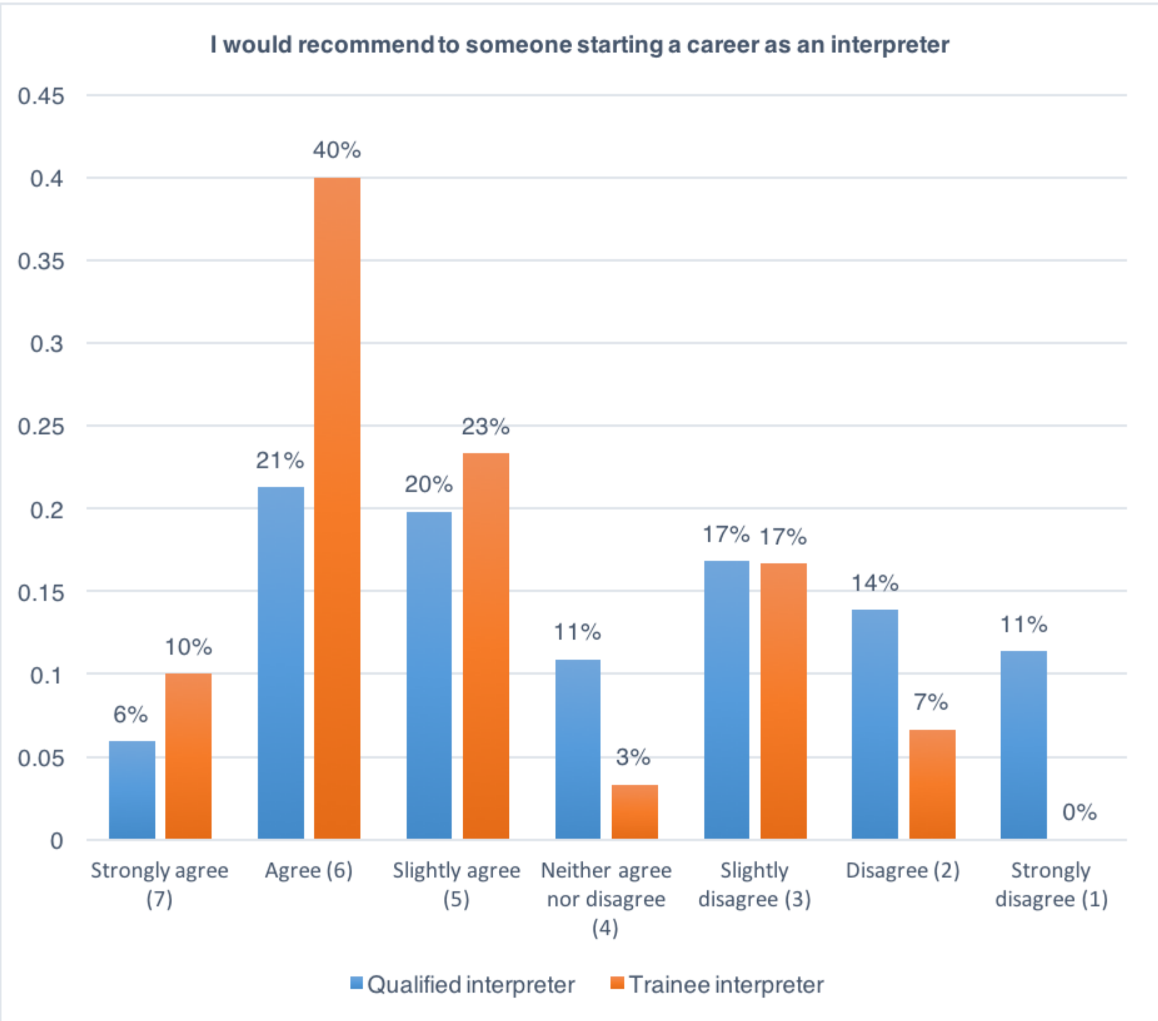


*Chart 7: My area / region is a good place to work as an interpreter*

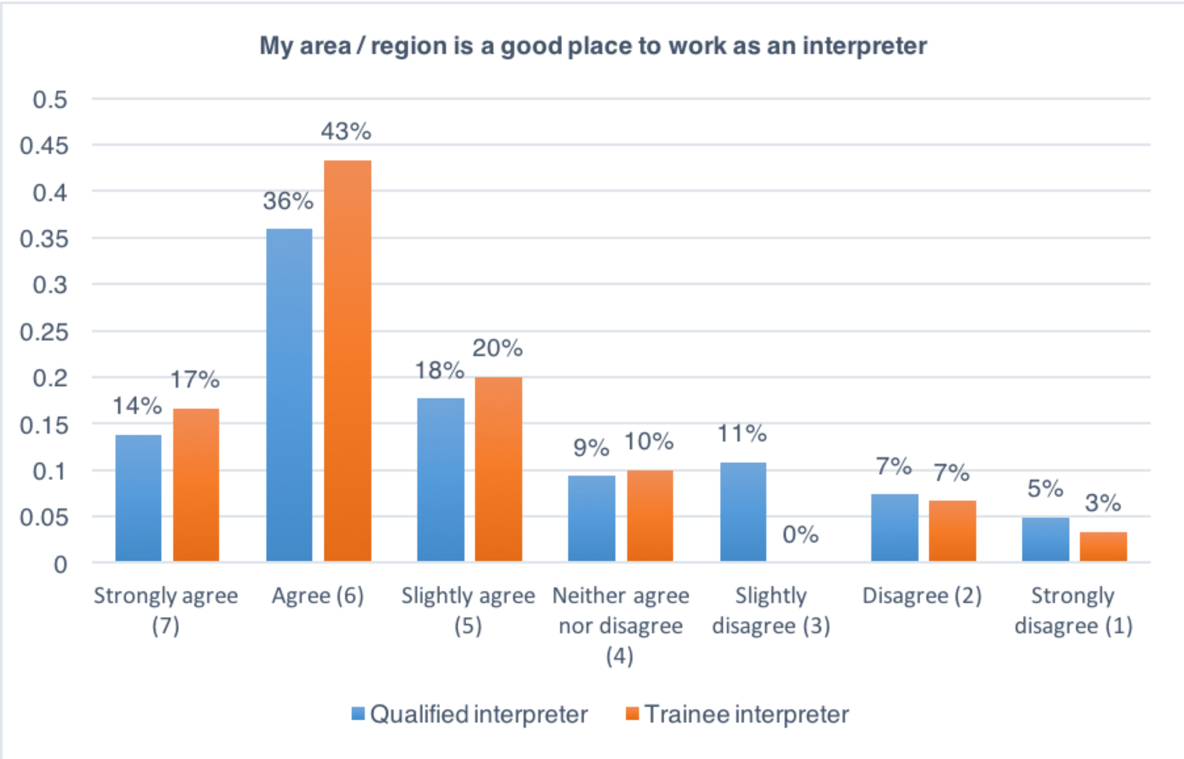
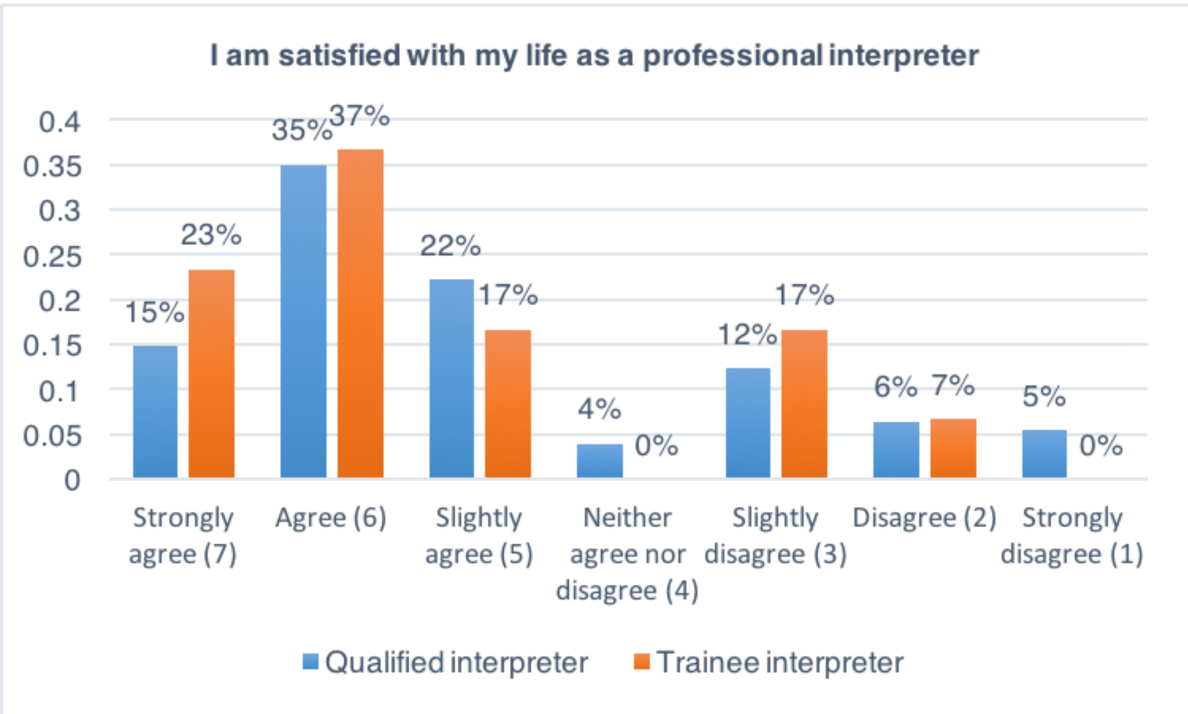



*Chart 8: I am satisfied with my life as a professional interpreter*



**Comments**

Respondents' comments help to illustrate the rationale behind these responses.

For a minority of interpreters their views were wholly positive. Comments from qualified interpreters include[35]:

*"Interpreting is still an interesting, demanding and satisfying profession."*

*"The role of interpreter gives me both the freedom and autonomy I want in my professional life as well as being able to contribute to society and make an impact on an individual's life."*

*"The East Midlands has both a reasonable number of qualified interpreters, as well as a lot of Deaf professionals; there does not seem to be a problem with obtaining work for most interpreters."*

However, most interpreters talked about the financial concerns having an impact on their perception of the profession. These concerns related to a downward pressure on fees and erosion of terms and conditions, problems with agencies and AtW, and the uneven distribution of interpreters in some areas impacting on the amount of work available. Comments from qualified interpreters include:

*"I feel insecure about my profession, my income, my future."*

*"I love my job but I worry about being able to continue in the future."*

*"Demand is high in my area but organisations use non-qualified signers as opposed to registered interpreters."*

*"The sector is becoming more difficult to work in and 'profit before people' seems to be agencies main aim. The agency market is saturated and is not good for interpreters."*

*"I absolutely love being an interpreter. But the current market, driving down prices with hourly rates and call outs not wanting to pay out of hours fees and mileage at 45ppm makes it an unrealistic profession to live off."*

*"I would not recommend anyone to start a career as an interpreter due to the uncertainty of future funding, the investment to learn how to interpret would probably not be worth it for someone just starting as there may not be a career for them when they finish training."*

*"I do much less* [interpreting] *and have found alternative work. I feel that my days are numbered and am no longer expecting it to be my long term career."*

*"I lived in a different region up until January 2015 where I had a much more positive outlook on the career, however this had started to wain during the past 3 years due to the constant ATW battles of non-payment. The region I now live in does not feel like a positive*

[35] There were no consistent themes from the 9 trainees who commented.

*place for interpreters and I am actively looking to retrain into a different career. I would not encourage people to become interpreters, whereas I have always been positive about it in the past. ….”*

*“I would like to get more work locally however the contracts already are not paying local interpreters a reasonable rate so I'm having to travel into London to get the rate I feel my skills and qualifications deserve. It seems illogical to me as it's more time out of my day and costs me over £30 a day in travel but local contracts are forcing me to do this and I have therefore also decided to start retraining so I can reduce my travel expenses!”*

*“Whilst I am satisfied with my work I am aware there are more interpreters travelling from outside London to work in London. As this increases the amount of work decreases for interpreters based in London. The main reason I am given is there is less or no work that will pay satisfactory rates in their regions.”*

*“The future of interpreting does not look bright to me. I would not encourage someone to consider it as a career unless they took a proper look at the viability of it in their region and had realistic expectations of it for the longer term. The squeeze on fees for agency-distributed work in my area has pretty much forced me out of that market. I am lucky enough to have built a decent reputation and to have clients who are prepared to book me directly, but for someone starting out, I'd imagine things could be difficult. Interpreting only makes up a small proportion of my working week now. I still love the job and am committed to furthering my professional development within the field, but I no longer feel able to cope with the uncertainty and instability were interpreting to remain my main source of income. I have a young family and need to have a future career I can rely on.”*

## Changes in interpreters' working patterns

Respondents were asked a series of questions about the amount of interpreting they do or intend to do, and their motivations for any change. These results are summarised in Tables 2 and 3, and chart 9.

Of the 244 interpreters who answered this question, 59.4% reported no change and 11.1% indicated intention to increase their working hours.

Trainee interpreters were more likely to be considering increasing their hours, because they will have finished training and/or are building up their work. For qualified interpreters the reasons for increasing hours were more varied, the main reason being the need to increase hours in order to earn enough. Other reasons included enjoyment of the work, and having the opportunity to do other kinds of work.

However, 31.2% of the respondents indicated an intention to reduce or stop interpreting.(A response similar to the 2015 survey[36]). This means that almost three times as many interpreters intend to reduce or stop interpreting than increase their hours[37]. This was more likely to be true of qualified interpreters than trainees, with 34% of qualified interpreters indicating their intention reduce or stop work: almost five times as many as intend to increase their hours[38].

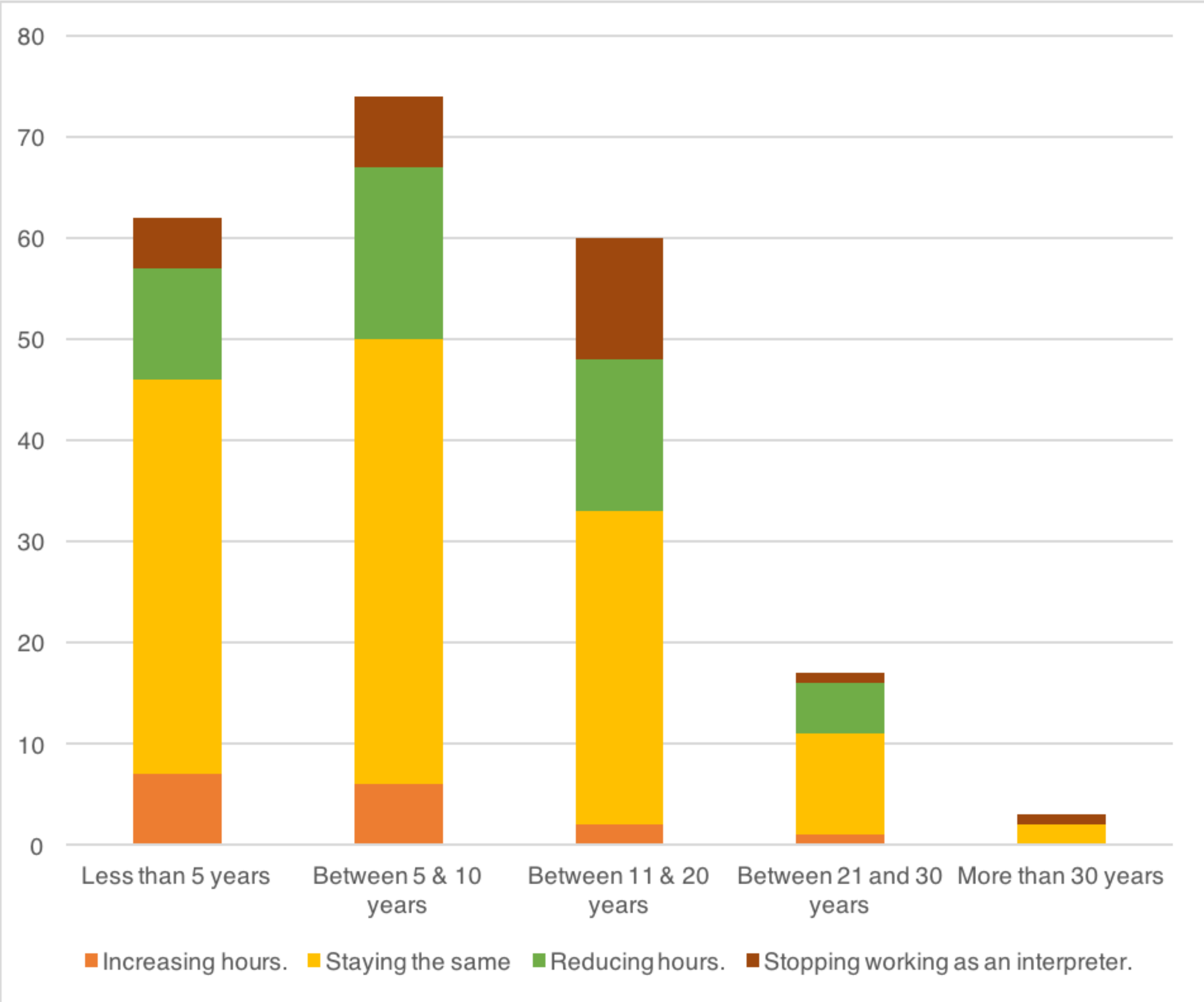
*Table 2: Are you considering increasing or reducing the hours you work, or stopping working as an interpreter?*

| **Are you considering increasing or reducing the hours you work, or stopping working as an interpreter?** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Answer Options** | **Qualified** | **Qualified percent** | **Trainee** | **Trainee percent** | **Response Percent** | **Response Count** |
| Neither increase nor reduce hours, nor stop working as an interpreter. | 125 | 58% | 20 | 69% | 59.4% | 145 |
| Reducing hours. | 48 | 22% | 1 | 3% | 20.1% | 49 |
| Stopping working as an interpreter. | 26 | 12% | 1 | 3% | 11.1% | 27 |
| Increasing hours. | 16 | 7% | 7 | 24% | 9.4% | 23 |
| Total | 215 | 100% | 29 | 100% | 0 | 244 |

[36] The question in the 2015 survey was "Are you thinking about, or will you be leaving, the profession?". 43% said no, 38% said maybe, 11% yes, and 9% don't know. Direct comparison of the results to the previous survey is not possible because of the differences in the question structure and answer options.
[37] 31.2% intend to reduce or stop interpreting, 11.1% intend to increase. I.e. 20.1% more intend to reduce or stop than increase.
[38] 34% qualified interpreters intend to reduce or stop interpreting, 7% intend to increase. I.e. 27% more intend to reduce or stop than increase.

The chart below shows the relationship between the number of years' post registration, and the intention to increase or decrease hours of work, and maintain or stop work as an interpreter. Interpreters of between 11 and 20 years' post registration were significantly more likely to be considering giving up work as an interpreter, or reducing their hours.

*Chart 9: Intention to change hours interpreting and years post registration*[39]



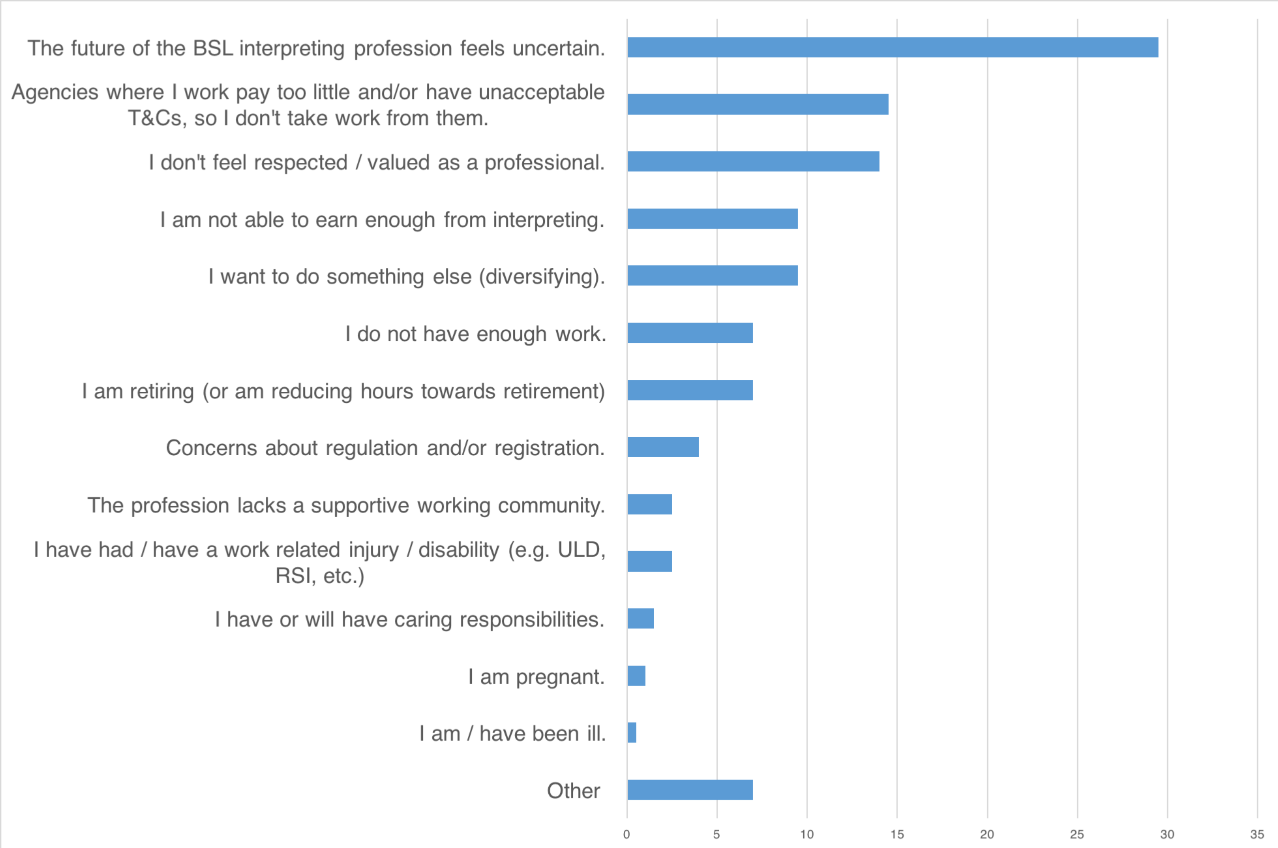

Respondents who intended to reduce hours or stop interpreting were then asked why[40]. The three main reasons given were:

- The future of the interpreting profession feels uncertain
- Agencies pay too little and/or have unacceptable terms and conditions
- Feeling unvalued as a professional

[39] For the results in table form see Appendix 5.

[40] The options in the 2015 survey were identified as common themes in interpreters' discussions. They were developed for the 2016 survey reflecting comments in the 'other' box in the 2015 survey.

*Table 3: Main reasons for intending to reduce or stop working as an interpreter*[41]




Whilst in any workforce you would expect professionals to reduce or stop work due to life changes (retirement, caring responsibilities, pregnancy, work related injury, illness, etc.) it is notable that taken together, substantially fewer respondents gave these reasons than any of the three main reasons above. This response is congruent with the response in the 2015 survey, and is indicative of a trend towards reduction of working hours due to insecurity around income from interpreting, and feeling undervalued because of this.

Whilst direct comparison is not possible with interpreters' responses to the 2015 survey, both surveys indicate that the number of interpreters giving '*the future of the BSL interpreting profession feels uncertain'* as a reason for reducing or stopping work was double those who chose any other option[42].

As well as intention to change, most of these respondents had taken action to realise these changes[43]. Interpreters intending to reduce hours or stop working were most likely to have looked and applied for alternative employment, reduced their interpreting hours, and/or retrained or studied.

[41] The question asked for the top 5 reasons. However, the inclusion of all 5 choices rather than the first and second choices made marginal difference to the ranking, but made the data harder to read.
[42] Numbers and percentages differ slightly from those published in the 2015 survey, as for comparability the table and percentages excludes those who identified only as CSWs and signers. See Table 25 Appendix 6 for the recalculated figures.
[43] See Tables 16 and 17 in Appendix 5.

Respondents who had already increased or reduced hours (rather than intended or planned to) were asked their main reasons for doing this. Respondents were able to select multiple reasons[44]. The five main reasons were:

- Difficulties with AtW bookings;
- Problems with agencies;
- Difficulties finding or unable to find enough work;
- and/or work that pays enough;
- and/or appropriate work[45].

This response is congruent with the response in the 2015 survey, and is indicative of a trend.

The main rationale for respondents who indicated '*other*' reasons for reducing/stopping work was due to the stress and difficulties of trying to be paid a decent income[46]. Others' reasons included diversification of income sources and having other work opportunities.

*"For all the interpreting training I did, there is insufficient work. Interestingly I earn more on the NHS frontline earning £9 an hour but with the offer of far more hours AND career progression."*

Three respondents indicated that they are no longer working as interpreters. Their main reasons being: concerns about regulation/registration; the uncertain future of the BSL interpreting profession; agency fees/terms and conditions; and feeling unvalued.

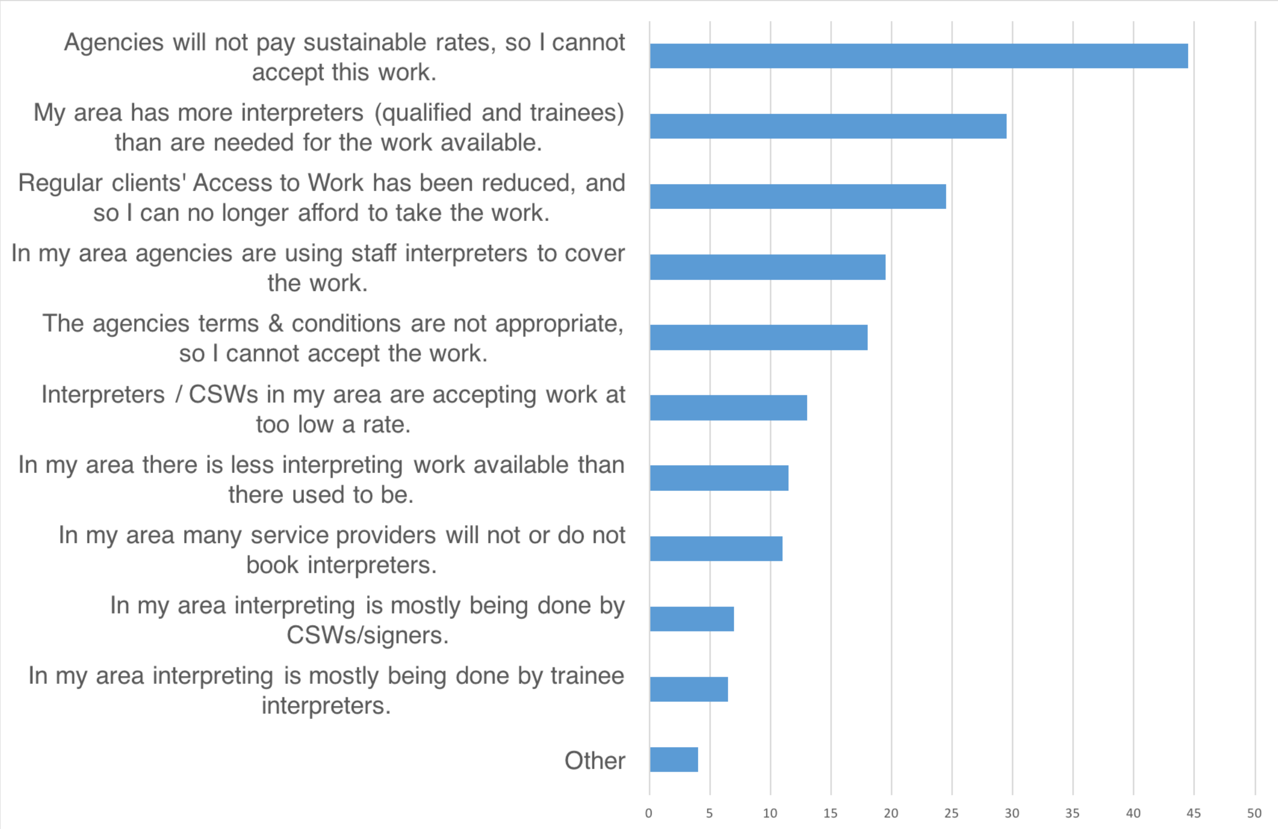
**Difficulties finding work**

Survey participants provided a number of reasons behind the difficulty in obtaining appropriate work as freelancer interpreters. Their responses are summarised in chart 10.

The three main reasons chosen by respondents were that agencies were paying unsustainable rates, that their area has more interpreters than needed for the work available, and that Access to Work rates have been reduced below sustainable rates.

[44] See Table 20 Appendix 5. Also see Appendix 7 for discussion of methodological issues.
[45] 43.3%, 38.8%, 37.3%, 34.3% and 23.9% respectively.
[46] Seven of the eighteen comments.

*Chart 10: If you have difficulty finding freelance interpreting / translation work, why do you think that is?*




The main reason given by respondents, that '*agencies will not pay sustainable rates, so I cannot accept this work*', was also the most selected reason chosen in the related question in the 2015 survey[47].

## Access to Work (AtW)

Many BSL interpreters work with Deaf clients in their workplaces, with funding for this from the AtW scheme. For some interpreters this type of work may form a significant portion of their working hours/income. Approximately 85% of respondents to this survey do or have previously done AtW funded interpreting.

Of those, almost half, 49.75%, reported that they had reduced or stopped AtW funded work since 2014[48], whilst only 10.15% increased this work.

[47] Numbers and percentages differ slightly from those published in the 2015 survey, as for comparability the table and percentages excludes those who identified only as CSWs and signers, and the percentage is calculated as a percentage of those who have said they do not have enough work. Respondents were not asked to rank, and some options were different or differently worded. See Table 26 Appendix 6.

[48] From 2014, not January 2015, as explained in Appendix 7, how we did this; additional information on the survey methodology and data analysis.

*Table 4: Do you or did you work with AtW clients?*

| Do you or did you work with Access to Work clients (between 2014 and now)? (Select N/A if you didn't & don't work with AtW clients). | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Answer Options** | **Response Percent** | **Response Count** |
| Yes | 85.65% | 197 |
| No | 10.4% | 24 |
| Other (please explain) | 3.9% | 9 |
| Response count | | **230** |

*Table 5: Have you increased, reduced or stopped working with Access to Work clients?*

| Have you increased, reduced or stopped working with Access to Work clients (between 2014 and now)? | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Answer Options** | **Response Percent** | **Response Count** |
| Reduced | 44.16% | 87 |
| Neither - stayed the same | 40.10% | 79 |
| Increased | 10.15% | 20 |
| Stopped | 5.58% | 11 |
| Response count | | **197** |

The main reasons for reduction in AtW work (summarised in Chart 11) relate to actual or perceived problems with payments.

66% of respondents commented on AtW funding being lower than their minimum fee, in some cases DWP restricting the rate the Deaf person can pay for support, to below market rates. In most cases travel costs are only paid as part of the overall hourly fee, even where that figure is already below the sustainable market rate[49].

In addition, respondents said that AtW now rarely fund two interpreters for assignments where two interpreters are required to co-work. Concerns about the impact of this on interpreters' wellbeing were cited by almost a third of respondents as a reason for reducing or stopping AtW funded work.

Approximately half of respondents said that they had experienced difficulties in obtaining payment from AtW. Key concerns raised were significantly delayed payments, part payment of invoices (such as deduction of travel costs), and non-payment of invoices for work carried out (due to changes in the customer's award). These difficulties were exacerbated by the funding arrangement between the interpreter, Deaf person and DWP, where the interpreter is paid by DWP, but the DWP do not recognise a contractual relationship with them.

[49] For more data on this, see section on travel below.

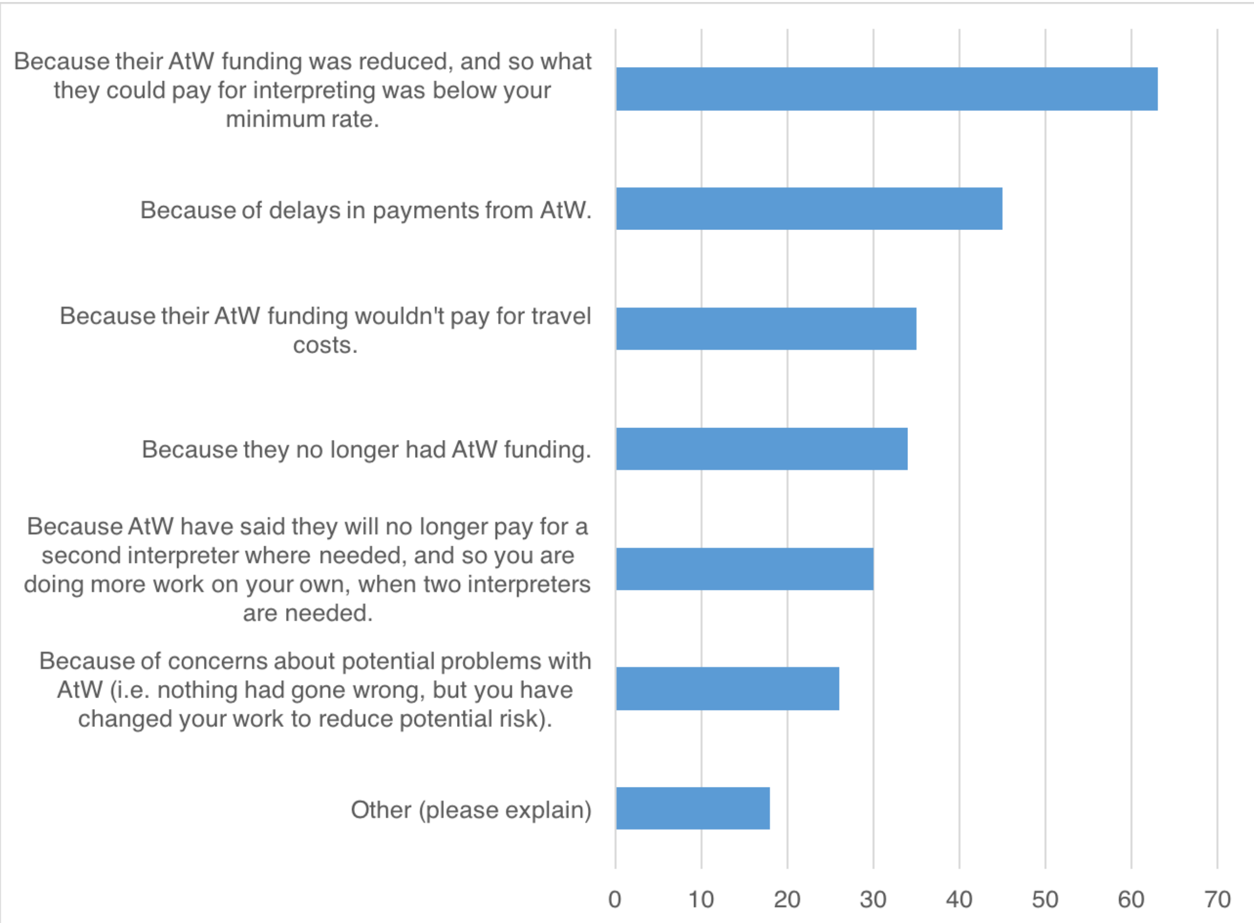
 

These financial problems could be quite considerable.  One respondent said they had been owed over £10,000 by AtW and as a result had to stop working as an interpreter and "*…ended up working as a temp … for 3 months.*"

A quarter (27.4%) of respondents cited concerns about potential problems with payment as reasons for not accepting AtW funded bookings, even where they had not personally experienced payment issues.

Problems with Access to Work funding was a identified as a contributory factor for two of the three respondents who have stopped working as interpreters, due to reduction in the fees payable to them and concern over unreliability of payments.

*Chart 11: Why have you reduced or stopped work with Access to Work clients?*




The 20 interpreters who had increased their AtW work did so for a number of reasons, including: increased opportunity, customer preference, and unwillingness to do other work with poorer terms and conditions.  One comment illustrates this:

"*Previously I did regular medical bookings (hospital, GP, dentist etc.) but these have increasingly been taken over by agencies such as Capita, The Big Word, Pearl Linguistics, [and] Prestige Network that have poor terms & conditions regarding hourly rate, minimum booking period and cancellation fees. I also used to undertake a considerable amount of legal work but have boycotted Clarion who have the* [Ministry of Justice] *contract work for BSL as their* [terms and conditions] *are poor."*

## Agencies, terms & conditions, and contracts

Throughout the survey respondents commented on agencies, terms & conditions and contracts. As discussed above, many respondents who were reducing or stopping interpreting, or having difficulties finding appropriately paid and coordinated work, said that '*problems with agencies*' was one of the main reasons.

Several of the survey questions were designed to elicit information about work via agencies, their terms and conditions, recognition of special expertise, and payments for travel and travel time. Interpreters were also asked how the booking of interpreters had changed over the past 5-10 years.

### The impact of framework agreements and single contracts

Many respondents commented how the increasing amount of publicly funded work carried out through single contracts with language agencies is affecting interpreters. Both specialist and non-specialist[50] interpreting agencies hold such contracts. Most of the feedback on the terms and conditions offered by large non-specialist (general language) agencies was negative; particularly in relation to terms such as minimum charge periods, hourly rates and travel costs. These were also identified as key issues by respondents in the 2015 survey.

Dissatisfaction with this was noted as being because any public purse savings made by reducing interpreters' terms and conditions were offset by the fees added on by the agencies. One respondent said: "*I think that there are instances where I am paid and this is a fair rate but there have been increasingly … times when I am asked to reduce my rate due to contract restrictions etc. However,* [I am] *finding out that agencies are actually still charging huge fees on top of mine!*"

Respondents' perceptions of some (particularly smaller) specialist sign language interpreting agencies were more positive. Some were noted as continuing to offer terms and conditions that accord with the market rates, and for trying to match the interpreter's skills to the assignment. However, where specialist agencies held large public sector contracts, or were subcontracted by large non-specialist language agencies, interpreters were more likely to report being offered less sustainable terms and conditions. Many respondents mentioned that they no longer took work in the public sector for this reason.

[50] Agencies that focus on BSL/English interpreting and translation are regarded as specialist agencies. They are often run by Deaf BSL users or BSL/English interpreters. Often they have a better understanding of the needs of the Deaf customer and of the market. They are also referred to as Sign Language Interpreting Agencies in this report.

A significant number of respondents commented on the impact of the downward pressure on fees on the affordability of taking work in rural areas, especially for short bookings. For example; "*I am being paid less for the same work … I refuse to take the 2hr jobs because by the time I have travelled there, even if I am 'lucky' enough to get one 2hr job in the morning and one 2hr job in the afternoon, in effect I am doing a full day's work for 4 hours' pay.*"

## Remuneration for Travel

Remuneration for travel has become an issue for 45% of the survey respondents. This suggests there are difficulties for those working in both rural and urban environments.

*Table 6: In what type of location do you mainly work?*

| In what type of location do you mainly work (i.e. more than 50% of your time)? | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Answer Options** | **Qualified interpreter** | **Trainee interpreter** | **Deafblind interpreter** | **SL Translator** | **Response Percent** | **Response Count** |
| Urban / City | 164 | 23 | 2 | 1 | 76.7% | 188 |
| 50:50 Urban / Rural (if roughly equal) | 44 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 19.6% | 48 |
| Rural | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 3.7% | 9 |
| **Total (categories)** | **215** | **29** | **3** | **1** | **100%** | **248** |

Key issues cited were reductions in payment of travel costs and time from both AtW and agency bookings. The main reported impact of this change was a reduction in income to a level below sustainable rates, and consequent unaffordability of accepting work in more rural areas.

Interpreters report that the fees offered by AtW are often below market rates. As a result, the requirement to include travel costs in a fee already below market rates is not sustainable. Where mileage is reimbursed, this is at the reduced rate of 25p per mile, rather than the HMRC approved rate of 45p per mile.

*"ATW [are] removing the mileage element from my invoices. This means I cannot afford to accept rural bookings."*

*"Travel costs are not claimable within ATW. Although £0.25ppm is stated, this amount must be within the client's budget limit so the more travel is charged the less we can claim for time worked."*

Interpreters' comments illustrate that these funding restrictions may have a direct impact on a Deaf employees' ability to fulfil their role.

*"Some clients would like me to travel with them out of my normal region of work because I know their work, for example at conferences when they are presenting. Travel expenses are not paid so I am unable to travel to support my client."*

Respondents reported that many agencies have also stopped paying travel costs at all, or are offering an 'all-inclusive fee' where travel costs form part of the fee paid, but the inclusive fee is below a sustainable market rate.

Survey responses indicate a particular impact on work in rural settings. Over 23% of the survey respondents spend at least 50% of their time working in rural areas.

Examples were given of fees for short rural bookings being set at 2-hour maximum with no travel costs paid. Where the booking location would involve 2-3 hours (return) travel, the booking becomes unviable as no further work can be taken that day. Some respondents said that there are some bookings they no longer accept for this reason, because they would only receive two hours' pay in a working day.

A number of interpreters said that they now restrict their work to a certain locality for the same reason. Some expressed concern for the ability of Deaf people in rural or remote areas to achieve full access, as they will find it harder to book appropriately skilled and experienced interpreters for their work. Interpreters were concerned that in some cases agencies were billing customers for the interpreter's travel costs, whilst not paying any travel costs to interpreters[51].

Respondents also mentioned the practice of agencies booking interpreters on a '*first come first served*' basis, rather than taking a more active coordination role and choosing a suitable local interpreter. The perceived impact of this practice is that it can increase the travel costs to customers unnecessarily, and lead to interpreters travelling unnecessarily.

Respondents provided some examples of good practice in relation to travel costs. In particular, that a number of specialist and long-standing sign language agencies and councils continue to pay travel costs, with some also paying fees for significant travel time.

### Recognition and remuneration for specialist skills

Respondents were asked to comment on the development, recognition and remuneration of interpreters with specialist skills[52].

Respondents reported that previously, specialist skills were recognised by procurers, and individual interpreters with particular skills were requested specifically. However, the majority said that this is now rarely the case This is primarily attributed to the large specialist domains (criminal justice, health, and child protection) being subject to single contract provision which follows a non-personalised method of booking interpreters.

"*The market is actually skewed at present to paying less for the work that should be paid at a higher rate and therefore this work attracts less experienced interpreters. E.g. Ministry of Justice, some police authorities, health and social services. This reflects public sector cuts and the drive to reduce costs, and along with it quality of provision.*"

[51] See section on agencies and contracts for more data and discussion.
[52] 216 people responded to these questions.

"*The full day fee paid to legal interpreters has dropped by 25% in 4 years and is probably the worst paid domain to work in. This has seen appropriately trained, qualified legal interpreters with extensive knowledge and skills stop working in courts for other types of work.*"

"*I don't think the market understands specialisms in any way. The market sees an 'interpreter' as just that, and* [thinks] *that we are all cut from the same cloth. There is no recognition for specialist skills or length of service as an interpreter - our career lacks structures of progression in experience.*"

## Deafblind interpreting

### Registration

Whilst few respondents were registered as deafblind interpreters, 107 respondents said they interpret or have interpreted with deafblind people.

BSL/English Interpreters reported having specialist skills in visual frame interpreting, tactile BSL interpreting, deafblind manual, guiding, and use of social haptic communication techniques.

However many of these skills are not recognised by registration bodies. Currently the NRCPD only registers deafblind manual interpreters[53] and SASLI registers deafblind manual interpreters and communicator guides[54].

"*I have Level 3 communication and guiding (2006) and I have done further training as CPD. There appears to be no current way I can formally register as an interpreter with* [deafblind] *people.*"

Other comments reflected the need for more training: "*I would be more comfortable with specific training and registration for this work.*"

These specialist skills take time and investment to develop, yet people working with deafblind people report that the fees available are often less than would be paid for BSL/English interpreting.

"… *I now do very little* [interpreting with deafblind people] *as I cannot afford to continue.*"

### The impact of Direct Payments

The survey asked respondents whether changes to deafblind people's Direct Payments have affected the interpreting work they do with them. 37 respondents indicated that they undertook work paid for through Direct Payments.

[53] NRCPD http://www.signature.org.uk/nrcpd
[54] SASLI http://www.sasli.co.uk/policies/registration-policy/

The majority of these (78.4%) indicated that their work has not altered as a result of changes to Direct Payments. 16.2% indicated a substantial reduction in working with this client group, and 5.4% reported a slight reduction in the work they took on. No one reported increasing Direct Payment funded work.

Whilst numbers of respondents are low, 21.6%[55]of the small number of respondents who do such work is a significant reduction, particularly as there is no evidence to suggest that the need for deafblind interpreting has decreased.

As the following comments indicate, the underlying issue behind this reduction in working with deafblind people is that the Direct Payment funding is inadequate to reflect the cost of the support needed.

"*The main issue with direct payments are that the specialist skills needed to work and communicate with Deafblind people are not taken into consideration. Those who are trained and qualified have done so at great expense and is reflected in their costs, this makes it difficult for people who are Deafblind; they need a high quality service but their funds often are restricted ...*"

"*A lot of the work I used to do is now being done by an agency who employs communicator guides to do the work previously done by interpreters. I understand there are a few who are qualified deafblind manual interpreters but a great many that aren't (partly because there has been no training or exams for this for many years). I believe I am requested for bookings seen as more 'challenging' and* [I am seen] *as a last resort due to my fee*."

There was also recognition that support for deafblind people is variable:

"*Not all deafblind people get direct payments - each area has different criteria and it's not an equitable service*."

### Access to Work

We asked whether changes to Deafblind people's Access to Work funding had affected the interpreting work respondents did.

There was little impact on the amount of AtW funded work for 24 (66.7%) respondents. However, 13.9% reported a substantial reduction, and 19.4% a slight reduction. No respondents reported taking on additional work with deafblind people.

Whilst numbers of respondents are low, one third[56] of this small group report doing less or none, is a significant trend in one direction. There is no evidence to suggest that the need for deafblind interpreting has decreased.

---

[55] 16.2% + 5.4%
[56] 13.9% + 19.4%

A number of respondents raised concerns about Access to Work advisers' lack of understanding of deafblindness, and the impact this has on the both the deafblind person and the interpreter working with them.

### Co-working

Interpreting work with deafblind people can be particularly intensive and tiring, especially when using hands-on or deafblind manual. In order to ensure interpreters stay healthy, they need to take regular breaks by swapping with a co-worker.

We asked "*In your experience, where two interpreters are needed to co-work for Deafblind interpreting, how often does this happen*?"

Respondents had mixed experience:

*"There is no one worker, let alone a co-worker."*

*There is no co-worker because of a "lack of understanding by purchasers of the need for co-working" and a "lack of understanding/knowledge on the booker's part of a need for co-workers".*

*"When required, there has always been a co-worker or relay booked".*

## Translation and translators

Respondents were asked if they did "*translation work as a specific job role (rather than just as part of normal interpreting practice)*". Of the 25 respondents, 3 are Deaf, 12 are staff for a translation company, and 14 are self-employed or run their own companies.

Whilst it appears that this figure includes some interpreters who do translation as part of their day-to-day interpreting work, the comments all respondents provided usefully illustrate some of the particular issues associated with translation work.

Respondents suggest there is a lack of understanding of what translation means, and therefore a failure to understand that translation to the standard required for the public domain takes considerable time, and is a specialist skill. This in turn means that that the work is underpaid and/or has to be done at a pace that does not allow for meaningful translation, and is not monitored effectively[57].

*"People often do not appreciate that preparing a detailed translation from BSL to written English is much more time consuming than providing a live, spoken interpretation."*

*"Those clients that … understand the skilled and detailed nature of the job … are prepared to pay for it."*

[57] For example, when recording a translation to camera, it is good practice to have a fluent BSL user monitoring the work as it is recorded, to spot inevitable mistakes and lack of clarity.

*"[I] would love for work to be monitored somehow - but costs can be an issue for clients."*

For translation undertaken as an aspect of normal interpreting practice, particularly when working in employment situations[58], there was concern that the skills required to do this were not recognised.

*"*[Translation is simply] *part of the normal Access to Work day."*

*"… there is little understanding … that translating into written English is much more nuanced and time consuming than simply* [interpreting into spoken English] *..."*

"*Translation is an important aspect of access to information for sign language users and receives very little attention.*"

Responses illustrate how translation is also undertaken as an aspect of normal interpreting practice, particularly when working in employment situations.  Comments suggest that the importance of this may be undervalued, associated with a lack of awareness of the time and skills involved.

## Conclusion

The most significant issue of concern to be drawn from the survey results is the impact on the interpreting profession of apparent attempts to drive down terms and conditions by using contracts for public service interpreting. For a significant proportion of interpreters, this has reduced the sustainability of their work, alongside their commitment to continuing with a career in the profession due to feeling uncertainty about the future, and undervalued as a professional.

It could be argued that the downward pressure on terms and conditions ensures best value for the public purse, and sustains the quality of service provision through contractual requirements for minimum qualifications. However, the model of procurement adopted fails to make best use of local and specialist interpreters, incurring unnecessary travel costs and reducing the suitability of communication service provision. It also fails to make savings to the public purse as the reductions in interpreter payments is offset by the addition of charges by the agencies holding the contracts.

The negative impact of these changes on the morale of the interpreting profession, coupled with the lack of obvious benefit to either the taxpayer or to those using communication professionals, means that ultimately, it is hard to see any justification for these market interventions. There is a real risk of market interventions having the opposite of the desired effect - reducing supply as more interpreters decide to take alternative kinds of work, and reducing the quality of communication support as the most skilled and experienced interpreters stop taking specialist work.

[58] E.g. translating Emails from written English into BSL, or translating live BSL into a written English report.

## Acknowledgements & thanks

Thank you to all who participated in this survey.  Your responses underpin all that is useful in this report.

I would also like to thank:

The interpreters who piloted various versions of the survey, and provided their feedback.
Rachel Mapson for her patient support and ongoing advice on all aspects of this work.
Morgan Phillips, for patience beyond reason, and no-holds-barred feedback.
The NUBSLI committee and Catherine Hale for their work on the previous surveys.

And you, reading this, and for any action you may take in order to contribute to the ongoing viability of our rewarding and essential profession.

## Appendices

Appendices 1, 2 and 4 are below.  Appendices 3, 5, 6 and 7 are available to download from the NUBSLI website[59].

Appendix 1 – Interpreter & Trainee Interpreter respondents by region

Appendix 2 – NUBSLI guidance on pay and conditions for British Sign Language/English interpreters

Appendix 3 – Survey questions

Appendix 4 – List of charts and tables

Appendix 5 – Additional data and tables from the 2016 survey

Appendix 6 – Data and tables from the 2015 survey

Appendix 7 – How we did this; additional information on the survey methodology and data analysis

[59] http://www.nubsli.com/guidance/survey-bslenglish-interpreters-working-conditions-2015-2016

## Appendix 1: Interpreter & Trainee Interpreter respondents by region

| Region | NRCPD SLI | RBSLI Registrants | SASLI Full Member | Total | Responded to survey | % of total who responded |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| London | 93 | 3 | | 96 | 45 | 46.88% |
| South West | 66 | 3 | | 69 | 24 | 34.78% |
| Yorkshire & Humberside | 66 | 4 | | 70 | 23 | 32.86% |
| East Midlands | 101 | 3 | | 104 | 24 | 23.08% |
| South East | 165 | | | 165 | 38 | 23.03% |
| Wales | 41 | | | 41 | 7 | 17.07% |
| East | 66 | | | 66 | 11 | 16.67% |
| North West | 131 | 3 | | 134 | 18 | 13.43% |
| Scotland | 44 | | 69 | 113 | 11 | 9.73% |
| West Mid | 104 | 1 | | 105 | 10 | 9.52% |
| NI | 24 | | | 24 | 2 | 8.33% |
| NE | 28 | 3 | | 31 | 1 | 3.23% |
| **Total** | **929** | **20** | **69** | **1018** | **214** | **21.02%**[60] |
| **Region** | **NRCPD SLI** | | **SASLI Full Member** | **Total** | **Responded to survey** | **% of total who responded** |
| Yorkshire & Humberside | 8 | | | 8 | 4 | 50.00% |
| London | 19 | | | 19 | 9 | 47.37% |
| South East | 35 | | | 35 | 8 | 28.86% |
| East Midlands | 17 | | | 17 | 2 | 11.76% |
| East | 21 | | | 21 | 2 | 9.52% |
| West Mid | 62 | | | 62 | 5 | 8.06% |
| Scotland | 11 | | 6 | 17 | 1 | 5.88% |
| South West | 21 | | | 21 | 1 | 4.76% |
| North West | 27 | | | 27 | 1 | 3.70% |
| NE | 2 | | | 2 | 0 | 0.00% |
| NI | 4 | | | 4 | 0 | 0.00% |
| Wales | 4 | | | 4 | 0 | 0.00% |
| **Total** | **231** | | **6** | **237** | **33** | **13.92%**[61] |

[60] Percentage of those who responded of total number of those registered.
[61] Ditto

The above data was accessed as follows:

NRCPD Bulletin February 2016 (RSLI / TSLI):http://www.nrcpd.org.uk/news.php?article=126

RBSLI website 'Find BSL/English Interpreters" function, accessed 5/3/16 (Registrant): http://www.rbsli.org/interpreters-public-profile?name=&field_region_value=All

SASLI, email 7/3/2016 (full and trainee members).

NB there is a small risk of double counting, as it is possible that some people are registered with more than one register.

## Appendix 2 – NUBSLI guidance on pay and conditions for British Sign Language/English interpreters

**Freelance fees for interpreting engagements for BSL/English interpreters/translators**

(These are in the process of being reviewed, and should be updated by October 2016)

**These figures are guidance only to the fees that NUBSLI members are likely to charge.**

Please note that higher rates may be charged to reflect the experience and specialist knowledge of the interpreter or translator.

**Freelance fees**
BSL/English interpreters generally work in half or full day sessions. However, a call out fee may be charged if an assignment is local to the interpreter or short in duration. View interpreter fees guidance.

**Specialist work**
Specialist work may incur a higher fee. This includes any assignment which requires additional training, specific expertise and/or a substantial amount of preparation. This may include work such as: mental health, legal, child protection, theatre/performance, television and conferences.

**Interpreter provision**
Due to the physical and mental demands of interpreting, two interpreters may be required depending on the duration and/or intensity of the work involved. Interpreters will discuss this with you at the time of booking. Larger teams may be called for in specialist settings, such as conferences and Crown Court.

**Evening and weekend rates**
Interpreting during evening hours, at weekends, or on public holidays will usually be charged at the higher rate of time and a half.

**Recording**
BSL/English Interpreters reserve the right to decline to be filmed or otherwise recorded whilst working (except when such recording is inherent within legal proceedings). Any consent to recordings intended for broadcast or publication is likely to incur an additional fee.

**Cancellation charges**
0 - 7 days prior to date of assignment: 100% of agreed fee
8 - 14 days prior to date of assignment: 50% of agreed fee

**Travel and accommodation expenses**
Travel expenses will be paid to cover travel to and from the assignment, and for any travel required as part of the booking. This will be charged at £0.45 per mile for travel by car, or at standard fare rate for public transport.

When an assignment requires an overnight stay, reasonable accommodation expenses will be paid.

Interpreters reserve the right to charge for travel time.

**Terms of payment**
Payment to be made in full within 30 days of receipt of invoice. After 30 days, charges will be applied as per Late Payment Legislation.

**Trainee interpreters**
Interpreting assignments of a legal nature or those with higher possible risk implications are not suitable for trainees to undertake. The types of domain this could include are: court, law, police, mental health, child protection, conferences and any work involving the signing of any legal documentation (not an exhaustive list).

Further to this, it is advisable to discuss the details and potential complexity of an assignment with individual trainee interpreters to ensure that they are sufficiently experienced to undertake the work.

Freelance fees guide for fully qualified interpreters (RSLI) and trainee interpreters (TSLI) or equivalent:

| **London** | **RSLI/TSLI** |
|---|---|
| Minimum call out fee | £90/£90 |
| Half day | £125/£120 |
| Full day | £250/£230 |
| **Central & East Anglia** | **RSLI/TSLI** |
| Minimum call out fee | £90/£80 |
| Half day | £120/£100 |
| Full day | £240/£200 |
| **South East** | **RSLI/TSLI** |
| Minimum call out fee | £90/£80 |
| Half day | £120/£110 |
| Full day | £240/£220 |
| **West & East Midlands & Wales** | **RSLI/TSLI** |
| Minimum call out fee | £90/£80 |
| Half day | £120/£100 |
| Full day | £240/£200 |
| **North West** | **RSLI/TSLI** |
| Minimum call out fee | £80/£70 |
| Half day | £100/£90 |
| Full day | £200/£180 |

| **Yorkshire/Humber & North East** | **RSLI/TSLI** |
|---|---|
| Minimum call out fee | £75/£70 |
| Half day | £90/£85 |
| Full day | £180/£170 |
| **South West** | **RSLI/TSLI** |
| Minimum call out fee | £90/£80 |
| Half day | £100/£90 |
| Full day | £200/£180 |
| **Scotland & Northern Ireland** | **RSLI/TSLI** |
| Minimum call out fee | £60/£60 |
| Half day | £100/£90 |
| Full day | £200/£180 |

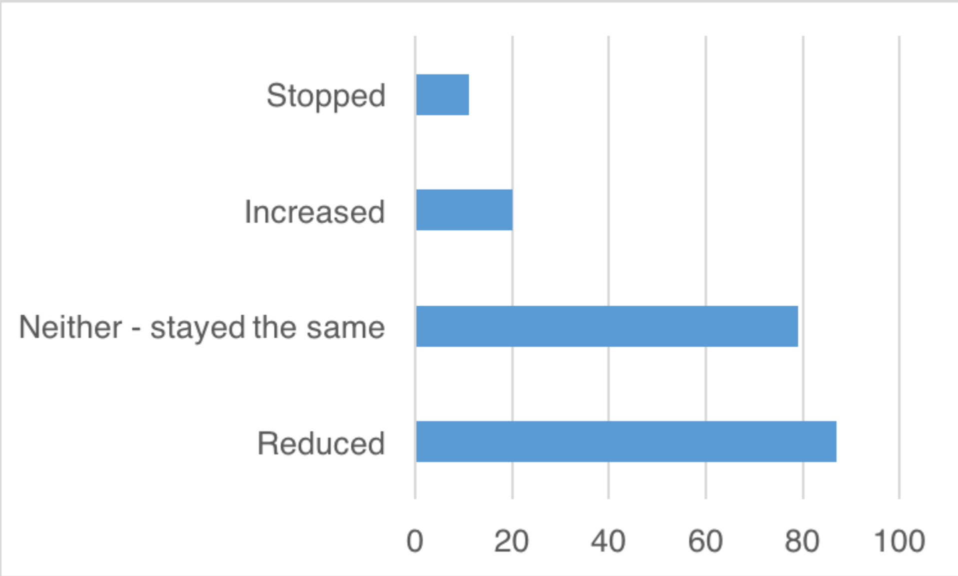
## Appendix 4: Charts and tables



**Appendix 5 – additional data and tables from the 2016 survey:**

**Appendix 6 –data and tables from the 2015 survey**

*Table 5: Have you increased, reduced or stopped working with Access to Work clients?*



## Appendix 3 – Survey questions

## Appendix 5 – Additional data and tables from the 2016 survey

## Appendix 6 – Data and tables from the 2015 survey

## Appendix 7 – How we did this; additional information on the survey methodology and data analysis

Appendices 3, 5, 6 and 7 are available to download from the NUBSLI website[62].

[62] http://www.nubsli.com/guidance/survey-bslenglish-interpreters-working-conditions-2015-2016