ATA Interpreters Division
Membership Survey Report
June 2019

Sent to: 3518 ATA ID members. Responses: 135.

Survey sent on June 5, 2019, closed on June 20, 2019, only one broadcast sent.

**Q1: Are you an interpreter? N=135**

- 99% Yes
- 1% No

**Recommendation:** Change this question to read, “Do you interpret?”

**Q2: Do you hire interpreters on a regular basis? N=135**

- 76% Yes
- 24% No
**Problem detected:** Most people identified themselves as freelancers (111) and most people (101) answered Q4 that was intended for employees, not freelancers. At the same time, a few people (11) checked N/A because they probably understood the question to be solely for employees.

**Recommendation:** Modify the question to read as follows, “If you are an employee (not a freelancer), is interpreting part of your job description?”
Recommendation: Change this question to read, “Do you do written translations?”

Q6: Please check the box that identifies the areas where you work as an interpreter

Problem detected: Refugee is an invalid category. A high proportion of LEP people are current or former refugees that need services in all areas of interpreting. Furthermore, the category “Other” does not provide valuable or actionable information.

Recommendation: For areas of interpreting, use ASTM F2089-15 categories which have been already vetted and include the description for each category, as follows:
• **Business Interpreting** - interpreting performed in the course of business activities.

• **Community/Social Services Interpreting** – interpreting for the purpose of outreach, information, and where human services programs are provided.

• **Conference Interpreting** – interpreting performed primarily in the simultaneous mode for persons attending congresses, conventions, seminars, summits, or other meetings.

• **Diplomatic Interpreting** - interpreting performed to facilitate communication between governments and/or international organizations or both.

• **Disaster Relief and Humanitarian Interpreting** – interpreting performed in support of humanitarian operations and of individuals affected by disaster or other emergency situations.

• **Educational Interpreting** – interpreting in settings where educational services are provided such as K-12 schools.

• **Healthcare Interpreting** – interpreting in settings where medical services are provided.

• **Labor Relations Interpreting** - interpreting performed for negotiations between management and their workers, and unions and their members.

• **Legal Interpreting** - which includes court interpreting (interpreting in the courtroom and depositions) and quasi-judicial interpreting (interpreting of interviews and hearings in settings that may have a bearing on legal proceedings)

• **Liaison Interpreting** – interpreting generally performed in the consecutive mode while escorting visiting individuals or groups.

• **Media Interpreting** – interpreting performed for media outlets such as television networks, radio stations, or the Internet.

• **Military and Conflict Zone Interpreting** – interpreting performed in support of the armed forces and their mission and of individuals affected by armed conflict.

• **Security-related Interpreting** - interpreting performed in support of government agencies working in law enforcement and national security.
Problem detected: English was one of the options, which resulted in being the most popular answer (90%). Another option for languages was “Other (please specify)” which resulted in a 4% of responses that give no valuable or actionable information.

Recommendation: Change the question to, “What is your primary working language other than English?” and don't put English as a possible answer. Do not have “Other” as a language answer.
Q8: What do you want the ATA Interpreters Division to do for its members? N=93

Frequently, there was more than one category chosen by a single respondent. Accordingly, there are more responses than respondents.
Q8: Advocacy
N=63

- Educate the public about interpreting: 15%
- Compensation: improve/set rates: 13%
- Promote the interpreting profession: 11%
- Promote standards of practice: 11%
- Use certified/qualified interpreters: 8%
- Lobby legislatures: 8%
- Improve interpreters' working conditions: 6%
- Promote professionalism of interpreters: 5%
- Support interpreters: 3%
- Collaborate with other interpreter organizations: 3%
- Be a national leader on interpreting: 3%
- Publish position papers: 2%
- Filter scams: 2%
- Eliminate language services companies: 2%
- Defend language access: 2%
- Group health insurance: 2%
- Collect data: 2%
- Be a trade union for interpreters: 2%
- Advocate in general: 2%
- Test interpreters in more languages: 2%
Q8: Education N=48

- Trainings: 31%
- Continuing education: 27%
- Webinars: 21%
- Workshops: 6%
- Sessions on interpreting at conferences: 6%
- Conferences on interpreting: 4%
- Skills building courses: 2%
- Directory of trainings for interpreters: 2%

Q8: Resources N=27

- Updates: 30%
- Generic: 15%
- Marketing: 11%
- Terminology: 7%
- Clearinghouse for events/trainings: 7%
- Theory & practice: 4%
- Note-taking: 4%
- Rights for small business owners: 4%
- Rights for freelancers: 4%
- Rights for employees: 4%
- Languages other than English: 4%
- Language access rights: 4%
- Certification: 4%
Concerns:

- There is an underlying feeling that ATA does not care about interpreters as much as it cares about translators.
- There is ignorance about US federal anti-trust laws and regulations that forbid professional associations, such as ATA, to set group rates. There is a need to educate the membership about how to form labor unions, which are the organizations that can legally negotiate group rates.
Interpreters are required by their credentialing bodies to do a certain number of continuing education activities in order to maintain their credentials. This explains interpreters’ demands for ATA to offer continuing education opportunities at low cost.

**Recommendations:**

- Create a tab on the ATA ID website called “Resources” with the following subcategories: standards, terminology, certification, and marketing.
- Create a tab on the ATA ID website called “Advocacy” with the following subcategories: legislative updates, tools, labor unions, contracts.
- Publicize the ATA ID listserv on the website as the ATA ID Discussion Forum.

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**Q9: Comments**

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<th>%</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>56%</td>
<td>Thank you</td>
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<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Volunteering</td>
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<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Advocate for Language Access</td>
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<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>ATA Credentialed Interpreter</td>
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<td>6%</td>
<td>Certification</td>
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<td>6%</td>
<td>Marketing</td>
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<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Parity with translators</td>
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</tbody>
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**Respectfully submitted,**

Milena Calderari-Waldron
June 22, 2019