



# Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

## Translation and Interpretation

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **Translation & Interpretation** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the [Business Gateway Plan Guide \(May 2025\)](#), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **May 2026**.

## What do I need to know about the Translation & Interpretation market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ The estimated value of the **UK language services market** was between **£1.9 and £2.1 billion in 2025**, compared to **£1.94 and £2.2 billion in 2022**. Following a period of growth over 2021/22, market revenue remained flat in 2025. A combination of geopolitical uncertainty, inflation and the impact of AI are threatening the industry, with the SME sector particularly vulnerable to the impact. To clarify, language services include both translation / interpretation and broader language services such as subtitling, copywriting, crosscultural marketing and language training ([Association of Translation Companies, A Snapshot of the UK Language Services market in 2025](#)).
- ◆ In 2023, total revenue from UK translation and interpretation activities was **£810 million** ([Office for National Statistics, Annual Business Survey: Non-financial business economy, UK, April 25](#))
- ◆ Rates of pay amongst those surveyed depended on a few factors, with those who **specialise in specific topics charging up to 43% more** than those who do not and translators who are **members of a professional association charging around 44% more** than those who are not ([Inbox Translation, Freelance Translator Survey 2023, December 2023](#))
- ◆ According to this survey of language companies, independent professionals and universities across 50 countries, the outlook for the industry is quite negative. Both language companies and independent professionals expect their activity to decline while universities expect decreased budgets and student numbers. The availability of AI tools and machine translation is leading to decreased client demand and pressure on pricing ([ELIS Research, European Language Industry Survey 2025, 2025](#)).
- ◆ The language services industry is in a critical period with the arrival of AI. Businesses are urgently trying to navigate the changing landscape and assess the potential opportunities, threats and limitations of AI and how this can be incorporated within their businesses ([Association of Translation Companies, A Snapshot of the UK Language Services market in 2025, 2025](#)).
- ◆ In **2025**, there were **1,635 businesses** with the UK SIC code for translation and interpretation services. The vast majority of these (**90%**) were **small businesses with 0-4 employees** ([Office for National Statistics, UK business: activity, size and location, Sep 25](#)).



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## Where can I find more information on my market?

The following UK organisations represent businesses working in the translation and interpretation sector:

- ◆ [Institute of Translation and Interpreting \(ITI\)](#)
- ◆ [Association of Translation Companies \(ATC\)](#)
- ◆ [National Register of Public Service Interpreters \(NRPSI\)](#)
- ◆ [The Chartered Institute of Linguists \(CIOL\)](#)
- ◆ [Association of Police and Court Interpreters \(APCI\)](#)
- ◆ [Professional Interpreters for Justice](#)
- ◆ [Association of Sign Language Interpreters and Translators \(ASLI\)](#)

The [National Library of Scotland](#) provides free access to a range of [eResources for Scottish businesses](#). These include **COBRA** reports such as **Translator/Interpreter (May 2025)**.

The following resources may also be helpful when setting up your business:

- [The 2026 NIMDZI 100](#) and the [Slator 2025 Language Service Provider Index](#) rank the largest language industry companies, including some UK companies. They also provides general market size and trends information for the global industry.
- There are a number of useful company directories to identify translators or interpreters with relevant specialisms such as [ITI – Find a professional](#), [ATC – Member directory](#), [CIOL – Find a linguist](#) and [ASLI – Find an interpreter](#)
- The Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL) has a [Scottish society](#) which runs a variety of professional development (CPD) events for both CIOL members and non-members.

The Information Service provides a bespoke research service for all Scottish businesses. If you have a more detailed research enquiry that you would like to explore, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com).

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## How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com) or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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## What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please [info@bgateway.com](mailto:info@bgateway.com) or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

## Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.



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## How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

### Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) "[Find a Chartered Accountant](#)" tool

### Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

### Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

### Legal Help

Gov.uk "[Licence Finder](#)" tool

Law Society of Scotland's "[Find a Solicitor](#)" tool

### Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

**Please note:** the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

### Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing and Sales](#)

### Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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**Updated by: Louise Morrison**

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