



CISLI Fees Survey 2025

This is the fifth fees/income survey that CISLI has carried out; the first was done almost ten years ago, in 2016. Together they provide an important set of data showing the evolution of interpreting fees/interpreters' income over time.

All the fees/income reports are on the CISLI website: <https://cisli.ie/resources/fees-surveys/>

Each survey is a standalone snapshot of the average income earned/fees charged in our sector at a particular moment in time.

The aim of this survey is to reflect approximate standard practice within the industry, rather than produce exact statistical measures.

This year's survey was open from mid July to the start of September 2025.

At the time of this year's AGM, held in July 2025, CISLI had 86 active members. 51 people responded to this survey. All answers are anonymised.

For context, at the end of July 2025, there were 121 interpreters registered with RISLI.

The fees referred to in the survey are those charged for freelance interpreting services (which may be engaged directly or through an agency). Please note that agencies often have their own fee structure/s, as reflected in some of the answers given in the survey. CISLI did not contact any agency for the purposes of this survey.

Outside of agency fee structures, as self-employed service providers, interpreters are free to set their own fees. And, as with other years, you can see that interpreters do indeed charge a broad range of fees according to the circumstances of the work.

This year there was a mix of closed and open questions. For some open questions, respondents provided extra information indicating that they apply different policies, fees etc, depending on the nature of the booking/assignment. And so for the purposes of the survey, some responses may constitute more than one answer.

A very small number of responses could not be interpreted with certainty.

Percentages are used in the report when appropriate. Please note, that percentages have been rounded up/down as needed, so the total may not equal 100% exactly.

CISLI does not provide a detailed analysis or interpretation of the data collected. We encourage you to engage with the data, explore it and interpret it appropriately. For example, you may find it useful to discuss the results with colleagues; and/or you may like to look at CSO data – www.cso.ie/en/statistics/ – about Irish society and the economy to see for yourself how our profession is developing compared to other people's situation.

One question that hasn't been addressed in these surveys is the volume of work available. It may well be worth considering this if you are comparing the 2025 survey to previous years.

Many thanks to everyone who responded to the survey.

Question 1.

Do you work (on a full-time or part-time basis) as a staff interpreter? (please answer No if your contract is in education and only runs for the duration of the academic year/semester)

No	Yes
35	16
68.63%	31.37%

Question 2.***Mandatory question**

What is your standard half-day fee for generic assignments? Please exclude any discounts or reduced rates that you offer Deaf organisations, regular customers, etc.

Fee	How many people charge that?	% of Responses
115 euro	1	<2%
135 euro	1	<2%
140 euro	3	5.9%
145 euro	13	25.5%
150 euro	15	29.4%
160 euro	2	3.9%
165 euro	6	11.8%
170 euro	1	<2%
180 euro	5	9.8%
200 euro	1	<2%
135-150 euro	1	<2%
150/160 euro	1	<2%
As per ISLI and Bridge rates	1	<2%

Comments / Other comments:

- ⊗ Two interpreters mentioned that they offer discounts to Deaf organisations or individuals.
- ⊗ One interpreter mentioned that they charge 135 euro for a half day, 300 euro for a full day and 330 euro for special events.

Question 3.

What is your standard half-day fee for high-skills assignments?

Fee	How many people charge that?	% of Responses
150 euro	2	3.9%
160 euro	1	<2%
165 euro	10	19.6%
170 euro	1	<2%
180 euro	22	43.1%
190 euro	3	5.9%
200 euro	7	13.7%
250 (400) euro	1	<2%
180 - 200 euro	3	5.9%
Rates suggested by ISLI and Bridge	1	<2%

Question 4.**Do you charge VAT?**

No	Yes
37	14
72.5%	27.5%

Question 5.

Do you charge for any other work related expenses, such as travel, tolls, parking, subsistence, etc? (If yes, please specify which expenses and explain what rates etc you use)

*51 responses received

What expense?	How many charge it?	Comments
Mileage	43	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ 21 interpreters specifically referenced civil service rates. ⊗ Rates mentioned as follows: 0.434c petrol/km (2 responses), 0.39c, 0.41c, 0.418c, 0.50c, and as suggested/set by the agency (2 responses). ⊗ How do colleagues decide to charge mileage?: 20+ km away (1 response), more than 25+ km away (1 response), outside Dublin (5 responses), out of county (2 responses), not accessible by public transport (1 response). ⊗ Yes, civil service rates (for GP assignments)
Accommodation	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Accommodation can be charged if an overnight is required. I generally charge a €100 rate for accommodation, and look for a hotel / B&B around this range. ⊗ ... overnight b/b. Linked in with VS.
Administration fee	1	
Travel time	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ If working private I charge travel time ⊗ I charge travel time: half day rate if I have to travel more than 1.5 hours to venue.
Subsistence	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Only if assignment allows for subsistence and parking. Very rare that this happens. ⊗ Subsistence only if agreed beforehand with client for example if out of county on full day assignment. ⊗ and subsistence at €25 (depending on the job).
Parking/Tolls	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Parking and tolls charged at cost (3 responses). ⊗ and tolls if outside of Dublin.
Yes	1	No additional details provided.
No	7	

Question 6.***Mandatory question**

What is your standard cancellation policy (length of notice required and fee applicable)? Please exclude any exceptions/flexibility you offer Deaf organisations, regular customers, etc.

A number of interpreters outlined more than one cancellation policy that may be applied, for example, in accordance with the booking agency being separate to their direct bookings.

Some interpreters have a staggered cancellation policy, ie full fee if less than X days and a smaller fee if longer notice is given.

Therefore, the results are divided as follows: the first table shows on what basis interpreters are charging the full fee and who does not apply a cancellation fee/have no cancellation policy; the second table shows other policies applied, including lesser fees policies applied.

*51 responses received

	Days' notice 100% fee	How many apply that?
C1.	1 day (24 hours)	1
C2.	2 days (48 hours)	7
C3.	3 days (72 hours)	7
C4.	3 working days	1
C5.	5 days	7
C6.	5 working days	6
C7.	7 days	10
C8.	7 working days	1
C9.	14 days	1
C10.	3-5 days	1
C11.	7 days for video assignments only	1
	Same as/determined by agency	3
	No/No policy	5

Additional/Other cancellation policies applied	How many apply that?
50% fee = 1-7 days (C1 above)	1
3 or 4 days (C2 above)	1
3-5 days (C3 above)	2
3-6 days (C3 above)	1
4-7 days (C3 above)	1
4-7 working days (C4 above)	1
5-10 days (C5 above)	2
5-10 working days (C6 above)	2
7-14 days (C7 above)	1
More than 7 days (C7 above)	1
Rarely/never apply it	3
Not applied for Deaf organisations/individuals	3
Waived on a discretionary basis	3

Comments/Other comments:

- ⊗ One interpreter that they intend to create a cancellation policy soon.
- ⊗ One interpreter mentioned that there is a cancellation policy for voucher scheme work, different to their own policy.
- ⊗ One interpreter commented that reschedules may be considered cancellations.

Question 7.

Q7. For assignments that require significant preparation (e.g. conferences), do you charge separately for preparation time? If so, how much? (Please do not include preparation for theatre or other performance work)

18 positive responses	How many charge this?
Yes/Depends	5
Yes, if my colleague does	2
High skills rate	2 interpreters
A half day at high skills rate	1 interpreter
An half day fee	3 interpreters
An extra full or half day fee at the assignment rate	2 interpreters
An extra full day fee	1 interpreter
An extra 1or 1.5 days' fee	1 interpreter
Between 50 – 100 euro	1 interpreter

Comments/Other comments:

- ⊗ One interpreter stated: "Always try to negotiate that but not always successful".
- ⊗ "No... but [I] wouldn't be opposed if prep ever took long enough to warrant it and would charge standard full day/half day rates depending on length."
- ⊗ "Have not to date..., but reconsidering charges at present."
- ⊗ One interpreter stated that they wished they did sometimes.
- ⊗ "Not really. Only if it's a very technical assignment then I might charge a half day extra for prep."

Question 8.

Do you have a separate rate for theatre/performance interpreting (which may include certain broadcast interpreting assignments, e.g. programmes like the School Hub and the Late Late Toy Show)?

18 responses	How many responded?	Comments
No		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ "It has been awhile since I've done this and I don't know the going rate." ⊗ "Same rate as half or full day rate as other assignments." ⊗ One interpreter commented that they accepted the rate given by the broadcaster or booking agency (currently approx. 900 euro for concerts, and in previous years approx. 1,800 for some certain broadcasting assignments).
High skills rate	2	

Yes	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ One interpreter stated: "Generally, yes - though if it's under the VS, it's whatever they offer." ⊗ On interpreter charges 200 euro per half day for private jobs, and 1.5 days if more than 6 hours. ⊗ One interpreter explained that they charge for prep: script/song translation, fee for time spent attending 2 shows beforehand, travel and actual performance. ⊗ One interpreter explained their fee calculation as follows: "Depends on length of show and if working alone or not. Typically 350 euro for an hour [show]".
-----	----	--

Question 9.

Is your theatre/performance interpreting rate a set fee? If yes, please state here how much that is.

21 responses	How many responses?	Comments
No	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ The going rate. ⊗ "It's not set could be 180-220 for half day." ⊗ "It can vary depending on budget of client, the nature of the performance etc." ⊗ "No, it always depends on the individual project, prep time, co-interpreter or solo etc." ⊗ "Varied- but would consider 500 euro as an opening consideration." ⊗ "It is not necessarily a set fee - I rarely do this type of work, and so am guided by colleagues, especially if they have worked at that venue before. It could be an "agreed fee" with the venue that colleagues have previously negotiated."
Yes	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ "150 euro < 3 hours, as I charge separately for prep and viewing shows beforehand." ⊗ "545 euro (185 euro [for the] performance and 360 euro [for] prep)." ⊗ "600 euro - 800 euro previously." ⊗ "It ranges from 500 to 800 but I do regular work for a theatre and charge them 700 euro" ⊗ "Charge a discounted fee of 750 euro / 800 euro for smaller companies/theatres." ⊗ One interpreter explains that they charge according to the production company/theatre size.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ One interpreter mentioned that the Abbey Theatre standard rate is 1,050 euro, including all prep and promotion – ⊗ One interpreter mentioned that they charge the same fee [as the Abbey Theatre] for large public funded theatres or commercial production companies.
--	--	---

Question 10.

If you do not charge a set fee, please explain your charges for theatre/performance interpreting assignments, including your rates for the performance and preparation etc.

Comments:
"I include a 200 euro half day rate for the performance and then an additional amount for the prep. 150 euro per 3 hours prep."
"Between 180 euro - 200 euro per half day rate. I would charge for prep in this depending on the intensity and amount of time needed to focus my attention on the preparation to achieve a high standard."
"Prep rate 400 euro, depends on the performance and [if] I have to attend in advance."
450 euro – 800 euro
450 euro – 900 euro depending on the assignment
"750 euro for preparation and interpreting show. About 3 days preparation and about under 2 hours to interpret."
"Minimum of 250 euro - 500 euro plus prep time."
"Depends on how much prep is required, the service provider (commercial or community), etc."
"I charge anything like this at about 3 x high skills rate (190 euro) - 1 x for performance, 1 x for preparation, 1 x for previewing the show = about 570 euro + VAT for something generic. Sometimes I might charge more for continuity with other interpreters. Some other types of client may not have the budget for this and we can negotiate."
"I consult with any other interpreters on the team and take into consideration prep time and prep type so it's completely on a case by case basis."
"Most often it is to do with the budget of the venue, I am flexible in this area and will work as long as I wouldn't acquire a loss due to prep time required."
"My fee is generally decided by and put forward with my co interpreters. It really depends on factors such as how much prep and research I need to do myself and the size/venue I am working at."
"The fee would include consideration for preparation time and time to attend for lights/sound tests. It also depends on the organisation paying - if it's a small organisation it may be less than "standard"
"It depends on the budget of the performance. I am willing to be flexible."
"It's impossible to charge for the amount of prep time involved."

Question 11.**Do you plan to increase your fee in the coming months (ie for or before 2026)?**

*50 responses

	Number of responses	Comments
Yes/Maybe	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ Four interpreters responded that they would be increasing their fees or reviewing their fees with a view to increasing them at the start of 2026. ⊗ "...haven't increased [them] for over three years."
No/Unsure	36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ "Not before 2026" ⊗ "Not yet" ⊗ "Not sure. Will discuss with colleagues." ⊗ "Not unless everyone else is"
Other answers	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ⊗ "TBC" ⊗ "Depends on other interpreters." ⊗ "I tend now to charge more the upper price now." ⊗ "I tend to follow agency rates." ⊗ "Would like guidance from CISLI."

Question 12.**Have you set up your own company for your interpreting business?**

*49 responses

No	Yes
41	8
83.7%	16.3%

Question 13.**Do you pay into a private pension plan for your retirement?**

*49 responses

No	Yes
24	25
49%	51%

Question 14.

Approx. how much do you earn per year from interpreting (freelance and/or as a staff interpreter)? (gross income, excl. VAT) - Please indicate if you're working as an interpreter Full-time or Part-time

*46 responses

Full-time – 29 responses	Part-time – 14 responses
Approx. annual average income from freelance interpreting: 46,150 euro	Approx. annual average income from freelance interpreting: 14,285 euro
Other answers: ⊗ "Part time and not working long enough to get a understanding yet." ⊗ "Enough to pay bills and the rising cost of living." ⊗ "Varies annually."	

Comments:

⊗ Two interpreters indicated that had they had staff interpreting roles, in addition to working freelance.	
Earning less than the average above:	⊗ "X euro full time but only a few years out of CDS."
	⊗ "Will be significantly higher this year as I am doing a lot more medical interpreting."
	⊗ "X to X euro full time but with family obligations."
	⊗ "X to X euro full time but work offers fluctuate."

Question 15.

Is there anything else that you think CISLI should know about your interpreting fees?

Comments:

- ⊗ "Very unsure what to charge."
- ⊗ "I do not 'match' fees, i.e. if a co interpreter asks me to charge more or less to match their rate, I refuse. I try to stick very firmly to the schedule of rates of my company so that expectations are very clear for the client."
- ⊗ "I think the fees I charge are broadly in line with colleagues, but I don't feel the need to charge a "premium" rate given the volume of work available to me."
- ⊗ "It varies from interpreter to interpreter. I suppose it's because it's self employed. There is no standard. I was charging below what other interpreters were charging because I was initially clueless. With [the] cost of living and inflation I increased my fees in line with other terms. It's totally different to PAYE work. No holiday pay, no pension, no sick pay."
- ⊗ "[There] should have different rates for International Sign or BSL or ASL etc."
- ⊗ "The expected salary could be increasing as I am now extremely busy this summer which was unexpected as I expected to earn that amount from 9/10 months work."
- ⊗ "...I think many of us will never retire. We will have get other work. No disposable income for pension."
- ⊗ "Just looking forward to seeing the final report and comparison to previous years."
- ⊗ "These surveys are super valuable and helpful to us members."