

Interpreting and Technology

Survey Results: Analysis of Responses

In 2017, Translation Commons conducted an industry-wide survey on Technology for Interpreters. The objective of the survey was to gather real-life information on existing technology tools and the attitudes of the interpreters who use them. The survey was designed to be completed by both simultaneous and consecutive interpreters. The results of the survey will help the Interpreting Think Tank (ITT) team, part of the non-profit Translation Commons, to create an overview of where we are and what we need to do in terms of our involvement in shaping the future of Interpreting. **The Interpreting Think Tank Team thanks all 101 Survey respondents very much for their participation in this piece of research in a field with a clear lack of formal, freely accessible information.**

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TC Members having contributed

Survey design: Arturo Bobea, Jeannette Stewart, Barbara Werderitsch

Analysis of responses: Barbara Werderitsch

Review: Jan Rausch

Final check: Giovanna Lester

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PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

The first part of the survey collects general information, such as **how long respondents have been active** in the interpreting business, their **country of residence**, their **interpretation modes** and the **scenarios they work in**.

Out of the 101 respondents, **only 100 could be evaluated**. Of those, 77% are **freelancers**, 22% **staff interpreters**, followed by **interpreting agency owners (9%)** and **project managers (7%)**. Over a fifth of the respondents have interpreting experience of more than 20 years; more than a third 10-20 years. In a truly international spirit, a total of 29 countries is represented, with the US accounting for the biggest share of 23%, followed by Spain and the Dominican Republic representing 11% each and the UK with 10%.

Most interpreters (90%) work in the consecutive mode, **80% interpret simultaneously**, 50% offer whispered interpretation and 42% are liaison interpreters. **In terms of interpreting scenarios, 80%** of the interpreters deliver their services **on site**, **50%** do so remotely **over the phone**, and **over a third (34%)** do it **remotely over video**. The breakdown continues: **76%** are **conference** and 31% community **interpreters**. In total, 11 fields of expertise are covered by the participants, **including law, medicine, arts and humanities, business and marketing** as well as **banking/finance/insurance and industry and technology**.

What follows is an individual analysis of each of the survey questions. Underneath each question's summary, the question itself plus answer options are stated. Please refer to the [Survey Website](#) to view the charts corresponding to each question. **Many questions allowed for comments** – please refer to the [Survey Website](#) to view them by simply clicking on the blue "Responses" link. **In some cases, we are so grateful for the efforts made by our respondents to specify their use of alternative interpreting equipment that we have included the respondents' individual answers** under the table below, with percentages appearing with each question.

Please also note that more than one answer could be chosen. Therefore, the bars in the charts will not add up to 100%.

Please contact [Jeannette Stewart, Arturo Bobea or Barbara Werderitsch](#) for any questions or comments.

Question 1: To get started please tell us a few things about yourself

Out of the 100 survey participants, 77% were freelance interpreters, 22% staff interpreters, 7% project managers, and 9% interpreting agency owners. **Kindly note that double roles are possible, which is why the percentages do not add up to a 100.**

*1. To get started, please tell us a few things about yourself:

I am a freelance interpreter	77.00%
I am a staff interpreter of an interpreting agency or official institution	22.00%
I am a project manager for an interpreting company	7.00%
I am an interpreting agency owner	9.00%

Question 2: I have been working as an interpreter for (time options)

Over a fifth of respondents are true veterans with more than 20 years' experience in the field, more than a third have experience of 10-20 years, and relative newcomers with a working experience of between 5 and 10 years represent the smallest percentage (19%) of professionals.

* 2. I have been working as an interpreter for:

1-5 years	19%
5-10 years	24%
10-20 years	32%
Over 20 years	24%
I don't personally interpret	1%

Question 3: Country in which I reside (enter your country name)

In a truly international spirit, the following countries are represented: Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czechia, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, South Africa, Spain, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, UK and the US, which accounts for the biggest share of 23%, followed by Spain and the Dominican Republic representing 11% each and the UK with 10%.

* 3. Country in which I reside: Please see answers online at the [Survey Website](#) .

Question 4: Interpretation modes I perform/organize:

(Multiple choices)

Most interpreters (90%) work in the consecutive mode, **80% deliver their services simultaneously**, half of them (50%) offer whispered interpretation, 42% liaison interpretation, 37% sight translation, and 5% sign language. Kindly note that double roles are possible, which is why the percentages do not add up to a 100. **To view the individual answers nine of our respondents were kind enough to provide us with**, please click on the blue Responses link you will find on the [Survey Website](#), in the same position as showed below.

* 4. Interpretation modes I perform/organize:

Simultaneous	80%	
Consecutive	90%	
Sight translation	37%	
Sign language	5%	
Whispering	50%	
Liaison	42%	
Other (please specify)	9%	Responses

Question 5: Scenarios where I interpret:

Multiple choices

Regarding the scenarios they interpret in, 80% of the interpreters work on site, 50% deliver their services remotely over the phone and over a third (34%), remotely over video; 76% are conference, and 31% are community interpreters. Kindly note that double roles are possible, which is why the percentages do not add up to a 100. **To view the individual answers nine of our respondents were kind enough to provide us with**, please click on the blue Responses link you will find on the [Survey Website](#), in the same position as shown below.

5. Scenarios where I interpret:

Over the phone	50%	
Conference	76%	
Liaison	10%	
Community	31%	
On-site	80%	
Video Remote Interpreting	34%	
Other (please specify)	9%	Responses

Question 6: Field/s of expertise:

(Multiple choices)

Out of the 11 fields of expertise in Q6, **most interpreters (56%) work in the legal field, followed by 53%** working either **in the medical field** or in **arts and humanities** or in **business/marketing/customer service**. Almost half of the participants work in **banking/finance/insurance**, which is closely followed by industry and technology. The lowest score is for **natural sciences**, with 21%.

* 6. Field/s of expertise:

Arts and Humanities	53%	
Banking/Finance/Insurance	49%	
Business/Marketing/Customer Service	53%	
Computers and Internet	39%	
Industry and Technology	47%	
Legal	56%	
Medical	53%	
Natural Sciences	21%	
Social Sciences	34%	
Tourism	33%	
Other/s (please specify)	29%	Responses

Question 7: I keep up to date with the latest news in the industry through:

(Multiple choices)

Online communities score big as the participants' first choice (73%) for keeping up with the latest news in the industry, followed by **61% doing their own research**, and **52%** relying on good old **word of mouth**. To view the individual answers four of our respondents were kind enough to provide us with, please click on the blue Responses link you will find on the [Survey Website](#), in the same position as shown below.

* 7. I keep up to date with the latest news in the industry through:

Events	44%	
Organization newsletter	40%	
Own research	61%	
Online community	73%	
Word-of-mouth	52%	
Through my every day work	48%	
Other/s (please specify)	4%	Responses

PART II: Traditional equipment or new alternatives, travelling

This second part of the survey, **comprising Questions 8 to 11**, aims to gather data about **the kind of equipment** (other than a notepad and pen) **employed by interpreters to deliver their interpretation or prepare for their assignments in shorter time**. A clear majority **(68%) uses traditional conference interpreting equipment**, more than half **(56%), the telephone**, scarcely a fifth **(19%) uses an app** (software application), and over a fifth **(23%) has used alternative conference interpreting equipment** (e.g.: smartphones as receivers and Wi-Fi for voice transmission). In their personal comments, 22 out of these 23% mentioned Interpreting Delivery Platforms (IDPs), alternative onsite conference interpreting equipment or preparation time-saving apps used. Amongst those, **ZipDx (3 mentions), Voiceboxer (2 mentions), Skype, UHF Rondson equipment (tour guide), Zoom.us and Zoiper** were mentioned.

Secondly, this part was looking for **insights into the amount of travelling done** for an interpreting assignment and the **interpreters' attitude towards travelling**, which in most cases appears to be a **positive** one.

Question 8: Other than my voice, notepad and pen, I use the following equipment to provide interpretation services:

(Multiple choices)

In line with the **high number of** participants claiming to interpret on-site and/or to be **conference interpreters, 68% use traditional conference interpreting equipment.** This is followed by **56% using the telephone** as a means of delivering their interpretation. With a significant offset, **23% state they use alternative conference interpreting equipment** (e.g.: smartphones as receivers and Wi-Fi for voice transmission), 19% use an app (software application). Asked for the specific technology used, the respondents named web-based conference interpreting platforms such as **ZipDx and Voiceboxer, Skype, UHF Rondson equipment (tour guide), Zoom.us, VoiceBoxer, Zoiper.**

Linguali and **Interprefy** were each mentioned twice, **ZipDx** was mentioned three times, **Kudo** and **HeadVox** were mentioned as having been tested in a trial. **Twenty-two** respondents were kind enough to specify the equipment they use, **please read their comments below.**

* 8. Other than my voice, notepad and pen, I use the following equipment to provide interpretation services:

Telephone (Landline)	56%
Traditional conference interpreting equipment	68%
An App (Software Application)	19%
Alternative conference interpreting equipment (Example: smartphones as receivers and Wi-Fi for voice transmission)	23%

If answer was any other than Telephone (Landline) or traditional conference interpreting equipment, please specify technology used in the comment field:

- I have personally used Linguali (assignment) and HeadVox (trial). I have participated in the trials for KudoWay
- Apps for personal glossaries & dictionaries used on the go.
- I have done some testing of over-the-internet interpreting software (but haven't offered any actual interpretation services via them).
- Web-based conference interpreting platform such as ZipDx and Voiceboxer
- Smart phone, Vol and video
- SKYPE
- I don't use any of the options above
- I log on to an online platform where I can interpret in simultaneous. I therefore use my cable Internet connection, headphones, mike and laptop. (Wifi also works)
- VSRI
- IP based VRI solution developed in co-creation with internet engineering companies
- UHF Rondson equipment (Guide Tour)

- Portable interpreting equipment (tour guide)
- Tablet
- Bosch conference e interpreting equipment
- I don't use anything other than my voice, pad or pen, but will like to try over the phone or video interpreting I think. But I do use landlines sometimes. I use mostly smartphones.
- None
- ZipDX Multilingual, Linguali, Zoom.us, VoiceBoxer, Interprefy
- Mobile phone
- VoIP using softphone, internet high speed connection
- Video screens in traditional conference interpreting booths that are in the next room to the conference. Video screens and Skype technology for videoconferencing in a delegate/speaker to a meeting.
- Zoiper
- Interprefy.interpret.world App (iOS and Android) v3,0 and ZipDX

Question 9: I have used apps that reduce conference interpreters' preparation time for an assignment:

23 of the respondents **have used an app that reduces conference interpreting preparation time** for a specific assignment. Fourteen respondents gave specific names: **INTRAKIT, InterpretBank II, Teachmaster** (to study vocab), **IntraGloss™, GPS** and **MINA** at the European Parliament, **Interplex, apps on the iPad allowing you to centralise and mark up research (Documents by Readdle), and have glossaries ready (Interplex), Sharefile for secure, encrypted and fast delivery of (mostly confidential) meeting documents** in connection with a **secure Azure cloud portal**. **Fourteen** respondents were kind enough to **provide us with the information about the apps they use** in individual comments.

* 9. I have used apps that reduce conference interpreters' preparation time for an assignment:

Yes	23%
No	63%
No, but I've heard of one/some	14%

If answered A or C, please specify and describe your experience, if any, in the comment field:

- INTRAKIT is a great glossary management tool that operates on smartphones and has a computer interface too. Practical. The app has expanded to include business management tools
- InterpretBank, Teachmaster (to study vocab)
- IntraGloss
- GPS and MINA at the European Parliament
- I have heard of glossary tools for interpreters such as Interplex.
- Maybe? Not sure what you mean, but apps on the iPad allow me to centralise and mark up my research (Documents by Readdle), and have my glossaries ready (Interplex)
- I would like to know more about those apps
- InterpretBank
- Linguee
- For document transfer we use Sharefile for secure, encrypted and fast delivery of (mostly confidential) meeting documents with a deadline for deletion and in view-only mode without the requirement to download. All documents - including order management - are recorded and managed from on a secure Azure cloud portal.
- Only Internet search
- Never done conference interpreting yet.
- All apps on an iPad mini: Docs app to collect information in one easy-to-read space, and to mark up documents for vocabulary research. Notability to mark up documents that are photographs. Interplex to make and use my glossaries.
- Linguee, SpanishDic, Ted, Wordref, Medreference

Question 10: I travel/commute or coordinate assignments that require travel

A third of respondents travel monthly for interpreting assignments, 15% weekly, only 7% daily, 22% work from the office.

* 10. I travel/commute or coordinate assignments that require travel:

Daily	7%
Weekly	15%
Monthly	31%
Rarely	26%
I work from the office, I don't travel	21%

Question 11: Assuming travel costs (hotel, train, car expenses) are correctly covered, I generally feel about travelling/commuting for an interpreting assignment like:

(Multiple choices)

Seeking to test the openness of participants to less travelling through the use of online interpreting platforms and tools, we discovered that **51% love** that part of their job, followed by **45%** arguing that **travel is a small price to pay for being face to face with people**, whereas 14% do not travel/commute at all for assignments. **Thirty-four** out of 100 respondents expressed dissatisfaction with commuting for assignments for one reason or another. For these, online interpreting platforms and tools might represent an opportunity. Eighteen percent stated they would like to get paid for commuting time the same rate as for interpreting.

* 11. Assuming travel costs (hotel, train, car expenses) are correctly covered, I generally feel about travelling/commuting for an interpreting assignment like:

It's one of the reasons I love my job	51%
I would like to travel less but cannot afford to lose the client	13%
It's a hassle, I would prefer not to travel at all	2%
I would like to get paid for commuting time the same rate as while interpreting	18%
If I could, I would prefer to work from home or an office	19%
I love being face-to-face with people, so travel is a small price to pay	45%
I don't travel/commute for assignments	14%

PART III: Remote interpreting platforms, tools or apps

Questions 12 to 18 collect data about **the frequency remote interpretation** is performed by the participants and the **interpreting platforms, tools or apps they use**. A large percentage (74%) has delivered remote interpretation services. Twenty-one respondents gave particular answers as to the equipment used to perform remote interpretation in Q13, as well as their perspective or attitude towards the tools used—**for which we would like to thank them very much**. The individual answers cover a whole range of different perceptions with a clear predominance of those who welcome new technology but have some reservations. **Some presented irrefutable arguments against it**.

This third part also gathers information about the **frequency** of use of **alternative conference interpreting equipment (as opposed to traditional onsite conference interpreting equipment)** and offers **valuable insights into** the assumingly **best and worst options** of those alternatives, thanks to the many written answers.

Question 12: I have performed remote interpretation:

Multiple choices

A very high number of respondents (74%) have performed remote interpretation, whereas slightly over a quarter has not.

* 12. I have performed remote interpretation:

Yes 74%

No 26%

Question 13: If answer is "Yes" for question #12, please select tools/apps used from the list:
(multiple choices)

Out of the high number of respondents (74 out of 100) who have performed remote interpretation, **more than half used landline connections** for over-the-phone interpreting (OPI) **followed by software for video remote interpreting (VRI)**, represented by 47%. Mobile app users were in a minority of 10%. **A third specified to have used remote interpreting delivery platforms, among which they specifically mention:** ZipDX (VoIP) and Interprefy v3.0 (webRTC), Mastervoice, "remote simultaneous interpretation (RSI)" for conference calls; "the client's Video Software for video conferencing in a delegate/speaker, on-site"; studio equipment for transmission over radio; VOIP at conferences to remote audiences. Also, Skype and Skype for Business have been mentioned.

13. If answer is "Yes" for question #12, please select tools/apps used from the list:

Landline (OPI)	52%	
Video Software (VRI)	35%	
Mobile App	8%	
Other (please specify)	21%	Responses

Question 14: If answer is "Yes" for question #12, tools/apps are provided by:

To face the **challenges** that go hand in hand with the **emergence of new technology** in any field, **such as ISO compatible working conditions** and **fair pay**, it also seems interesting that it is **the client** (43%) who **most often provides the remote interpreting equipment**, followed by the agency, with 35%. **Only 17% of the interpreters** who have taken this survey use their own tools/apps.

14. If answer is "Yes" for question #12, tools/apps are provided by:

Client	43%
Agency	35%
Myself. I use:	17%

Question 15: If answer is "No" for question #12, I am willing to try remote interpretation by using tools/apps:
(Multiple choices)

Out of the 41 respondents to this question an **overwhelming 90% is willing to try remote interpretation** by using tools/apps.

15. If answer is "No" for question #12, I am willing to try remote interpretation by using tools/apps:

Yes	90%
No	10%

Question 16: In conference interpreting settings, I have used equipment other than traditional simultaneous interpreting equipment:
(Multiple choices)

In the specific settings of conference interpreting, a vast majority has never used any tools other than traditional simultaneous interpreting equipment. However, **a fifth has**, out of which **one participant judges** that “*Both onsite and online VRI have merits and applications: online for webinars, onsite for highly interactive meetings. **Hybrid solutions** are a **combination of onsite and online audiences** and will become popular for professional conference organizers*”. Wisely seen and well explained.

* 16. In conference interpreting settings, I have used equipment other than traditional simultaneous interpreting equipment:

Yes	20%
No	80%

Question 17: If answer for question #16 is "Yes", which one is the best in your opinion? Please explain why.

Nineteen out of the 20 participants who indicated that they had used alternative conference interpreting equipment (Q16), **gave written answers as to their preferred alternative. Amongst those**, remote interpreting on video; client set up computer and microphone/speakers; infoport; my tablet & smartphone; mobile phone; hybrid solutions; tour guide system (bidule); Williams Sound Digi-Wave; KUDO, Interpretify (with both HD video and full range-audio) **were mentioned each positively once**. Bidule was at the same time mentioned negatively by one of the respondents. Kindly refer to the [Survey Website](#) to view all 19 individual answers by clicking on the blue Response link.

17. If answer for question #16 is "Yes", which one is the best in your opinion? Please explain why.

Kindly refer to the [Survey Website](#) to view all 19 individual answers by clicking on the blue Response link.

Question 18: Which is the worst? Please explain why.

The 15 respondents replying to this question mentioned: *bidule, a computer used and combined with the sound equipment/internet, glossary on paper, Infoport in noisy environments, telephone interpretation, VRI with traditional interpreter equipment on 2 or more locations connected through gateways; ZipDX (without video when the participant tested).* Onsite is preferred by one respondent because of less exposure to technology failure, but this same respondent sometimes prefers to work from home to avoid travelling. Kindly refer to [Survey Website](#) to view the **15 individual answers**. They provide a good idea of **existing nuances** and the **need for constructive dialogue** and **discussion about new interpreting technology and tools based on facts and first-hand experience**.

18. Which is the worst? Please explain why.

Kindly refer to [Survey Website](#) to view the 15 individual answers.

PART IV: Helping shape the future of interpreting

The final set of **questions, 19 to 22**, aims to elicit the **interpreters' attitude towards** the future role of **new technology** for the interpretation industry, possible benefits of positive advancements and any missing elements interpreters would wish were covered.

Question 19: I think that new technology for the interpretation industry, such as the use of Wi-Fi, smartphones and/or specifically designed online apps/tools to deliver "virtual on-site" or remote

interpretation; is:

(Multiple choices)

Despite all their **concerns**, which are part of human nature and **may not be unjustified**, a majority of 52% approve the use of new technology for the interpretation industry. Developments such as the use of Wi-Fi, smartphones and/or specifically designed online apps/tools to deliver "virtual on-site" or remote interpretation are very important as they provide clients/users with choices and additional benefits. Additionally, 31% consider it necessary in a changing world, 14% do not judge it relevant and would prefer not to use any. Only 3% think it totally ridiculous because they feel that technology makes things harder for everyone.

* 19. I think that new technology for the interpretation industry, such as the use of Wi-Fi, smartphones and/or specifically designed online apps/tools to deliver "virtual on-site" or remote interpretation; is:

Absolutely necessary, the world is changing	31.00%
Very important because it gives clients/users choices and other benefits	52.00%
Fine, but not that relevant. I can try, but I prefer not using any	14.00%
Totally ridiculous, technology makes it harder for everyone	3.00%

Question 20: If there are positive advancements in technology, I believe this could benefit the industry by:

Asked for possible benefits of positive advancements in technology, **half of the interpreters see new technologies as an alternative to travelling long distances** to work with current clients. Even more **(66%) think new technologies might empower them** to offer options to clients who are unable/unwilling to pay for travel and cost. **43% state more control over environment conditions** while interpreting as a very interesting benefit of technology advancements, followed by 37% thinking of it as allowing them more free time and the possibility to schedule more assignments.

Among the individual answers (16), **the following reasons** were mentioned **positively**: cost-cutting as an enabler for some clients unable to afford an interpreter otherwise, opening of new markets of small groups that do not consider paying for the equipment, gradual opening of new markets, VRI as a cost and time efficient solution, and the expansion of the market for interpreters.

The **loss of multi-faceted face interpreting and its efficiency**, the need of improvement of technical aspects, **lack of reliability of telephone, Skype, other applications** as well as **technology justifying to pay interpreters less** were mentioned **negatively**.

As one respondent emphasised, interpreters using **VRSI (video remote simultaneous interpreting)** platforms will benefit from a flexible calendar and secure a complementary revenue. **According to that respondent, the most important aspect is** *“the gradual opening of new markets, by offering a **credible, certified, secure and confidential service with better financial terms to clients that until now almost never used pro conference interpreters and simultaneous.**”* Another respondent makes the very relevant point of the **need for the industry to decide upon the best practices** for remote interpretation: *“Remote allows us to respond to increased demand for interpreting—but as of now, our profession has yet to step up to the plate and decide upon best practices for the use of remote.”* Kindly refer to the [Survey Website](#) and click on the blue Responses link to view the 16 individual answers.

* 20. If there are positive advancements in technology, I believe this could benefit the industry by:

Providing an alternative to travelling long distances to work with current client/s	53%
Offering options to new clients who are unable/unwilling to pay for travel and diet	66%
Allowing us to have more free time to schedule more assignments	37%
Allowing us to have more control over environment conditions while interpreting	43%
I don't think that we will benefit at all with technology advancements	2%
Other (please specify) Responses	16%

Question 21: Concerning the risks/opportunities new technology could pose towards me and/or future generations of interpreters, I subscribe to the following statements:

Of the respondents, **44%** declared to be **cautiously optimistic concerning the risks/opportunities new technology** could pose for them and/or future generations of interpreters, closely followed by 42% wanting to be involved in forging the future of how they work. **Over a third (33%) equal new technology to more production and lower cost and rates.** Taking into account that many interpreters might also have experience as translators, their view might be influenced by **the fact that translation technology and tools seem to have worsened working conditions and payment** in some scenarios and markets for highly specialised translators.

It will not change anything	8.00%
I am cautiously optimistic	44.00%
I do not think interpreters will benefit from new technology	11.00%
I want to be involved in forging the future of how I work	42.00%
New technology means more production and lower costs, which means lower rates	33.00%
Total Respondents: 100	

The answers provided to Question 22 were not edited so as to reflect the voices of the participants.

Question 22: This is the role I believe technology will play in the industry in the near future:

Lower rates, the need of wise use, and the loss of the relevance of the human interpreter seem to be **shared concerns**. Amongst the positive views, **one respondent answered** “*Face to face interpretation without being there (surgeries, therapists, etc...)*”. Please read the **written answers all 100 respondents were kind enough to provide us with** below:

* 22. This is the role I believe technology will play in the industry in the near future:

- Technology will make language access less of an issue. I do not understand why new technologies should lower the cost of the interpreter’s services: we are still trading our knowledge, time, training; clients are saving on ancillary expenses (transportation, accommodations, food, per diem)
- Very important role
- Reduce prices of the industry
- Technology will assist but not replace interpreters. In the long run, interpreters will mostly no longer be on site, but I do think that interpreters (at least of the same booth) will still be in the same room working, so there will still be some face-to-face interaction!
- Make preparation easier
- NA
- It will reduce costs to clients and allow ANYONE to be able to communicate without unreasonable accommodations being made for them.
- Integral
- I am glad to see new tools that can help interpreters prepare and do their job. I am less optimistic, however, regarding the fact that remote interpreting will bring lower rates to the sector.
- A huge one
- A clumsy attempt at replacing interpreters.
- It will facilitate global interpreting assignments.
- Helping to make interpreters accessible
- It will give clients more choice but also sometimes lead to reduced rates.
- Key.
- Allowing more clients to have access to professional interpreting assistance.
- It may open up more markets to people not interested in/able to afford interpreters. It will separate interpreters even more from their clients, and we will be more disregarded.

- It will allow interpreters to interpret from home... from office and/or on site.
- Important, but hand in hand with the interpreter. Make opportunity for people to meet and talk through interpreters feeling that they are at the same place without traveling and being there physically.
- It will be ruling us interpreters out because client[s] are always trying to find out the cheapest solution even if that goes against any logic and against their interests.
- Crucial.
- Make things more complicated, in terms of controlling unforeseen situations during the event, gathering information, being able to talk to the speakers and get the latest versions of their presentations, etc. Let alone long-distance communication problems (noise, line cut-offs, signal quality, etc.)
- Huge role; telecommuting is quickly becoming a new norm.
- It will benefit the interpreter by reducing preparation and commute time while improving interpretation quality. Also, it will benefit the client by reducing costs and adding flexibility of use.
- It will kill a lot of jobs. It will be detrimental to quality
- Things will get easier and faster, that's what technology does
- Not sure.
- Making the interpreting services available for more people - less consecutive, more simultaneous interpreting
- n/a
- Face to face interpretation without being there (surgeries, therapists, etc...)
- There may be some glitches, but I think that technology can raise efficiency of workers.
- Enhance interpretation
- I don't know
- Long distance interpreting will be accessible to all. My wish is that if the interpreter is off-site, they can raise questions for clarification if needed.
- The designed role for technology was and is to enhance the value and sustain the role of the INTERPRETER; NO technology can replace the INTERPRETER, and NO INTERPRETER can hide behind technological gimmicks. Any further initiative should be directed towards a higher degree of human proficiency in performing this important job: CONNECTING PEOPLE.
- Probably assisting interpreters
- It will take away work.
- Optimization
- N/A
- I think its effective as is.

- Na
- It will facilitate productivity and lower costs.
- Technology makes life easier for everyone
- All, Interpreters cannot Interpret if not for technology
- It is my firm belief that if used wisely technological advancements can make our job a lot easier or at least more comfortable (e.g. sim consec thanks to digital pens and notepads)
- Will create more opportunities for interpreters to work from home
- Definitely it will mean lower rates, but as we live in low-cost capitalistic world, it is inevitable. Many clients do not think about the quality but about the cost, and we have to offer them something because this share of market is quite big
- Coming up with enhanced aptitude tests that gauge interpreter's knowledge, command of the language and comprehension.
- It will reshape our whole sector of activity.
- Mandatory
- n=a
- Initially, it will be used to cut costs, but with the claim that it will shorten distances between people. Despite that, I doubt that the audio quality required for interpretation will be provided. Unstable internet connections will be a hassle and a source of stress for interpreters. We will also miss the nonverbal cues that are so important to our work.
- There is no escaping technology. It will be both negative - because it will replace some onsite interpreters and it will drive down rates in some cases - but it will also be positive because it will allow more interpreters to get more work and more end users to receive the benefits of interpreters. The transition phase is painful and we should be doing whatever we can to smooth those pains.
- Many new technologies serve the clients more than the interpreter, interpreters need to demand technology that enables them to do a better job, not for the convenience or ease of the client.
- Speed
- VRI is there to support the interpreter of the future, not to replace the interpreter. Virtual meetings are here to stay and the interpreting industry will go with the trend because meeting planners and interpreting clients will continue to pay the bill and therefore look for time and cost efficiency without compromising quality of content.
- A key role
- See Point 5 from #21
- Disrupter

- Technology will be a necessity
- It might push the rates down until clients realise that they should invest in quality interpreters and pay rates they can live on and develop professionally.
- It will dump down the industry even further. In Latvia there are lots of stinking lay people, who spoil the experience for conference participants, but are still being hired, because they are cheap idiots.
- It will ease the work of interpreters and translators but it would also reduce the number of interpreters. In the next 10 years the focus will be on specialized interpretation, fields like technology, medicine, etc.
- connecting people
- It will help prepare for the conferences and will make it possible to work remotely.
- It will mean lower rates and less job. However, if it is a reality, we will need to adapt
- Reduces times and costs, but need to be used wisely, and will not replace interpreters and translators, it assists them in their work.
- A more and more important role. We will have to fight again for our charges.
- Lower rates and slowly contribute to rendering the human interpreter irrelevant
- It'll make our job much easier.
- Increasingly crucial. I do not think it will eliminate live translators. Just change the way we work, so we need to be ready.
- Increase supply, increase automation, reduce rates and average quality.
- Catalyst
- Increasing role, hopefully making life for interpreters easier.
- That will depend on how interpreters react. The technological advances are so much bigger than the interpreting profession. For those willing to try new ways of working, tech can be a source of opportunity.
- No idea
- Covering small-scale events, where immediate communication is more important than accuracy
- n/a

- I am cautiously optimistic regarding those benefits
- Deprive all jobs of the human element and decrease rates, worsening working conditions.
- Increasingly important
- It should enhance the quality of our work but it will require a willingness to learn how make the most of it.
- It is so good
- Provide faster and more accurate support to the interpreter
- Help
- Easier access to an interpreter.
- Important
- It will help us prepare better. It will force us into trying new tech that is not yet up to the job. It will create confusion as to who is liable for the tech / phone lines / connections / broadband, and so who is entitled to be paid when one of these cuts out.
- Just another tool.
- Yes, I see this technology in the hospitals, patients, providers prefer a "live" person in the room versus a remote video or a phone. They have clapped, they have charred a hurrray!! Or we are glad it is you instead of that video, thanks for coming
- Will open up the market for more assignments for qualified interpreters (instead of using bi-linguals in call centres for over the phone-interpreting)
- Increasing use of onsite wifi and smartphone technology for smallish events, video remote for regular meetings. Remote interpreting without video is not a sensible option for conferences.
- less hardware
- Time saving, less cost for equipment, protect rates from decreasing
- It will help us to achieve better solutions, probably never fully replacing the role of an interpreter. If that time does come, there will probably be a language quality specialist to revise AI/machine work.
- Technology will give interpreters that are using it an edge over the ones that are not.

The answers provided to Question 23 were not edited so as to reflect the voices of the participants.

Question 23: What would you like to have as an interpreter in the sense of tools or support that has not been covered in this questionnaire?

- Client education as a part of agencies' and professionals' responsibility: what tools can we develop to provide to them? I have written about it, but much work is still to be done.
- I'm not interpreter, then
- No opinion
- Better apps for use in the booth. An integrated app that pools glossaries, documents, notes, etc.
- Tools to help preparation (like text summarisation or entities extraction)
- NA
- Nothing
- N/a
- More coursework
- More relevant material for preparation - much more important than gadgets.
- Remote Video Interpreting Tools
- It's all good
- Cannot think of anything.
- Apps for glossaries.
- N/A
- Legal tools that would allow us to understand who bears the liability when wifi stops working, when the tech isn't working, but the interpreter is ready, willing, and able to work.
- An intelligent booth... with built in features, with all the comfort for performing ... including comfortable chairs and desktop space... Good earphones...
- I don't have enough knowledge at this time.
- Tools or apps to organize preparation documents needed at the moment of interpretation task. May be some kind of social network where interpreters can exchange opinions or experiences.
- SKYPE in court interpreting. Not to have Google dictionaries where for every language a noun is said to be a verb like "exchange" translated as I exchange you exchange, we exchange...
- No.
- Nothing.
- Nothing at this time.
- More training in both specific industry related interpretation and tech tools.
- Nothing
- All covered
- Not sure
- don't know
- n/a
- Understanding from clients when repetitions are required
- More glossaries for interpreters in various industries.
- None
- Nothing really

- Nothing, the questionnaire covered it
- A GREAT HELP for INTERPRETERS would be a viva -voce instant dictionary (electronic) tool: A flexible, versatile equivalent of the old THICK BOOK translators use. And, of course, the matching headphones for direct communication with the " electronic dictionary".
- Dictionaries and glossaries
- Nothing comes in my mind right now
- Na
- N/A
- Wouldn't add anything
- Na
- Nothing.
- Better quality of audio on remote connections
- n/a
- To let us know which businesses are already using these tools
- The information, because I don't know any tools to help to prepare for the simultaneous equipment assignments
- What I had in mind have been covered
- I'd love to have the results of your survey in as much detail as it is possible.
- n-a
- This questionnaire assumes some very optimistic conditions I believe should not be taken for granted: a) stable internet connection, b) perfect audio quality, c) materials received in advance for preparation, d) having no visual access is the same as being in a place where you can see the speaker and the audience (not true), e) in the case of onsite technology, such as the use of smartphones, you are assuming that batteries will last that long - you may have enough Internet connection in a room set up for that, but not enough power outlets to charge smartphones. Considering that hardly ever these conditions will be met, this will put a lot of stress on interpreters. I do believe remote interpreting will find its niche in the market, but probably for meetings that can be interrupted because of tech-related problems, but not conferences, that will probably be run without taking into account the poor viewers who are located remotely, let alone interpreters.
- Best practice guidelines to have when negotiating with a client. A way to test the audio equipment and sound ahead of time to make sure it will work. Clear troubleshooting guidelines to use with the client and agency if the technology does not work as planned.
- Technology is important and must be developed, but we must not forget that it is to be used by interpreters as professionals so we must also focus on technology in service of the profession
- N/A
- An interpreter cloud portal where interpreters can log in to accept assignments online, either from their trusted clients or from third parties using one or various online portals.
- N/A
- A mote in-depth view of the best practices in addition to just technology choice.
- Online dictionaries and more apps for tablets
- Training courses on new technologies. smartphones provided by the agencies if apps are to be used for remote interpreting.
- Difficult to say, I use my own laptop, when I need to search for a term all of a sudden.

- I would like to have access to technology which would provide me with a channel for remote interpretation, because the current Skype for Business connection I have to use is not sufficient in terms of sound quality.
- Nothing I can think about
- No answer
- I do not know
- More glossaries and training
- I don't know.
- Nothing comes to mind right now
- Everything has been covered,
- Specialized apps allowing prepared specifically for translations over the web,
- A way to put clients in touch with me
- Speech-to-text in the console
- n/a
- Speech recognition with speech-to-text capabilities to identify terminology
- Just nothing
- An international consensus which will bring to light what is not acceptable as an environment for interpreting
- n/a
- Recognition of our important role
- Nothing
- A tablet!
- computers tools
- nothing comes to mind right now
- nothing
- Greater variety of dictionaries.
- Anything
- Legal support to understand who is liable for the tech / phone lines / connections / broadband when it cuts out. Am I still entitled to be paid? Tech support to show me how these new tools can actually benefit me at the current level of tech development.
- Can't think of anything
- Webinars at a lower cost.
- I would like to have more webinars on for instance ProZ.com over available RSI-/or VRI-platforms
- New forms of professional indemnity insurance to cover breakdown of equipment, power outages etc.
- Direct access to speakers' material
- Cannot think of one at the moment
- None that cross my mind. Apologies.
- Quality monitoring through agencies

Question 24: If you would like to participate in Translation Commons working groups and initiatives, **please register at <https://translationcommons.org>**

55 respondents answered they wanted to be notified when the results are ready which the Translation Commons Interpreting Think Tank team will happily do.

You can also join the LinkedIn groups:

LinkedIn Translation Commons

LinkedIn Translation Commons Interpreting Think Tank

Many thanks.