

DE/2026-032 – Freedom of Information Request

Request:

I am requesting the following information regarding your organisation's provision, procurement, and use of translation, interpreting, transcription and wider language support services.

Please provide the information for **the most recent financial year for which complete data is held**.

1. Total Spend on Language Services

Please provide total spend, broken down into:

- Spoken language interpreting
- Non-spoken interpreting (e.g., BSL)
- Document translation
- Transcription
- Any other language-related services

2. Service Activity Volumes

Interpreting – Spoken Language

- Total number of face-to-face assignments
- Total hours completed
- Total number of telephone interpreting calls
- Total minutes of telephone interpreting
- Total number of spoken video interpreting calls
- Total minutes of spoken video interpreting

Interpreting – Non-spoken (e.g., BSL)

- Total number of face-to-face assignments
- Total hours completed
- Total number of non-spoken video interpreting calls
- Total minutes of non-spoken video interpreting

Translation & Transcription

- Total number of document translations
- Total words translated
- Total number of audio transcriptions
- Total audio duration (minutes or hours)

3. Contracted Providers

- Name(s) of all contracted providers
- Which services each provider delivers
- Whether you use:

- a separate BSL/non-spoken supplier
- a separate transcription supplier
- Framework or procurement route used (e.g., CCS framework, regional framework, local contract)

4. In-House Resources

- Do you employ any in-house interpreters and/or translators?
- If yes, please list all relevant roles.

5. Contract Information

- Contract end date (without extensions)
- Contract end date (with all extension options included)

6. Contact Details

Please provide the name, telephone number and email address for:

- The contract manager responsible for language services
- The budget holder for language services
- The person responsible for procurement

(If personal details cannot be released, please provide departmental or generic contact information.)

7. Language Demand

- The top 20 most-requested languages across interpreting and translation.

8. Fill Rates

Please provide service fill rate percentages for:

- Face-to-face interpreting
- Telephone interpreting
- Video interpreting
- Document translation
- Audio transcription

9. Unfulfilled Requests

- Which languages your provider(s) were unable to supply in the past 12 months.

10. Service Credits

- Have service credits been applied in the past 12 months?
- If yes, please specify the performance issues that triggered them.

11. Social Value

- What social value activity has been delivered as part of the contract in the latest 12-month period?

12. Tender Documents

If the contract was awarded competitively, please provide a copy of the winning bidder's tender submission (with appropriate redactions where required).

13. Contracted Rates

Please provide current pricing for:

- Spoken face-to-face interpreting (hourly rate)
- Non-spoken face-to-face interpreting (hourly rate)
- Telephone interpreting (per-minute rate)
- Spoken video interpreting (per-minute rate)
- Non-spoken video interpreting (per-minute rate)
- Document translation (per-word rate)
- Audio transcription (per-audio-minute rate)

Please also confirm whether any minimum booking durations apply for any service type.

14. Pricing Changes

- Have any contracted providers increased their rates in the past 12 months?
- If yes, please provide details.

15. Route to Market

- What is your typical procurement route for language services (e.g., framework, direct award, competitive tender)?

16. Interpreter-on-Wheels / VRI Devices

- Do you have any interpreter-on-wheels devices or other video-remote interpreting (VRI/VSI) equipment as part of your contract?
 - If yes:
 - How many?
 - Are they provided free of charge or charged?

17. Off-Contract Spend

Has any language service work been commissioned outside your contracted provider(s)?

If yes, please provide:

- Total value
- Names of the off-contract suppliers

18. Complaints

Please provide:

- The number of complaints received in the latest 12-month period relating to language services
- A breakdown by type (e.g., quality issues, delays, interpreter conduct, availability, unfulfilled requests, translation accuracy, etc.)
- Whether any complaints were escalated, upheld, or resulted in corrective action

Department Response:

I wish to advise you that following a search of our records the information you have requested in relation to Language Services is not held by the Department. This relates to questions 6, 16 and 17 within your request.

I can advise that the Department for Communities (DfC) will be able to provide information with regards to which services have been used by each department, in relation to questions 1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,10,11,15 and 18. They can be contacted at FOI@communities-ni.gov.uk

The Department of Education (DE) do not hold information in relation to questions 12,13 and 14, however, Department of Finance (DoF) – Central Procurement Directorate (CPD) (FOI@finance-ni.gov.uk) may be able to provide the information requested.