

## The OPTIMALE employer survey and consultation

### The competence survey

*What was the remit of the survey?*

- To determine current and emerging competence requirements within the European translation industry, i.e. identify the competences that employers look for when seeking to employ new staff.
- To provide input for further analysis and discussion during eight "regional" workshops bringing together academics involved in Master's degree translator training programmes and industry players from across Europe.
- To provide a pan-European snapshot of specific competence requirements for graduates seeking employment in the industry and for programme directors seeking to improve the employability of their graduates in the translation professions.

*Whom did the survey target?*

Following an initial assessment of existing surveys and resources, it was decided that the Optimale survey would focus more specifically on commercial TSP employers. Institutional translation service competence requirements have recently been extensively studied by Anne Lafeber, within the framework of an ongoing doctoral research project undertaken at Tarragona University under the supervision of Professor Anthony Pym, while freelance translator competences have been the subject of international and national surveys conducted by professional associations. TSP employer surveys, on the other hand, whether at the national or international level, naturally tend to concentrate on market trends rather than on competence requirements. The survey did not, however, exclude respondents from translation departments within large organisations, institutional language services or freelance translators.

*How were respondents selected?*

No prior selection of respondents was conducted, though thanks to EUATC support, members of the EUATC's member organisations were given first notice of the initiative. The survey was primarily conducted through the OPTIMALE network and its partners in the translation industry. All of OPTIMALE's academic members were asked to contact their own network of employers and partners in the translation industry or to identify potential TSP employers who could be contacted by the project management, through local directories or via the published list of companies having undertaken sub-contracting work for the Commission. The EUATC, for its part, was instrumental in disseminating the questionnaire and information about the survey and its online location to all its national members, who relayed the information to their own member companies. The survey was also promoted in a number of events organised by the EUATC (Rome conference), its member organisations (ATC conference, London) or Optimale's academic partners

(Alcala de Henares...). Once online, the survey was accessed by respondents who had presumably not been solicited, hence the handful of responses received from places as far apart as Afghanistan and Venezuela.

#### *How was the questionnaire designed?*

The survey took the form of a short questionnaire to be completed on paper (in the initial stages of the survey) and online (from May 2011 onwards). The questionnaire was designed to be completed in the shortest possible time, and therefore sought to elicit information that would be meaningful and useful both for the profession and for academics and students, while setting a limited number of questions. **The questionnaire can be found in appendix A.**

Respondents were asked to rate each competence as “Essential”, “Important”, “Not very important” and “Not required”. No “indifferent” answer was included.

The first basic premise of the consultation was that TSP employers are interested not only in translation competence *per se*, but in the whole range of competences required within a language service providing company. Hence the sections devoted to project management, translation technology or client relation competences.

The second premise was that the survey should not seek to elicit the obvious. It was therefore assumed that for positions in translation, high-level language competence requirements, both in the native language and in the foreign working languages, were to be taken as a given which did not need to be reasserted within the scope of this survey (whether such skills are always available is another matter). Similarly, translation competences *per se* (i.e. source text and discourse analysis, cognitive skills, target message formulation, reader and user focus, etc.) were excluded from the remit of this survey, as it was assumed that any employer seeking to employ a translator or his/her services, would require the translator to possess the primary skills of his/her profession. According to the same rationale, generic professional competences such as the ability to comply with specifications or deadlines, or to work under stress, were excluded from the questions.

What the questionnaire did *not* include was a question on whether employers did actually find the required competences in applicants for the LSP/TSP positions they advertised, and if not, which essential or important competences were found to be lacking. This was partly compensated for by the comments registered in the “free comment” sections of the survey and in the regional workshops and the Brussels conference where the survey results were discussed with members of the profession.

#### *When was the survey conducted?*

The survey was launched at the EUATC conference in Rome, on April 8 2011. It went online on April 6 2011 and was open until October 31 2011.

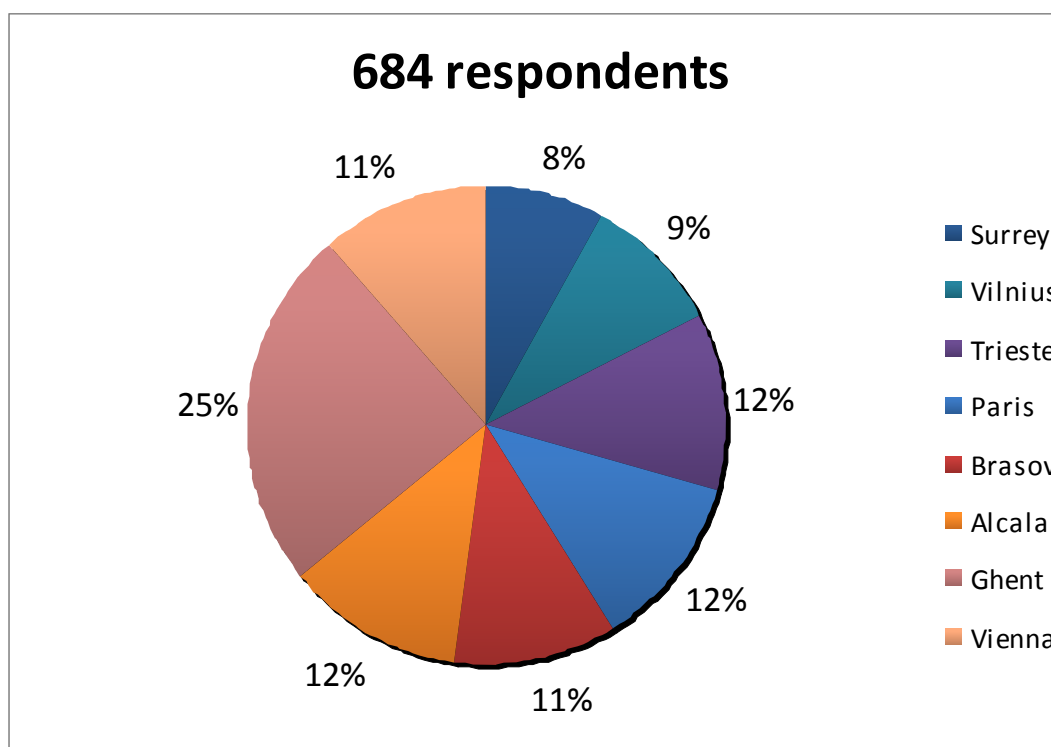
#### *Who completed the survey?*

Over 780 connections were registered on the online survey site. Discounting failed connections and respondents who did not complete any questions, 738 respondents provided at least information on their country of origin. Of these, 688 were from the EU and non-EU countries represented in the Optimale consortium (including Norway and Turkey). A number (26) of the non-EU respondents were from the five so

called “third countries” (Albania, Croatia, Macedonia, Russia, Ukraine) given associate status within the project. This means that a further 24 respondents connected to the online survey, from places as far apart as Luxemburg to Venezuela, and Afghanistan to the Fiji Islands. The latter results are not included in the following analysis.

Not surprisingly, the largest number of responses (82 and 74 respectively) came from France and Belgium, which both have strong TSP networks and well-established links with university translation programmes. However countries with large LSP sectors were clearly under-represented \_ the UK, Germany and Spain only registering 29, 36 and 25 responses respectively\_ while others with far smaller populations (e.g. Austria or Portugal) recorded over 50 responses each, almost on a par with Italy. Conversely, Ireland, with its well-established localization industry, only supplied 7 responses.

Regional clustering based on geographical location partly compensated for these imbalances, as the following graph shows:

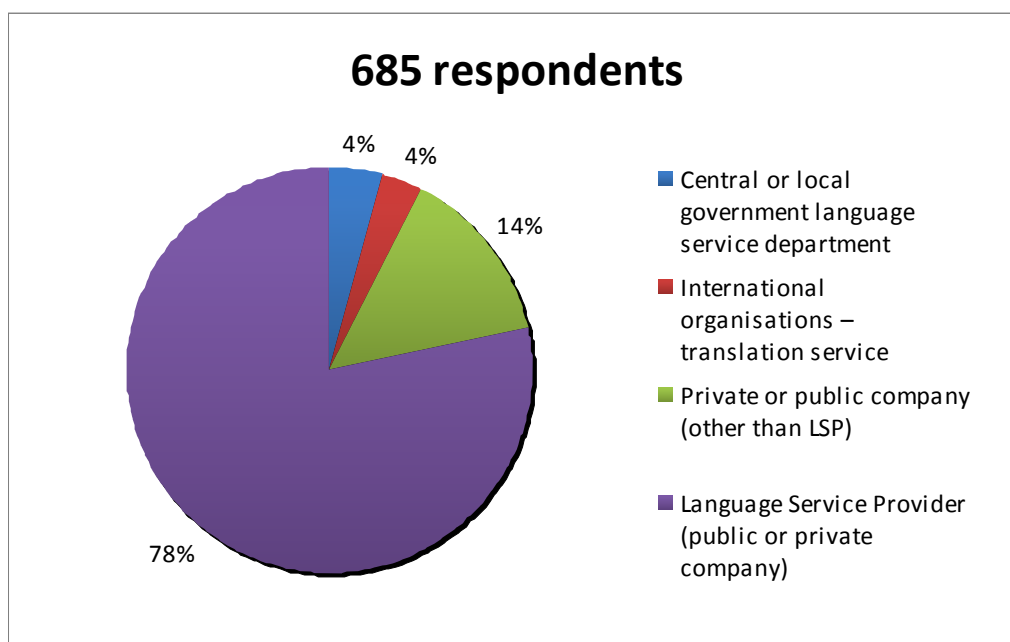


“Regional” groupings were as follows (the city referring to the consultation venue):

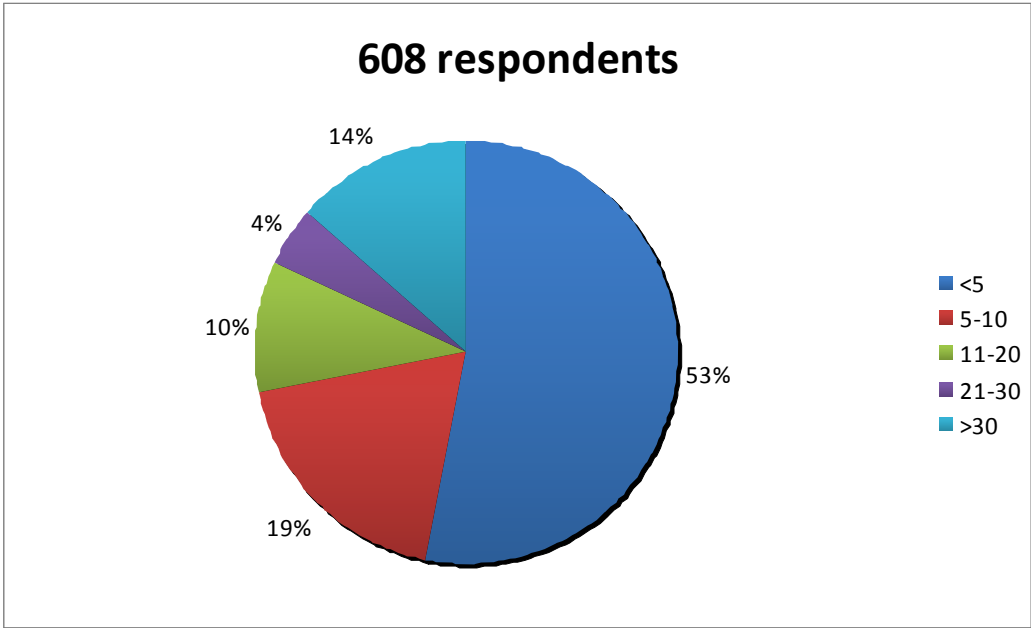
1. Surrey = UK, Republic of Ireland, Iceland, Norway
2. Vilnius = Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Poland
3. Trieste = Italy, Slovenia, Malta
4. Paris = France
5. Brasov = Romania, Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey
6. Alcala (de Henares) = Spain, Portugal
7. Ghent = Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark, Germany
8. Vienna = Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia

Only the Ghent grouping is weighted more heavily than the other seven clusters, due to the large contingent of Belgian respondents.

As can be seen below, the overwhelming majority of respondents (78%) were commercial sector TSPs, although a sizeable number of non-LSP companies (96) with translation departments or services were also represented. Few international organisations contributed responses, as these were not our primary target in this survey and their requirements have been surveyed in a separate study, as mentioned above. It is therefore unsurprising to find that 82% of respondents declared “translation services (including audio-visual)” as their main business activity, with localization only accounting for 7% of the answers.

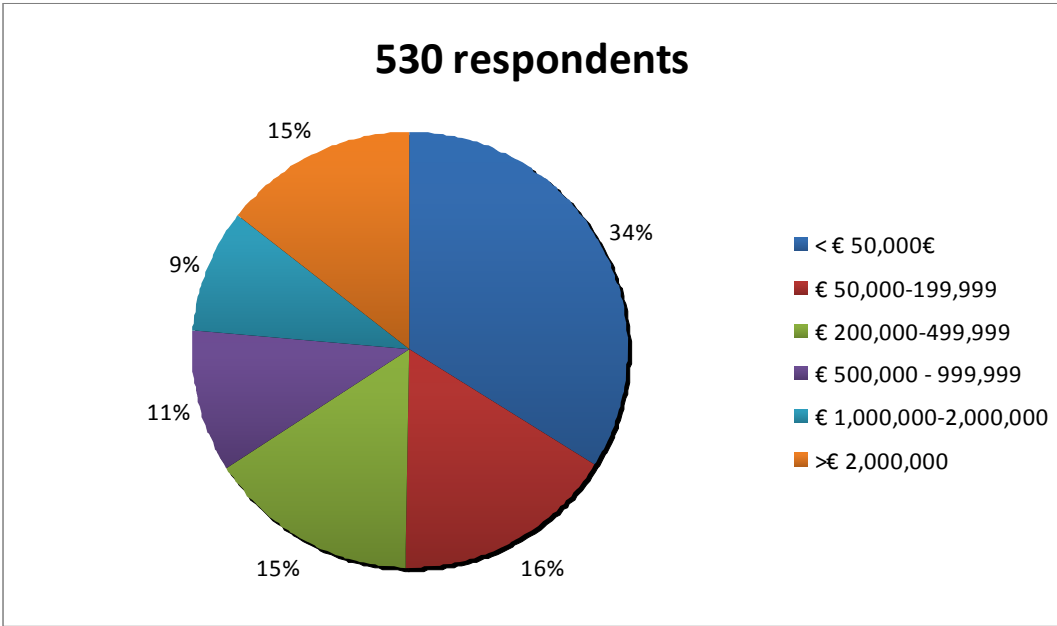


In terms of size, a wide cross-section of the industry is represented among the survey respondents and the breakdown broadly reflects other business surveys such as those conducted by Common Sense Advisory. Not surprisingly, in an industry still dominated in many countries by small or very small companies, 53% of the 605 respondents who supplied information on staff numbers, said their company employed fewer than 5. This obviously includes a number of single person companies, especially in countries where the translation market is still in the process of developing into a fully-fledged translation industry. Another 19% employed between 5 and 10 full time staff. Taking these two categories together, our results show a higher proportion of respondents from small companies than those provided by the CSA 2009 survey of the European market, where 60% of the respondents employed 10 staff or fewer. At the other end of the spectrum, 14% of our respondents employed more than 30 staff, including some very large international operators employing several hundred in-house translators and project-managers.



*Numbers of full-time staff employed in-house*

Respondents were naturally more reluctant to supply figures on their turnover. However, some 530 did so, showing that 50% registered annual sales of less than €200,000 and 76% less than €1million. Again, our random sample of European TSPs is weighted towards the smaller end of the market compared to the CSA survey, where less than 58% of the sample expected to generate comparable revenue in 2009. However, the gap narrows if one includes all companies earning less than €2 million\_85% in the OPTIMALE survey and 75% in the CSA study.



*% of respondents declaring annual sales as per legend.*

## Competences

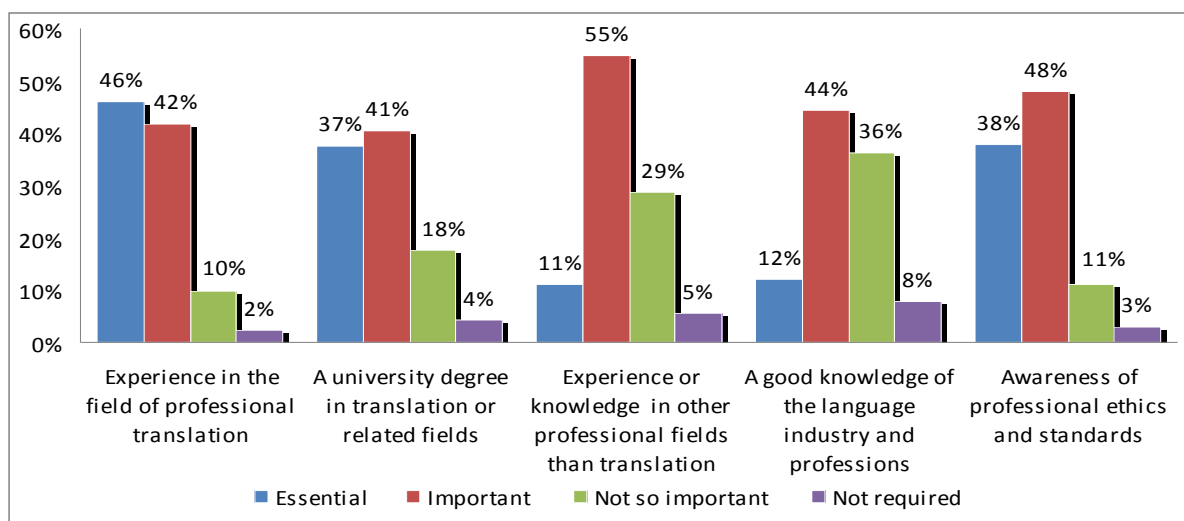
The following overall analysis covers the responses to the “competence” questionnaire.

Response rates varied from section to section or even within sections. Some respondents who completed the identification and activity part of the survey did not complete the competence questionnaire, or failed to complete certain sections, in some cases specifying that the questions in a particular section were not relevant to their situation (e.g. one-person companies that do not employ project managers or translation agencies that employ no in-house translators). This why between 530 and 580 answers were registered according to the questions in this part of the questionnaire.

### Experience vs. knowledge

As regards applicants’ qualifications and experience, employers stress the importance of both in almost equal proportions (42 and 41%). However, when the “essential” answers are added, professional experience is given priority over a university degree, with 88% considering experience in the profession as important or essential, against 78% who say the same about an academic qualification in translation. Conversely, academics can take comfort in the fact that only 22% of employers can see little or no use for a university degree in the field of translation or in a related field (not defined in the questionnaire).

A good knowledge of the language industry and professions is considered to be an important or essential quality in applicants by just over 50% of respondents, while over a third consider it “not very important”. By contrast, 86% of the 570 respondents who answered the question on professional ethics and standards gave it high priority, making it one of the most sought after competences in new applicants. The phrasing of the question did not allow respondents to distinguish between “ethics” or “standards”. However, the workshop discussions that followed, made it clear that employers required applicants both to be aware of the profession’s ethical code regarding confidentiality, language competence, translation capability, loyalty, etc. and professional standards with regard to quality, prompt delivery, customer relations, etc. This is probably why experience in professional fields other than translation is considered more “important” than experience in the industry itself, though not as “essential”. Employers are first and foremost looking for people who know the basic rules and ethics of business and who can interact effectively both with other staff and with clients and suppliers.

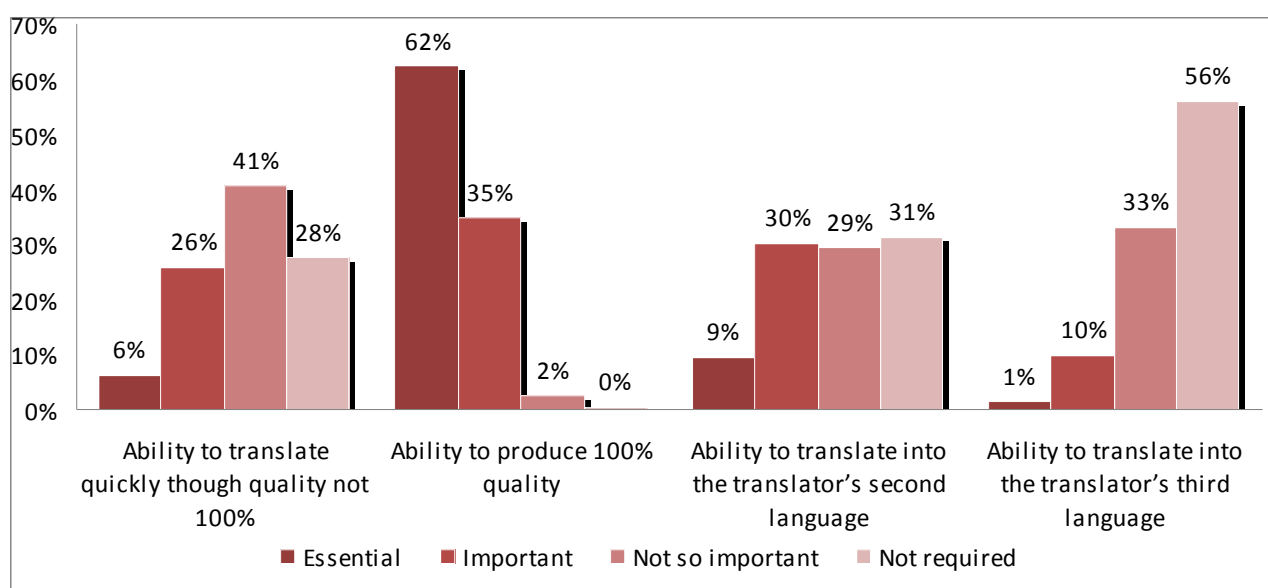


*% of respondents to each question who consider the competence “essential”, “important”, “not very important” or “not required” (100% = 570-575 according to question).*

## Translation-related competences

As explained above, the survey did not set out to question respondents on language or translation competence *per se*. It concentrated instead on translation as a process designed to produce a document in a given language for a client within a specific deadline.

The questionnaire first somewhat naïvely asked employers to rate quality vs. speed. Not surprisingly producing “100% quality” was unanimously rated as “essential” or “important”, with only 2% of respondents replying that it was “not very important”. Speed, on the other hand, was only considered more important than “perfect” quality by 32% of respondents. Beyond these fairly predictable findings, the situation is less “black and white” than the survey appears to show. When asked to elaborate, most employers add that: 1° “100% quality” is an elusive goal when it comes to the translation industry, as quality can be defined against an ideal quality standard for a given type of translation, in a given domain and in a given language combination, or against the quality required by a given client for a given purpose (i.e. “fit for purpose”); 2° that the ideal translator or project manager should aim to combine both speed and quality, given that the end-product may have a limited “shelf-life” and cease to be of any use if delivered after the deadline. Hence, the 32% of respondents who rate speed (and presumably productivity) higher than “quality” *per se*.



*% of respondents to each question who consider the competence as “essential”, “important”, “not very important” or “not required” (100% =530-549 according to question)*

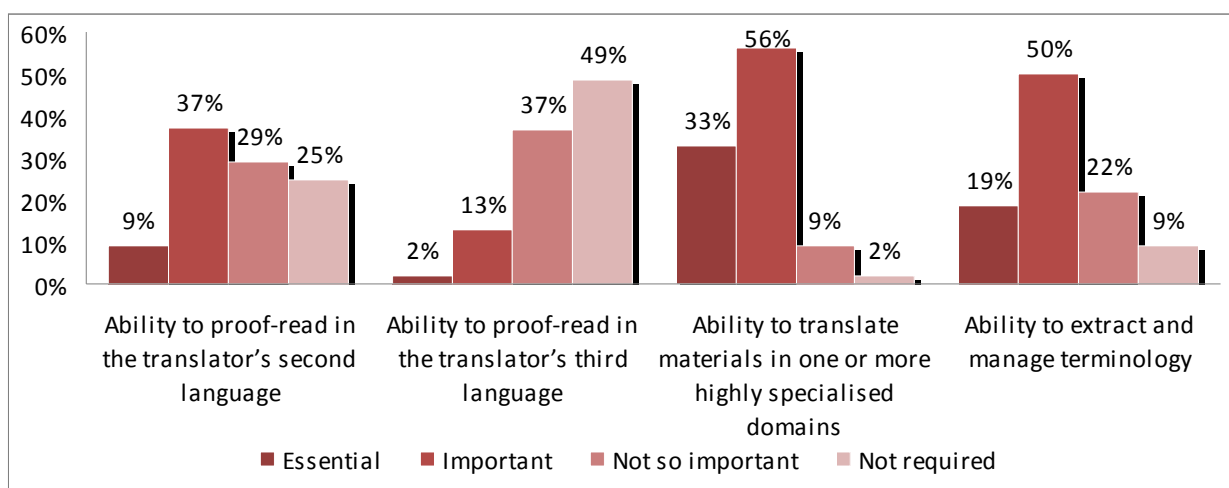
The questionnaire then went on to identify the importance of being able to translate and proofread in the operator’s second or third language, given that this appears to be common practice in certain European markets. The overall results show that translation competence in the second language is important or essential for 39% of the 541 respondents, while 31% apply standard practice according to international quality standards, i.e. translators only translate into their native language. The figures are even higher when

the question applies to proofreading, with 46% of respondents requiring this competence. Translating or proofreading in the operator’s third language, on the other hand, is generally not required.

A geographical breakdown of the results shows a strong regional bias, with 44% of respondents in the “Vilnius” group of countries and 42% in the “Brasov” group saying that translation into a foreign language is “important” or “essential”, against 25 and 14% respectively in the “Ghent” and “Surrey” groups.

### Specialisation

Domain specialisation is almost unanimously required by employers, with almost 90% giving it priority status. The questionnaire did not ask respondents to specify the fields most in demand, although workshop discussions showed that technical translation in the widest sense and in some markets, legal translation, are still the dominant market segments. A logical extension of this requirement is the importance afforded to terminology extraction and management: 69% of respondents consider this one of the basic skills required of applicants for positions in translation.



*% of respondents to each question who consider the competence as “essential”, “important”, “not very important” or “not required” (100% = 539-546 according to question)*

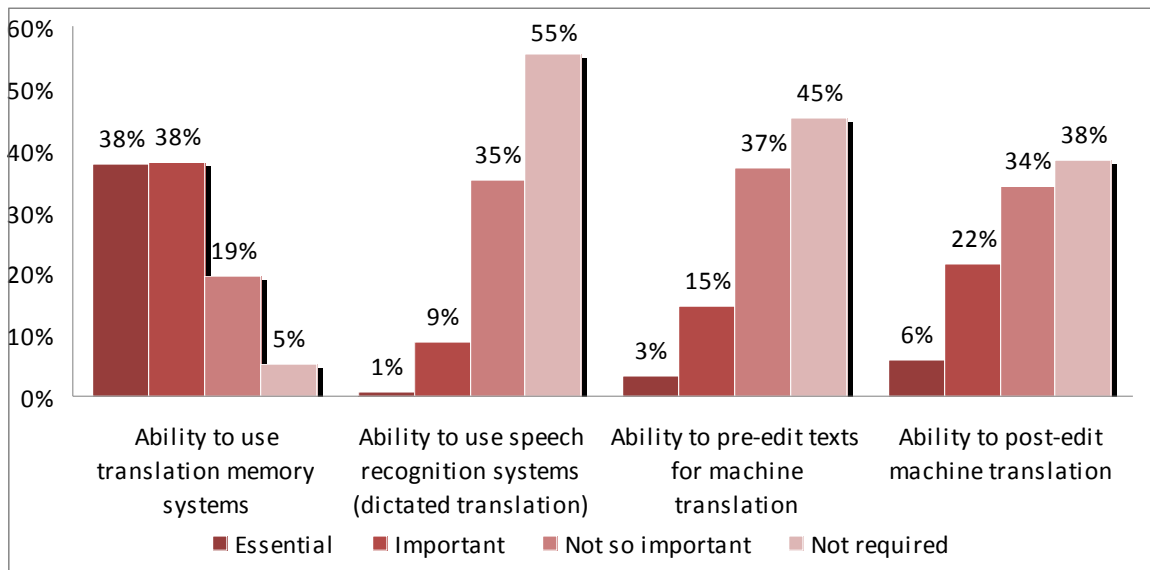
### Use of tools and technologies

In an industry which has undergone rapid technological changes, it seemed important to assess the degree to which employers require new applicants to have the relevant skills.

As can be seen in the survey results below, there is a clear contrast between the need for what are now “standard” CAT tool or IT-related competences and the call for newer or more advanced technological skills. Whereas the former (i.e. the ability to use TM systems or to process and convert files) are considered essential or important by over or around three quarters of the respondents, the use of speech recognition applications or the ability to pre-edit or post-edit machine translation are still by no means mainstream requirements. It is, however, interesting to note that while speech recognition technology (i.e. dictated

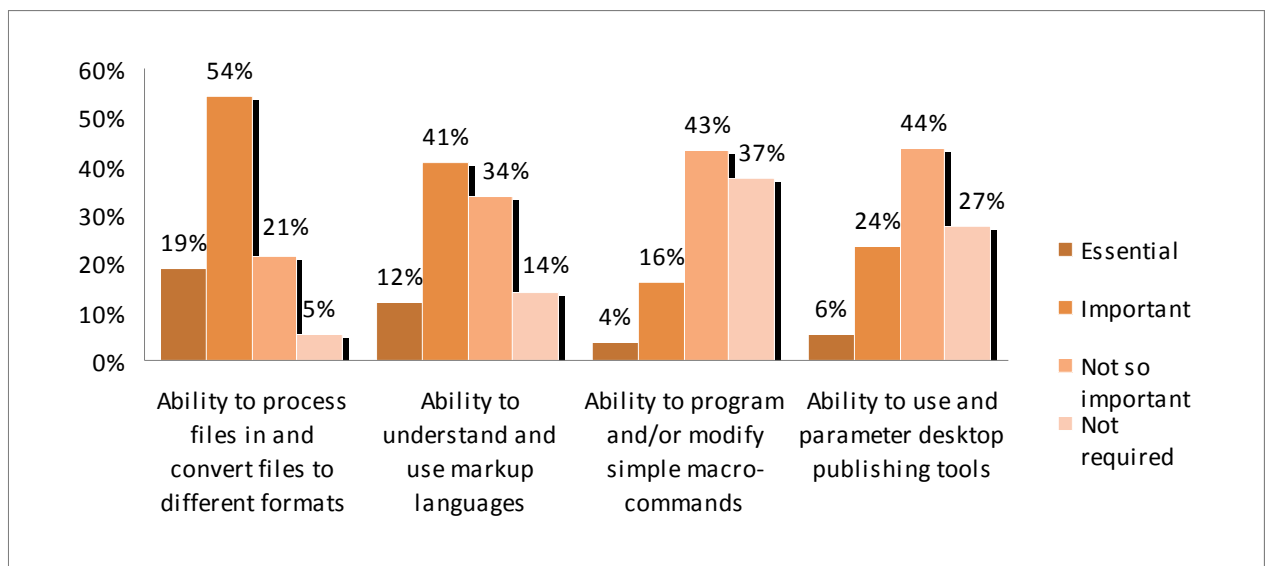


translation) is only required by 1 in 10 respondents, a significant 28% of respondents require MT post-editing skills, reflecting the growing interest in the integration of MT in the translation process.



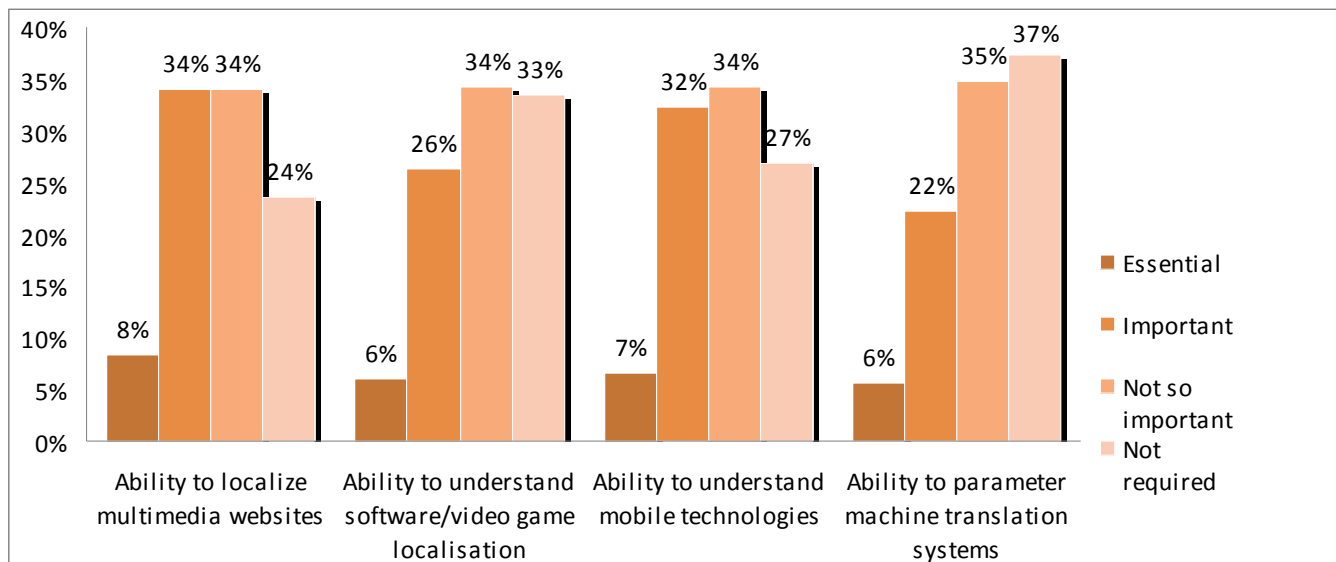
% of respondents to each question who consider the competence as “essential”, “important”, “not very important” or “not required” (100% = 538-542 according to question)

As regards the more advanced IT skills, a similar contrast can be seen between the ability to understand and use mark-up languages, which is required by a (small) majority of respondents, reflecting the importance of web-based source materials, and the ability to programme macro-commands or to use and configure desktop publishing tools, where the figures are significantly lower.



% of respondents to each question who consider the competence as “essential”, “important”, “not very important” or “not required” (100% = 526-531 according to question)

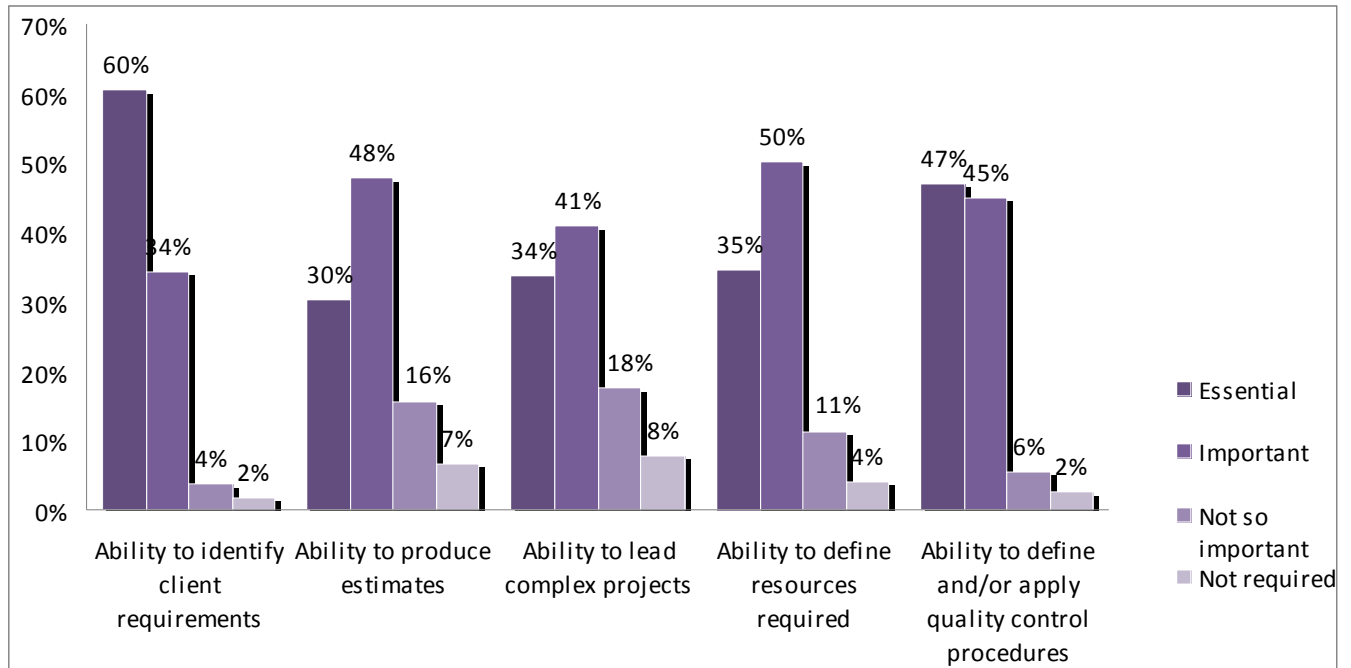
However, although variations can be observed, all the technological competences listed in the survey were considered important or essential by at least 20% of the respondents, reflecting the growth of “technology-oriented” companies seeking productivity gains or looking towards higher-added value segments of the market. This is also obvious in the following set of technology-related competences, each of which attracted between 42 and 28% of positive responses. Again, it is important to note that over one in four respondents would require new applicants to possess MT parameter setting skills. Translator education and training cannot afford to ignore the message conveyed by these results.



*% of respondents to each question who consider the competence as “essential”, “important”, “not very important” or “not required” (100% = 526-529 according to question)*

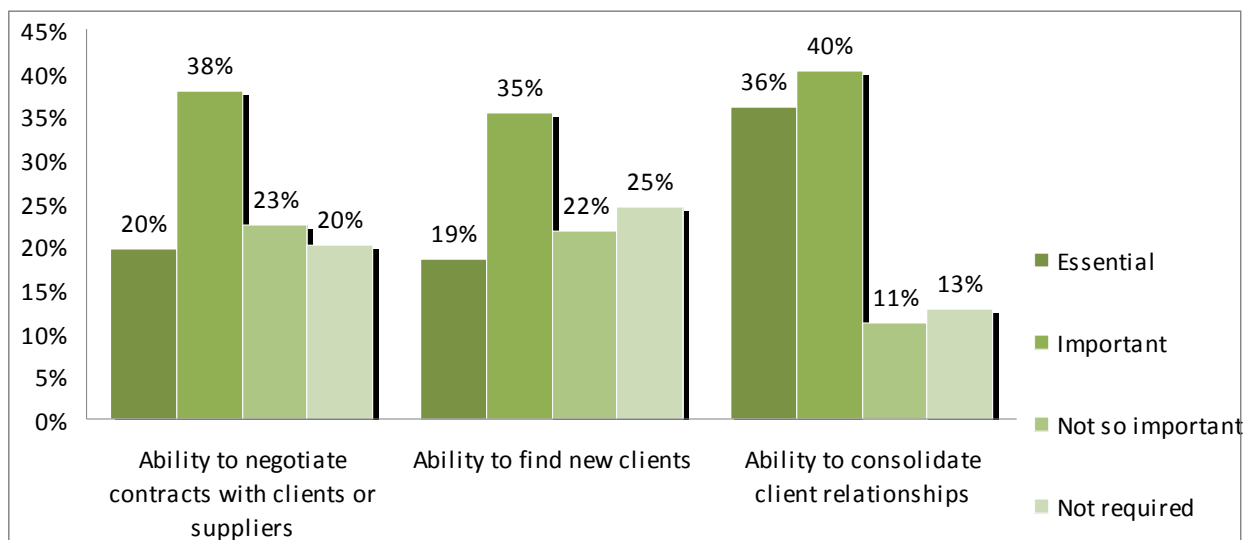
### Project management and customer relations

Another clear message sent by the survey results is the need for project management and client relations competences. The ability to identify client requirements, to draw up estimates and to define the resources required for a given translation project all come out among the top ten competence requirements listed by TSP respondents, with a massive 60% of respondents stating that client awareness is an essential competence. Specific project management skills are also highly rated, with the ability to lead complex projects being considered important or essential by three-quarters of the respondents. Also very high up in the list is the ability to define and/or apply quality control procedures, with over 90% of respondents feeling this is essential or important. This is of course to be seen alongside the almost unanimous call for 100% quality in the production process. The slightly lower number of respondents answering these questions reflects the position of the respondent, i.e. in companies where the production and project management functions are clearly separate, the respondent may not be involved in the project management side of the process.



*% of respondents to each question who consider the competence as “essential”, “important”, “not very important” or “not required” (100% = 519-533 according to question)*

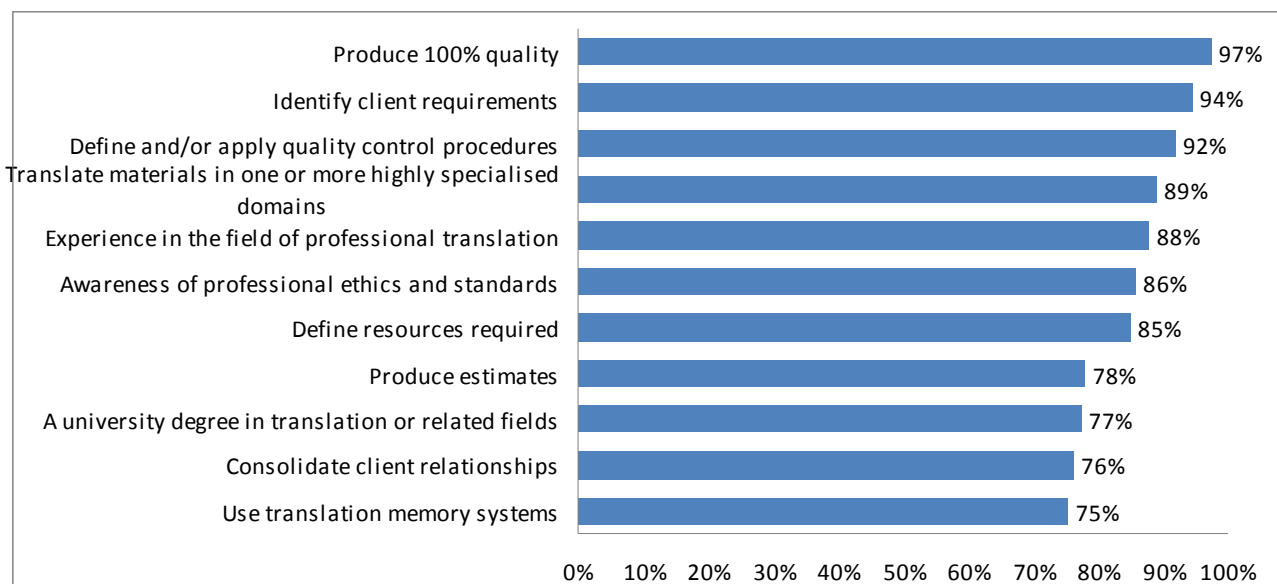
The latter comment also applies to the “marketing” competences included in the survey, with some respondents specifying that they have no involvement with the sales side of the business. However, between 517 and 520 respondents did answer the questions below, and over 50% of them rated “pure” sales skills (i.e. finding new clients and negotiating contracts) as important or essential. An even higher figure (over 75%) see “consolidating” client relations as being important or essential (in almost equal proportions), which can be viewed as a logical follow-on to the question on identifying client requirements.



*% of respondents to each question who consider the competence as “essential”, “important”, “not very important” or “not required” (100% = 517-520 according to question)*

### In conclusion

TSP companies have to adapt constantly to changing market situations and client demands. The need for optimal quality underlies many of the competences surveyed and particularly those which scored the highest percentages of “important” or “essential” answers, as can be seen in the following table, where competences are ranked according their importance from the employers’ point of view:



Quality in the translation process requires :

1. Quality in the translators employed by the industry, who are expected to have:
  - A good knowledge of one or more specialised fields
  - Experience of professional translation
  - An awareness of the professional ethics and standards
  - A university degree in translation or related areas (and not simply a modern language degree)
  
2. Quality in the work produced
  - High quality translations
  - By identifying and making efficient use of resources
  - By making efficient use of the most suitable IT translation tools
  - By defining and applying quality management and control procedures
  
3. Quality in the customer relationship
  - By correctly identifying client needs
  - By being capable of establishing estimates
  - By maintaining good client relations through the quality of service

The importance of these qualities and competences was underlined by the professional representatives who took part in the joint regional workshops organised in eight different locations. They also stressed a number of generic professional competences which were not specifically included in the survey, as explained in the introduction, i.e.

- Perfect native language competence (the lack of which is deplored by many European employers)
- The ability to work in teams (and to be aware of the role of the translator in the overall translation process)
- Flexibility, i.e. the ability to demonstrate a range of competences within the company (translator, project manager, proof-reader, reviser, CAT tools manager, etc.)
- Proactiveness in identifying client needs or in adapting to new technologies
- Awareness of the primary importance of deadlines
- A good knowledge of professional practices

The comments section of the questionnaire provides further valuable insight into the qualities and competences that employers believe are often lacking in new graduates (**see appendix B**). These include many of the needs listed above, and emphasize the need for advanced language skills, particularly in the native language, to be acquired before attempting to embark on a career in translation.

#### **What lessons for academics in the field of translation and translation programme directors?**

Universities are not in the business of slavishly following market trends and requirements. They do however have a growing responsibility to ensure that students who do intend to work in the translation industry are aware of the current and future requirements of potential employers, and that they are given the opportunity to acquire the wide range of competences, from advanced linguistic skills, translation skills and IT skills to project management and quality assurance, which will enable them to occupy various positions within the industry.

One approach is to consider that these skills and competences can only be acquired on the job, via comprehensive in-house inception programmes for new TSP or translation department recruits, or via continuous professional development. Another approach is to consider that translator education and training is the shared responsibility of universities and employers, and that in a highly competitive market, graduates need to be equipped with the basic competences listed above (by a combination of academic education and training and internships) *before* they finally enter the labour market, where they will then acquire the further experience and advanced knowledge and competences they need to become fully-operational translation industry professionals. This is the approach on which the OPTIMALE project is founded.

Appendix A : The employer questionnaire

Consultation of translation professionals

1) Country .....

2) Type of organisation

Language Service Provider (*public or private company*)  Private or public company (*other than LSP*)

Central or local government language service department  International organisations – translation service

3) Main field of activity or business (by volume (public service) or turnover (business))

Translation (including audiovisual)  Localisation

CAT/MT tool development  Language consultancy

Technical writing and documentation management  Other language services .....

4) Total number of staff employed in-house (*full-time equivalent*)

<5  5-10  11-20  21-30  >30

5) For non LSPs, number of LSP staff employed in-house (*full-time equivalent*)

<5  5-10  11-20  21-30  >30

6) Annual turnover (*for LSPs, optional*)

<€ 50,000  € 50,000€-199,999  € 200,000-499,999

€ 500,000-999,999  € 1,000,000-2,000,000  >€ 2,000,000

7) Please name the most commonly requested source and target languages provided by your organization, service or department.

	Source	Target
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		

**8) Which of the following qualities and competences do you look for when recruiting new staff?  
(multiple answers)**

	Not required	Not so important	Important	Essential
<b>8.a) Qualifications and experience</b>				
Experience in the field of professional translation				
A university degree in translation or related fields				
A university degree in a subject other than languages or translation				
Experience or knowledge in other professional fields than translation				
A good knowledge of the language industry and professions				
Awareness of professional ethics and standards				
Other ( <i>please specify</i> )				
<b>8.b) Translation competence</b>				
Ability to translate quickly though quality not 100%				
Ability to produce 100% quality				
Ability to translate into the translator's second language				
Ability to translate into the translator's third language				
Ability to proof-read in the translator's second language				
Ability to proof-read in the translator's third language				
Ability to translate materials in one or more highly specialised domains				
Ability to use translation memory systems				
Ability to use speech recognition systems (dictated translation)				
Ability to pre-edit texts for machine translation				
Ability to post-edit machine translation				
Ability to extract and manage terminology				
Other ( <i>please specify</i> )				
<b>8.c) Technological competence</b>				
Ability to process files in and convert files to different formats				
Ability to understand and use markup languages (html, xml...)				
Ability to program and/or modify simple macro-commands				
Ability to use and parameter desktop publishing tools				
Ability to localize multimedia websites				

Ability to understand software/video game localisation processes				
Ability to understand mobile technologies				
Ability to parameter machine translation systems				
Other ( <i>please specify</i> )				
<b>8.d) Project management</b>				
Ability to identify client requirements				
Ability to produce estimates				
Ability to define resources required				
Ability to lead complex projects				
Ability to define and/or apply quality control procedures				
Other ( <i>please specify</i> )				
<b>8.e) Marketing competence</b>				
Ability to negotiate contracts with clients or suppliers				
Ability to find new clients				
Ability to consolidate client relationships				
Other ( <i>please specify</i> )				

### 9) Respondent

Organisation (official or business name) .....  
 Department or service .....  
 Website .....  
 Full name of respondent (*optional*) .....  
 Position (*optional*) .....  
 e-mail (*optional*) .....

**Thank you very much for participating!**



## APPENDIX B Additional employer comments

### General professional competence:

- Good general education, proficiency in mother language, ability to work/get knowledge in themes / fields of translation required (research ability, capacity to find essential information sources)
- Soft skills and stress resistance
- Reliability, confidentiality, technical expertise
- Motivation, flexibility, willingness to learn, qualities as a translator/revisor/project manager
- Knowledge of own limitations
- Diligence, Accuracy, willingness to accept feedback and take comments on board as part of learning and development
- Must be able to work in a team. Must be customer-oriented.
- Availability, reliability
- Detail oriented, willing to cooperate and learn new technologies. Meet the deadline even under pressure and friendly proactive attitude
- Precision, preparedness to study and learn new competencies, passion for their work
- Obsessiveness
- Ability to meet the deadlines is essential
- Above all, the ability to translate quickly is essential as we find that trainees (with a translation degree) translate as little as 300 wpd (in eight hours!) What ARE they teaching these students and HOW do they ever expect to make a living in translation??!!
- Team-spirit, autonomy, research skills, IT skills
- Soft Skills: Time Management, Negotiation, Planning and hitting milestones

### Domain knowledge and experience

- Scientific experience
- Specialist knowledge within a certain field is very important (e.g. medical, technical, legal etc.)
- Experience and knowledge in the subject matter (or ability and willingness to perform research) and knowledge of European directives and requirements concerning the translations in the subject field
- Ability/willingness to understand/learn the basics of banking and complex operations.
- Professional field! The best combination is someone with a law/economic/technical/medical degree and/or relevant work experience plus linguistic training. Translators with linguistic MA will never reach the in-depth subject field knowledge they have.
- A degree or a specialisation in another field, not language related, can be very important, especially if the person knows a second language very well, or if he's studied his particular field in different languages.
- Only work with graduates in medicine and pharmacy; expertise more important than speed. Unique texts, therefore little or no CAT.
- Technical translations are very important, most students are not prepared in that field
- University degree - but not necessarily in translation

## Language and communication skills

- Good communication skills and organizational skills
- Way too often, the basics of a language (grammar/spelling) are overlooked by the training course and we see "professional" translators actually not fully grasping the source and target languages.
- Whatever the target language, translator should have a perfect mother tongue language. Willingness and ability to work with dictionaries, specialists of other professions and read a lot more than is required in university. Ability to find logical connections between different things, causes and consequences, analyze them, etc. We expect that translator is able think more deeply and in broader perspective as people usually do. Have respect against well known terminology and definitions.
- Essential is an outstanding ability to use one's native language and a very good written and spoken command of the foreign language. Ability to communicate with clients is essential, to work in a team and to adapt to new situations.
- When recruiting translators, the most essential criteria and that unfortunately is not listed in your table is the mastering of its mother tongue. This is the most critical issue we face when recruiting translators, and in our daily activity. We notice a decrease in such quality level.
- Perfect command of native language
- A perfect knowledge of the mother tongue as well as accuracy and punctuality
- Communication skills. Curiosity and insight.

## Tools and technologies

- Experience in the field of ICT and translation technology. Staffing a translation company means different functions, not all language related.
- Experience in the use of CAT tools.
- Very good sense of computing.
- General computer literacy is also an important factor.
- Ability to adjust quickly to new tools
- For me, pre-edit means pretranslation using a CAT tool (e.g. Trados). We never use machine translation.
- Ability to work on the layout of the final document. Ability to work with structured documents.
- Editing text for MT is not so important yet, but will be in the future. In certain cases speed with less care for quality MIGHT be important. Ability to produce 100% quality: I would've said "essential" if it weren't for the fact that I don't think there are many, if any, translators capable of that. A good translator must be humble, he always checks and double checks. He should extremely good have research capacities. He should always understand what is written (this is no pun - often translators just translate without really thinking about what they're writing). Capable of using CAT software. They must be consistent, concentrated and the language produced must not "sound" like a translation.
- The problem is that the importance of the different skills depends on the specific task. e.g. the use of markup languages is essential for localization providers but not required from translators specialized in other fields.



## Project management

- Good project manager and marketing skills
- Serious knowledge of Project Management techniques, tools and budgeting skills
- It depends whether I am recruiting a freshly graduated or an experienced translator.
- Comfortable with technology and its use; adaptable and learns quickly
- We often also recruit people after an internship in our company. In this case, those people have almost no experience but a high potential in the field translation.
- All depends on the profile requested. If we are looking for a junior translator, previous experience in translation is not essential. However as our firm is specialised in financial translation, staff must imperatively be familiarized with financial/economic fields.
- You should be more specific on the profile we would recruit - as a LSP, we recruit translators more often than project managers (even though we want our PMs to be translators too), and the profiles we would look for are very different in both cases.
- Ability to solve problems (quality, communication, lead time, etc.) on his/her own.
- Freelancers should understand how we manage a project, even a complex one, to be able to provide the answers we need to find the optimal solutions. The adherence to client requirements is essential. (i.e. understanding that they provide one step of a complex process and have to follow instructions to make this process smooth).
- Our Sales & Marketing team deals with account management and sales. PMs are mostly involved in production, although they are required to maintain the best possible client relations. Negotiations, quoting and contracting, however, is done by the sales team.
- Good client communication skills.

## Quality

- Responsible translators, meaning able to take their translations to a high-quality point by means of spell check, revision, quality check, observance of client instructions in respect of terminology, etc.
- Native speakers, as required by NEN-EN 15038
- Ability to listen to and act on client feedback
- As a Kiwa-certified translation company (according to NEN-EN 15038) quality is of the utmost importance; we don't provide translations of lesser quality!
- Ability to proof-read in native language
- Ability to translate badly written texts into understandable language.

## General comment

- Where are the individual intellectual and personal criteria resulting in the production of clear and effective translations? Translators are not interfaces with machines. How can you wish to motivate students for a 5-6-year degree course if they have no perspective except dealing with files, machines, strings of isolated texts their entire careers long, for poor income (see statistics available)? You're not serving the translation professional activity; you're serving translation industry and their shareholders.