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# Lost in compensation: pricing methods, rates, and income satisfaction among freelance translators in Belgium and Switzerland

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**ABSTRACT**

Research indicates that lack of fair compensation is one of the primary sources of dissatisfaction among freelance translators (Moorkens, 2020; Ruokonen & Svahn, 2024) and that rate-setting practices in the language services industry need to be improved collectively (Lambert & Walker, 2022), especially since the advent of neural machine translation (Vieira, 2020). In the 2024 edition of the European Language Industry Survey, for the first time in the history of the survey most freelance translators reported price drops, despite current inflation. Within this context, however, actual rates, pricing methods, and income satisfaction have received scant attention in translation research. In this article, we present the findings of an anonymous online survey on translation, revision and post-editing rates, pricing methods, and income satisfaction among freelancers based in two multilingual European markets, namely Belgium and Switzerland. The study confirms industry-wide trends of falling rates and reduced workloads due to AI. It reveals significant cross-country differences in pricing models and income satisfaction, with dissatisfaction mostly related to low rates rather than to pricing methods themselves. Despite structural concerns and uncertainty about AI's impact, professional satisfaction remains relatively high, driven by the intrinsic appeal of translation-related work and freelance autonomy.

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## Setting the scene: structural shifts in the freelance translation market

Since the technological disruption caused by neural machine translation and, more recently, AI translation, the language services industry has undergone a marked transformation, shaped by intensifying downward pressure on rates and growing concern over the sustainability of freelance careers. Reliable, focused data on these dynamics, however, remain scarce, making it difficult to capture the full extent of these economic changes for freelancers. In this regard, data from the European Language Industry

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Survey (ELIS) is quite valuable, as its annual and large-scale-scope across Europe enables systematic tracking of developments within the language services industry. The 2024 and 2025 editions, in particular, shine a spotlight on a profession at a critical juncture, with long-term viability increasingly called into question.

The ELIS 2024 report, based on responses from 919 freelancers across 49 countries, was the first in the series to record an overall decline in both activity level and prices among independent language professionals (ELIS, 2024, p. 4, 13). The survey results further indicated that financial concerns are the primary source of stress for freelancers, with respondents frequently citing low rates, negotiation difficulties, and the shift from human translation to lower-paid post-editing (PE) driven by machine translation (MT) and artificial intelligence (AI) (ibid., p. 26). By 2025, these challenges had deepened.

The ELIS 2025 survey, based on answers from 654 freelancers across 42 countries, found that fewer than half of freelance translators believe their work constitutes a viable long-term career path, a result the report describes as a serious wake-up call (ELIS, 2025, p. 19). This loss of confidence is particularly marked among junior translators with less than two years of experience: a sharp decrease from 69% in 2024 to 41% in 2025. Particularly striking is the finding that 23% of freelancers are considering exiting the profession altogether (ibid., p. 24). A major structural factor behind these developments is the widespread adoption of MT and generative AI: over 50% of translation projects handled by language services companies (LSCs) now involve MT (ibid., p. 35). Interestingly, half of the LSCs surveyed report a direct negative impact of AI on their business, due either to reduced client outsourcing or to the downward pressure on PE rates (ibid.). ELIS 2025 data further show that the independent use of MT by freelance professionals is also rising significantly (ibid.). Negotiation power has tilted further against freelancers, with difficulties negotiating rates with large LSCs (ibid., p. 30). However, while many professionals continue to express a desire to work more with direct clients, these aspirations have largely failed to materialize in practice (ibid., p. 27). Finally, the 2025 data confirm a concerning level of income dissatisfaction among freelance translators, with only 57% reporting that they earn enough from their freelance activity (ibid., p. 40). In sum, the ELIS data across two consecutive years reflect a growing professional precarity among freelance translators in Europe and beyond. Rates are declining, career confidence is eroding, and AI-driven automation is reshaping both workflows and economic models.

While the ELIS results are informative, they present aggregated data and do not reflect country-specific trends. Also, the number of individual freelance respondents per country is generally low, with a few exceptions. For example, 40% of the freelance language professionals who participated in the 2025 survey are based in just three countries, namely France, Italy, and Hungary, which constitute the most strongly represented national groups in the dataset. In addition, the survey does not differentiate between translation-related language services, such as translation, revision, and PE, making it difficult to assess the specific role of each service within this evolving professional landscape. Finally, it is important to note that other surveys paint a more positive picture. The 2024 European Language Council survey is a case in point: it indicates that rates have either increased or remained stable for approximately 70% of the 600 respondents (83% of whom are freelancers), while only 35.5% report a reduction in workload (Rivas Ginel et al., 2024).

Given these important limitations, it is crucial to consider other sources of information, such as market surveys conducted by national and international translator associations. Such surveys typically examine rates and income, often distinguishing between services. An overview of the main initiatives conducted up to the mid-2010s is provided in Pym et al. (2014). In recent years, several national initiatives have been undertaken, for example by the *Chambre belge des traducteurs et des interprètes* in 2018 (CBTI/BKTV, Belgium), the *Société française des traducteurs* in 2022 (SFT, France), and the *Institute of Translation and Interpreting* in 2023 (ITI, United Kingdom).[1] Common findings across these surveys include the observation that rates charged to direct clients are consistently higher than those paid by agencies and often associated with greater rate satisfaction. It also appears that association members tend to charge higher fees or report greater job satisfaction than non-members. These initiatives offer valuable country-specific insights into current market trends. When conducted on a regular basis, as in France, they can also track developments over time. However, due to limited resources, such surveys are understandably not carried out systematically.

In addition to formal surveys by professional associations, conversations about pricing methods and fair pay often surface in professional forums, blogs, and social media, providing further, though largely anecdotal, insights. For instance, Rocío Txabarriaga (2024), reporting on a Slator survey, raises concerns about fair compensation for PE services and advocates for pricing models that go beyond per-word rates in order to reflect the time, expertise, and value involved in PE more accurately. However, no specific alternative model is proposed. In a 2022 blog post titled 'Charging value rather than words'[2], Gaële Gagné, a French translator and entrepreneurial consultant, critiques both word-based pricing, which she argues commodifies translation, and hourly rates, which she considers difficult to estimate in advance and potentially disadvantageous to experienced professionals who work efficiently. Instead, she advocates for value-based pricing models, such as project-based rates. On professional social media platforms such as LinkedIn, posts highlighting unsatisfactory pricing methods and unfair CAT tool discounts applied by agencies appear daily. While these accounts provide insight into current sentiment within the profession, it remains difficult to assess how representative they are of the broader freelance translator population.

The developments outlined above call for careful examination not only by language industry stakeholders but also by translation scholars, as they raise fundamental questions about fair compensation, the sustainability of the profession, and, more broadly, the economics of translation. Despite the importance of these issues, academic research in this area remains limited. This study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by investigating current translation, revision and post-editing pricing methods and rates among freelance translators based in Belgium and Switzerland. In so doing, it aims to document current practices and assess income satisfaction, a factor that is central to job satisfaction and the long-term viability of the profession. Belgium and Switzerland were selected as target markets for this study because both countries are officially multilingual (Dutch, French, and German in Belgium; French, German, and Italian in Switzerland). Belgium and Switzerland are also particularly interesting because they host the headquarters of major European Union institutions and international organizations such as NATO and the United Nations, which generate a sustained demand for language services.

The remainder of this article is structured as follows. We begin by examining existing academic research on rate-setting practices, job satisfaction, and income satisfaction, positioning the present study within that broader context and complementing the industry insights offered in this introduction. Next, we describe the survey design, distribution methods, and participants' profiles. We then present the results and discuss their implications, before concluding with key takeaways and suggestions for future research.

## Background

### *Rates and rate-setting practices: too mundane for translation scholars?*

Despite the persistent relevance of low rates of pay, frequently cited as a major source of stress and dissatisfaction among freelance professional translators, pricing and income have historically received limited attention from translation scholars. Except for sporadic and mostly theoretical contributions on the economic dimension of the profession (a comprehensive overview is provided in Walker & Lambert, 2024), empirical data on rates and rate-setting practices have predominantly been sourced from industry surveys. Researchers themselves have seldom undertaken systematic efforts to gather such data. In recent years, however, there has been a growing interest in these issues among a small group of researchers.

Pricing methods and compensation levels are increasingly being explored as part of broader investigations into translators' working conditions, or in relation to professionals' perceptions of PE tasks. For instance, Vieira (2020) analyzed freelance translators' discourse on social media, highlighting that pricing and income are central topics of discussion. Similarly, Álvarez-Vidal et al. (2020) surveyed experienced post-editors working for a Spanish LSC ($n = 50$), finding that PE rates were widely perceived as inadequate relative to the cognitive and technical effort required, and consistently lower than standard translation rates. While the study notes that most respondents were paid per word for PE tasks, it remains unclear what other pricing methods were considered.

In another study on the freelance market in Spain, Pérez Macías (2020) briefly addressed pricing methods via a focus group ($n = 5$) and a survey ($n = 104$) that explored participants' fears and preferences regarding PE tasks. The results revealed a general dissatisfaction with the economic viability of PE projects and confirmed that per-word rates were more commonly used than per-hour rates.

Further insights into the economics of PE tasks are offered by Sakamoto and Bawa Mason (2024), who discussed pricing strategies in a focus group drawn from eight UK-based language service companies, focusing on per-word, per-hour, and edit-distance-based pricing models. LSCs' representatives indicate, among other things, that hourly and edit-distance-based rates are the least useful methods, but also recognize the pitfalls of the widely used word rates for freelancers.

Particularly noteworthy is the work of Callum Walker, Joseph Lambert, and JC Penet, who recently concluded a project on the sustainability of the freelance translation profession in the United Kingdom.[3] In their presentation for ITI members (Walker et al., 2024), the authors discuss findings from a survey of more than 300 professional translators (mostly UK-based). The data reveal that those working exclusively with agencies are particularly dissatisfied with their income. The broader picture they paint is one of financial precarity, with many participants expressing concerns about the long-term viability of their careers and considering leaving the profession altogether. In another article devoted to rate-setting and professional status, Lambert and Walker (2022, p. 3) also call for ‘a change in attitudes to rates [that] is embedded within an understanding of worth by all parties’. This appeal highlights the need for collective action to promote recognition of the profession’s value, including advocacy by national professional associations.

## *Job and income satisfaction: what do we know?*

Remuneration is closely linked to the broader issue of job satisfaction, which has emerged as an increasingly prominent topic of discussion within Translation Studies. A comprehensive overview of how job satisfaction has been addressed in the field is offered by Ruokonen and Svahn (2024), who analyzed 51 articles published up to 2023. Their review categorizes the factors influencing job satisfaction into five main areas: individual factors; job-intrinsic factors (i.e. related to the nature of the work itself); job-extrinsic factors (i.e. associated with the working environment); societal factors (i.e. concerning the role and status of the profession); and background factors, such as participants’ age and employment status (e.g. freelance or salaried).

Income and rates fall within the category of job-extrinsic factors, but their role in shaping job satisfaction has proved inconsistent across studies. Some have demonstrated a direct positive correlation (Bednárová-Gibová & Majherová, 2021; Rodríguez-Castro, 2015), while others report no such link (Bednárová-Gibová & Madoš, 2019; Dam & Zethsen, 2011; Heino, 2020). Income satisfaction is sometimes reported among salaried translators, particularly in institutional contexts (Bednárová-Gibová & Madoš, 2019; Rodríguez-Castro, 2015), while dissatisfaction emerges as the dominant theme when income or pricing are addressed with freelance translators (e.g. Heino, 2020; Moorkens, 2020; Penet et al., under review).

It is also worth noting that in most studies that address income or income satisfaction, these topics are never the primary focus but rather a secondary variable in the investigation of other complex constructs often related to job satisfaction, such as translators’ professional status. For example, Dam and Zethsen (2009, 2011) found no direct relationship between translators’ income levels and their perceived professional status. In their study, Danish freelancers reported the highest income compared to company and agency translators, yet ranked low in terms of status perception.

Similarly, in a study conducted among Finnish translators, Ruokonen and Mäkisalo (2018) observed no correlation between income levels and perceptions of the status of the profession in general. However, they did find a correlation between income and translators’ perceptions of their own professional status: freelancers earning below the national median gross income tended to view their own status as low–whereas no significant correlation was found in the case of salaried translators. In the same study, data on income satisfaction showed interesting differences depending on the domain specialization of the respondents. Business translators satisfied with their income also tended to perceive both the status of the profession and their own status as high. In contrast, for literary translators, income satisfaction did not seem to influence perceptions of their own status, which remained high despite this group reporting the lowest income compared to business and audiovisual translators (ibid., p. 14).

To conclude, we note that income levels and income satisfaction are two distinct concepts which may influence professional satisfaction, and that these have not been addressed systematically in the existing literature. In particular, findings on the specific role of income satisfaction within translators' job satisfaction remain quite inconclusive. Moreover, the wide range of geographical and professional contexts in which the existing studies have been conducted–reflecting the inherently heterogeneous nature of the translation industry–further limits the potential for generalization. Taken together, these observations highlight the need for more targeted research on income satisfaction.

### *Bringing together pricing methods, rates, and income satisfaction*

Previously, we have documented the lack of reliable data needed to discuss pricing in translator education (Girletti & Lefer, 2024). In the same vein, Walker and Lambert (2024) analyzed translation programs in the UK and Ireland on the basis of the module descriptions available online. They found that pricing-related topics are rarely signalled as being part of the curricula. We argue that data on pricing is not only a pedagogical blind spot but also a country-specific issue best understood within the broader economic dynamics of each national market. As previously mentioned, the efforts of national translator associations to provide such data are often unsystematic or, in some cases, legally discouraged. Moreover, to date there are no comprehensive studies examining both pricing methods and income satisfaction, nor analyses of how these aspects may vary across different translation-related services and national markets. This gap motivates our own study, which adopts a contrastive approach by comparing rate-setting practices across two multilingual countries and three translation-related services, namely translation, revision, and PE. Our research also seeks to contribute to academic initiatives developed in close collaboration with national associations with a view to generating relevant data and sharing them with both researchers and practitioners.

## Survey design, distribution, and participants' profiles

We designed an online survey targeting freelance language professionals offering translation, revision, and/or PE services in Belgium and Switzerland. The questionnaire was fully anonymous and addressed exclusively to freelancers based in the two countries. It was composed of the following key sections:

- **Participants' profiles**: This section included demographic and professional information, such as years of experience, membership of professional associations, main language pairs in terms of workload, domains of specialization, and types of service offered (translation, revision, PE).[4]
- **Service-specific sections (translation, revision, PE)**: Each service-specific section asked whether the respondents provided the service to agencies and/or direct clients (national or international organizations, companies, colleagues, or others), and then gathered up to three examples per category. Participants who experienced difficulty identifying their main clients for the current year (i.e. 2024) were advised to use 2023 as a reference year. For each example, data were collected on the pricing method used, rate charged, and satisfaction with the rate ('happy', 'neither happy nor unhappy', 'unhappy'). Regarding pricing methods, we proposed seven predefined options: rate per word (source or target), rate per line (source or target), rate per page (source or target), and hourly rate. An additional 'Other' option was included

to allow respondents to specify any pricing methods not covered by the predefined categories. As for the rates themselves, respondents were given the option of providing a rate range rather than a specific figure, in order to accommodate potential discomfort with disclosing exact amounts.

- **Satisfaction**: This section assessed participants' satisfaction with their pricing methods, income, and freelance career overall. Responses were collected using a seven-point bipolar Likert scale ranging from 'Very dissatisfied' to 'Very satisfied', with 'Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' as the midpoint.

The Belgian questionnaire included up to 167 questions, and the Swiss version up to 172, but some of them were optional and filtered according to previous answers. The Swiss version of the questionnaire included additional country-specific questions (e.g. regarding collaboration with the Swiss Confederation). The survey combined close-ended and open-ended questions. An informed consent form was displayed on the opening page before participants could proceed to the questionnaire.

Both versions of the questionnaire were pre-tested in several iterations with members of the national translators' associations – the Belgian Chamber of Translators and Interpreters (CBTI/BKVT) and the Swiss Association of Translators, Terminologists and Interpreters (ASTTI) – as well as with university colleagues who are active freelance translators.

The questionnaire was distributed using the LimeSurvey platform.[5] The Belgian version, drafted in English, launched on June 4, 2024, and remained open until August 5, 2024. The Swiss version was translated into the three official languages of the country (German, French, and Italian), as required by ASTTI, and administered from October 8, 2024, to January 12, 2025. Dissemination took place through the national translators' associations and the social media channels of the study's authors, to allow participation of non-members. At least two reminders were issued via both dissemination channels during the survey period in each country.

A total of 176 valid responses were collected in Belgium (133 complete and 43 partial), and 194 in Switzerland (150 complete and 44 partial). To be considered valid, a response had to originate from a freelancer based in the relevant country. Partial responses were only included if they contained at least one completed service-specific section.

Quantitative data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel, employing descriptive statistics. Since many questions were not mandatory and partial completions were accepted, all reported analyses include the corresponding number of observations (n). Responses to the fifteen open-ended questions in the survey were analyzed thematically, with both authors jointly coding the data in Excel.

A summary of participants' profiles is presented in Table 1. In Belgium, age distribution is balanced across categories, while the Swiss sample is skewed toward more experienced professionals with an average of 22 years in the profession (median: 22 years), as compared to 16.5 years (median: 15 years) in Belgium. In both countries, more than 60% of respondents report being a member of at least one professional association, while the rest of the freelancers who took part in the survey are non-members.

In Belgium, the most represented language combinations in terms of workload[6] are Dutch into French (23%), French into Dutch (18%), English into French (16%), and English into Dutch (11%). In Switzerland, they are German into French (40%), German into Italian (17%), and French into German (16%).

**Table 1.** Participants' profiles.

| | | BELGIUM | SWITZERLAND |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | $N = 176$ | $N = 194$ |
| **AGE RANGE** | | | |
| 18–29 | | 10% | 3% |
| 30–39 | | 20% | 14% |
| 40–49 | | 34% | 24% |
| 50–59 | | 22% | 30% |
| 60+ | | 13% | 28% |
| N/A | | 1% | 1% |
| **YEARS OF EXPERIENCE** | | | |
| Average | | 16.5 | 22 |
| Median | | 15 | 22 |
| Min | | 1 | 1 |
| Max | | 40 | 50 |
| **TRANSLATION AS MAIN PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY** | | 74% | 78% |
| **MEMBER OF A PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION** | | 68% | 64% |
| **SERVICES OFFERED** | | | |
| Translation | | 98% | 97% |
| | *Direct clients* | 87% (*n* = 150/172) | 99% (*n* = 187/188) |
| | *Agencies* | 78% (*n* = 134/172) | 41% (*n* = 77/188) |
| Revision | | 70% | 76% |
| | *Direct clients* | 63% (*n* = 70/111) | 86% (*n* = 109/127) |
| | *Agencies* | 68% (*n* = 76/111) | 35% (*n* = 44/127) |
| PE | | 51% | 47% |
| | *Direct clients* | 16% (*n* = 11/70) | 60% (*n* = 44/73) |
| | *Agencies* | 80% (*n* = 56/70) | 34% (*n* = 25/73) |

In both surveys, at least 74% of respondents reported specializing in one or more translation domains. Out of these, 53% of the Belgian respondents indicated specialization in two or three domains. The same was reported by 49% of Swiss respondents, although a notable 25% reported specialization in four or five domains. In total, respondents cited a remarkably wide range of specializations-almost 100 different domains, ranging from broad fields to niche sectors, indicating a highly diversified professional landscape. In both countries, legal and medical translation emerged as the most frequently mentioned areas of specialization. However, while marketing ranked third in Belgium, in Switzerland it was economics that occupied this position.

Translation (in the broad sense) emerges as the main professional activity of over 70% of respondents. Almost all respondents in both countries offer translation services, while revision is less prevalent but still offered by at least 70% of respondents. Post-editing services are offered by approximately half of the respondents in both samples.

Regarding clientele, most Belgian freelancers report working with both agencies and direct clients across all services. In contrast, Swiss freelancers show a stronger orientation toward direct clients, particularly for PE services, which in Belgium are primarily provided through agencies. As respondents could provide data for up to three direct clients and three agencies, the number of mentions per client type is reported in Table 2.

In both countries, most respondents provided data for translation tasks with three direct clients, while for PE tasks, most respondents provided data for only one client. Regarding revision tasks, Swiss respondents most frequently reported data for one or three clients, while Belgian respondents tended to provide information for one client.

**Table 2.** Client type: number of mentions (1–3) for each service.

| | | | BELGIUM | SWITZERLAND |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| TRANSLATION | DIRECT CLIENTS | One client | 23 | 25 |
| | | Two clients | 37 | 27 |
| | | Three clients | 77 | 116 |
| | AGENCIES | One agency | 43 | 39 |
| | | Two agencies | 36 | 12 |
| | | Three agencies | 36 | 15 |
| REVISION | DIRECT CLIENTS | One client | 36 | 39 |
| | | Two clients | 12 | 26 |
| | | Three clients | 15 | 37 |
| | AGENCIES | One agency | 41 | 34 |
| | | Two agencies | 16 | 3 |
| | | Three agencies | 11 | 3 |
| POST-EDITING | DIRECT CLIENTS | One client | 9 | 29 |
| | | Two clients | 0 | 6 |
| | | Three clients | 0 | 7 |
| | AGENCIES | One agency | 33 | 23 |
| | | Two agencies | 14 | 1 |
| | | Three agencies | 6 | 1 |

When considering agencies, most respondents in both surveys reported data for only one client per task type. This does not necessarily indicate that translators work with fewer agencies than direct clients. This pattern could also reflect respondent fatigue during questionnaire completion, leading some participants to skip questions or limit the number of entries provided per service type.

Preliminary results were shared with CBTI/BKVT and ASTTI members, as well as with non-member respondents who had expressed interest in obtaining the study results, in two dedicated free webinars.

## Results

In this section, we present the results of the survey, addressing in turn the pricing methods, rates, and levels of income and job satisfaction reported by freelance translators.

### *Pricing methods*

Respondents were asked to indicate, for each service, which pricing method they considered most suitable from a freelancer's perspective. As shown in Table 3, the results reveal notable differences between the two countries as regards translation services: Belgian freelance translators predominantly prefer word rates (either source or target), whereas their Swiss counterparts favor line rates (either source or target). In both countries, hourly rates rank second for translation. Hourly rates are clearly preferred for revision and post-editing, ranking far ahead of other pricing methods in both Belgium and Switzerland.

When asked about the reasons for preferring specific pricing methods, respondents in both countries consistently indicate that hourly rates are fair, as these make it possible to account adequately for source-text difficulty and terminological searches in translation tasks, translation quality in revision tasks, and raw machine translation quality in

**Table 3.** Preferred vs actual pricing methods across the three services. Preferred pricing methods are based on the total number of respondents (we report methods that collectively account for at least 50% of respondents). Actual pricing methods are based on the number of direct clients and agencies mentioned by the respondents (at least 50% of mentions).

| PREFERRED | TRANSLATION | REVISION | POST-EDITING |
|---|---|---|---|
| **BELGIUM** | WORD ( $n = 51/104$)<br>HOUR ($n = 32/104$) | HOUR ($n = 72/91$) | HOUR ($n = 59/81$) |
| **SWITZERLAND** | LINE ($n = 60/149$)<br>HOUR ($n = 36/149$) | HOUR ($n = 97/112$) | HOUR ($n = 76/94$) |

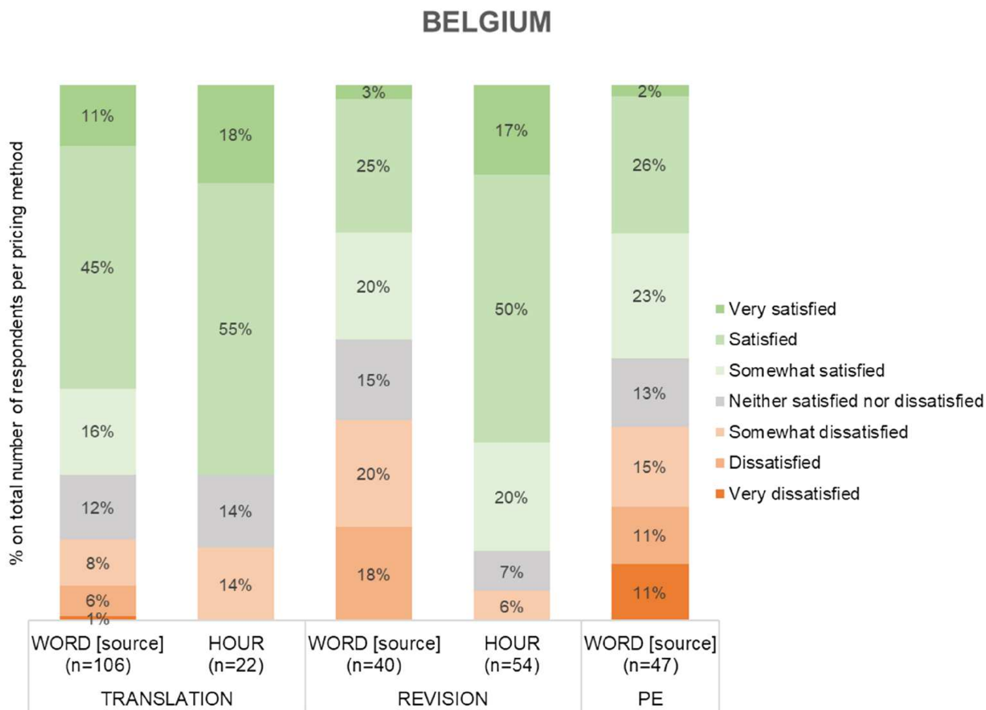
| ACTUAL | TRANSLATION | | REVISION | | POST-EDITING | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Direct clients | Agencies | Direct clients | Agencies | Direct clients | Agencies |
| **BELGIUM** | WORD [source] ($n = 200/328$) | WORD [source] ($n = 185/223$) | HOUR ($n = 72/105$) | WORD [source] ($n = 50/106$)<br>HOUR ($n = 48/106$) | WORD [source] ($n = 6/9$) | WORD [source] ($n = 63/79$) |
| **SWITZERLAND** | LINE [source] ($n = 112/427$)<br>LINE [target] ($n = 111/427$) | WORD [source] ($n = 34/108$)<br>LINE [source] ($n = 32/108$) | HOUR ($n = 164/202$) | HOUR ($n = 30/49$) | HOUR ($n = 44/62$) | WORD [source] ($n = 11/28$)<br>HOUR ($n = 10/28$) |

post-editing tasks. Additionally, some respondents highlight the ease of calculation associated with word-based and line-based pricing. Some Swiss-based freelancers further emphasize that target-line rates effectively account for cross-linguistic differences, specifically expansion from the source to the target language, making this pricing method a fair reflection of effort involved.

Interestingly, a marked discrepancy emerges between freelancers' preferred pricing methods and the ones typically adopted in practice. As shown in Table 3, in the case of Belgian freelancers, agencies predominantly apply source-word rates across all services, followed closely by hourly rates for revision assignments only. It is important to note that agencies apply CAT tool discounts to word-based pricing in 72% of cases for translation ($n = 160/223$) and in 81% of cases for post-editing ($n = 64/79$). When working with direct clients, Belgian freelancers mostly apply hourly rates for revision services, while the picture for translation is more varied: although source-word rates remain most common, other methods are frequently employed as well. It is difficult to identify trends for PE services, as only a handful of Belgian respondents offer these services to direct clients.

In the case of freelancers based in Switzerland, by contrast, agencies adopt different pricing methods for each of the three services. They apply line and word rates for translation, hourly rates for revision, and both source-word and hourly rates for post-editing. Swiss freelancers dealing with direct clients typically employ line rates (source or target) for translation assignments, whereas hourly rates prevail for revision and post-editing. Particularly noteworthy is that some Swiss freelancers seem to have successfully implemented hourly rates for post-editing, whereas their Belgian counterparts, who predominantly provide post-editing services through agencies, apply word rates, often subject to substantial discounts as compared with translation word rates (see below).

Respondents were also asked to evaluate their satisfaction with the pricing methods employed, regardless of whether these were applied when collaborating with agencies or direct clients. The results are represented graphically in Figure 1. Overall, freelancers



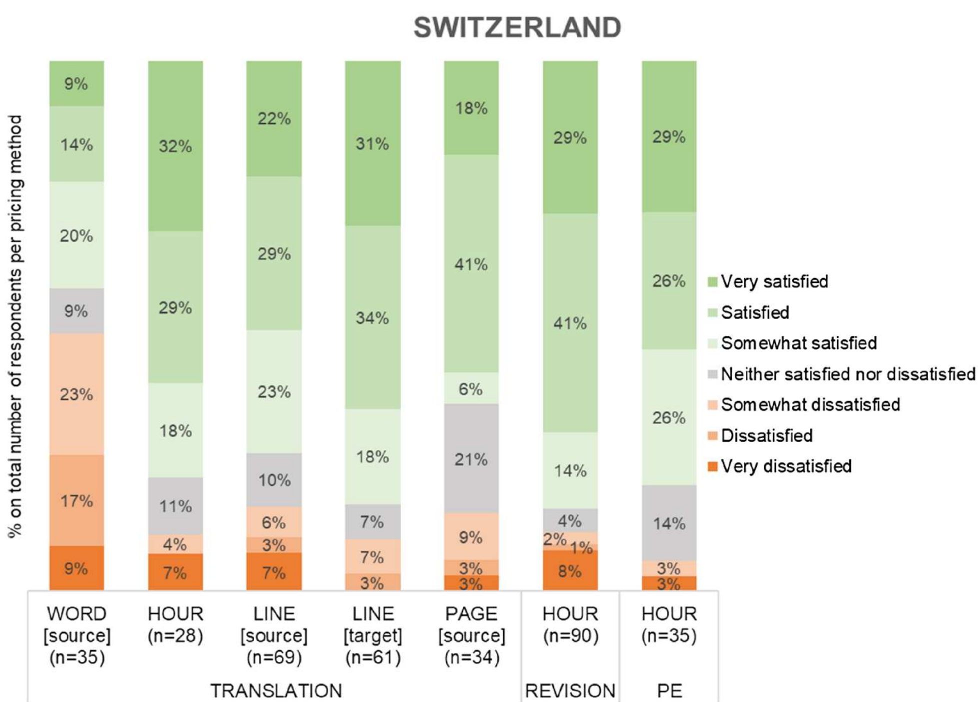




**Figure 1.** Levels of satisfaction with the most commonly used pricing methods (min. 20 respondents).

appear broadly satisfied with the most commonly used pricing methods, reporting higher levels of satisfaction with hourly rates, which, as previously indicated, constitute their preferred pricing approach.

### *Rates*

In this section, we present the rates applied in the most frequently used pricing methods in the two countries surveyed. Rates are reported in euros (€) and include all language combinations. We report the mean, median, standard deviation, minimum and maximum values, as well as the number of respondents taken into account in the calculation. Only responses in which participants provided specific figures, rather than rate ranges[7], are included in the analysis. For Switzerland specifically, only the rates applied by agencies based in the country are included. Table 4 presents the rates for the three services surveyed, broken down by direct clients and agencies. For respondents who provided multiple rates for the same pricing method, we calculated an average rate per respondent and client type (direct client or agency).

The results indicate that rates paid by agencies are lower than those charged to direct clients. In Belgium, the difference amounts to approximately €0.02 per source word for translation (excluding CAT tool discounts typically imposed by agencies) and €10 per hour for revision tasks (−27% and −21% respectively). Given that very few freelancers provide PE services to direct clients, it is difficult to draw meaningful rate comparisons between direct clients and agencies for these services. However, the limited data available suggest that PE word rates are approximately €0.01 lower when working with agencies. With regard to agencies' word rates across language services in Belgium, it is noteworthy that average rates for PE and revision are approximately 40% and 70% lower, respectively, than the mean translation rate. For direct clients, hourly rates for revision are around €10 lower than those applied for translation (−20%).

In Switzerland, Swiss agency rates are significantly lower than those that freelancers charge direct clients for both translation and revision tasks: CHF 0.10 lower for word-based translation rates (−38%), CHF 1 lower for line-based translation rates (−32% for target lines and −41% for source lines), and CHF 30 lower for revision hourly rates (−36%). Due to insufficient data on agency PE rates, no meaningful comparisons can be made with direct client rates. Cross-service rate comparisons are rather complicated, since Swiss agencies apply different pricing methods for translation and revision. In addition, we gathered insufficient data on agency PE rates. Interestingly, however, the data indicate that when working with direct clients, Swiss freelancers charge similar hourly rates for PE and revision, i.e. approximately CHF 90 in both cases.

Each time freelancers provided a rate, they were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with that specific rate: either as happy, neither happy nor unhappy, or unhappy. In total, slightly more than 1,700 responses were collected, distributed evenly across the two countries. Figure 2 summarizes the overall satisfaction scores associated with these rates. Unsurprisingly, freelancers express notably lower satisfaction with agency rates as compared with the rates applied to their direct clients. This difference is particularly pronounced among Swiss-based translators.

**Table 4.** Actual rates charged according to the main pricing methods, all language combinations (2024 average exchange rate: CHF 1 = €1.0498. Source: European Central Bank).

| **BELGIUM** | **TRANSLATION** | | | | **REVISION** | | | | **POST-EDITING** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (EUR) | DIRECT CLIENTS | | AGENCIES | | DIRECT CLIENTS | | AGENCIES | | DIRECT CLIENTS | | AGENCIES | |
| | WORD (source) | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR |
| Mean | €0.12 | €60.13 | €0.10 | €35.40 | €0.03 | €47.99 | €0.03 | €37.94 | €0.07 | €30.00 | €0.06 | €33.04 |
| Median | €0.12 | €55.00 | €0.09 | €40.00 | €0.02 | €45.00 | €0.03 | €36.00 | €0.05 | n/a | €0.05 | €30.00 |
| MIN | €0.06 | €30.00 | €0.05 | €23.00 | €0.02 | €23.00 | €0.03 | €18.00 | €0.04 | n/a | €0.04 | €23.00 |
| MAX | €0.24 | €150.00 | €0.15 | €50.00 | €0.06 | €83.33 | €0.05 | €55.00 | €0.14 | n/a | €0.10 | €50.00 |
| SD | €0.03 | €25.39 | €0.02 | €11.61 | €0.01 | €14.82 | €0.01 | €8.92 | €0.04 | n/a | €0.01 | €9.31 |
| n | 98 | 19 | 90 | 5 | 15 | 38 | 31 | 38 | 7 | 1 | 40 | 7 |

| **SWITZERLAND** | **TRANSLATION** | | | | | | **REVISION** | | **POST-EDITING** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (converted to EUR) | DIRECT CLIENTS | | | SWISS AGENCIES | | | DIRECT CLIENTS | SWISS AGENCIES | DIRECT CLIENTS | | SWISS AGENCIES | |
| | WORD (source) | LINE (source) | LINE (target) | WORD (source) | LINE (source) | LINE (target) | HOUR | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR |
| Mean | €0.27 | €3.47 | €3.60 | €0.17 | €2.03 | €2.45 | €94.17 | €60.27 | €0.11 | €99.03 | €0.24 | €53.01 |
| Median | €0.25 | €3.65 | €3.67 | €0.16 | €1.89 | €2.31 | €94.48 | €62.99 | €0.11 | €97.98 | €0.10 | €49.87 |
| MIN | €0.12 | €1.78 | €2.10 | €0.09 | €1.36 | €1.47 | €31.49 | €36.74 | €0.05 | €41.99 | €0.07 | €45.14 |
| MAX | €0.47 | €5.25 | €5.25 | €0.28 | €3.04 | €4.20 | €146.97 | €125.98 | €0.17 | €146.97 | €0.94 | €62.99 |
| SD | €0.09 | €0.66 | €0.53 | €0.05 | €0.44 | €0.68 | €25.36 | €17.96 | €0.08 | €23.05 | €0.35 | €8.09 |
| n | 21 | 48 | 50 | 15 | 19 | 17 | 76 | 23 | 2 | 25 | 6 | 6 |

| **SWITZERLAND** | **TRANSLATION** | | | | | | **REVISION** | | **POST-EDITING** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (CHF) | DIRECT CLIENTS | | | SWISS AGENCIES | | | DIRECT CLIENTS | SWISS AGENCIES | DIRECT CLIENTS | | SWISS AGENCIES | |
| | WORD (source) | LINE (source) | LINE (target) | WORD (source) | LINE (source) | LINE (target) | HOUR | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR | WORD (source) | HOUR |
| Mean | CHF 0.26 | CHF 3.31 | CHF 3.43 | CHF 0.16 | CHF 1.94 | CHF 2.34 | CHF 89.70 | CHF 57.41 | CHF 0.11 | CHF 94.33 | CHF 0.23 | CHF 50.50 |
| Median | CHF 0.24 | CHF 3.48 | CHF 3.50 | CHF 0.15 | CHF 1.80 | CHF 2.20 | CHF 90.00 | CHF 60.00 | CHF 0.11 | CHF 93.33 | CHF 0.10 | CHF 47.50 |
| MIN | CHF 0.11 | CHF 1.70 | CHF 2.00 | CHF 0.09 | CHF 1.30 | CHF 1.40 | CHF 30.00 | CHF 35.00 | CHF 0.05 | CHF 40.00 | CHF 0.07 | CHF 43.00 |
| MAX | CHF 0.45 | CHF 5.00 | CHF 5.00 | CHF 0.27 | CHF 2.90 | CHF 4.00 | CHF 140.00 | CHF 120.00 | CHF 0.16 | CHF 140.00 | CHF 0.90 | CHF 60.00 |
| SD | CHF 0.09 | CHF 0.62 | CHF 0.50 | CHF 0.05 | CHF 0.42 | CHF 0.65 | CHF 24.16 | CHF 17.11 | CHF 0.08 | CHF 21.95 | CHF 0.33 | CHF 7.71 |
| n | 21 | 48 | 50 | 15 | 19 | 17 | 76 | 23 | 2 | 25 | 6 | 6 |

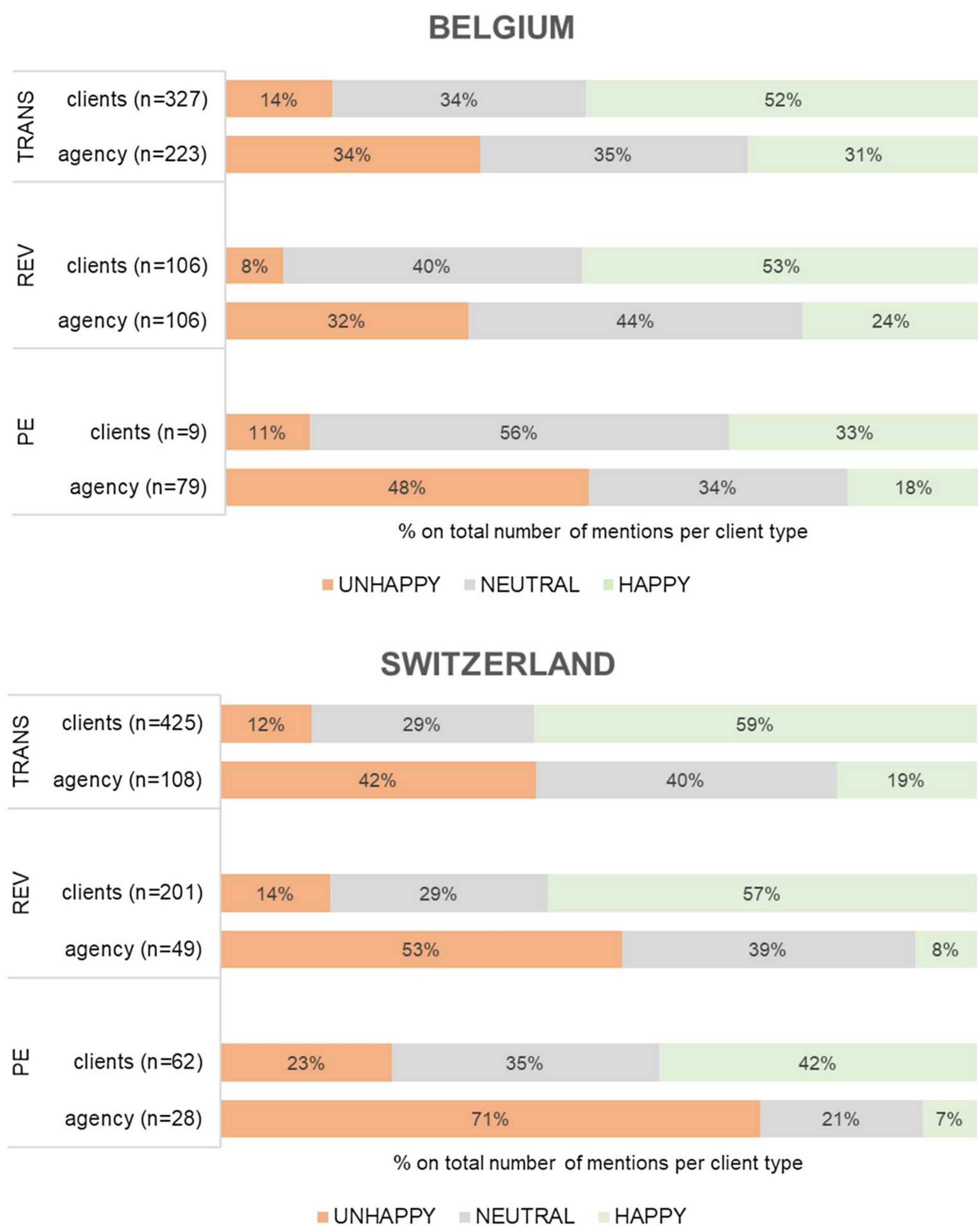



**Figure 2.** Satisfaction with current rates. Percentages refer to the number of mentions (n) per client type.

## *Income satisfaction*

Respondents were also asked to assess their level of satisfaction with their income as language professionals. In this respect, striking differences emerge between the two countries surveyed (see Figure 3). In Belgium, 49% of respondents indicate dissatisfaction with their income, whereas 38% report satisfaction ($n = 133$). Conversely, in Switzerland, the opposite trend is observed, with 60% expressing satisfaction and only 27% dissatisfaction ($n = 153$).

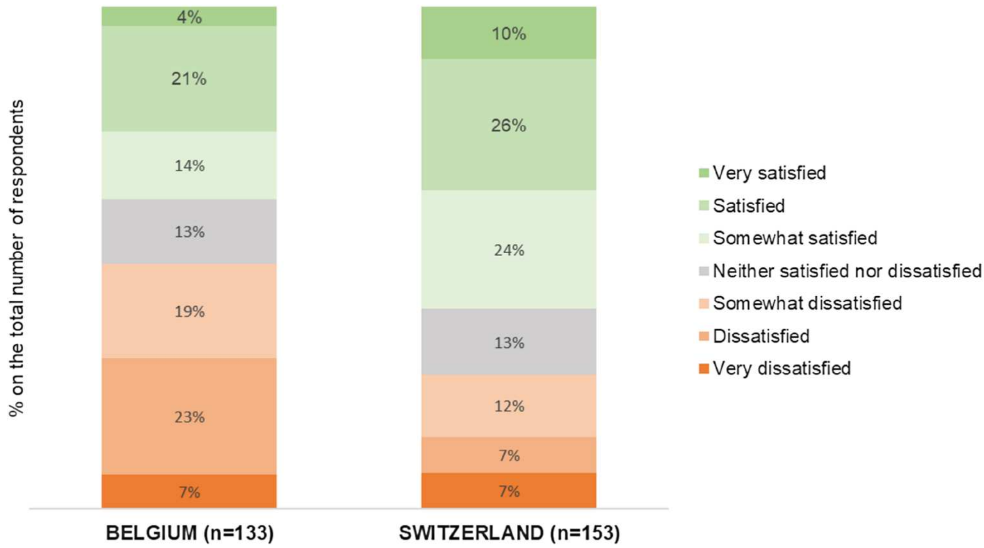



**Figure 3.** Levels of income satisfaction as language professionals.

However, when asked to elaborate on the reasons for their dissatisfaction, Belgian and Swiss freelance translators provide remarkably similar explanations. The most frequently cited reasons in the two countries are low or diminishing income (sometimes not enough to provide a decent living) ($n = 38$), lack of recognition of translators' academic qualifications and the translation profession itself ($n = 23$), irregular demand (and related lack of financial stability) ($n = 22$), and a decline in workload (mostly due to the rise of AI) ($n = 21$). Additional reasons commonly mentioned by respondents include difficulties in raising rates (especially in the context of inflation) ($n = 16$), negative impacts on work-life balance and personal well-being (e.g. longer working hours necessary to achieve financial stability) ($n = 8$), downward pressure on prices ($n = 8$), AI anxiety and uncertainty for the future ($n = 7$), high taxation ($n = 5$), unfair competition (domestically from fellow translators in Belgium, and globally in the Swiss context) ($n = 5$) and agencies' unfair business practices ($n = 4$).

When respondents were asked to evaluate their income satisfaction across the two client types and three service categories, low rates emerged as the primary source of dissatisfaction in both countries (mentioned 104 times in total). Other frequently reported reasons include difficulties in raising rates ($n = 46$) and irregular demand ($n = 27$), although these are less acutely felt when collaborating with agencies in Switzerland. Moreover, in both countries income dissatisfaction with agencies often relates to unfair business practices ($n = 40$).

Country-specific patterns also appear. In Belgium respondents highlight the insufficient number of direct clients ($n = 7$), whereas in Switzerland respondents working with agencies cite declining rates ($n = 7$). A further concern, raised explicitly by respondents in Switzerland across all service categories, is competition from abroad, as foreign-based freelancers offer services at substantially lower rates ($n = 14$). Finally, respondents from both countries emphasize that providing PE services to agencies is not profitable ($n = 8$).

### Professional satisfaction

Finally, respondents were asked to assess their overall job satisfaction as freelance language professionals, taking all aspects of their work into account. Results are reported in Figure 4.

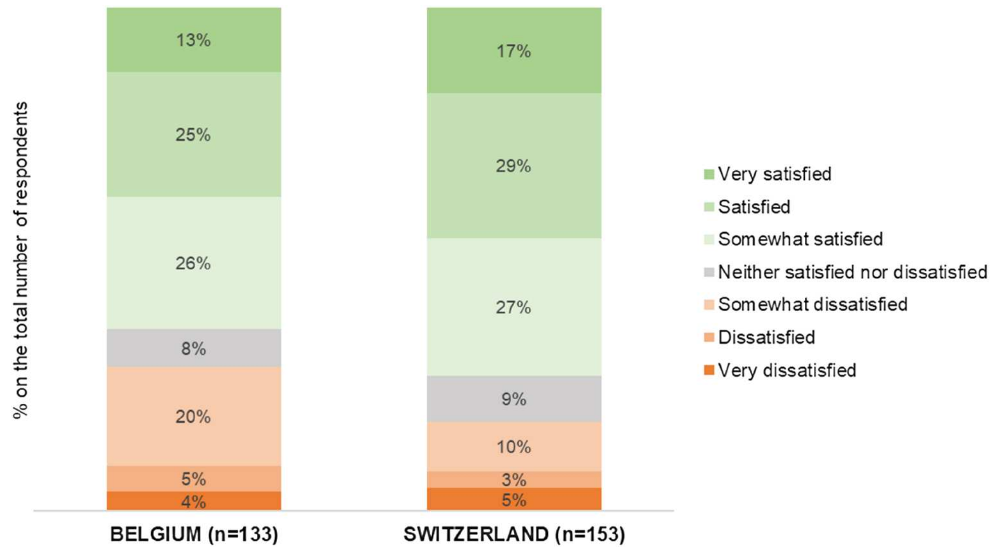



**Figure 4.** Levels of professional satisfaction.

Contrary to what was observed regarding income satisfaction, the results obtained for job satisfaction were comparable in the two countries, although slightly higher in Switzerland: 64% of Belgian respondents report satisfaction and 29% dissatisfaction, whereas 73% of Swiss respondents indicate satisfaction and 18% dissatisfaction. The main reasons cited for satisfaction are similar in the two countries and include the fulfilling nature of the translation profession (mentioned 61 times), the freedom associated with freelancing ($n = 25$), the possibility of achieving a decent standard of living ($n = 21$), the combination of freelance work with salaried employment (making it suitable as a supplementary income, rather than the main one, $n = 12$), and a positive work-life balance ($n = 5$). Among the negative factors most frequently reported are low or declining income ($n = 30$), anxiety related to the rise of AI ($n = 26$) or to the broader future of the profession ($n = 14$), consideration of leaving the profession ($n = 11$), lack of recognition of translators' academic qualifications and the translation profession itself ($n = 10$), negative impacts on work-life balance ($n = 9$), a reduced sense of professional fulfillment ($n = 7$), declining workload ($n = 7$), deteriorating working conditions ($n = 5$), and dissatisfaction with entrepreneurial aspects of freelance work ($n = 4$).

## Discussion

The results of our survey confirm some well-documented industry-wide trends. For instance, in both Belgium and Switzerland and for the three services surveyed, rates charged to direct clients are consistently higher than those paid by agencies and are generally associated with greater satisfaction. This is particularly evident in Switzerland, where the gap between agency and direct client rates is most pronounced. Our study also contributes new insights into pricing methods, rates, and income satisfaction among freelance translators. They are discussed in this section. Our study is the first of its kind, providing extensive insights into pricing methods used across three distinct language services, as well as the associated satisfaction levels.

It is interesting to note that preferred pricing methods for translation services differ between the two countries: freelancers based in Belgium tend to favor word-based rates, whereas those in Switzerland prefer line-based pricing. This divergence may reflect different market cultures or established professional practices in each national context.

An hourly rate is the preferred pricing method for both revision and post-editing services in both countries. This widespread preference may support the case for advocating hourly rates more broadly within the language services industry, as they are perceived as fair and a better reflection of the value of translators' expert work. At first glance, hourly pricing might appear less profitable for experienced professionals who work efficiently; however, this can be addressed by letting translators set higher hourly fees that correspond to their level of expertise. Nonetheless, challenges remain, particularly regarding the difficulty of estimating time requirements in advance and the potential for agencies to underestimate the actual time needed to complete a task. Interestingly, flat rates or project-based pricing were almost entirely absent from respondents' preferences and reported practices. Yet this model offers significant advantages: it reflects more accurately the value of translators' work and provides a powerful means of resisting the commodification of translation-related services.

While discrepancies between preferred and actual pricing methods are apparent in both markets, freelancers nonetheless express general satisfaction with the methods currently in use. This suggests that dissatisfaction is not rooted in the pricing mechanisms themselves, but rather in the low rates often associated with them. It may be that freelancers have grown accustomed to prevailing pricing practices and hence rarely question them. In this context, it is crucial for pedagogical settings to engage with these issues in order to foster critical awareness among translation students prior to their entry into the professional market.

Ultimately, our findings indicate that it is the level of remuneration–not the structure of pricing–that constitutes the primary source of discontent among freelancers. Our study offers relatively rich data on rates, providing valuable reference points for future research. Freelance translators are dissatisfied with current rates, particularly those imposed by agencies. This finding holds across both countries examined and is perhaps unsurprising, as many freelancers in our survey report that agency rates are typically non-negotiable, leaving them with limited bargaining power. Furthermore, these rates are not only difficult to increase but, in some cases, have even declined–despite ongoing inflation and rising living costs. It is important to add, however, that agencies themselves often operate under significant price pressure from their clients, which constrains their price-setting practices (see for instance ELIS, 2025).

While comparative historical data for Switzerland is lacking, the latest CBTI/BKVT market survey (2018) provides a useful benchmark for Belgium. According to this survey, agency rates have remained largely unchanged (in nominal terms) since 2018, hovering around €0.10 per word for translation and €0.03 for revision. Interestingly, our data indicate that word rates for direct clients – which are generally considered more profitable – have actually declined. The average reported translation rate for direct clients is now €0.12 per word, compared to €0.13 in 2018, while revision rates have dropped from €0.05 to €0.03. This suggests a gradual erosion of income potential, even in segments traditionally seen as more lucrative. This downward trend in direct client rates may not be readily perceived by freelancers, who often express a desire to increase their share of direct clients. Instead, they tend to focus their frustrations on agency pricing, while, ironically, agency rates have proved more stable over time. It is important to add, however, that when inflation is factored in, the real value of agency rates has actually declined.

The 2018 CBTI/BKVT report also included data on rate satisfaction, but it used a binary scale (satisfied vs. not satisfied), which limits direct comparison with our findings. In our dataset, approximately one-third of respondents reported feeling neutral ('Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied').

An interesting finding from the Swiss data is that freelance translators report receiving the same hourly rate from direct clients for revision and PE tasks. This trend may be seen as a positive development, suggesting a growing recognition of the value of translators' expertise, regardless of whether the task involves revising human translation or post-editing machine-generated output. This is also particularly noteworthy given that PE tasks are typically remunerated on a per-word basis and at lower rates than traditional translation assignments. However, this development also raises important questions regarding productivity expectations.

Are freelancers expected to achieve the same output, measured in words or lines per hour, for both revision and PE? Recent research has shown that the two tasks differ considerably in this regard, with PE requiring more time than traditional revision (Girletti, 2024). This leads us to question whether time allocations are calculated in advance and, if so, whether they are based on realistic estimates for each task type. Similarly, we may wonder whether freelancers are subject to time pressure from their direct clients. Our study does not provide data on these dimensions, but they clearly represent important avenues for future research.

While our study provides insights into freelance translation rates, certain limitations of the data must be acknowledged. First, the data reflect a single point in time, with 2023/2024 as the reference period. Second, obtaining reliable data on rates–particularly in Switzerland–proved challenging. This may be due to the sensitive nature of the topic; indeed, competition and market authorities often discourage professional associations from offering guidance on rates or engaging in rate-setting practices. In our analysis, we focused exclusively on specific rate figures rather than ranges, as the latter tend to be highly variable and thus of limited practical use. Based on this experience, we suggest that future research prioritize the collection of precise rate data over ranges, in order to increase the proportion of exploitable data.

Our study also provides valuable data on income satisfaction, revealing notable differences between the two countries surveyed. Satisfaction is significantly higher among Swiss respondents than among their Belgian counterparts. While this discrepancy may partly reflect broader differences in living standards[8], other contributory factors could include the composition of the national samples. The Belgian sample relies more heavily on agency work and includes a greater proportion of younger and less experienced freelancers than the Swiss sample.

Additionally, it is important to consider the possibility of survivor bias in the Swiss data–namely, that the perspectives of those who are close to leaving the profession (often for reasons of dissatisfaction or unprofitability) are mostly underrepresented. This may lead to an overly optimistic interpretation of income satisfaction and obscure the structural challenges faced by freelance translators. Notably, the 2025 edition of the ELIS survey reports a similar figure for income satisfaction, with 57% of respondents stating that they earn enough from their freelance activity (2025, p. 40). However, survivor bias may also be in play in the ELIS findings, particularly in light of the 29% decrease in freelance respondents between the 2024 and 2025 editions.

Across the two countries, the reasons for income dissatisfaction are largely consistent and echo concerns raised in previous academic and grey literature. Our study contributes added value by offering more nuanced, country-specific insights into how these issues play out. For instance, our data have shown that competition from translators living abroad is acutely felt in Switzerland.

Contrary to the findings on income satisfaction, job satisfaction levels were relatively comparable between the two countries, although slightly higher in Switzerland. The primary drivers of satisfaction in both groups include enjoyment of the work itself, autonomy, flexibility, and the good work-life balance afforded by the freelance profession. These findings are consistent with broader European trends and previous academic research (Inbox Translation, 2023; Piecychna, 2019; SFT, 2022; Walker et al., 2024). Anxiety and uncertainty surrounding the impact of artificial intelligence on future rates and working conditions were frequently mentioned in our data, echoing concerns reported in other recent studies. While stress and time pressure have been consistently identified as key sources of professional dissatisfaction in the literature (e.g. Bednárová-Gibová, 2021; Courtney & Phelan, 2019; Ehrensberger-Dow & Massey, 2019; Rodríguez-Castro, 2015), our survey results do not reflect this pattern. On the contrary, several respondents pointed to a decline in workload, a trend also reported in the ELIS 2025 findings.

## Concluding remarks

This study has examined pricing methods, actual rates, and levels of income satisfaction for translation, revision, and PE services among almost 400 freelance translators based in Belgium and Switzerland, two multilingual European markets. In doing so, it has contributed to a growing but still underexplored body of academic research on the economics of translation, while addressing a clear gap in country-specific, service-differentiated data.

Our findings echo key industry trends, especially falling rates and reduced workloads linked to the rise of MT and AI. The study also reveals new insights, such as the difference in pricing methods between countries and services. While hourly rates are widely considered the fairest model by freelancers, especially for revision and post-editing, they are not consistently adopted in practice, particularly when working with agencies, which favor word- and line-based pricing. An important finding of our study, however, is that the discrepancy between preferred and actual pricing methods does not appear to contribute significantly to dissatisfaction. Instead, it is the level of rates themselves that emerges as the primary concern. This suggests that the specific pricing method, whether per character, word, line, page, or hour, is perceived as less critical than the fairness of the compensation.

Income satisfaction emerged as a key point of divergence between the two countries studied. While Swiss freelancers generally report high income satisfaction, the opposite trend is observed in Belgium. Despite this difference, respondents in both countries cite remarkably similar reasons for dissatisfaction: low or declining income, irregular demand, difficulty in raising rates, the negative impact of AI on workload, and a general lack of recognition of the profession. These findings suggest that even in contexts where income levels are relatively higher, structural concerns persist and contribute to broader uncertainty about the long-term viability of freelance translation. Despite these concerns, job satisfaction remains relatively high in both countries, particularly in Switzerland, highlighting the intrinsic appeal of translation-related work and the benefits associated with freelance autonomy. However, this is clearly tempered by growing anxiety about the profession's future, particularly in relation to the rise of AI.

Finally, the undervaluing of translation-related services often mentioned by the survey respondents is closely linked to a broader, systemic lack of recognition of the profession by translation buyers and the public at large. This long-standing issue has been exacerbated in recent years by the increasing capabilities of AI, which further distort perceptions of the value and complexity of human translation work. Though some promising initiatives aimed at educating non-translators (Bowker, 2023) and translation buyers have emerged in specific contexts, such as the Swiss Confederation (Di Rosa & Röthlisberger, 2024), there remains a pressing need to expand such efforts on a broader scale.

For future research, a logical next step is to use inferential statistics to examine how various factors, such as language combinations, domains of specialization, services offered, pricing methods, and the proportion of direct clients, affect income satisfaction among freelance translators. This point is particularly significant given the marked differences between the two populations surveyed, such as the greater reliance on direct clients in Switzerland compared to the reliance on agencies in Belgium. Such analysis would provide deeper insight into the economic dynamics of the profession and help identify general and country-specific factors that contribute to more sustainable freelance careers.

Finally, this study has paved the way for a growing recognition of the need for deeper academic engagement with the economic realities of freelance translation. As Lambert and Walker (2024, p. 100) aptly note, '[more] impactful research co-designed and co-created with the industry will have far greater ability to effect change than academia acting in isolation'. This is a view we strongly share. Meaningful change in the profession requires closer collaboration between practitioners, professional associations, translation scholars, and trainers.

## Notes

1. The 2023 survey was carried out in collaboration with Inbox Translation (https://inboxtranslation.com/resources/research/freelance-translator-survey-2023/), and a preliminary report was authored by Walker et al. (2024).
2. The article is in French: https://www.tradupreneurs.fr/facturation-basee-sur-la-valeur/
3. See https://ahc.leeds.ac.uk/directory-record/1872/chasing-status-the-sustainability-of-the-freelance-translation-profession-in-the-united-kingdom

4. We did not collect data on participants' gender in order to minimize the gathering of demographic information not directly relevant to our research questions.
5. https://www.limesurvey.org/
6. In the survey, respondents were asked to indicate their main language combination. However, some respondents listed multiple combinations. In these cases, only the first-mentioned combination was taken into consideration. When all reported language combinations are taken into account, the percentages change slightly. In Belgium: Dutch into French (27%), French into Dutch (21%), English into French (22%), and English into Dutch (16%). In Switzerland: German into French (40%), German into Italian (18%), and French into German (19%).
7. Ranges accounted for around 8% and 14% of rate mentions in Belgium and Switzerland respectively.
8. In 2024, Switzerland ranked first for the Cost of Living Index and third for the Local Purchasing Power Index, while Belgium ranked 14th and 11th respectively. Retrieved on April 23, 2025, from https://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/

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## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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