

Government Consultation Responses Confirm Support for Raising Fees for Interpreters

[Government's consultation response confirms legal aid fees for Illegal Migration Act work](#)

Electronic Immigration Network (Extracts)

Further consideration will be given to a variety of other areas, such as interpreters fees and disbursements, and changes will be made where required.

Interpreter services

Consultation summary

79/. Many respondents (31%) supported increasing fees for interpreters. One of the main suggestions was that interpreter fees have not increased with inflation and therefore should be increased to address a lack of 'suitability qualified interpreters' created by low remuneration and to widen the available number of interpreters to work at short notice. Interpreter fees are £25 an hour and have not increased since 2011, with one provider stating it was 'nearly impossible' to find interpretation services. One respondent noted that 'a key tenet of receiving quality legal advice is being able to comprehend said advice' and that lower fees and thus lesser capacity of interpreters have decreased the usefulness of legal advice received by non-English speaking individuals, which is 'indispensable' to access to justice.

Wider stakeholder feedback

80/. Several stakeholders in roundtables also commented on the difficulty of securing interpreters, which many linked to low interpreter fees and the nature of requests - for example, last-minute and for a brief period of time. Given these difficulties, organising interpreters was described as a time-consuming task, reducing solicitors' capacity to do casework. In their joint letter to the MoJ, 66 providers raised similar views, calling for interpretation fees to be recalculated in line with inflation.

Government response

81/. The Government acknowledges the issues raised around interpreter fees and recognises this as an issue requiring further consideration and longer-term solutions. This was not a policy the Government consulted upon within the consultation; however, we thank respondents for raising comments on this matter which will further inform our consideration of this matter.

170/. After careful consideration of the responses, the LAA and MoJ will also further consider a variety of other areas, such as interpreters fees and disbursements, and after further consideration will make changes where required.

Additional measures

41/. Across Questions 1 and 2, respondents stated that additional measures would be required to improve the effectiveness of the 15% increase. The further measures mentioned included: accreditation, interpreter fees and disbursements. Some also stated that additional measures were needed but did not specify further. Those responses have been summarised in Chapter 4.

Wider stakeholder feedback

68/. Stakeholders at the roundtables called for changes to the current payment structures, commenting on slow billing timings which can stretch over multiple years, and related cash flow issues. These comments are primarily related to Home Office processes. Some providers suggested that the LAA should also speed up payment of disbursements, for example, for interpreters or medical experts. The open letter from 66 signatories also echoed this point and suggested that the LAA should ensure that PoAs for Controlled Work are made every three months.