

Reference: 1921285

Information Requests
information.requests@ofcom.org.uk

10 December 2024

Freedom of Information request: Right to know request

Thank you for your request for information about translation and interpretation services at Ofcom.

We received this request on 12 November 2024 and we have considered your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (“the FOI Act”).

Your request

1. How much has Ofcom spent on translation and interpretation services in the past year?
2. How much of this is for investigating complaints?
3. Apart from English, are there any languages that Ofcom can investigate complaints in without the need for translators or interpreters?
4. Are there any in-house translators or interpreters that work for Ofcom? If so, what languages do they provide translations and/or interpretations for?
5. Does Ofcom use third-party translation or interpretation services? If so, what languages have they provided Ofcom in the last year?

Our response

1. How much has Ofcom spent on translation and interpretation services in the past year?

By way of background, as Ofcom is a public body with an office in Cardiff, we must comply with [Welsh language legislation \(PDF, 360.3 KB\)](#). Since 25 January 2017, we’ve been working in partnership with the [Welsh Language Commissioner](#) on implementing our Welsh language standards. This legislation sets out how Ofcom must provide and promote services through the Welsh language. [Ofcom’s final compliance notice \(PDF, 360.3 KB\)](#) from the Welsh Language Commissioner carries Ofcom’s full authority, support and approval.

From November 2023 to October 2024, we have spent a total of £153,970 on translators and interpreters, of which £118,846 was spent on Welsh language translation.

2. How much of this is for investigating complaints?

For the same period our records show that out of the total spend above, £12,395 was used by our Standards and Audience Protection team who handle broadcast standards complaints.

3. *Apart from English, are there any languages that Ofcom can investigate complaints in without the need for translators or interpreters?*

We can investigate broadcast standards complaints using in-house resource for programmes in languages other than English for programmes in Urdu, Pashto/Pushto, Arabic, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujrati and French.

4. *Are there any in-house translators or interpreters that work for Ofcom? If so, what languages do they provide translations and/or interpretations for?*

Colleagues in our Standards and Audience Protection team are able to provide translations in Urdu, Pashto/Pushto, Arabic, Punjabi, Hindi, Gujrati and French for programmes in these languages. We contract out our Welsh language requirements to a third party, however colleagues in our Wales office may translate short documents and other pieces of texts as required.

5. *Does Ofcom use third-party translation or interpretation services? If so, what languages have they provided Ofcom in the last year?*

To enable us to meet our legal obligations and to investigate broadcast programmes in languages beside English, Ofcom do use third party translation and interpretation services. For the period November 2023 to October 2024, we have been provided with services in Welsh, British Sign Language, Gaelic, Arabic, Urdu and have used the services of a stenographer.

We hope this information is helpful. If you have any further queries, then please send them to information.requests@ofcom.org.uk – quoting the reference number above in any future communications.

Yours sincerely,

Information Requests

Request an internal review

If you are unhappy with the response you have received to your request for information, or think that your request was refused without a reason valid under the law, you may ask for an internal review. If you do, it will be subject to an independent review within Ofcom. We will either uphold the original decision, or reverse or modify it.

If you would like to ask us to carry out an internal review, you should get in touch within two months of the date of this letter. There is no statutory deadline for us to complete our internal review, and the time it takes will depend on the complexity of the request. But we will try to complete the review within 20 working days (or no more than 40 working days in exceptional cases) and keep you informed of our progress. Please email the Information Requests team (information.requests@ofcom.org.uk) to request an internal review.

Taking it further

If you are unhappy with the outcome of our internal review, then you have the right to [complain to the Information Commissioner's Office](#).