



Society for Technical Communication (STC)

France Chapter

France Salary Survey 2003

The Society for Technical Communication France Chapter conducts a bi-annual salary survey. This is the fifth survey since 1992.

The 2003 survey was conducted online for the first time.

The link to the survey was emailed to STC France members, posted on the TECHWR-L listserv, and sent to various technical communication organizations in Europe, including CRT, FIT, EASE, LISA, OTTIAQ, SDR, TEKOM, and the technical communication certificate program at the American University of Paris. Respondents were encouraged to forward the link to the survey to their colleagues in technical communications, whether or not they are affiliated with the STC. Our goal was to get as reliable a picture of the market as possible; therefore we made the survey available to as many people as we could reach.

This survey was made available to technical communicators throughout Europe. There were a total of 109 completed questionnaires. Of these, 49 respondents work in France. This report summarizes the responses from respondents who work in France. A separate report summarizes the Europe responses as a whole.

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Salaries in France

The average salary shown by the survey decreased since the last survey in 2001.

This is partly due to a shift in the type of respondent. The proportion of entry level and younger respondents increased since the last survey. There was also a decreased proportion of respondents with masters' degrees since the last survey. Fewer people cited documentation management as their primary activity. Therefore we could infer that the proportion of managers in the respondent pool has decreased, thus decreasing the salary levels of respondents as a whole. The 2003 report shows a significant difference between the Supervisory and Non-Supervisory salaries.

Average salary

The following table shows mean (average) salary for technical communicators working in France.

Grouping	Number of Respondents	Mean gross annual salary (Euros)
Total	46	41 596
Employment Level*		
Entry Level	11 (24%)	29 844
Mid Level, Non-Supervisory	15 (33%)	39 467
Mid Level, Supervisory	6 (13%)	44 017
Senior Level, Non-Supervisory	8 (17%)	39 443
Senior Level, Supervisory	6 (13%)	68 915
Years of Experience in Technical Communication		
Less than 2 years	10 (21%)	28 750
2-5 years	20 (43%)	38 300
6-10 years	8 (17%)	48 000
11 years or more	8 (17%)	52 203

*Respondents classified themselves as entry-level, mid-level, or senior-level. In a separate question, they indicated whether they supervised other technical communicators, i.e., whether other technical communicators reported directly to them. These statistics combine the information gathered in the two questions.

Salary distribution

The following table shows the distribution of salaries for technical communicators who are working in France.

In this table, *n%* means that *n%* of the responses were below this value, and the remaining responses were above this value. 50% is equal to the median.

Grouping	Gross Annual Salary (Euros)				
	10%	25%	50% (median)	75%	90%
Total	25 400	32 100	39 000	47 775	59 500
Employment Level					
Entry Level	22 800	28 100	29 000	32 000	39 000
Mid Level, Non-Supervisory	25 920	33 950	38 500	45 500	52 200
Mid Level, Supervisory	35 000	37 000	43 550	47 775	53 500
Senior Level, Non-Supervisory	31 753	36 894	39 500	44 366	49 697
Senior Level, Supervisory	49 607	58 500	69 500	77 500	87 639
Years of Experience in Technical Communication					
Less than 2 years	21 318	24 100	28 750	31 500	36 300
2-5 years	31 620	33 750	38 300	43 500	47 428
6-10 years	38 273	41 765	48 000	56 000	69 883
11 years or more	34 150	43 160	52 203	69 250	73 000

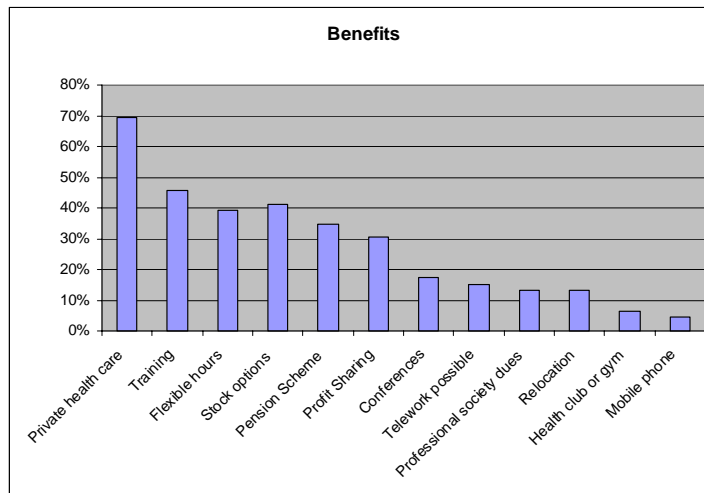
Benefits

The most common benefit is private health care.

Many respondents receive training benefits, although not as many as in previous surveys. Training as a benefit dropped from 64% in 2001 to 45% in this survey. As detailed in the Education section, many people seem to be taking advantage of the training offered.

This survey did not ask about standard French benefits, including sécurité sociale retirement and basic health care, five weeks of vacation, a 35-hour work week (or the equivalent in RTT compensation time), luncheon vouchers, transportation vouchers, and the comité d'entreprise.

Private health care	70%
Training	45%
Flexible hours	40%
Stock options	40%
Pension Scheme	36%
Profit Sharing	30%
Conferences	17%
Telework possible	15%
Professional society dues	13%
Relocation	13%
Health club or gym	6%
Mobile phone	4%



Contractors

The median rate charged by contractors is 60 Euros per hour.

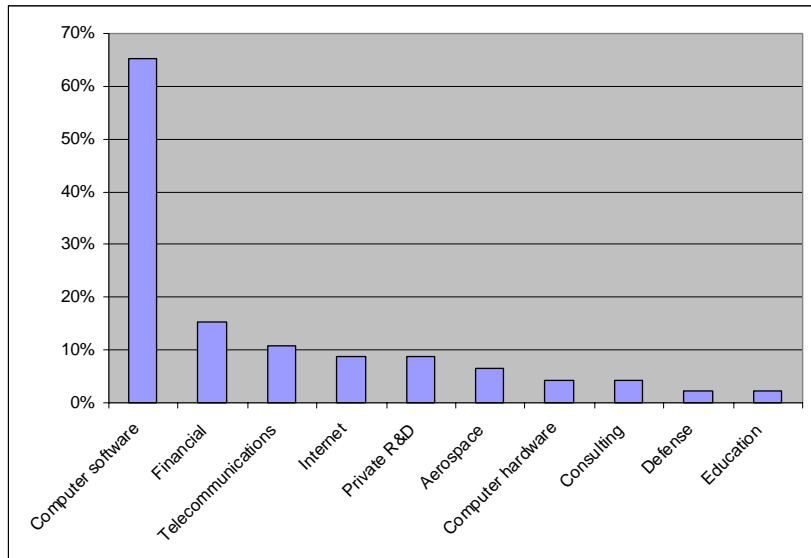
Note that we received only three responses from contractors in France, so this figure is based on a small sample. Since we received a greater number of responses from contractors in Europe as a whole, we have presented more detailed information about contractors in the Europe salary survey report.

Industries

The vast majority of respondents are working in the computer software industry.

There has been a significant decrease in the number of respondents working in the telecommunications industry, down from 23% in 2001 to 13% today. However, the financial industry has recovered from the drop in 2001.

Computer software	64%
Financial	15%
Telecommunications	13%
Internet	9%
Private R&D	9%
Aerospace	6 %
Computer hardware	4 %
Consulting	4%
Defense	2%
Education	2%



(more than one answer could be given)

This table below shows the evolution of the industries in which respondents have worked over the past decade. Only the most frequently selected industries are shown. The computer software, telecommunications and financial industries have always been the largest employers of technical communicators in France.

	2003	2001	1999	1996	1992
Computer software	64%	51%	58%	48%	76%
Financial	15%	5%	14%	7%	-
Telecommunications	13%	23%	16%	11%	-
Internet	9%	8%	-	-	-
Private R&D	9%	-	4%	-	-
Aerospace	6 %	3%	4%	4%	8%
Computer hardware*	4 %	NA	NA	NA	NA
Consulting	4%	-	8%	9%	12%
Defense	2%	5%	-	4%	8%
Education	2%	-	2%	4%	-
Medical	-	3%	4%	4%	-
	n = 49	n = 39	n = 50	n = 46	n = 25

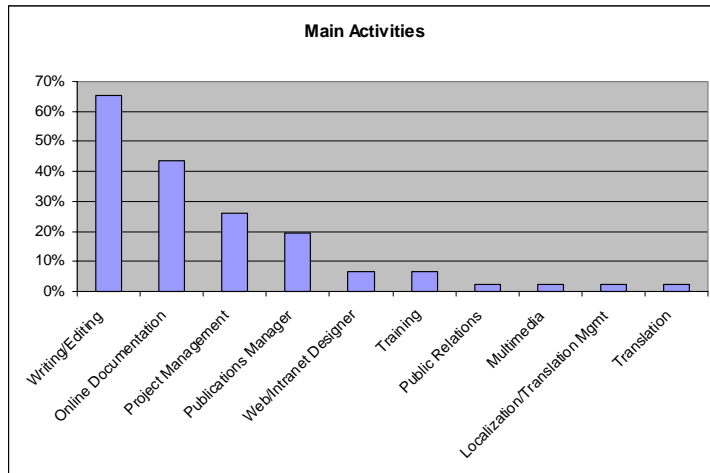
*New option in 2003.

Main Activities

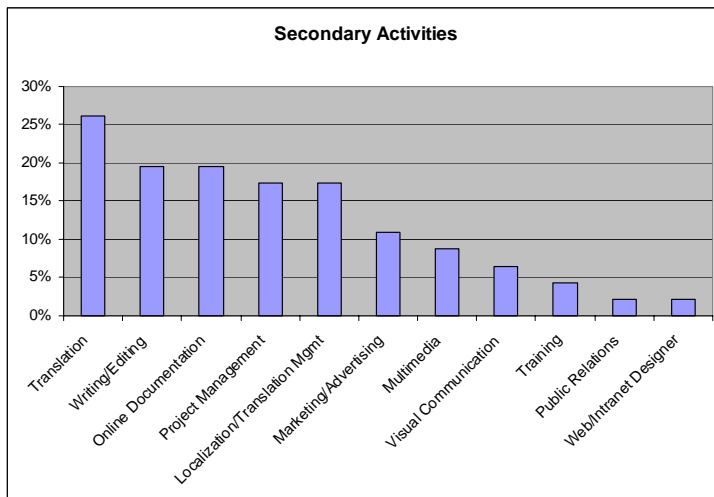
Most respondents spend most of their time writing and editing. There has been an increase in the proportion of people doing online documentation, up from 23% in 2001 and 10% in 1999. There has been a decrease in the proportion of people who cited “Publications Manager” as their main or secondary activity (23% and 18% respectively in 2001).

Main Activities

Writing/Editing	66%
Online Documentation	43%
Project Management	26%
Publications Manager	20%
Web/Intranet Designer	7%
Training	7%
Public Relations	2%
Multimedia	2%
Localization/Translation Management	2%
Translation	2%



There has been a large increase in the number of respondents doing translation as a secondary activity, up from 18% in 2001 and 2% in 1999 to 26% in this survey. In the 2001 survey 16% of respondents were involved in localization/translation management. This percentage has remained stable.



Secondary Activities

Translation	26%
Writing/Editing	20%
Online Documentation	20%
Project Management	17%
Localization/Translation Management	17%
Marketing/Advertising	11%
Multimedia	9%
Visual Communication	7%
Training	4%
Public Relations	2%
Web/Intranet Designer	2%

Employment

94% of respondents are currently employed full time. 2% are employed part time.

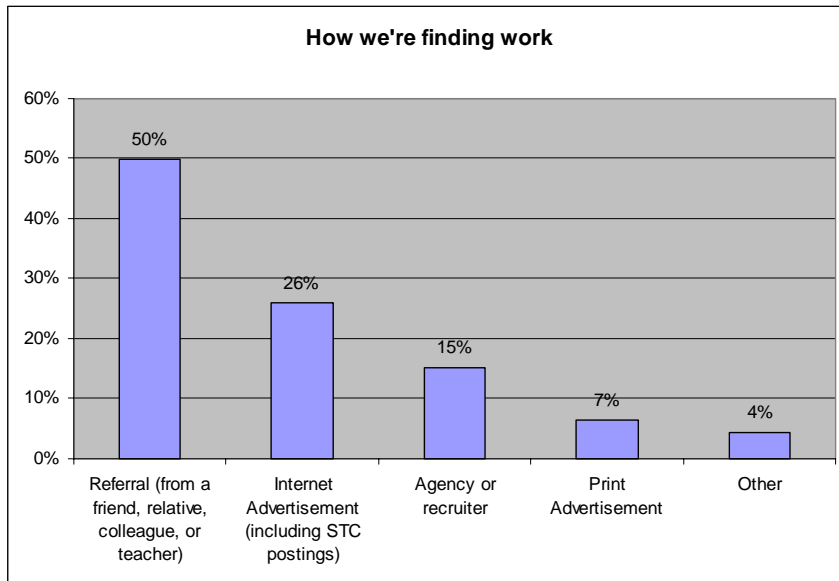
Currently, 4% of respondents are unemployed. 15% were unemployed for some period of time since January 2002. The average (mean) months of unemployment is 5.2.

9% of respondents changed fields in the past year. Examples of field changes include machine translation to human translation, translator to technical writer, and documentation manager to project manager.

Employment resources

Although it is not reflected by the graph, 6% of respondents were hired because of school connections; either they were hired by one of their teachers, or they found their job through their college placement office. Those who were hired by one of their teachers are reflected in the “Referral” category.

Reflected in the “Other” category are those who found their job through the college placement office, and those who were promoted internally.



Qualifications

Education

Nearly all respondents have a college degree. However, the proportion of respondents with master's degrees has decreased since 2001, down from 50% to 28%.

Most degrees were either in communication (languages, technical writing, or translation), or in engineering.

55% have a diploma in technical communication, which is similar to the result in 2001.

36% received training in technical communication during the last 12 months. The duration of training ranged from 2 days to 18 months. All training was done in a classroom; none via a correspondence course.

High school	6%
Deug (high school + 2-3 years)	13%
Bachelors (high school + 4-5 years)	55%
Masters (high school + 6-8 years)	28%
PhD (high school + 9 or more years)	4%

Memberships

30% of the respondents who are working in France are members of the Society for Technical Communication (STC). Of these, all are members of the France chapter. 70% of respondents are not STC members.

This low STC membership level could be related to the fact that only 13% of respondents had their memberships paid for by their employers, as shown in the Benefits section. The number of respondents who had their STC membership paid for by their employer has fallen significantly since the last survey (46% in 2001).

Languages

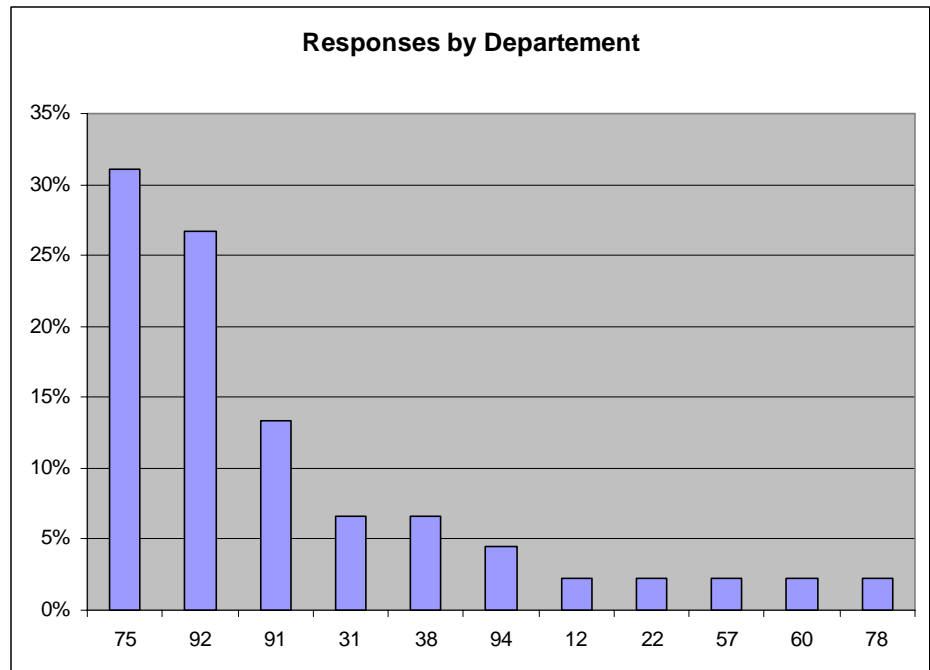
There has been a significant increase in the number of respondents who have French as their first language since 2001: 51% speak French as a first language, while in 2001 26% were native Francophones. 47% speak English as a first language (a decrease from 72% in 2001). Other first languages included German.

98% of respondents speak a second language. 53% speak English as a second language. 47% speak French as a second language. Other second languages included German, Spanish, and Italian.

62% said their level of competency in their second language is excellent. 40% said it was good. 85% said they use their second language regularly in their work. 11% said they use it occasionally. 4% said they use it rarely or never. These percentages are fairly similar to those of the last survey.

Geographical distribution

Most of the survey responses were from Paris and the outlying areas. The graph shows the proportion of responses by département.



Demographics

36% of respondents are male. 64% are female. The male/female proportion has remained roughly constant for several years.

The age distribution has changed dramatically since the last survey. Survey respondents this year are much younger than in previous years.

