

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

by the TRANSLATOR SCAMMERS INTELLIGENCE GROUP

www.translator-scammers.com

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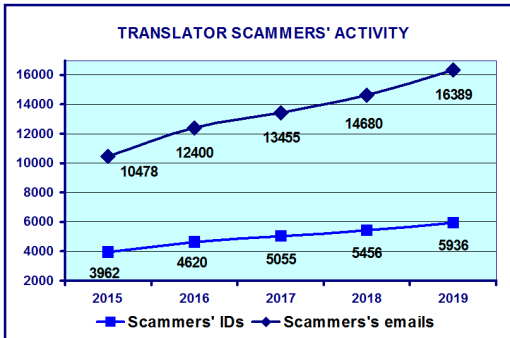
Our year online

Scammers live online, operate online, and try to hide online. Our mission is to expose their operation and hiding places and to make their lives a living hell. Yes, the CV scam is real, and our rule is simple: whatever scammers make public, we publish it online for everyone to see! Below is a summary of our activities in 2019.

Items Tracked	2015	2016	Change from 2015	2017	Change from 2016	2018	Change from 2017	2019	Change from 2018
SCAMMERS' IDS EXPOSED (1)	3962	4620	17%	5055	9%	5456	8%	5937	9%
<i>New scammers' IDs created per MONTH</i>	64	55	-15%	36	-34%	33	-8%	40	20%
SCAMMERS' EMAIL ADDRESSES EXPOSED	10478	12400	18%	13455	9%	14680	9%	16389	12%
<i>New scammers' emails created per MONTH</i>	225	160	-29%	88	-45%	102	16%	142	40%
EMAILS SENT TO TSD	576	1940	237%	1125	-42%	3066	173%	4038	32%
<i>New Listings in Directory resulted from Emails</i>	24%	37%	54%	39%	5%	39%	0%	29%	-26%
WEBSITE PAGEVIEWS	117580	167995	43%	172280	3%	149370	-13%	57769	-61%
<i>Page views – Daily Average</i>	323	460	42%	472	3%	410	-13%	158	-61%
WEBSITE UNIQUE VISITORS	93567	104250	11%	88627	-15%	77768	-12%	39600	-49%
<i>Unique Visitors – Daily Average</i>	257	285	11%	243	-15%	213	-12%	110	-48%
WEBSITE FIRST TIME VISITORS	54851	60088	10%	44698	-26%	42100	-6%	20407	-52%
<i>First Time Visitors – Daily Average</i>	151	165	9%	123	-25%	115	-7%	56	-51%
WEBSITE RETURNING VISITORS	38716	44162	14%	43929	-1%	35668	-19%	19193	-46%
<i>Returning Visitors – Daily Average</i>	107	121	13%	120	-1%	98	-18%	54	-45%
COUNTRIES VISITED WEBSITE	208	213	2%	214	0%	215	0%	215	0%

(1) Scammer ID = Name (fake or just stolen) + Email

1. Let the numbers speak. Compared to 2018, we've noticed in 2019:



9% MORE [↑] NEW SCAMMERS' IDs (from 8% MORE in 2018)

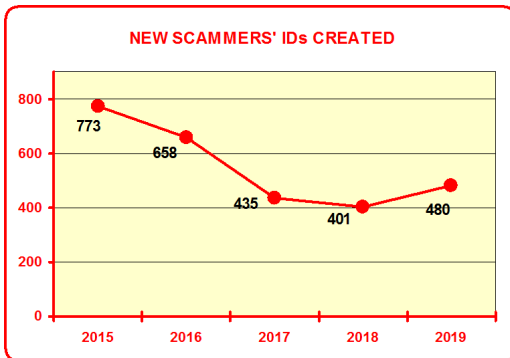
(40 per month, 480 in the year).

12% MORE [↑] NEW EMAILS (from 9% MORE in 2018)

(142 [↑] per month (MORE 40% from MORE 16%), 1709 in the year).

After NEW SCAMMERS' IDs (NAME and EMAIL) going down consistently since 2014 until 2018, with a slight deceleration in trend in 2018, we have seen a slight increase in the creation of NEW SCAMMERS' IDs (+9%) and NEW EMAILS (+12%) again in 2019.

BUT, THERE ARE ALSO GREAT NEWS: IN 2019, WE HAVE RECEIVED ONLY 2 REPORTS OF ACTUAL SCAMS STRIKING TRANSLATION COMPANIES WITH THE SAME POSITIVE OUTCOME: AFTER JOBS WERE SENT TO THE SCAMMERS, THEY HAVE BEEN BUSTED AT THE TIME OF PAYMENT AND THEY ARE STILL WAITING FOR "THEIR" MONEY.

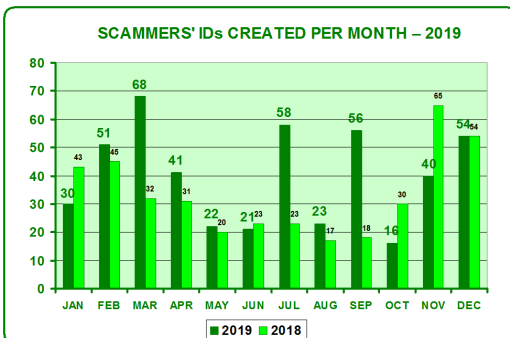


NOTE: 98% (approx.) of the fake CVs circulated in 2019 were just recycled, i.e., re-sent either from known names and emails or from NEWLY CREATED EMAILS.

Relentlessly exposed in our Directory and everywhere, scammers find no other way than creating NEW SCAMMERS' IDs in the hope that "this one will go through".

NOT ALL emails listed in our website are related to CV THEFT SCAMS. In 2019, we have CONTINUED to witness an increase of emails related to other scams targeting translators, like the impersonation of translation companies and other financial scams (mainly of the overpayment type).

We DO NOT list financial scammers individually, but we do collect and list their email addresses. This also explains the increase in the number of emails created/used by scammers.



Starting in 2018, we also analyzed the monthly distribution of FAKE CVs created throughout the year. Spikes seen in the 1st and 3rd Quarters (about 42% of the year total) are due to the desperate efforts by scammers to create new IDs ("this one will go through").

But, burned everywhere and with their names and emails systematically exposed on our website and many other platforms, scammers can only resort to keep creating new fake CVs. Only to be busted and exposed again.

WEBSITE AND VISITORS ACTIVITY

TOP 4 VISITING COUNTRIES

61% LESS WEBSITE PAGEVIEWS (61% LESS on the daily average);
49% LESS UNIQUE VISITORS TO OUR WEBSITE (48% LESS on the daily average);
52% LESS FIRST TIME VISITORS TO OUR WEBSITE (51% LESS on the daily average);
46% LESS RETURNING VISITORS TO OUR WEBSITE (45% LESS on the daily average).

United States: 23%
United Kingdom: 15%
Spain: 5%
Italy: 5%

2. **WHAT DO THE ABOVE NUMBERS MEAN?** We see all these numbers as fairly positive: after going down consistently since 2014, NEW SCAMMERS' IDs and NEW EMAILS have shown a slight acceleration in trend in 2018 and 2019. Even the drop in visits to our website indicates that the busting of fake CV and false translators is now being done by the potential victims themselves. Remember: **once you know what to look for, a fake CV can be spotted in about 30 seconds.**
4. **WHAT ABOUT THE INCREASE IN NEW SCAMMERS IDs IN 2019?** This trend deceleration is due to 4 reasons:
 - 4.1 Exposed everywhere, scammers keep on creating new IDs, in a useless attempt to avoid being busted;
 - 4.2 The increase of scammers impersonating real people from genuine translation companies, with emails showing their signature blocks and including links to their real websites in their messages to translators. Lured by the prospect of another "job", these poor suckers end up wasting their time doing jobs that never be paid;
 - 4.3 Several giveaways left by the scammers in their documents, lead us to believe that new operators, mainly from Gaza (Palestine), have joined the scamming ranks. Luckily to us all, most of them show ridiculously low skills in the scamming business, and;
 - 4.4 More translators and companies have joined the fight against scammers, leading to more scammers being exposed.
5. **RAISING AWARENESS.** We continued warning translation jobs posters about the high probability of their offers being answered by false translators with fake CVs. **The inclusion of advisories in translation job posts pages warning about this risk and the need for a careful assessment of all applicants would be a great service to all in the Translation Community.**
6. **THE ROLE OF TRANSLATORS' PORTALS.** Scammers see (and use) translator portals as a fast and cheap way to get some sort of online footprint and "professional credibility", and, yet, shamefully and with almost total impunity, scammers do keep profiles in Translators Portals. We regularly warn the major translator portals – ProZ, TranslatorsCafé and TranslationDirectory – about any profiles kept by scammers in their directories. Response to delete false profiles from TranslatorsCafé continued to be swift and outstanding, TranslationDirectory is still very slow to acknowledge our warnings and delete the scammers' profiles, and we wish ProZ could be a lot more responsive to deny scammers access to their portal. Here is one example:

On 26FEB2018 (ALMOST TWO YEARS AGO!), we warned ProZ about ghost "Ken Toshi" (aka jap4trans / jap4trans@gmail.com) keeping a profile (1930181) on their portal. This excerpt of "Ken" CV is self-explanatory:

Ken-Toshi Fake name
English <-> Japanese

Personal details: Since 2014, on ProZ (profile: 1930181)

- Name: Ken-Toshi
- Address1: 3-34-17 Eifuku Suginami-ku, Tokyo, Japan A night club in Tokyo?
- Address2: 11 Harriott Close, London, UK Belongs to translator Olga Jurczuk
- Date of birth: 5/2/1975
- Email: jap4trans@gmail.com "4trans" is a known hallmark from Gaza scammers

Languages:

- Japanese: mother-tongue.
- English: excellent in reading, writing and speaking

Olga Jurczuk
GENUINE TRANSLATOR
United Kingdom
Mother Tongues: Polish, English
Time zone: not defined

Activity statistics of Olga Jurczuk

Services and Rates	Subject Areas

Contact Information

Address: 11 Harriott Close, London, SE10 0JP, United Kingdom
Phone: +447756351081
Joined: Monday, July 9, 2012, last update Wednesday, July 11, 2012
The user's last log on was more than two years ago. Messaging is disabled.

After being aggressively exposed, the scammer behind "Ken Toshi" changed the name on the ProZ profile to **Ken4translation** and created another email address: **ken4translation@gmail.com**:

Ken Toshi
English <-> Japanese

Personal details:

- Name: Ken Toshi
- Address1: 3-34-17 Eifuku Suginami-ku, Tokyo, Japan
- Address2: 11 Harriott Close, London, UK
- Date of birth: 5/2/1975
- Email: Ken4translation@gmail.com

TO THIS DATE (AND SINCE MAY 2014), THIS FAKE PROFILE IS STILL ONLINE.

In our [Translator Scammers Directory \(PDF edition\)](#), we now have a section listing the profiles kept by scammers in Translators Portals.

7. **DATABASE OF FAKE CVs.** The Database of Fake CVs (yes, the fake CVs themselves) now has **3938 files** (520 were added in 2019). More fake CVs are constantly being added as they are processed or become available. Also, please read the information about accessing the database **very carefully**.
8. **WHERE SCAMMERS LIVE.** The [Directory of FAKE OR STOLEN addresses, phone numbers, VAT numbers and other ID data shown on the scammers' CVs](#) continues to grow. It now contains **3332 entries (2996 in 2019)** and is becoming one more invaluable tool in the fight against translator scammers.
9. **IS THIS SCAM SERIOUS?** With EACH fake CV emailed by the scammers to about 2000 to 3000 recipients and with about 130 fake CVs circulated worldwide EVERY WEEK, what do you think, is it serious?
10. **IS THIS EXPOSURE OF SCAMMERS WORKING?** Clearly, yes: **new scammers' IDs and new emails are going down consistently since 2014 (with a slight increase in 2018 and 2019)**. And, above all, genuine translators and companies are being warned not fuel the scammers' "business": no jobs and no money for scammers and impersonators. **Shamefully, despite our warnings, we continued to see some translation companies, mainly based in India, Pakistan and other Far East countries, working with or granting safe haven to false translators.** Do their clients know how their documents are being handled?
11. **C'MON GUYS, IT'S 2020 AND WE HAVE INTERNET!** Also worrying are the many translators and companies who lack active knowledge about the scammers operation and those who regularly come forward publicly to tell us all that they have fallen victims to all sorts of scams, from stolen/fake CVs to overpayment and other online scams. Where do you live? In Wonderland? In the twilight zone? And what about the many others who never publicly share their losses to scams?
12. **TWITTER IS PROTECTING SCAMMERS:** On Jul 24, 2019, 11:47 AM, we have been notified by Twitter that our account had been suspended: "Your account, tsdirectory has been suspended for violating the Twitter Rules. Specifically, for: Violating our rules against posting private information." For the record: our tweet exposed JOHN BOURRY (a fantasy name created by scammers) using the emails john.bourry.french@gmail.com & john.bourry.pro@gmail.com to circulate a CV stolen from a translator based in France. Because our tweet included the FAKE address and phone numbers used by the scammer, Twitter saw that as to "publish or post other people's private information without their express authorization."

[Read our TSD Bulletin 01 / 2019 about this issue.](#)

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13. **STUPID SCAMMERS 1:** On July 29, 2019, a Vanda Mark / vandamark77@gmail.com / vandamark@hotmail.com wrote to us complaining about a UK company not paying her: **"This is a bad situation and stolen company. Please put it in your website for scammer"**, she said. The scammer behind "Vanda" even tried to open an account at an online payment portal with a photo of "her" German "passport" (see below). When confronted with this bizarre situation, "Vanda" replied: **"I have said that by mistake"**. And, when busted, "she" did what scammers do, i.e., threaten to defame the company online: **"I will put your name in all sites in the Internet that you have stolen my money"**. Now, "Vanda" is still waiting for "her" money, aren't you, Vanda?



Vanda Mark's beautiful "German passport" with the "Mustermann" signature



Specimen of the German identity card (image taken online)

STUPID SCAMMERS 2: We let scammers know that we keep a very keen eye on their emails and fake CVs. And when we did that to Kitty Willems / kwillems355@gmail.com, she quickly responded **"Hello, Thanks a lot for contacting me. I am available and interested."** That's exactly what an English-<>German false translator would respond, if you send him a Dutch-Russian job!

We were featured

We continued to see a large number of translators, translation companies and other players in the translation world [talking about our work and our Directory in their websites, blogs and other sources](#). In 2019, we were featured in the following original online publications, and in posts and comments in translation portals and social media too numerous to mention individually. A big Thank You to you all:

Date	Publication Title	By / Source
Jan 2019	<i>How to write an effective translator CV - according to our Vendor Manager</i>	Németh Nikolett, Language Experts Group, Hungary
Apr 2018	<i>Translation Scams, Part I. Recognizing and Avoiding Scams (SlavFile Reprint)</i>	Olga Shostachuk, ATA Slavic Languages Division
May 2019	<i>Translator-Scammers: alles nur Fälschung</i>	Alexandre Nefedov, Techtrans-Russia
June 2019	<i>Attention aux faux traducteurs !</i>	Pop Translation, France
Oct 2019	<i>Tips en hulpmiddelen (Tips and Tools)</i>	Anouschka Schutte (Jouw Vertaler), The Netherlands
2019	<i>Listas de traductores Scammers y listas negras de empresas de traducción</i>	Micaela González, Biblioteca Digital de la Facultad de Lenguas. Universidad Nacional del Comahue, Argentina

Acknowledgments

Our work and this Report would not have been possible without the support and collaboration of the many independent translators and translation companies who tirelessly share with us data, emails, fake CVs and other documents circulated by scammers, and more are joining this fight every day. Without your dedication – you know who you are – scammers would have a much easier life. A very special appreciation goes to our top 6 very determined champions in 2019:

Source	Geographic origin	Exposure contributed
M.M	France	529 emails / 529 scammers
S.D.	Belgium	245 emails / 187 scammers
K.K	United States	218 emails / 218 scammers
R.C.	France	186 emails / 210 scammers
P.E.	United Kingdom	178 emails / 637 scammers
T.L.P.	United States	147 emails / 153 scammers

and many, many others, for the many fake CV shared with us daily.

How the CV Scam works — A reminder

CVs from legitimate freelance translators are stolen from translation websites or when provided by unwary and gullible translators to unscrupulous scammers posing as job providers and then modified with made-up names (sometimes, the victim's name is even kept unchanged in the scammed CV) and emails controlled by the scammers. Remember, **the CV Scam is based on ONE thing, and ONE thing ONLY: an email address (or several email addresses) created and operated by scammers as their point of contact**. Forget about street addresses, phone numbers or video chats: scammers communicate by email only, and only in English. Asked by an Italian company why "she" didn't write in Italian, one false "Italian translator" responded: **"I talk with all my clients with English language even if they are Italian, because of a lot of reasons such that to find my emails easily when I need to search about anything, to improve my English language and a lot of things that make my works easier"**. Or, "Carlito Tronci", when asked for a phone or Skype interview by a US company, replied: **"I have a speaking problems, my vocal cords damaged due to an old accident"**!

Then, armed with their "impressive" CVs, claiming proficiency in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Turkish, and Dutch (and always "capable" to translate in every direction) and boasting a ridiculous list of degrees from 4 Universities from 3 different continents in a span of 5 or 6 years, including language studies abroad of their own native language (!) these "multi-skilled" and "multi-language" ghosts go online, trying to lure unsuspecting clients with their "skills", or responding to online job posts. As for their prices, scammers tend to follow what they perceive as "market fees", to which they undercut 2 or 3 cents, i.e., just enough for some greedy, but careless and wide-eyed, companies believe they've found Treasury Island... Then, if a job lands on their computers, scammers will just deliver some Google-translated gibberish or turn into "companies" or "independent PMs" and try to attract the cheapest operators they can find, which, in the end, are either not paid or just paid no more than miserable rates. Yes, the client-victim will never use them again, but the damage has been done.

And who are the scammers' victims? Scammers spare or respect no one: from translators living in poor African countries to those living in richer European or American cities, everyone is prey to their scamming madness, but particularly those with years of experience to whom they snatch their credentials. And when busted, scammers initiate threats to defame their client-victims online: **"I will put you in the blacklist at all the sites"** it's a well known line.