

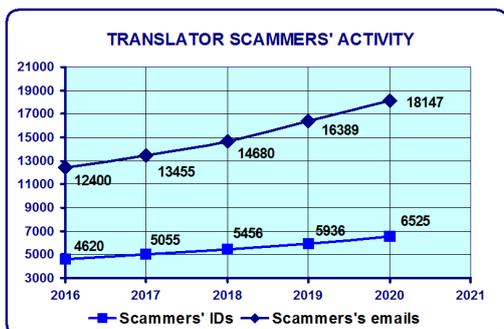
Our fight against the CV scammers

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 made public, we published it online for everyone to see!

1. **LET THE NUMBERS SPEAK.** Compared to 2019, we've noticed in 2020:

Items Tracked	2016	Change from 2015	2017	Change from 2016	2018	Change from 2017	2019	Change from 2018	2020	Change from 2019
SCAMMERS' IDS EXPOSED (1)	4620	17%	5055	9%	5456	8%	5936	9%	6525	10%
New scammers' IDs created per MONTH	55	-15%	36	-34%	33	-8%	40	20%	49	23%
SCAMMERS' EMAIL ADDRESSES EXPOSED	12400	18%	13455	9%	14680	9%	16389	12%	18147	11%
New scammers' emails created per MONTH	160	-29%	88	-45%	102	16%	142	40%	147	3%
EMAILS SENT TO TSD	1940	237%	1125	-42%	3066	173%	4038	32%	2385	-41%
New Listings in Directory resulted from Emails	37%	54%	39%	5%	39%	0%	29%	-26%	25%	-14%
WEBSITE PAGEVIEWS	167995	43%	172280	3%	149370	-13%	57769	-61%	46377	-20%
Page views – Daily Average	460	42%	472	3%	410	-13%	158	-61%	127	-20%
WEBSITE UNIQUE VISITORS	104250	11%	88627	-15%	77768	-12%	39600	-49%	34762	-12%
Unique Visitors – Daily Average	285	11%	243	-15%	213	-12%	110	-48%	95	-14%
WEBSITE FIRST TIME VISITORS	60088	10%	44698	-26%	42100	-6%	20407	-52%	20649	1%
First Time Visitors – Daily Average	165	9%	123	-25%	115	-7%	56	-51%	56	0%
WEBSITE RETURNING VISITORS	44162	14%	43929	-1%	35668	-19%	19193	-46%	14113	-26%
Returning Visitors – Daily Average	121	13%	120	-1%	98	-18%	54	-45%	39	-28%
FOLLOWERS ON TWITTER	2415	23%	2732	13%	2956	8%	3105	5%	207	n/a
COUNTRIES VISITED WEBSITE	213	2%	214	0%	215	0%	215	0%	215	0%

(1) Scammer ID: Name (fake or just stolen) + Email Traffic sources to our website: Direct: 75% • Search Engines: 21% • Website Referrals + Social Media: 4%

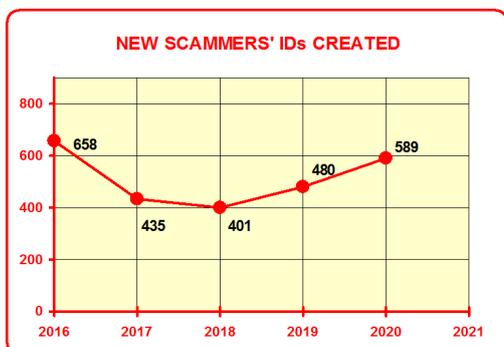


10% MORE [↑] NEW SCAMMERS' IDs (from 9% MORE in 2019)
(49 per month, 588 in the year).

11% MORE [↑] NEW EMAILS (from 12% MORE in 2019).
(147 [↑] per month (MORE 5 per month), 1,764 in the year).

Will we ever see the end of the Gaza-based CV THEFT SCAM PLAGUE?

NOTE: NOT all emails listed in our website are related to CV THEFT SCAMS. In 2020, we have CONTINUED to witness an increase of emails related to other scams targeting translators (usually originated from Africa countries), like the impersonation of translation companies and several financial scams (mainly of the overpayment type). We DO NOT list these scammers individually, but we do collect and list their email addresses. This also explains the increase of emails listed in our website.

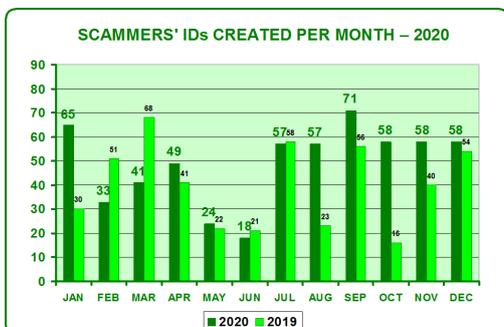


After NEW SCAMMERS' IDs (NAME + EMAIL) going down consistently since 2014 until 2018, with a slight deceleration in trend in 2018, we have seen a steady increase in the creation of NEW SCAMMERS' IDs in 2019 and again in 2020 (9% and 10%, respectively).

NOTE: approximately 98% of the fake CVs circulated in 2020 were just recycled, i.e., re-sent either from known names and emails or from NEWLY CREATED EMAILS.

Relentlessly exposed in our website since 2014 and many other online sources, scammers keep creating NEW SCAMMERS' IDs in the hope that "this one will go through".

But, no matter how big these numbers seem to be and the nuisance inflicted on the Translation Community, the cold hard fact is that the CV scam is becoming less and less profitable to scammers: to our knowledge, NO SCAMMER GOT PAID IN 2020 (see item 9. below).



Since 2018, we also analyze the monthly distribution of FAKE CVs created throughout the year. In 2020, 8 months have shown more IDs created than in the same months of 2019. This was due to the desperate efforts by scammers to create new IDs ("this one will go through").

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

WEBSITE AND VISITORS ACTIVITY

- 14% LESS WEBSITE PAGEVIEWS (20% LESS on the daily average);
- 12% LESS UNIQUE VISITORS TO OUR WEBSITE (14% LESS on the daily average);
- 1% MORE FIRST TIME VISITORS TO OUR WEBSITE** (SAME on the daily average);
- 26% LESS RETURNING VISITORS TO OUR WEBSITE (28% LESS on the daily average).

COUNTRIES WITH TOP 12 VISITORS (73% of the total)

United States:	16%	Netherlands:	5%	Czech Republic:	3%
United Kingdom:	14%	Germany:	5%	Ireland:	2%
France:	9%	Spain:	5%	Argentina:	2%
Italy:	6%	Portugal:	4%	Latvia:	2%

2. WHAT ABOUT THE INCREASE IN NEW SCAMMERS IDs IN 2020? This increase is due to 4 reasons:

- 2.1 Exposed everywhere since 2014, Palestinian scammers keep on creating new IDs (while we cannot measure how many of these resulted from CVs voluntarily sent by glibble translators to scammers in response to their infamous "Authorization and Agreement" pitches, their number may not be negligible);
- 2.2 The increase of African scammers impersonating real people from genuine translation companies, with Gmail emails showing stolen signature blocks and including links to their real websites in their emails. Lured by the prospect of a "job", translators end up wasting their time and never be paid;
- 2.3 Several giveaways left by the scammers in their emails and other documents (**see 4. below**), lead us to believe that new operators, mainly from Gaza (Palestine), have joined the scamming "business". However, luckily for us all, most of these operators show ridiculously low skills in their craft, and;
- 2.4 More translators and companies have joined the fight against scammers, leading to more scammers being exposed.

3. WHAT WERE THE CV SCAMMERS UP TO IN 2020? In one word, more of the same. But with some new twists:

- 3.1 Creating new emails for their fantasy or stolen identities, in the hope that "this one will go through";
- 3.2 Using the same genuine CVs to create several other fake CVs (sometimes the same CV has given origin to 5, 8, 12 different fake CVs);
- 3.3 More than 99% of new/recycled fake CVs are now coming from hotmail.com (but with their Gmail emails being kept active);
- 3.4 Some more creative scammers have created fake identities with websites to match: *Elias Ziegler* (eliasziegler.com) and *Jose Manuel Gomez* (jtraductor.com) were two recent examples.

4. ABOUT THE GEOGRAPHIC ORIGIN OF THE CV SCAM. Most of the CV scammers are located in Arab countries (namely Palestine and Gaza, about 99%) or other Eastern Europe and Asian countries (namely, India, Bangladesh or China). Recently, most of the emails from Palestinian scammers began showing interesting telltales in their headers:

```
Received:from AHMAD-PC (158.140.97.120) by V11PR08CA025
with Microsoft SMTP Server (version=TLS1_0, cipher=
15.20.3261.17 via Frontend Transport; Wed, 5 Aug 20
X-TMNI:[MrwNvSfaJx7Hxc4qmqj16MibhFkQxFMC]
icTrafficType:Email
```

```
Received:from baraa-PC (85.114.111.92) by AM0PR05CA00
with Microsoft SMTP Server (version=TLS1_0, cipher=
15.20.3216.22 via Frontend Transport; Mon, 27 Ju
X-TMNI:[hQIHwSq2MNuy6Sbl32ZHZ/B9UTJiz0G0]
icTrafficType:Email
```

```
Received:from ALNajjar-PC (85.114.111.92) by smtp.gmail
cipher=ECDHE-ECDSA-AES128-SHA bits=128/128
Message-ID:<5f2bb8a4.1c69fb81.6116b.8805@mx.google.com>
Date:Thu, 06 Aug 2020 01:00:36 -0700 (PDT)
Original-Date:6 Aug 2020 11:00:31 +0300
```

Of course, the [IP addresses shown on the email headers belong to Palestine/Gaza ISPs](#), and the analysis of these telltales confirmed what we already knew: the CV scam is not some playful operation carried out by some small group of Palestinians willing to make a fast buck. Rather, it is a vast and networked operation, as we can see the very same fake CVs (maybe kept in a shared pool), some already being circulated for years, being sent from various computers with various Palestinian/Gaza IP addresses.

So far, more than 1,885 emails sent by Gaza scammers show these telltales: 812 from confirmed Gaza sources (tagged "Gaza") and 1,073 showing the IDs and IPs of their computers (tagged "77*" on the [PDF Directory](#)). From one computer alone – ALNajjar-PC, tagged "771" – more than 580 fake CVs have been sent to prospective victims. These numbers keep growing by the day.

5. **WARNING JOB POSTERS.** We continued warning translation jobs posters about the high probability of their offers being also answered by scammers with fake CVs. **The inclusion of advisories in the translation job posts pages warning about this risk and the need for a careful vetting of all applicants would be a great service to all in the Translation Community.**
6. **CV SCAMMERS PROFILES IN 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. TranslationDirectory continues being very slow in deleting scammers' profiles from their lists. **In our [Translator Scammers Directory \(PDF edition\)](#) (downloaded 9786 times in 2020), we now have a section listing 177 profiles kept by scammers in Translators Portals.**
7. **DATABASE OF FAKE CVs.** The Database of Fake CVs (yes, the fake CVs themselves) now has 4653 files (3938 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 3655 entries (2996 in 2019) and is one more useful tool in the fight against translator scammers.
9. **A SCAMMER EXPOSED IS A SCAMMER BUSTED:** more than exposing scammers by the thousands, our work can be seen as more effective when scammers are denied working as false translators or simply busted, when they were already believing to be home free and waiting for their money. Below, is a summary of such successful busts registered in 2020, without any payment to scammers being reported (which doesn't mean that they didn't occur in other instances):

Scammer's name	Scammer's email	PayPal ID used by scammer	Country where busted	Scam outcome	Remarks
Andrea Artemio	andreaartemio1@gmail.com	24trans.service87@gmail.com	UK	NOT PAID	N/A
Besso Saqer Strong Translation	besso.saqer@gmail.com	UNKNOWN	LV	NOT PAID	Doc. circulated: Calscape Quiz and Test Questions 2-13-2020.docx
Carla Rossi	carla433rossi@gmail.com	UNKNOWN	UK	BUSTED	Responded to a EN-PT job offer from a UK LSP. "Carla" totally messed up the filling of the NDA form.
Conrad Graf	conrad.graf@fastmail.de	N/A	UK	NOT PAID	N/A
Elizabeth Friel	elizabeth.friel1@hotmail.com	24trans.service87@gmail.com	?	NOT PAID	N/A
Janice Dong	janicedong177@gmail.com	N/A	UK	BUSTED	"Janice" applied for a job from a UK company. She was quickly busted with the help of our Directory.
Karla Valdemar	humantranslation8@gmail.com	one.translation@yahoo.com	EE	NOT PAID	<i>I lost all my identification papers, university degrees and my family when my house was burned on New Year's Eve, so I need money to be able to extract papers from government departments (LOL)</i>
Lars Hansen	lh@your-mail.com	UNKNOWN	UK	NOT PAID	<i>I am a native speaker of course... reduce the payment and I will post a warning against your company.</i>
Layal Ros	layal.ros1@gmail.com	UNKNOWN	N/A	UNKNOWN	Portuguese into Italian translation job gotten w/ fake CV
Martin Harris	harris78martin@gmail.com	ibrahim.blewi@gmail.com	UK	NOT PAID	Ibrahim gets Martin's money? Really?
Nihad Ahmad Wordsvoice	pts.pm88@gmail.com	N/A	N/A	N/A	Circulated a NL-EN job about a bank account at Rabobank. Unknown if scammer delivered the job.
Vladimir Beslanovich Argun	vladimirbeslanovichargun@gmail.com	rayyedeema@gmail.com	US	NOT PAID	"I told them he was a scammer and a liar, but he is being aggressive".
Zein Jeff	zeinjeff88@gmail.com zeinjeff22@gmail.com	UNKNOWN	UK	NOT PAID	<i>sir, i am not scammer, that is not me as my gmail account is: zeinjeff88@gmail.com not zeinjeff22@gmail.com please check again (LOL)</i>

TSD ANNUAL REPORT 2020

by the TRANSLATOR SCAMMERS INTELLIGENCE GROUP

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10. **WHY WAS TWITTER PROTECTING SCAMMERS?** [Read our TSD Bulletin 01/2019 about this issue](#). However, as from 17SEP2020, we were back on Twitter: [@scammersTSD](https://twitter.com/scammersTSD), AND, YES, WE WELCOME NEW FOLLOWERS. Reminder: our legacy account [@tsdirectory](https://twitter.com/tsdirectory), created 14MAR2014, [had 3105 followers](#).
11. **OTHER SCAMS TARGETING TRANSLATORS (ADVANCE PAYMENT, OVERPAYMENT AND OTHER FINANCIAL SCAMS). AND, WHY IS THIS TYPE OF SCAMS SO POPULAR AMONG TRANSLATORS AND GOING ON FOR SUCH A LONG TIME?** Because, naive and unwary translators keep fueling these scams by happily responding to them. And, to those who have fallen to these scams, you don't have out sympathy. **STUPIDITY AND BLIND GREED HAS A PRICE, AND YOU, AND YOU ALONE, MADE IT HAPPEN.**

IN OUR DIRECTORY (ONLINE OR OFFLINE), WE DO NOT DEAL WITH FINANCIAL SCAMS, like advance payment/overpayment scams, Nigerian scams, pay-to-work, wallet lost abroad, employment abroad, dating and romance (where "lovers" are asked to pay for "translation services", so that they can communicate with their ravishing Russian or Ukrainian "ladies"), and data verification (phishing) scams. Whenever possible, we keep the names, emails and other data used by scammers, like addresses and phone numbers (always fake) in our Directory, so that their data show up in online searches. It is however worrying that many translators and companies still lack active knowledge about the scammers operation and accept jobs from, e.g., john.lord.thebigword.com@gmail.com!!! In all Translator Portals, we can see people coming forward publicly telling us how they've fallen victims to all sorts of scams, from stolen/fake CVs to overpayment and other financial scams. Where do these people live? In Wonderland? And what about the many others who never publicly share their losses to scams?

We were featured

We continued to see a large number of translators, translation companies and other players in the translation community [TALKING ABOUT OUR WORK and our Directory in their websites, blogs and other platforms](#). In 2020, 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 2020	<i>Here's What Translator Scammers Were Up to in 2019</i>	Seyma Albarino, SLATOR
Jan 2020	<i>I earned 10 million yen a year in the home translation entrepreneur community!!</i>	Miura Yukiko
Feb 2020	<i>2020 Language Service Outlook No. 5 (in Chinese)</i>	Wei Zhonghe / Global Language Service
Mar 2020	<i>Business Practices</i>	Gaucha Translations
Apr 2020	<i>Information on Scams</i>	Northern California Translators Association (NCTA)
Apr 2020	<i>How not to fall for translation scammers</i>	Federica Gubiani, BeTranslated
May 2020	<i>Links & Tips for New Translators – Websites</i>	Nikki Graham
May 2020	<i>Translation scams (2): Information and Resources</i>	Emily Sung
Jun 2020	<i>The Pitfalls of Freelance Translation</i>	Sofia Gutkin / Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (BE)
Jun 2020	<i>Nep vertaalbureaus en nep vertalers</i>	PRO Translation Management
Sep 2020	<i>Watch out – there's a scam in your inbox!</i>	Carole Berger / OSTI 2020 Virtual Conference
Sep 2020	<i>They're Out to Get You, But Everything is Going to Be Okay</i>	Joseph Wojowski / 17th MATI Annual Conference
Oct 2020	<i>Scam job offers</i>	Austin Area Translators and Interpreters Association (AATIA)

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 all of our very determined champions in 2020.

How the CV Scam works – A reminder

It all starts when CVs from real and legitimate freelance translators are stolen from translation websites or 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 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 postal addresses, phone calls or video chats: scammers communicate by email only, and only in English. Asked by an Italian company why "she" didn't write in Italian, a "Elena Mazzotta" 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 (!) and claiming to be/have been "language teachers" or being in business for 20 or 30 years, but with no online presence anywhere, these "multi-skilled" and "multi-language" heavily spam everybody in the translation world with 10, 15 or 20 messages a day, trying to lure unsuspecting clients with their shining "skills", or responding to online job posts. As for their prices, scammers tend to use 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 (*I suspect, he is not a native speaker of Danish and has no grip of Danish grammar, syntax, gender and idioms, and has no feel of subject/meanings* – editor's comments about the work provided by Danish "translator" "Lars Hansen"), or turn into "companies" or "independent PMs" 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: translators living in poor African countries and those living in wealthier European or North 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 ALWAYS initiate threats to defame their client-victims online: *"I will put you in the blacklist at all the sites"* or *"I want be paid, or I speak bad of you with thousand translators"* are just some lines from these criminals.

THE TRANSLATOR SCAMMERS INTELLIGENCE GROUP

*they steal your CV, your work, and your money
together, we'll make their lives a living hell*

In 2020, our [TSD Annual Report 2019](#) has been downloaded 640 times

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