

Measuring the linguistic asset

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An asset that is not measured is not managed. Institutions can track a few simple indicators: the share of client relationships by language of the relationship, the corresponding share of assets, the distribution of the staff's language skills by function, the number of documents available in each language and the date of their last update, the budget for translation and language training, and the number of complaints or disputes in which a question of language played a role. These indicators, compiled each year, show whether the institution serves its clientele in its own language, whether its control functions have the necessary skills and whether its linguistic investment keeps pace with the development of its markets.

At the level of the financial centre, a periodic survey by the umbrella organisations on these same indicators would objectify the French-speaking advantage and guide training policies. The cantonal statistics on the languages of the population, the data of the Office cantonal de la statistique (cantonal statistical office) on cross-border workers and the surveys on International Geneva provide the context, but a measure of language in business relationships themselves is lacking. For want of such data, this book has had to rely on converging indications and on examples. The financial centre would benefit from having figures.

Indicator	Use
Share of relationships and assets by language of the relationship	guidance for business development and documentation
Language skills of staff by function	planning of recruitment and training
Documents available by language and date of last update	control of legal and regulatory risk
Budget for translation and language training	monitoring of investment in the asset

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Indicator	Use
Disputes and complaints with a linguistic component	detection of gaps in understanding

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