



EUROPEAN COMMISSION
DIRECTORATE GENERAL FOR INTERPRETATION

RESOURCES AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE
Audiovisual Solutions and Sound Quality

MAIN TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR CONFERENCE ROOMS WITH SIMULTANEOUS INTERPRETING

PERMANENT BOOTHS (EN ISO 17651-1)

1. Minimum interior dimensions

Width: 2.50 m for 2 interpreters
3.20 m for 3 or 4 interpreters
Depth: 2.40 m
Height: 2.30 m

2. Doors

Each booth shall be fitted with a door operating silently and providing satisfactory acoustic insulation.

3. Ventilation / Air Conditioning

The ventilation and air-conditioning system shall be efficient, soundless and independent from that of the rest of the building.

Complete air renewal at least seven times per hour shall be provided. The airflow may be regulated by the use of CO2 detectors. In the absence of such detectors, the air supply shall be 100% fresh.

4. Windows

Front windows shall span the full width of the booth. Vertical supports shall be avoided. Front and side windows shall consist of colourless anti-glare glass, satisfying the sound insulation requirements.

If the permanent booths do not meet ISO 17651-1 requirements or the above technical specifications, mobile booths shall be used.

MOBILE BOOTHS (EN ISO 17651-2)

1. Minimum interior dimensions

Width: 2.40 m for 2 or 3 interpreters
3.20 m for 4 interpreters
Depth: 1.60 m
Height: 2.00 m

N.B. For very short meetings (max. 1 hour), sometimes 1.60 m wide booths are allowed. Please consult DG Interpretation.

2. Doors

At its back or side, each booth shall have a hinged door without a lock that opens outwards, providing direct access from the room or platform. It shall operate silently.

3. Ventilation

The booth shall be fitted with an effective ventilation system, ensuring complete air renewal at least eight times per hour, without causing draughts on seated occupants. This means one ventilator per roof panel. It shall operate as soundlessly as possible.

To provide objective readings, the CO2 detectors have to be placed in the middle, halfway between the work surface and the ceiling of the mobile booth. The detector shall give a visual warning only.

4. Windows

Each booth shall have front and side windows. For maximum visibility, front windows shall span the full width of the booth. Vertical support shall be as narrow as possible and shall not be in the central field of view of any working position. Windowpanes shall be colourless, clean and free from scratches.

5. Platform

Mobile booths shall be placed on a carpeted platform about 30 cm high, which produces no mechanical noise, leaving a passage of minimum 1.30 m wide behind the booths, at the same height as the booth floor; it has safe access.

6. Distance between booths and participants

A free space (min. 1.50 m) shall be provided between the last row of chairs and the booths to avoid participants being disturbed by voices from the booths.



REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO ALL CONFERENCE ROOMS

Whether with a permanent or a mobile simultaneous interpreting installation

1. Number of booths: (at least) one booth is required for every language into which interpretation is provided.

2. Equipment in the booths:

One individual console (EN ISO 20109:2016) per interpreter.

Each console shall comprise:

- one control panel with an outgoing channel switch and a relay selection;
- (Each console shall have at least three single button relay pre-selections or five in the case of interpreting from more than six languages.)
- one microphone;
- one set of headphones (AKG K15 or similar).

The booths shall be equipped with:

- a firm working surface covered with shock-absorbent material;
- an individual adjustable compact table light per interpreter;
- a dimmable overhead light source;
- comfortable chairs with five legs on wheels and adjustable in height;
- a CO₂ detector (mobile booths);
- paper, pens (no pencils);
- water and glasses.

The technical equipment and booths shall be in perfect condition and installed with the utmost care.

Switching a microphone ON shall switch OFF any other microphone on the same outgoing (A or B) channel.

At least one fully qualified simultaneous interpreting technician should remain in the room throughout the meeting to intervene if necessary.

3. Delegates' microphones (EN ISO 22259:2019):

- i) Fixed: Normal practice is at least one microphone for every two delegates, or one per delegation, at the main conference table.
- ii) Roving: Where a speaker has to move around or for Q&A sessions, a suitable handheld/neckband microphone shall be provided.

To avoid confusion, the conference equipment should only allow one microphone to be switched ON at any given time. (FIFO 1 = First In, First Out with 1 active microphone)

4. Additional requirements:

A drawing of the positioning of the booths in the conference room shall be sent to the Directorate General for Interpretation (DG SCIC) for approval.

All booths must afford the interpreters a direct and unobstructed view of all proceedings in the room and of the other interpreting booths.

Conference rooms cannot have pillars and columns obstructing the interpreters' view.

Fire and safety regulations to ensure safe access and exit from the booths shall be complied with at all times.

Projection screens shall be fully visible from all booths and close enough to allow interpreters to read words and numbers. If necessary, small (max. 17") screens can be placed in the booths, one screen for two interpreters, two screens for three interpreters.

If videos or films are shown, the soundtrack shall be fed into the interpreting system; interpreters shall receive the script in advance.

If you are considering videoconferences etc. with simultaneous interpreting, please consult the Directorate General for Interpretation (DG SCIC) in advance to check the feasibility.

Contact:

European Commission

Directorate General for Interpretation (DG SCIC.C.5)

Technical Compliance

scic-conform@ec.europa.eu