

The Council of Europe's response to the challenge of RSI

Consultations with AICC since Jul 2018

Real-life empirical tests in Nov 2019

Why?

- The **demand for remote interpreting exists**
- There are **no clear rules or professional standards**
- **The vacuum** that we have left has been filled by commercial solutions. This is harmful for our profession
- Must be **actors of change** to provide a **high-quality interpreting service**.

Why?

- **We are in the throes of a genuine revolution**
- Greatest challenge is to **rethink the way we do things.**
- Some of the **5 pillars**, defined after Nuremberg Trials are challenged.
 - Personal qualities
 - Direct view of all speakers
 - Personal impartiality
 - Absolute need to prepare and study documents
 - Respect for professional secrecy (trust)

Why?

- The obligation to be actors of this change by contributing our expertise.
- The Council of Europe demands quality.
- Need to agree on working conditions in consultation with AIIC.

Consultations with AIIC

- CoE opened consultations with AIIC on new conditions for remote/distance interpreting in **July 2018**.
- 6 meetings
- Three sets of issues:
 - - **working conditions**
 - - **conditions of use (typology)**
 - - **technical conditions**

Scope of consultations

- **Bilingual** meetings where the booth is located in a different venue from that where the meeting takes place (**distal** remote interpreting); or
- **Bilingual** meetings where the booth is connected remotely to a virtual meeting room (**virtual** remote interpreting).
- **NOT HAMPTON COURT !**

Scope of consultations

- **Replicate** interpreters' normal working conditions.
- **No** interpreters working from **home**
- All interpreters are located in the **same room and/or the same booth**.

Consultations and tests

- **Issues to be covered** by new professional standards.
- **Empirical tests** in a real work environment with a view to adopting evidence-based working conditions.
- Agreement on the **conditions for the tests**

Conditions for the tests

- **Remote interpreting shall remain the exception** at the Council of Europe.
- Rule out any arrangement which would guarantee interpreters a direct view of the meeting room.

Conditions for the tests

- **Close prior consultations** between head interpreter and AllC's representatives
- **Agreement laying down detailed conditions** signed with meeting organisers
- **The prior information of interpreters** recruited.
Possibility to refuse
- **All booths located in the same room**
- **No assignment to another meeting** on the same day
- **A coordinator**
- **Questionnaire**

Conditions for the tests

Daily remuneration

- Remuneration at the higher rate + an allowance equivalent to 25% of the basic rate.
- Recognition of the physical and psychological discomfort during the test phase.

Conditions for the tests

Definition of the working day

- Key form of compensation for the extra cognitive load is to **shorten the length of working sessions**
- A single session of **3h30**
- Two sessions of **2h30**, with a **break of 1h30**.

Conditions for the tests

Composition of teams

- Minimum of 2 interpreters for bilingual meeting.
- Take account of duration and particular difficulties.
- The exact composition agreed between the head interpreter and AICC representatives.

Conditions for the tests

Liability

- Liability for any disruption of the interpreting caused by technical conditions **remains with the meeting organisers.**
- In line with AICC guidelines

Conditions for the tests

Follow up

- **Need for analysis of effects in a real work environment.**
- Enter into a phase of **empirical tests in real-life conditions.**
- After each test, **analyse the replies to the questionnaire** devised with a member from TFDI.
- A **joint analysis of all tests**, including a typology of meetings shall be made with AIIC's representatives before agreeing on rules applicable to RSI to be approved by both Parties.

Conditions of use/Typology Criteria

- **Structured and formal** with discipline of speakers and the ability to coordinate with the interpreters
- **Short** duration
- Remote interpreting must be **bilingual**
- Meetings with a **limited number of participants** and with a specific room configuration (outside Strasbourg)

Technical conditions

- Work carried out in a **different context**.
- **ISO/PAS 24019** in Ottawa.
- Need to **test** different platforms and different technical setups to feed the process.

Empirical tests at the CoE

- From **13 to 15 November 2019**, empirical tests in real-life conditions
- In line with **working conditions agreed with AIIC.**
- **Precautionary principle**, with a team of 4 interpreters for a bilingual meeting.

Empirical tests at the CoE

- Due regard to the conditions laid down in **ISO/PAS/24019**.
- **Protection from acoustic shocks** is the responsibility of the CoE.

Empirical tests at the CoE

- 4 different workstations
 - Different consoles (hard vs soft)
 - Different screens and configurations (curved, tactile, in vs out of the booth)
 - Different headsets (with vs without integrated mic)
 - 3 visual feeds (vs 2 on the third day)
 - 1 platform selected for these tests

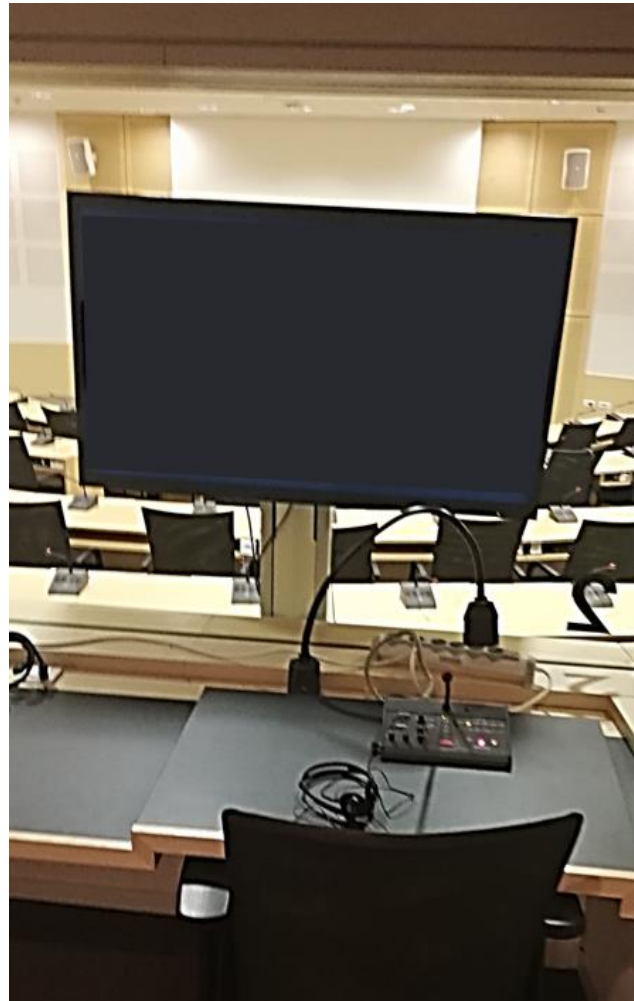
Empirical tests at the CoE workstation A



Empirical tests at the CoE

- **Specs Interpreter workstation A:**
- Siemens (Stemin) hardware console model **IS 6**
- Headphones: **Stemin KH03**
- Screen: (samsung), curved, size 47inches, placed on additional desk in front of the interpreter
- 3 video feeds (close-up president, overview of room with participants, active speaker) displayed on curved screen

Empirical tests at the CoE workstation B



Empirical tests at the CoE

- **Specs Interpreter workstation B:**
- Siemens (Stemin) hardware console model **IS 6**
- Headphones: **Stemin KH03**
- Screen: (samsung) size 55 inches, placed in front of the booth

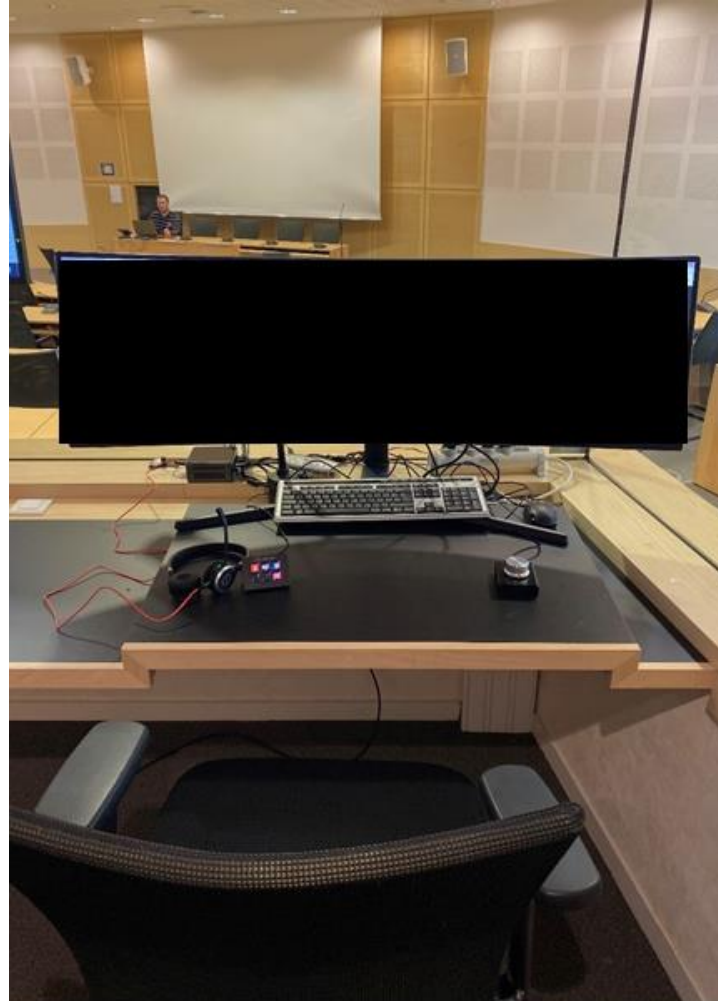
Empirical tests at the CoE Workstation C



Empirical tests at the CoE

- **Specs Interpreter workstation C:**
- soft console, accessed via Chrome browser on tactile screen 27 inch, placed on the left of the interpreter
- Controls on console manipulated via tactile screen or mouse
- Headphones/microphone: Jabra headset evo 40
- Screen in front of the booth, size 55 inches

Empirical tests at the CoE Workstation D



Empirical tests at the CoE

- **Specs Interpreter workstation D:**
- soft console, accessed via Chrome browser
- console controls operated via external programmable USB control panel (mic on/off, mute, outgoing language selection); volume control operated via separate external control knob (acting on computer audio settings)
- Headphones/microphone: Jabra headset model evo 40
- Screen: curved, size 47 inches, placed on normal booth desk

Empirical tests at the CoE

- Results and feedback of interpreters still **confidential**.
- We have learned a lot
- Back-up team in Paris had to take over on 3 occasions.
- We have a clearer idea about screens and their location.
- All participants liked the volume control knob.
- Good sound quality
- Quality of video feeds fluctuated greatly.
- The IT component is crucial.
- **Trust and solidarity between interpreters, technicians and IT specialists, the only way forward.**

Conclusion

- Non, je ne regrette rien!
- Must strive for the highest quality at all times.
- One of our greatest challenges is to **remain in charge of the recruitment of interpreters.**
- Must be actively and jointly involved to make sure that we all gain from this new form of interpreting.