



Technical requirements and practical recommendations for parties and representatives making oral submissions by videoconference

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This document has been drawn up jointly by the Registries of the Court of Justice and of the General Court, the Interpretation Directorate and the Information Technology Directorate of the Court of Justice of the European Union, and is intended for parties and representatives who wish to participate in a hearing by videoconference. It sets out the necessary technical requirements for videoconferencing (I) and contains some essential practical recommendations for those parties and representatives for the preparation and proper conduct of such hearings (II).

I. TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

The use of videoconferencing for hearings is possible only if certain technical requirements are met. It is therefore very important to follow the instructions set out in this document.

Technical equipment required

1. Only connections using **H.323, SIP or WebRTC protocols** are permitted. H.323, SIP and WebRTC are protocols that are used specifically to set up videoconference calls and enable the stability and optimal security of connections;
2. The use of a software platform or any other meeting system which is solely app-based is not permitted;
3. Connections via mobile devices such as smartphones are not permitted;

4. **Clear sound and image quality and connection stability** are very important for the smooth conduct of the hearing. They will always have to be assessed in the two tests (technical and interpreting) that will be carried out prior to the hearing.

II. PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Where a party or the representative of a party to proceedings before the Court of Justice or the General Court has been authorised to participate in a hearing by videoconference, the following points must be taken into account to enable that party or representative to participate in the hearing in the best possible conditions, with or without simultaneous interpretation.

Preparing to participate in a hearing by videoconference

1. The room chosen by the party or representative making oral submissions remotely must have good **acoustics**.
2. There must be sufficient **lighting** to render colour as accurately as possible.
3. The use of a unidirectional **microphone** is advised. This type of microphone picks up sound coming mainly from one direction and will reduce ambient sound and improve the quality of the audio signal that is sent to the various participants in the hearing and to interpreters where use is made of simultaneous interpretation.



4. The party or representative making oral submissions remotely should be positioned in relation to the camera in such a way that his or her **upper body and face** can be seen, as in the image shown below. The use of a **lectern** is advised. It is very important to avoid camera angles that are too high or too low. The **background** must be as neutral as possible.



5. The party or representative making oral submissions remotely must have a legible **nameplate** positioned in front of him or her.
6. The room must be equipped with a **fixed-line telephone** to enable communication with the technical support services of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the event of a connection failure or interruption.
7. A **technical and interpreting test will be arranged beforehand** by the support services of the Court of Justice of the European Union, to check that those requirements are met.

On the day of the hearing where videoconferencing is used

8. **No later than 30 minutes before the start of the hearing**, the party or representative making oral submissions remotely must connect remotely and undergo technical tests. If those tests are not successful, the President of the formation of the Court will decide on the action to be taken.
9. The **contact person's details** provided to the Registry by the party or representative in his or her request for the use of videoconferencing will be used on the day of the hearing by the technical support services of the Court of Justice of the European Union in the event of disconnection or technical difficulties.
10. Where videoconferencing is used for a hearing, the parties and the representatives (those present in the courtroom and those making oral

submissions remotely) will not be invited to the short meeting with the Judges and the Hearing Registrar that is normally organised before the start of a hearing.

11. Before the start of the hearing, the court usher, or, as the case may be, the Hearing Registrar, notes who is in **attendance** and asks the parties and the representatives making oral submissions remotely, if there is more than one, who will be addressing the court.

12. A party or representative making oral submissions remotely will:

- see the speaker in the courtroom when that person is speaking;



Different views of the speakers

- see a wide shot of the courtroom when nobody is speaking;



Wide shot of the courtroom

- be visible on the projection screen set up in the courtroom for the other parties and representatives and for the public;



View of the remote site on the projection screen in the courtroom

- be visible on the individual screens of the Judges and the interpreters.



View of the remote site on the screen of the Judges and the interpreters

During the hearing in which videoconferencing is used

13. Any party or representative making oral submissions remotely must ensure that the room from which he or she is addressing the Court remains quiet and calm.
14. He or she must **disable any notification sounds**, screen saver or power saver on electronic devices in the room that may be triggered while he or she is speaking (verification by a technician is recommended).
15. He or she must **switch off or set to 'airplane' mode any mobile phones** ('silent' mode does not prevent interference), and mute the ringing of fixed-line telephones in the room.
16. When invited to speak by the President of the formation of the Court, the party or representative making oral submissions remotely must place the **microphone** directly in front of him or her (maintaining a distance of 30-40 cm). He or she should ensure that no objects are placed between him or her and the microphone and should not tap the microphone to test the sound after turning it on. He or she should avoid handling documents while the microphone is switched on and ensure that it is only switched on when he or she is invited to speak.
17. When speaking, the party or representative making oral submissions remotely must look at the camera directly in front of him or her.
18. It is best to avoid large gestures and sudden body movements.
19. He or she should speak clearly and at a reasonable pace, and either freely or with the help of notes or bullet points. It is preferable not to read from a text. Other speakers should not be interrupted during a discussion.

20. The party or representative making oral submissions remotely may use only the language of the interpreting channel he or she is receiving. That is the language in which he or she is authorised to plead under the Rules of Procedure.
21. When he or she has finished speaking, the party or representative making oral submissions remotely must switch off the microphone.