

Home>Court procedures>Videoconferencing>Manual

Manual

3.1. Background to Technical Requirements

45. This section of the Guide discusses the technical aspects of videoconferencing and videoconferencing equipment. This includes placement of cameras, lighting, screens and microphones. The equipment provided should be selected and set up to support as well as possible the various steps involved in the process of the court hearing. The detailed technical standards for videoconferencing are contained within Annex II.

True-to-life principle

46. The objective is to make the videoconferencing session as close as possible to the usual practice in any court where evidence is taken in open court. To gain the maximum benefit, several differences have to be taken into account. Some matters, which are taken for granted when evidence is taken in the conventional way, take on a different dimension when it is taken by videoconferencing: for example, ensuring that the witness understands the practical arrangements of the videoconferencing session and which are the parties to the videoconferencing and what their various roles are. The following are suggested as a checklist of practical considerations that encourage best practice in the use of videoconferencing:

Time zone differences need to be considered when a witness abroad is to be examined by videoconferencing. The convenience of the witness, the parties, their representatives and the court should all be taken into account.

At the courtroom the videoconferencing tools should to the widest extent possible be installed and used in such a way that it supports the users' feeling of participating in a traditional meeting of the court.

Those involved with videoconferencing need to be aware that, even with the most advanced systems currently available, there are slight delays between the receipt of the picture and that of the accompanying sound. If due allowance is not made for this, there will be a tendency to "speak over" the witness, whose voice may continue to be heard for a fraction of a second after he or she appears on the screen to have finished speaking.

With current technology, picture quality is good, but not as good as a television picture. The quality of the picture is enhanced if those appearing on videoconferencing monitors keep their movements to a minimum.

Last update: 18/01/2019

This page is maintained by the European Commission. The information on this page does not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission. The Commission accepts no responsibility or liability whatsoever with regard to any information or data contained or referred to in this document. Please refer to the legal notice with regard to copyright rules for European pages.