

Provision of simultaneous interpretation at the closed session

Note from the Secretariat with Chair's proposal

At the December meeting France noted the poor quality of interpretation in Mauritius, and asked whether interpretation services for the Closed Session could be funded from registration fees at Amsterdam. The Netherlands advised that the budget and registration fee had been set, and that interpretation could not be accommodated within budgeted funding.¹

The Secretariat undertook to prepare a report specifying options for simultaneous interpretation.

Recommendation

That part of the surplus funds from Mauritius be applied to provide simultaneous interpretation from English to Spanish and French for the Closed Session at Amsterdam.

Background information

The Conference rules and procedures express a clear preference for efforts to be made for the Conference to accommodate different language communities where practicable.²

In response to the action point from the December meeting, France supplied information on costs incurred for interpretation at recent past conferences:

35th Conference, Uruguay

¹ Minute 4(d) from December Executive Committee meeting stated:

Simultaneous Interpretation (impromptu item)

Concern was expressed about the standard of interpretation at the recent conference. France enquired as to whether it would be possible for interpretation in Spanish and French could be provided for as part of the registration fee. There was some discussion about how the Committee might determine which languages should be funded, and the Dutch DPA advised that with the registration fee having been set there was little if any room to accommodate interpretation services for Amsterdam 2015. The Secretariat agreed to review the suggestion and report back at the next meeting, bearing in mind the constraints of the Conference rules and the limits on what might be possible for 2015. France agreed to submit information to the Secretariat about the provision of interpretation at recent conferences.

Action point: *France to submit information to the Secretariat about the provision of the interpretation service at recent Conferences and the associated costs. The Secretariat is to compile a report on the topic for the March meeting.*

² The relevant portion of clause 6 of the Conference Rules and Procedures provides:

“Language: Cultural and linguistic diversity are features of the conference. Authorities shall make their best efforts to preserve it by providing simultaneous interpretation for different languages, including but not limited to English and the language of the hosting Authority. The different linguistic communities shall contribute, when required, to accomplish that aim. ...”

Costs: €3740 funded by the Belgium, Canadian and French DPAs. Costs included two interpreters providing interpretation service from English and Spanish into French for 4 days.

36th Conference, Mauritius

Costs: €13000 funded by the Belgium, Canadian and French DPAs and the Association of Francophone Data Protection Authorities (AFAPDP). Costs included interpretation service between English and French for 4 days and all technical devices like headphones, transmitters etc., in the plenary room and other rooms.

Information on estimated costs if simultaneous translation were to be provided at Amsterdam

France, with the assistance of the Netherlands also obtained an estimate of costs for simultaneous interpretation for a conference held in Amsterdam.

COST ESTIMATE

Meeting: 37th Data Protection and Privacy Conference 2015
Date: 25 - 29 October 2015
Location: PTA, Amsterdam
Working hours: 25/10: 17.00 -18.00, 26/10: 10.00 - 18.00,
27/10: 10.00- 13.00, 28/10: 09.30 - 13.00,
29/10: 09.30 – 13.00 hours
Language combinations: EN -> FR en ES met retour

2 interpreters	x 1 x partial day (25/10) at €450	€	900,00
	X 1 x travel costs the Netherlands at €30	€	60,00
4 interpreters	x 3 partial days 27-28-29/10 at € 550	€	6.600,00
	x 1 x day 26/10 at €650	€	1.300,00
	x 4 x travel costs at €30	€	480,00
Office- and recruitment costs		€	<u>1.585,00**</u>
Total (VAT excl.)		€	10.925,00

Comment from secretariat on the estimate:

- The original request put by France at the December meeting sought interpretation of EN, FR and ES. These are languages where demand for interpretation has previously been demonstrated from linguistic communities.
- It is not clear whether equipment costs are included or are extra. The Chair's proposal below is based upon the information supplied.
- The estimate includes not only the 1.5 days of closed session, which are the Executive Committee's principal concern, but also the 2 days of public conference. Without attempting a more precise allocation, one might expect less than half of the estimated costs to be attributable to the closed session but for working purposes, say, €5,500.

Chair's proposal

Ideally, a host would engage with representatives of different linguistic communities to arrange for satisfactory interpretation funded in part from registration fees, sponsorship or other conference revenue, and in part from contributions from the language communities represented. Unfortunately this model has failed to deliver effective interpretation at Mauritius, and the Netherlands is unable to accommodate interpretation within its budgetary constraints.

The Chair observes that for future Conferences it will be useful for the position on funding interpretation to be clearer at the time a hosting proposal is made.

Unexpectedly, it appears that supplementary funds may be available to the Executive Committee as a result of the surplus from the Mauritius Conference. These funds have not yet been received and so any proposal for using them is subject to caution. However, the reasonable prospect of receiving those funds allows the Chair to offer a proposal.

The Chair's proposal is that a portion of the surplus Mauritius funds be made available for subsidising simultaneous interpretation at the closed session at the forthcoming and future conferences.

To put the Conference on a 'firm footing' (to use the language of the Conference's strategic direction resolution)³ the Committee should seek to provide a degree of medium-term certainty for simultaneous translation. It therefore seems better to plan a reasonable subsidy for, say, the next 4 Conferences than simply be very generous for the forthcoming event and face the same problem for 2016 and beyond.

Therefore, the Chair proposes that (surplus Mauritius funds permitting):

- €5,500 or so be allocated from the surplus funds to subsidise simultaneous interpretation at the closed session in Amsterdam – this figure is suggested to cover the estimated costs. If the costs exceed the estimated amount the relevant linguistic communities might be asked to contribute.
- No allowance is proposed for the public conference, for this year the relevant linguistic communities might be asked to contribute and in future years the same solution might be followed if hosts have not made other arrangements. Hosts' proposed arrangements should be made transparent through the proposal process.
- A similar sum (€5,500) would be earmarked from the surplus funds for each of the following three conferences.

³ The Conference's Strategic Priority B2 ('A firm Footing') is 'to put the Conference on a sustainable footing so that it may step confidently into the future'.