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**Simultaneous interpreting —  
Permanent booths — Requirements**

*Interprétation simultanée — Cabines permanentes — Exigences*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see [www.iso.org/patents](http://www.iso.org/patents)).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

The committee responsible for this document is ISO/TC 37, *Terminology and other language and content resources*, Subcommittee SC 5, *Translation, interpreting and related technology*.

This fourth edition cancels and replaces the third edition (ISO 2603:1998), which has been technically revised.

## Introduction

A number of basic aspects shall be considered when equipping a conference venue with permanent booths. As interpreting is an activity that requires high concentration, stress factors have to be avoided, and the working environment accordingly has to meet the highest ergonomic standards and provide an environment that enables interpreters to carry out their work properly.

This document addresses the following:

- a) sound insulation, both from the noise transmitted from the booth's environment to a booth and vice versa and from noise passing from one booth to another;
- b) good visual communication between the interpreters and the participants in the event;
- c) adequate working conditions for the interpreters, whose booths are their workplace, such as to enable them to sustain the intense effort of concentration required throughout the day's work.

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# Simultaneous interpreting — Permanent booths — Requirements

## 1 Scope

This document provides requirements and recommendations for building and renovating permanent booths for simultaneous interpreting in new and existing buildings. This document also ensures the usability and accessibility of booths for all interpreters, including those with special needs.

It is applicable to all types of permanent booths, using built-in or portable equipment.

In conjunction with either this document or ISO 4043, ISO 20108 and ISO 20109 provide the relevant requirements both for the quality and transmission of sound and image provided to interpreters and for the equipment needed in the booths.

## 2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 717-1, *Acoustics — Rating of sound insulation in buildings and of building elements — Part 1: Airborne sound insulation*

ISO 3382-2, *Acoustics — Measurement of room acoustic parameters — Part 2: Reverberation time in ordinary rooms* <https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/76aa85b7-663f-4bbe-80f2-75f7912fle68/iso-2603-2016>

ISO 7730, *Ergonomics of the thermal environment — Analytical determination and interpretation of thermal comfort using calculation of the PMV and PPD indices and local thermal comfort criteria*

ISO 8995-1, *Lighting of work places — Part 1: Indoor*

ISO 16283-1, *Acoustics — Field measurement of sound insulation in buildings and of building elements — Part 1: Airborne sound insulation*

ISO 20109:2016, *Simultaneous interpreting — Equipment — Requirements*

ISO 21542, *Building construction — Accessibility and usability of the built environment*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

— IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at <http://www.iso.org/obp>

### 3.1

#### **simultaneous interpreting**

mode of interpreting performed while a speaker is still speaking or signing

Note 1 to entry: The activity requires specialized equipment.

**3.2  
booth**

booth for simultaneous interpreting  
self-contained unit enclosing the interpreter's work space

Note 1 to entry: One of the purposes of simultaneous interpreting booths is to provide sound insulation, both from the noise transmitted from the booth's external environment into the booth itself and vice versa, and from noise passing from one booth to another.

**3.2.1  
permanent booth**

permanent simultaneous interpreting booth  
*booth* (3.2) structurally integrated into a facility

**3.2.2  
mobile booth**

mobile simultaneous interpreting booth  
free-standing *booth* (3.2) assembled from modular components which can be transported and set up at a variety of facilities

Note 1 to entry: ISO 4043 applies to mobile booths.

**3.3  
control booth**

room where the control instruments are located, and from where the technical equipment is managed

**3.4  
video display**

electronic device that represents information in a visual form

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**4 Location of booths**

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**4.1 General requirements**

When new conference rooms are being designed, booths shall be integrated into the structure so that the room itself and the booths constitute a well-balanced unit in terms of layout, circulation within buildings, accessibility and usability according to ISO 21542. Conference interpreters experienced in technical consultancy shall be consulted from the earliest stages of planning together with suppliers and specialists such as architects and project engineers.

Booths shall receive as much indirect daylight from the conference room as possible.

**4.2 Specific requirements**

Booths shall be located away from any sources of disturbance, such as kitchens, public corridors and passageways.

Depending on how the conference hall is used, the booths shall be placed in such a way that the interpreters have an unobstructed view of the main speakers. In situations where extended language regimes require the use of booths on two levels, video displays may be used to provide a view of the speakers in the booths situated on the upper level.

Booths shall be raised above the floor of the hall in order to give the interpreters a clear view (see 4.5) of all proceedings in the hall, and of all visual aids such as a projection screen and displays. The view from the booths into the hall shall not be obstructed by people standing in the way or by building components such as columns. Accordingly, the booth floor shall be no less than 60 cm above the hall floor, assuming a level floor.

The booths shall be grouped in such a way as to facilitate visual contact, as well as cabling between them.



### 4.3 Control booth

If present, the control booth shall be placed close to the interpreting booths in order to facilitate access and enable visual communication between the technician and the interpreters and to provide the technician with a clear view of all proceedings, including speakers and use of the projection screen. Interpreters shall have a facility whereby they can communicate directly with the control booth. The technician shall have safe, quick and easy access to the booths and the conference room. See also ISO 20109:2016, C.2.

### 4.4 Access to booths

There shall be quick and easy access to the booths from the hall and between booths.

A minimum of 10 % of the booths, rounded up to the next whole number, shall be accessible to persons with a disability in accordance with ISO 21542.

### 4.5 Visibility

A direct, unobstructed view of the entire conference room, including a projection screen and the rostrum is essential. If the booths are located to one side of the conference room, the angle of the interpreters' line of vision towards a screen should be no less than 35°, taking the edge of the booth as a reference. The purpose of this is to give the interpreter a clear view of the rostrum and the projection screen without the interpreters having to bend or incline the body.

In very large halls, where the rostrum and/or projection screen are more than 20 m away, video displays shall be used (in accordance with ISO 20109:2016, B.2)

- if the distance between the booths and the screen is  $\geq 3$  times the screen's diagonal, or
- if the booths are located behind the main speakers or on an upper level.

The interpreters' booths shall be sited in such a way that columns and pillars allow interpreters to have clear view of the projection screen, the rostrum and speakers without having to make any additional movements. Materials used shall be such that they do not inhibit visibility of the projection screen and the rostrum (e.g. non-glaring glass).

## 5 Building standards for booths

### 5.1 General

Each booth shall be wide enough to accommodate the required number of interpreters seated comfortably side by side, each with sufficient table space to work on (see 6.6) with documents and electronic devices spread alongside each other. The booth shall be high and deep enough to provide the required volume of air to enable adequate temperature control and draught-free air renewal (see 5.6), as well as sufficient space for the occupants to enter and leave without disturbing one another.

NOTE Permanent booths providing space for only one interpreter are not compliant with this document.

### 5.2 Minimum dimensions

The size of a permanent booth (see Figure 1) is governed by the need to provide each interpreter with sufficient work space and air volume. The following minimum dimensions shall apply:

- width: 2,50 m;
- depth: 2,40 m;
- height: 2,30 m.