

Event Background

The International and Ibero-American Foundation for Administration and Public Policies hosted an Inter-institutional webinar to discuss border cooperation and management within the Eurofront project.

The challenge

The event took place online to ensure broad participation involving an expected number of 150 participants from over 15 countries in Latin America and 5 European countries.

One of the key participants to the event had strict security requirements which meant that it could only be held on one videoconference platform, Microsoft Teams, which was not among the commonly used platforms by the organiser. As Microsoft Teams does not support language interpretation there was the need to include a remote interpreting solution that could be easily integrated with Teams with minimum impact on the attendees' user experience.

Our solution

Globenti was used as an RSI platform given the short duration of the event and that it was already known by the client and some of the assigned interpreters.

A kick off meeting was held with the client to discuss the event particulars and after gathering information we agreed upon the corporate identity on the support materials and interpretation app, including logos, and a preferred access code for the interpretation app was established.

As the client was new to the use of Microsoft Teams, we included the additional role of Event Moderator in the service provision as this is a widely used tool in our company and we felt one of our PM would be prepared to undertake the tasks related to moderation, troubleshooting and general information from participants.

Common ground rules were established with the client to perform moderation of the event, including a shared presentation (see figure 1 below) displaying information in all five languages of the event.



Figure 1. Multilingual welcome presentation



The event was created on our partner's platform, the agreed corporate identity was assigned to the app and webapp and the agreed access code was programmed.

For easy information dissemination, the User Guide and Recommendations for speakers and participants was produced into three of the event's languages, English, French and Spanish. The client did not request further languages. Completed support materials were shared with the client in PDF format for distribution to participants via email.

Results

With the participants speaking five different languages, Spanish, English, French, Italian and Portuguese the event required a sophisticated configuration to allow cross interpretation from and into all languages.

To ensure efficiency and cost effectiveness it was decided that Spanish would be used as a pivot language and four booths were set up: Spanish <> English, French, Italian and Portuguese with a total of eight interpreters.

Some of the interpreters had not worked on our partner's platform before, therefore two separate test sessions were conducted to walk them through the online console and perform the appropriate sound checks. The test sessions included testing the relay function to which some of the interpreters were new.

On the day of the event, 60 minutes before the event start one of our Project managers connected to the session as broadcaster to perform sound checks and ensure smooth start of the interpretation. Three individual sound checks were performed for each interpreter: one to test the first target language, the other to test the second target language and the third to test the relay using Spanish as a pivot language. 32 individual sound checks were performed in total to test all possible language configurations.

Our PM was also connected as moderator to the event and checked in from time to time to inform participants about the tests that were being performed while they were joining the event. A separate chat was opened on MS Teams with the client's PoC to address any issues directly.

Once the tests were completed the PM issued the commonly agreed welcome message, including house rules for optimal interpretation as well as instructions and recommendations to listen to the interpretation.

The event started on time and the interpretation ran smoothly throughout the whole duration.

During the Q&A section of the event there was an issue in the French booth whereby one of the interpreter had not selected the appropriate channel. To avoid loss of information the PM acting as moderator briefly intervened to inform there had been a technical issue and asking the speaker to repeat his question which was done with no objection. The PM also intervened in the chat to solve questions from participants regarding the interpretation app and to request one of the speakers to slow down.

During a particularly active section in terms of language change, an issue was found in the app whereby the previously selected language was still audible. This was reported to Globenti and is awaiting feedback.

Feedback

The feedback was very positive, and the client welcomed the continuous support during the event including the moderation:

Lo que sí que quiero dejar claro Dora, es que tu trabajo me parece excelente, tanto para que todo funcione bien (que funcionó) como en la moderación técnica detrás del ordenador.

One of the participants who listened to the Italian interpretation reported a good service, they did not spot any mistakes in the translation and the overall service was good.

Interpreter Feedback

The interpreters who had not worked with the platform before found it intuitive and easy to use. Below is some feedback.

Muchas gracias a vosotros por estar tan pendientes, la verdad es que yo estaba nerviosa al principio por el sonido y la tecnología, entiendo que con el tiempo se cogerá más práctica.

Two Interpreters had questions and comments regarding the relay function which were passed on to Globenti and have been resolved.

Lessons learned

For internal purposes only

A template presentation was created to be used on events moderated by us at the beginning and ensure the information about the interpretation app is displayed in all languages of the event.

Some interpreters did not have their headphones recognised and a test was requested on a different day to ensure appropriate equipment configuration for future events.

The importance of moderation was particularly highlighted in this event as there were multiple language configurations and there was a high risk of errors in channel selection, particularly when relay was used.

During this event we missed the possibility of regulating interpreters' volume from the broadcaster platform, as well as having different chat channels with booths and maximising the chatbox to have better visibility of all messages, especially important during the initial sound checks. Another suggestion is to have a view of interpreters who are connected. All have been sent to Globenti.