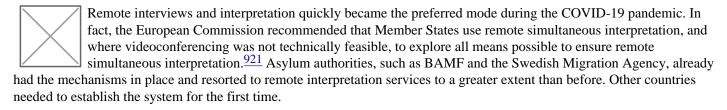


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## 4.11.5 New working methods



Countries such as Germany, lii Norway and Sweden conducted personal interviews with remote interpretation using different communication software since April 2020. Similarly, in Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands and Switzerland, interpretation was provided through videoconferencing from a different room. Swedish NGOs cautioned, however, that important nuances might get lost during remote interviews and interpretation. To tackle this challenge, the Irish Refugee council provided training to interpreters on how to work remotely. Slovenia was not able to purchase the technical equipment to ensure distance interpretation and videoconferencing but is currently developing such a system for the future, during the epidemic and in the implementation of interpretation for some rare languages.

Authorities in Czechia used interpretation by teleconference at times since they reported a shortage of interpreters during the pandemic, which created delays in the asylum procedure. This was echoed by JRS Europe, noting that asylum interviews were delayed or postponed because interpreters would refuse to be physically present. Sissues were reported also in Hungary, where interpretation through videoconferencing was sometimes difficult due to a bad connection.

Some countries followed a different approach. In Denmark, for example, plexiglass barriers were installed to separate the interviewer, the applicant and the interpreter. Likewise, the Danish Refugee Appeals Board also used plexiglass barriers separating board members and secretariat staff from the applicant, the interpreter, the first instance representative and the lawyer. Similarly, in France, Italy and Luxembourg, plexiglass panels were used to separate the interviewer from the applicant, the lawyer and the interpreter, while the use of a mask was mandatory. 927 In addition to the mask, Slovakia introduced an air purifier in the rooms and required a self-declaration to be signed by the interpreter. However, EASO operations personnel in Malta cautioned that face-to-face interviews with protective personal equipment required additional efforts by both interpreters and applicants for clear comprehension. 928

[lii] In addition, branch offices at the operational level are instructed to book the nearest interpreters.

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