International Standard

ISO 13611

Interpreting services — Community interpreting — Requirements and recommendations

Services d'interprétation — Interprétation de service public — Exigences et recommandations

Second edition
2024-02

Reference number
ISO 13611:2024(en)

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Published in Switzerland

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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 document 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).

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For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, 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 www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 37, *Language and terminology*, Subcommittee SC 5, *Translation, interpreting and related technology*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 13611:2014), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

— the document has been elevated to an International Standard;

— the structure of the text has been modelled on ISO 18841:2018;

— the content has been streamlined for clarity.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user’s national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

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Introduction

This document was developed in response to a worldwide need to accommodate the growing linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity of people who interact via spoken and signed communication. Community interpreting, also called “public service interpreting”, is essential to enable people to access community services available to members of society, which they would be otherwise unable to access owing to a language barrier as a result of not understanding the language of service delivery.

Such community services can occur in several communicative settings and can include, amongst others, the following:

— public institutions (local authorities, schools, universities, community centres, etc.);

— social services (refugee boards, self-help centres, etc.);

— business and industry services (housing, real estate, insurance, financial services, etc.);

— faith-based organizations (rituals, ceremonies, etc.);

— media organizations (television, internet broadcasters, etc.);

— emergency services (natural disasters, pandemics, etc.).

Community interpreting can include services provided in legal settings (police stations, courts, prisons, etc.) to facilitate equal access to justice. Legal interpreting is addressed in ISO 20228. In a number of countries, legal interpreting, a broad field that includes court interpreting, is not considered part of community interpreting. Similarly, healthcare interpreting is addressed in ISO 21998. In a number of countries, healthcare interpreting is not considered part of community interpreting. However, in several countries, community interpreting includes services provided in legal and/or healthcare-related communicative events, with acknowledgement that these services require additional training.

Community interpreting has become established as a profession. There are various codes and standards for specific settings but there are currently no universally agreed requirements for community interpreters. It is important to stress that interpreting differs from translation as it deals with oral or signed communication occurring in real time.

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Interpreting services — Community interpreting — Requirements and recommendations

1 Scope

This document specifies requirements and recommendations for the provision of community interpreting services. It establishes the foundational principles and practices necessary to ensure quality community interpreting services for all language communities (spoken and/or signed), for end users, as well as for clients, and for community interpreters.

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 20109, *Simultaneous interpreting — Equipment — Requirements*

ISO 20539, *Translation, interpreting and related technology — Vocabulary*

ISO 24019, *Simultaneous interpreting delivery platforms — Requirements and recommendations*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 20539 and the following apply.

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

— ISO Online browsing platform: available at https://www.iso.org/obp

— IEC Electropedia: available at https://www.electropedia.org/

3.1 Terms related to interpreting activities

3.1.1
interpret
render spoken or signed information from a *source language* (3.4.3) into a *target language* (3.4.4) in spoken or signed form, conveying both the meaning and *language register* (3.4.9) of the *source language content* (3.4.6)

[SOURCE: ISO 20539:2023, 3.1.10]

3.1.2
interpreting
interpretation
rendering spoken or signed information from a *source language* (3.4.3) into a *target language* (3.4.4) in spoken or signed form, conveying both the meaning and *language register* (3.4.9) of the *source language content* (3.4.6)

[SOURCE: ISO 20539:2023, 3.1.11]

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