

Inclusive Audiovisual Media and Information Services

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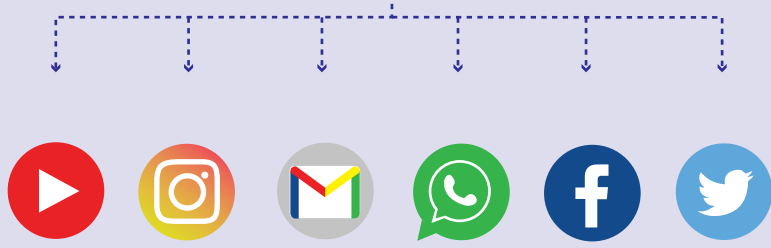
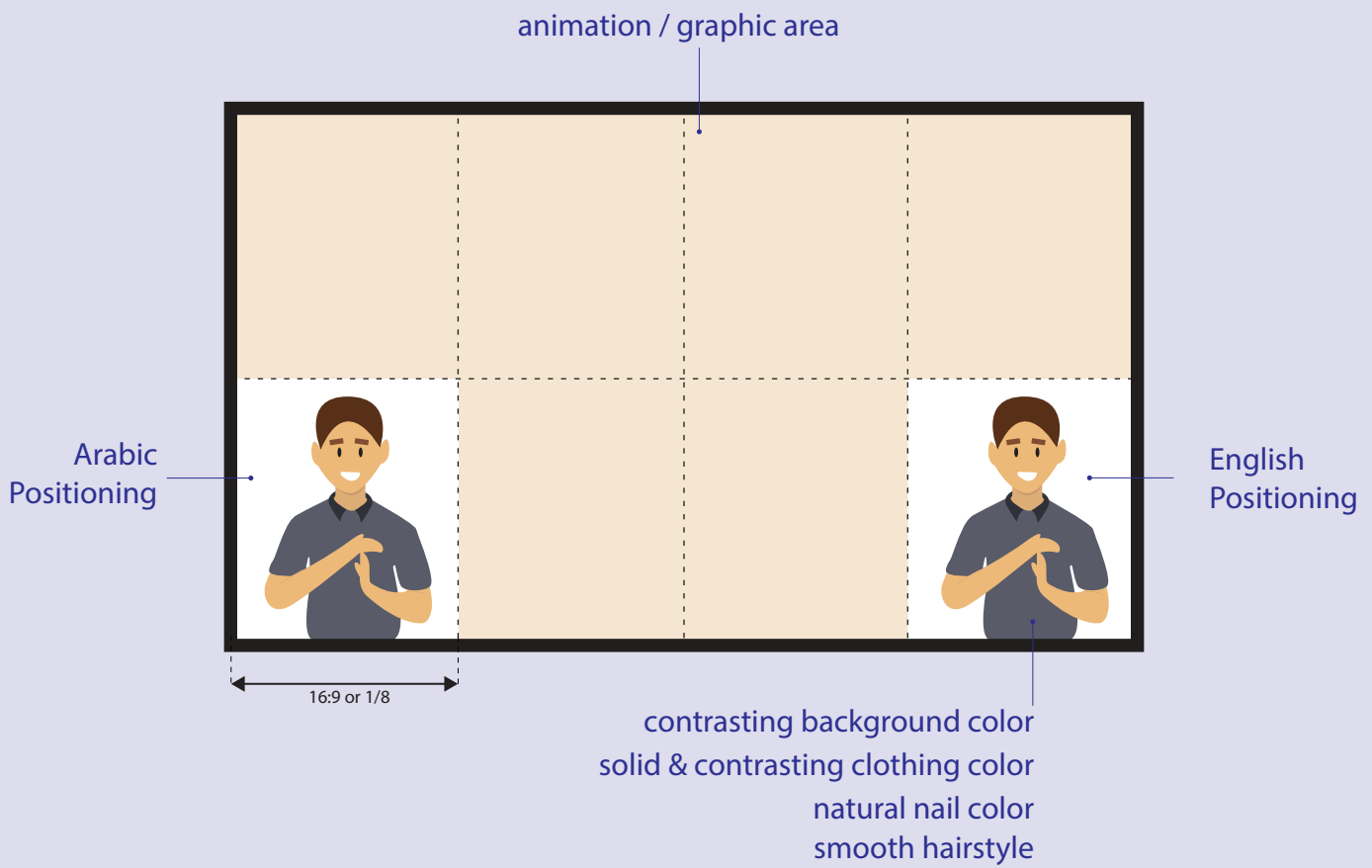


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Introduction

In Society, we as human beings, regardless of our age groups, gender, language, cultural background, and physical and cognitive abilities, use different communication methods to convey oral or written information to interact with each other and the environment around us. The right of access to information enables us as citizens to gain access to information regardless of our physical abilities/ disabilities. It encompasses our rights to request and receives information in different formats that are accessible for diverse needs. This includes audiovisual media such as film and television, and the use of computer-based technologies, the internet, and the World wide web that have to be designed to be accessible for all users including people with physical, visual, hearing, and cognitive impairments.

The Preamble of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, states in its section (v) the importance of accessibility to the physical, social, economic, and cultural environment, to health and education and information and communication, in enabling persons with disabilities to fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Inclusive Audiovisual media and information Services guideline is published by the Disability Hub- Centre for Lebanese Studies- LAU with the collaboration of the Lebanese Federation of the Deaf to ensure an understanding and implementation of a better quality of sign language SL interpreting, closed/open captioning, and audio description of audiovisual media and information.

Guidelines for Inclusive Audiovisual Media on TV Screens and Internet Format

Most TV channels contain daily political news, broadcasting programs, and other TV shows. All people regardless of their physical, visual, hearing, and cognitive abilities should have the right to gain access to the TV information by providing Sign Language interpretation, audio description for visual information, closed/ open captioning, and subtitles.

TV channels, any media service, or organization /institution, and service providers delivering audiovisual information are recommended to provide inclusive media content that includes a graphic text message at the beginning of the program on each channel informing its audience that the program is inclusive and is available with Sign Language interpreting, Closed/ Open Captioning, and Audio- Descriptions.

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1. Assigning a Certified Sign Language Interpreter

There are different ways to include sign language in TV shows. Most shows include a sign language interpreter in addition to the presenter who interprets the information delivered by the presenter. Other shows contain animations, and the sign language interpreter is available to interpret the audiovisual information provided in the animated media.

2. Sign Language Interpretation Preparations

Sign language service preparation time is vital to ensure good interpreting quality in the visual media. It is recommended that the interpreter has a previous time to prepare the service before the actual interpretation. During this period, the visual materials should be provided to the signer/ interpreter. Namely, audiovisual materials, the script, the step outline, or the video clips that will be used in the program. They should be readily available for the interpreter to consult so that the signs can be adjusted to these materials.

Keep in mind that Sign Language is a visual language and the interpreter should interact positively with the visual media. So having these materials in advance will enhance the quality of the interpretation service. Therefore, make sure that before they assign a sign language interpreter they follow these steps:

1. Provide all the audiovisual materials (clips, graphics, ...)
2. Provide the script or step outline
3. Allow sufficient time for preparation.
4. Do not introduce new visual materials without letting the Sign Language Interpreter know.
5. Hire the Signer/ Sign Language interpreter for the time of the service.

3. Filming the Sign Language interpreter

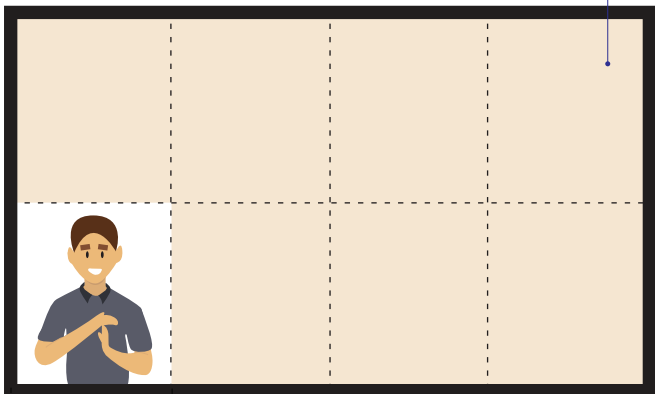
The following steps are recommended when filming the sign language interpreter.

1. Check the illumination
2. Check the size of the signing space with the sign language interpreter when framing the shot.
3. Use a medium-long shot (MLS) to film the signer
4. Leave some air above the signer's head and on both sides when framing the sign language interpreter
5. Use an eye-level camera angle with the sign language interpreter's head at the level of the focus
6. Use a frontal or a semi-profile shot
7. Maintain the shot

4. Sign Language Interpreter Screen Dimensions

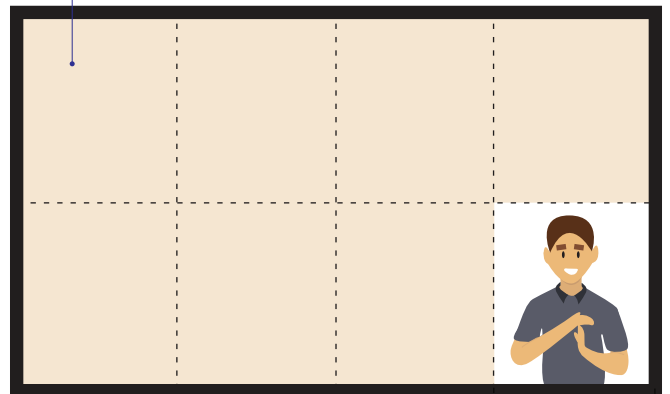
The Sign Language interpreter should be embedded on-screen window or rectangular frame not less than 1/8 of the 16:9 Screen or take 1/4 of the split-screen and use a medium shot or a medium-large shot for News Broadcasts.

animation / graphic area



Arabic Layout

16:9 or 1/8



English Layout

16:9 or 1/8

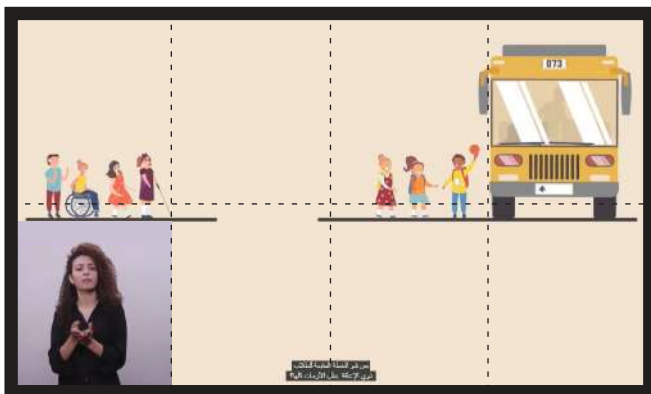
Sign language interpreters must not be obscured by graphic elements, and they should not cover any of the background graphic elements.



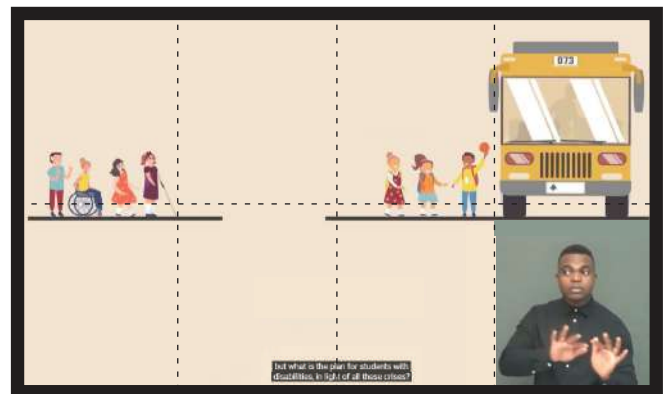
Sign language interpreting is not an alternative to subtitles/ captions and cannot be treated as such by broadcasters, suppliers, or transmission providers.



The background color behind the Sign Language Interpreter should be set to contrast with clothing and skin color so that all three-dimensional language details can be perceived accurately, enhance legibility, and prevent eye fatigue. The Sign Language Interpreter should wear a solid color that is in contrast to the skin and the background, without logos, have a smooth hairstyle, nails in a natural color.



Arabic Example



English Example

5. Press Conference

During press conferences, it is recommended that the event organizer provides Sign Language interpreting. The Sign Language Interpreter should stand next to the speaker, face the audience, and be visible. Broadcasts may be from different platforms, however; the main TV channels should not remove the Sign Language Interpreter to ensure easy access for a wide audience.

The Sign Language Interpreter should be always displayed in the full-screen image, with no text or graphics covering the interpreter.

To ensure that Press Conferences are accessible for the Deaf Community, a Sign Language Interpreter should be assigned regardless of their gender, and age.

They should be certified and well-trained and have experience in working for the media to make the content of speech or other information available to sign language users. It is vital to assign a native hearing certified professional from either the Deaf Community or has a certificate as a sign language interpreter to provide a better cultural match with the audience depending on the spoken language and the audience.

interpreter not separated
in a different frame



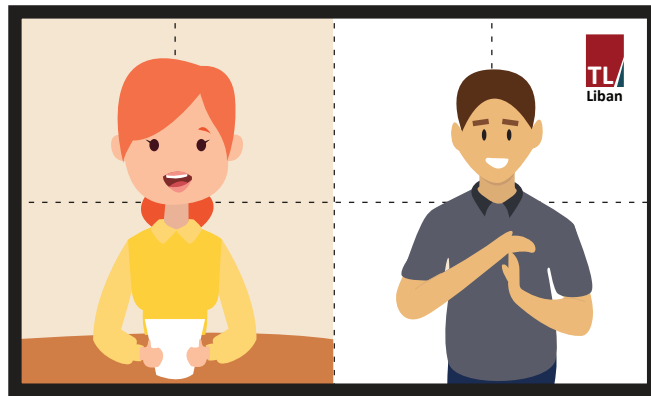
Arabic Layout



English Layout

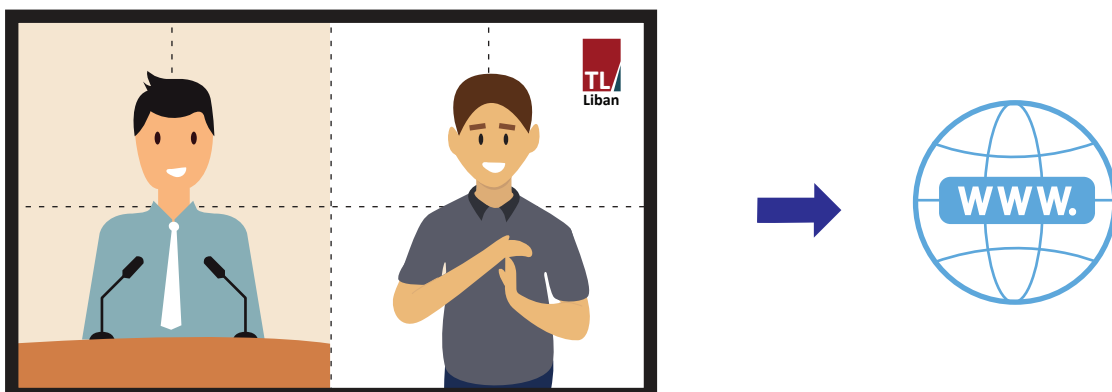
6. Live (Special) News Broadcasts with Sign Language Interpreter in Studio

1. It is recommended once providing a Live-news broadcast to use a white screen background behind the Sign Language interpreter who should always wear solid dark color clothing.
2. The Sign Language interpreter frame should be half of the Screen or placed in a rectangular filling $\frac{1}{4}$ or 25% of the screen, separate from the actual image of the screen.
3. Broadcasts should be multiplatform but should always be provided on the main public TV channels to ensure easy access for a wide audience.



7. Live Ministerial and Official Announcements

Sign Language Interpreters cannot usually attend Live Ministerial and official announcements or updates, especially on the floor of the parliamentary arena or hall. Hence it is recommended that the principles for live news broadcasts should be used, where the Sign Language Interpreter is live-streamed simultaneously on-screen alongside the speaker. In addition, the broadcast should be also available through a parliamentary web-based platform.



8. Sign Language interpretation Available on the internet

Ensure that all TV programs or any audiovisual media content with sign language interpreting on television are also available on the Internet, both on websites and social media.



9. Public Information Videos and Awareness Campaigns

Public information such as the Covid-19 and Coronavirus, vaccination, safety measure guidelines, new laws, or awareness campaigns for particular topics should be accessible to all people including the Deaf community. It is the responsibility of public authorities, media channel owners, or organizations launching awareness campaigns to ensure that information is made available directly in the national Sign Language or Languages of the country, and preferably created in that sign language or provided as a transcript from a written or spoken text as an alternative option. It is recommended that National Deaf associations are contacted for their expertise and guidance in developing these videos.

Medical information such as the Coronavirus and safety measures should be interpreted by a Deaf native presenter to ensure that the information is accurate.

Any healthcare videos should be published on the national and public health websites alongside other public information such as the information about the Coronavirus.

10. Closed/Open Captioning/ Subtitling

Captioning is essential in enhancing accessibility for people with hearing disabilities. Captions are either open or closed.

Open captions are always in view and cannot be turned off in a video, whereas closed captions can be turned on and off by the viewer. Closed captioning appears on YouTube and Kaltura media viewer players that support them.

Open/ Closed Captioning and subtitling should also be provided in addition to the Sign Language interpretation. Open/ Closed Captioning should be 100% accurate and matches with the voice-over. It should be provided below the sign language interpreter frame, so it does not cover any of the visual content or animation. The close captioning text should have a minimum font of 12pts of either Ariel or Calibri that has a visual contrast against the background (White text on Black background or vise/ versa).



11. Audio- Description

Ensure that important visual content such as the place, time, character names, emotional expressions, and other visual information is provided with audio descriptions, so they are accessible for people with visual impairments. The narrator or the person assigned to the audio description should have a clear voice, be certified, and be well trained to provide a clear and precise audio description that conveys the vital visual content in a TV Show, program, and animation. Ensure that visual content such as infographics or program graphics/ credits is also audio-described.

12. Alternative Text Description

Visual images should be used wherever possible to support the information. Alternative text descriptions should accompany any visual image provided on the web to enable people with visual impairments from gaining access to visual information.



Image sample

Alt Text

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind or low vision?

- The subject(s) in detail
- The setting
- The actions or interactions
- Other relevant information

(1-2 sentences recommended)

A picture of a meeting held by the disability hub steering committee, members and partners.

Mark as decorative

Word Document Alt-Text Feature

13. Accessibility Features Advertised

Once the information is provided in an accessible format, it is recommended that such information is well advertised to inform people with visual and hearing impairments about the options they can use to access such information. This can be done by either providing a written text or a sign language video.