

Instructions for Speakers

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Whether you are invited to speak in a plenary, in a panel or in a working group, make sure you really **speak**, not read a text. Reading we can all do at home.

Preparing:

In an international event, give your public a sense where are you from, what you are doing and under what circumstances. Even if you are introduced by the moderator and if your short bio is in the conference dossier, your audience will appreciate a few clues about your reality, your background – as long as you avoid being excessively autobiographical or pompous.

Stick to your topic. Decide what are the main points you are to make. Skip the details and technicalities. Avoid historic references, name dropping and professional jargon that may be unknown to others and difficult to translate.

You can use some notes or cues or a power point presentation if you wish.

If you are using a power point presentation, do not use more than 10 slides.

Do not overload with pictures and text. Do not read aloud what is written on your slides but paraphrase, expand and explain.

If you tell a story or offer a personal reminiscence, make sure it is relevant to the topic and supportive of your stance. Humor and (self)irony help.

If you are presenting your own practice in a working group, consider using a well edited and condensed DVD, a clip from Youtube or a series of well chosen photos that you will comment. But whatever visual material you use, make sure it runs under 5 minutes.

Rehearse your talk at home, aloud in a calm tempo and with PowerPoint-slide changes if you are using PowerPoint. This way you practice finding the right words, which is even more challenging if you are not speaking in your mother tongue. You also get a chance to time the duration of your talk.

It will be much appreciated by the organisers if you provide an outline of your contribution well in advance.



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Speaking:

Check the microphone in advance and measure optimal distance from it. Don't touch the microphone while speaking and keep your hands away from your mouth and face.

Speak clearly, articulate and shift emphasis and do not rush, especially if there is a simultaneous translation

Keep an eye contact with you audience and – if you are in a panel - with the panellists and the moderator.

Stay within the assigned time slot. Notice signals to wrap up and make sure you offer your conclusions in a clear and graspable manner.

In a panel situation, make sure you listen attentively to your fellow panellists, so you can refer to their points, polemicize or explain.

If you have an impression from the reactions of the audience that you are not being understood, clarify your terms at once.

Leave additional explanations for later, in the questions-and-answers period or for informal discussions after the session.

After speaking:

Keep your notes. You might be requested to provide a written text afterwards. Notes will also help you edit and authorize the transcript if the organizers have taped the session.

Don't disappear from the event immediately after you finish. Some people might want to talk with you afterwards, so try to make yourself available.



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