Online Testing and Training Tool for Interpreters (OTIS) Candidate user guide (web app version)

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Contents

1.   Introduction

The Online Testing and Training Tool for Interpreters (OTIS) is an online platform for remote testing and training used within the European Parliament.

2.   Receiving an invitation to take a test

The system administrators will send you an email inviting you to take a scheduled test. The email will include important information, such as the start and end dates and your OTIS username and password.

Please note that the Tests tab is only accessible on the dates mentioned in the email invitation. All the other sections and tabs in OTIS, with the exception of the Test Simulation tab, can be accessed at any time. You will be able to access the Test Simulation tab once you have received the invitation for the test.

The administrators may send you follow-up email notifications if there is a change in the dates of your test or if the test is cancelled.

Finally, the administrators will send your test results to you by email.

3.   Minimum mandatory requirements

The OTIS tool **does not work with an IPad.**

The minimum mandatory requirements for the tool are:

- **Browser:** Firefox 22 or later.
- **Broadband internet connection:** a minimum speed of at least 0.5 Mbit/sec
- **Headset:** for audio playback and microphone recording

After you log in and before you start the test, the tool performs automated checks to verify if the device you are using meets the minimum requirements set out above (see point 11 for more information). If you would like to check your browser and see if JavaScript is enabled before you log in to the tool, you can visit a website such as *www.whatismybrowser.com*
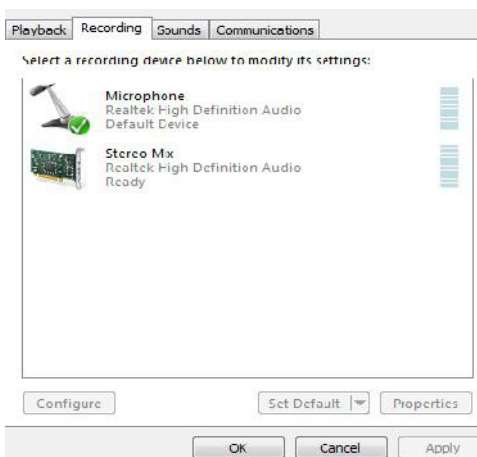
4.   Instructions for candidates

<mark>IMPORTANT INFORMATION</mark>

If you plan to sit your test using a Windows operation system, you must disable the stereo mix in the speaker settings using the below instructions to make sure you produce the best possible recording:
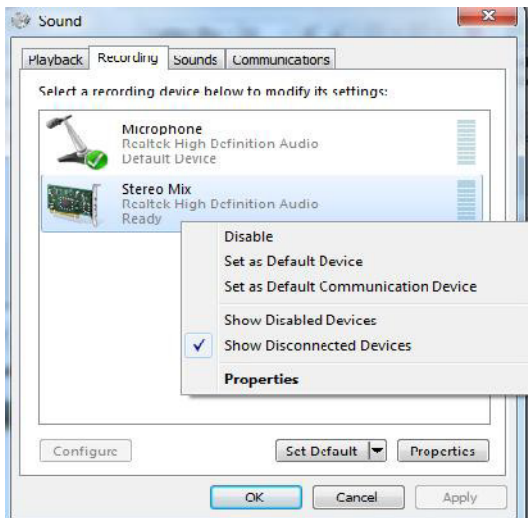
1. *Right click the speaker icon*

2. *Click Recording devices*

3. Right click Stereo Mix (if that option is not available, your configuration is suitable for the test)

4. Click Disable

Before taking the test, please close all other programs on your device, especially those using an internet connection.

Check your screen saver options to make sure that your computer does not go into screen saver mode while the test speech is playing. You might get distracted if this happens during the test.

Please always use a good-quality head-mounted headset with earphones and a microphone to guarantee that your recording is of the best possible quality. Never use the loudspeakers to listen to the speech or the integrated microphone of your device to record your interpretation. You should only record your interpretation of the speech. If you put the loudspeakers on, your microphone will pick up the sound from the speakers, creating a feedback effect.

Before you start the test, please make sure that you are in a quiet environment and that you will not be disturbed during the test. Please be aware that ambient sounds might be recorded and could influence the quality of the audio file you submit. Make sure you are not too close to other electronic devices or mobile phones, even if they are switched off.

Make sure that you record at a sufficiently high volume. Please bear in mind that the evaluator will hear two channels at the same time: the original speech and your recording. It is therefore important that your recording is loud enough to hear you clearly. During the 'Simulation & Adjustments' step (see point 13), you will be able to test your microphone and the quality of your recording. Make sure that your microphone is properly configured. You will find more instructions on how to configure your microphone settings on the FAQ page of the tool (Question 2): https://pst.secure.europarl.europa.eu/content/faq.

Ensure that the headphones are not so loud that they leak into the recording.

5.   Switching language

The OTIS application is available in English, French and German. To switch between the available languages, open the language menu from the tool's banner (Figure 1).

6.   Logging in

To take the test from your desktop or laptop, log in the OTIS system on https://pst.secure.europarl.europa.eu.

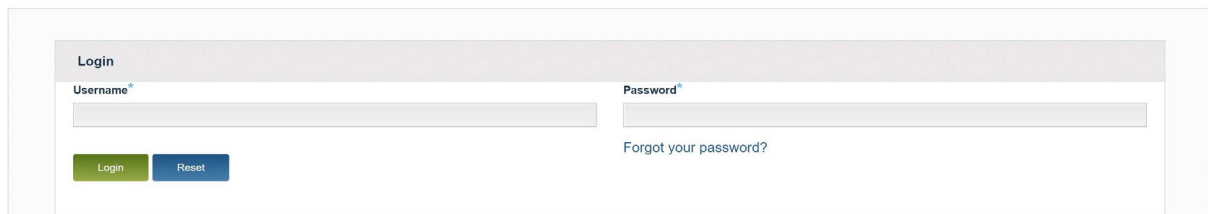Enter the credentials that were sent to you by email.

Figure 2 – Login screen

When you log in for the first time, you will be invited to change your password.

If you have forgotten your password, please follow the steps outlined in the next section.

For security reasons, the system will automatically lock your account after three failed attempts to log in. If that happens, please contact the help desk.

7.   Resetting your Password

To reset your password, please follow these steps:

1. Click the **Forgot your password?** option, which is below the input fields on the login page.
2. Insert your email address (the one mapped to your OTIS account) and click the **Reset my password** button (Figure 3).
3. The system will send you an automated email message. Click on the link in the email and follow the instructions.

4. The system will then send you another automated message containing your new automatically generated password. Please use this password to log in.
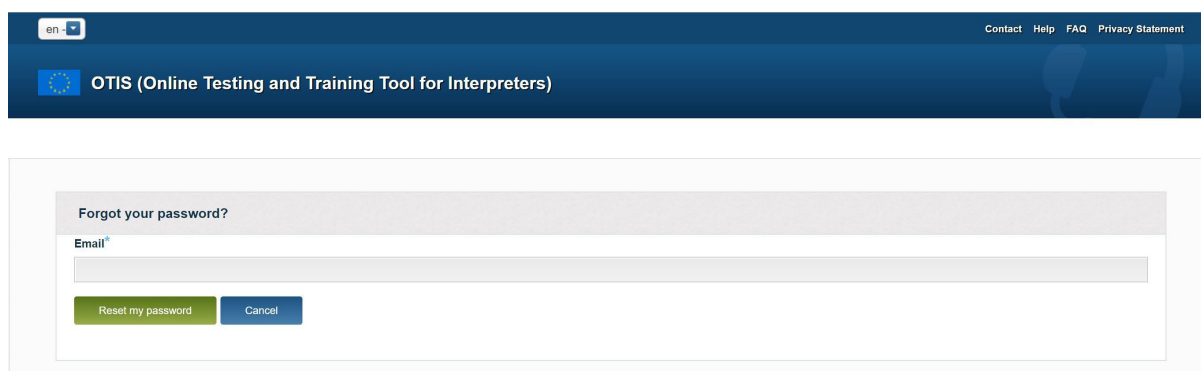

Figure 3 – Forgotten password

8. The Candidate Important Information Tab

This tab can be accessed at all times and contains important information about the test.

9. The Candidate Communications Space Tab

This tab can be accessed at all times and contains information such as the test schedule.

10. The Candidate Test Simulation Tab

This tab can be opened once you have received an email invitation to take the test. It gives you access to a simulation test.

11. Tests Tab

Provided that you have been assigned a test, you will be taken to the index page on which your assigned test is displayed after logging in to the system (**Figure 4**). Please plug in your headset before you click the **Start** button and move to the next step.

12.   Outline of the test process

Clicking the **Start** button initiates the test process, which consists of a series of steps. Those steps are:

1. Terms and conditions acceptance
2. Explanation of the procedure
3. Technical instructions
4. Simulation & adjustments
5. Test

13.   Accepting the terms and conditions

On this screen (**Figure 5**), you need to read and accept the **terms and conditions**. Read them carefully and tick the **I Accept** checkbox, which will allow you to move to the next step.

| Welcome | Explanation of the procedure | Technical Instructions | Simulation & Adjustments | Test | Upload of the recording |

Welcome

OTIS (Online Testing and Training Tool for Interpreters) is provided for candidates taking part in a language-adding test and is hosted and maintained by the Directorate-General for Logistics and Interpretation for Conferences of the European Parliament.

Before taking the test, you must acknowledge and accept the following terms and conditions:

1. The username and password provided to you as well as the content of the test speech are strictly confidential and intended for your personal use only.

2. You are responsible for all activity that occurs via your account. You must not share your account information or use another person's account.

3. You must not misuse the application; in particular, you are not allowed to:

(a) capture, download, copy, send or disseminate to third parties any data related to the content of your test;

(b) enable or allow others to use OTIS using your account information;

(c) attempt to circumvent any access or use restrictions put into place to prevent misuse of the tool;

(d) perform any operations that may interrupt, destroy or restrict the functionality of OTIS.

4. You must notify the European Parliament immediately (via the e-mail address provided in the "contact" menu) of the loss, theft, breach of confidentiality concerning your username and password or of any risk of misuse of OTIS.

5. In case of deliberate misuse of OTIS or breach of confidentiality of your personal account and/or test content, you will be excluded from any further testing.

6. You are responsible for the choice, purchase, installation and operation of any hardware, software or telecommunication services required to connect with and to use OTIS as well as for the related purchasing and licensing costs.

7. The European Parliament is not liable for hardware, software, products and services of third parties, such as telecommunication equipment, internet connections, operating systems and internet browsers.

Further to the above mentioned consequences in case of misuse of OTIS, the present terms and conditions do not exclude your personal responsibility, as stipulated by the applicable legal provisions, in particular those of the country where you are using the tool.

☑ I Accept

Figure 5 – Welcome screen

14.   Explanation of the procedure

This page explains the procedure that needs to be followed in order to take the test (**Figure 6**).

Figure 6 – Explanation of the procedure

15.   Technical instructions

After clicking the **Next: Technical Instructions** button, the system will run a number of automated checks. After each check has been completed, a green tick will be displayed next to it. If your computer fails one of the automated checks, you must take the appropriate corrective action before moving on to the next step.

As well as the automated checks, you need to manually confirm four other checks (Figure 7). You will not be able to move on to the next step until you have confirmed those checks.

Technical Instructions

Before taking the test, please **close all other programmes on your device**, especially those using an internet connection.

Check your screen saver options to make sure that your screen saver will not be activated while the test speech is running. It might disturb you if this happens during the test.

Please always use a good quality head-mounted headset with earphones to guarantee the best possible quality of your recording. Never use the loudspeakers to listen to the speech or the integrated microphone of your device to record your interpretation. What you want to record is only your interpretation of the speech. If you put the loudspeakers on, your microphone will pick up the sound from the speakers, creating a feedback effect.

Before you start the test, **please make sure that you are in a quiet environment** and that you will not be disturbed during the test. Please be aware that ambient sounds might be recorded and influence the quality of the audio file you will submit. Don't stay too close to other electronic devices or mobile phones, even if they are switched off.

Make sure that you record at sufficiently high volume. Please bear in mind that the evaluator will hear two channels at the same time: the original speech and your recording. It is therefore important that your recording is loud enough to hear you clearly. In the next step, you will be able to test your microphone and the quality of your recording. Make sure that your microphone is properly configured. You will find more instructions on how to configure your microphone settings on the FAQ page (see Question 2):**https://pst.secure.europarl.europa.eu/content/faq**

To go to the next step, you must tick the boxes of the manual checks.

Automated checks

✔ JavaScript: Enabled
✔ Browser: Chrome 114. Supported
✔ Connection speed: 7.90 mbps
✔ Audio recording capability: Supported
✔ Audio recording permission: Accepted

Manual checks

☐ **I have a headset connected**

☐ **I am not downloading other large files which could slow down the test**

☐ **I have allowed recording in the browser popup**

☐ **I have closed all other programs on my device**

☐ **I have checked the stereo mix in the speaker settings**

Figure 7 - Technical Instructions page

16. Simulation & Adjustments

The purpose of the simulation is to give you the opportunity to fine-tune your environment and familiarize yourself with the process before taking the real test.

Step 1
The purpose of the first step of the simulation is to verify that you can play a video, to check the quality of the sound and to make any necessary adjustments (Figure 8). Ensure that the headphones are not too loud . When you are satisfied that everything is OK, please click the **Sound is OK** button to move on to the next step of the process.

Figure 8 – Test the sound of the video

Step 2

The purpose of the second step of the simulation is to check that you can record your voice, to check the quality of the recording and to make any necessary adjustments (Figure 9).

To start the recording, click the **REC** button and start speaking into your microphone. When you have finished, click the **STOP** button to stop the recording. To play back your recording, click the **PLAY** button. You can repeat the process by clicking the **REC** button again. When you are satisfied that everything is OK, click the **Audio recording is OK** button to move on to the next step of the process.
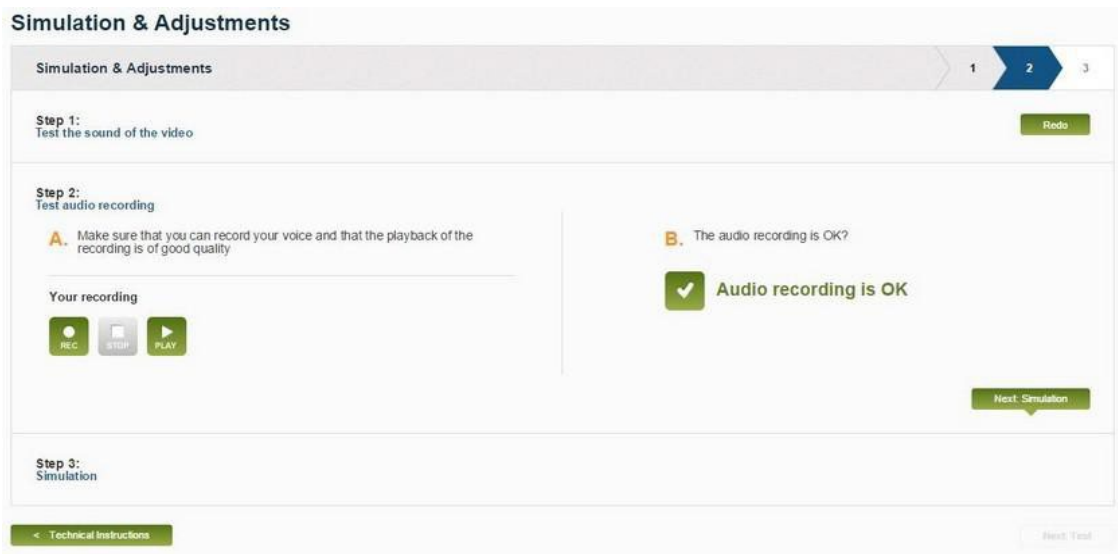

Figure 9 - audio recording test

Step 3

The purpose of the third step of the simulation is to simulate a real test (Figure 10). The simulation test video starts automatically after a countdown of five seconds. Once it has begun, you can start recording your interpretation. Previously, ensure that the headphones are not so loud that they leak into the recording.
You can stop the recording at any point by clicking the **STOP** button. Once you press the **STOP** button, the recording will be compressed and uploaded to the server for processing. When the merged video (of the original simulation video and the recording of your voice) is ready, click the play button on the video to play it back. Assess the sound quality of your recording and if you think that you need to make any adjustments, click the **REPEAT** button. You can repeat the process until you are ready to move on to the next step. Once you are satisfied, click the **Simulation test is OK** button to move on to the next step of the process.
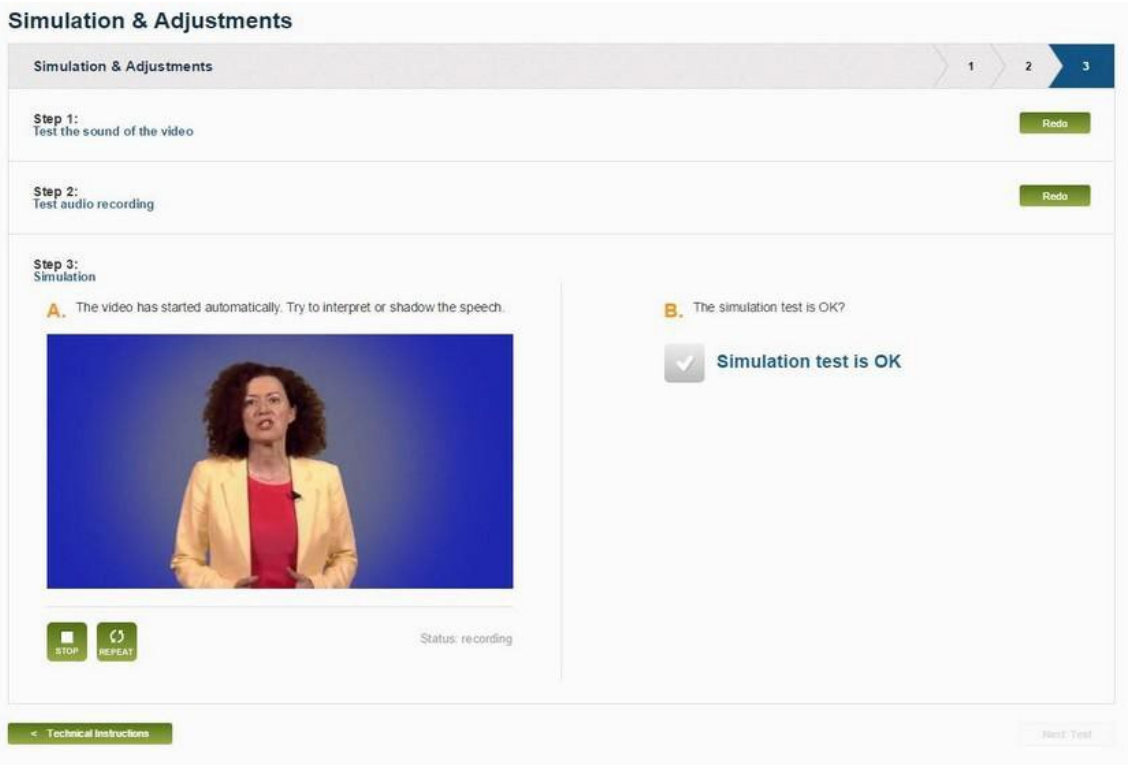
Figure 10 – Simulation test

17. Test

To start the actual test, click the **Start Test** button (Figure 11). Please note that *you will only be allowed to play the test video once*. If you navigate back or close the browser while the test video is running, the test will be invalid and you will not be allowed to repeat it.
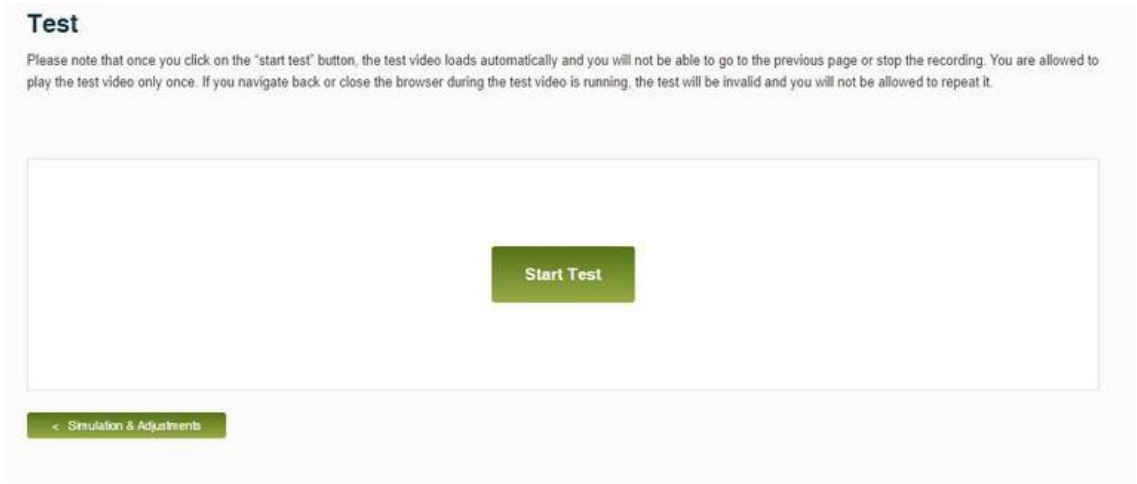

Figure 11 – Start real test

Clicking the **Start Test** button will trigger the five-second countdown to the start of the test video (Figure 12).
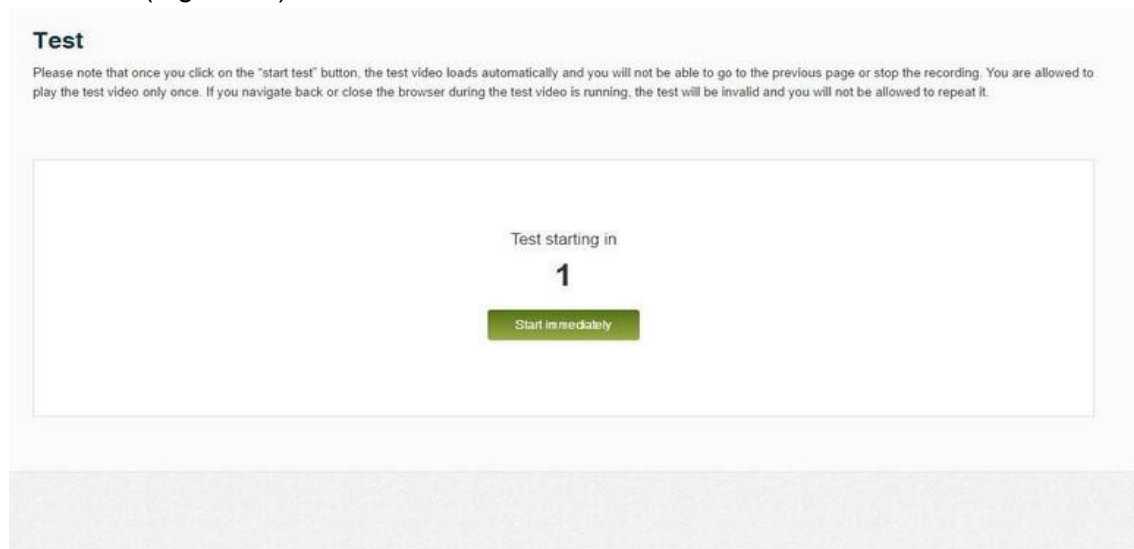

Figure 12 - Countdown

The video starts with an introduction to the test and an explanation of some key terms. After the introduction ends, *your interpretation will be recorded* (Figure 13). When you have finished recording your interpretation for the test, please click the **Complete the Test** button. Please note that you can use this button to abort the test at any time, even before the test video has ended. The system will automatically complete the test 30 seconds after the test video ends even if you do not press the **Complete the Test** button.
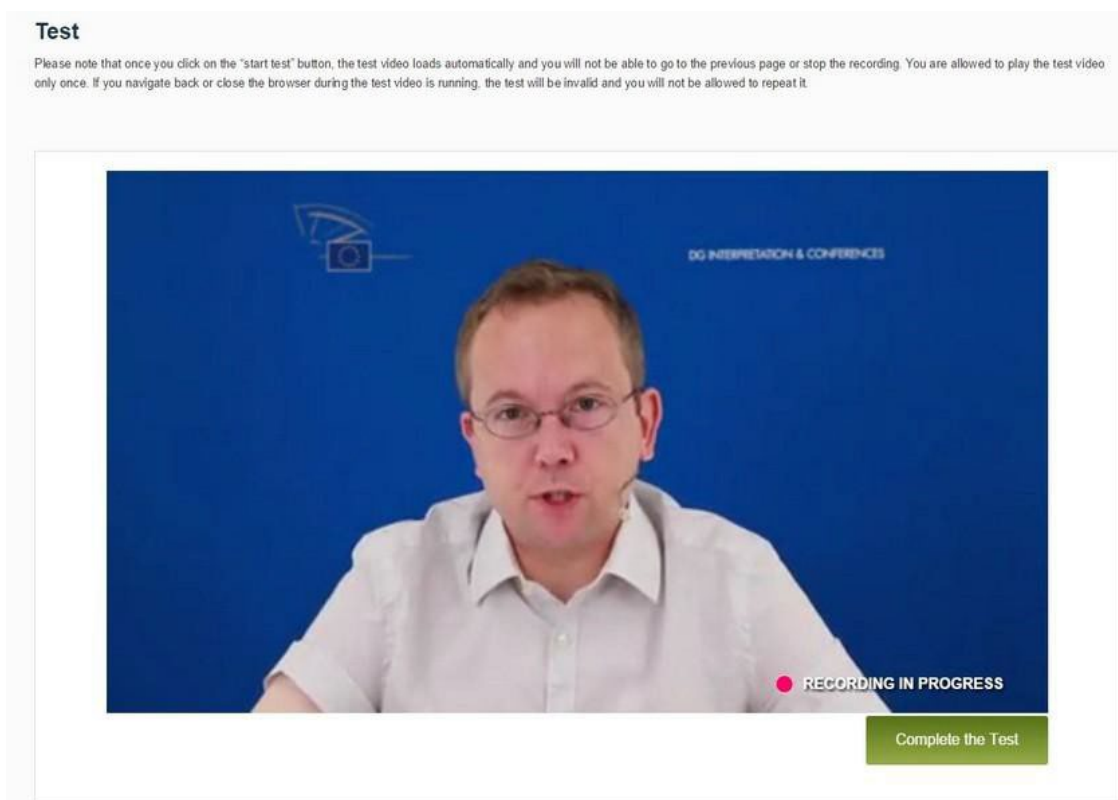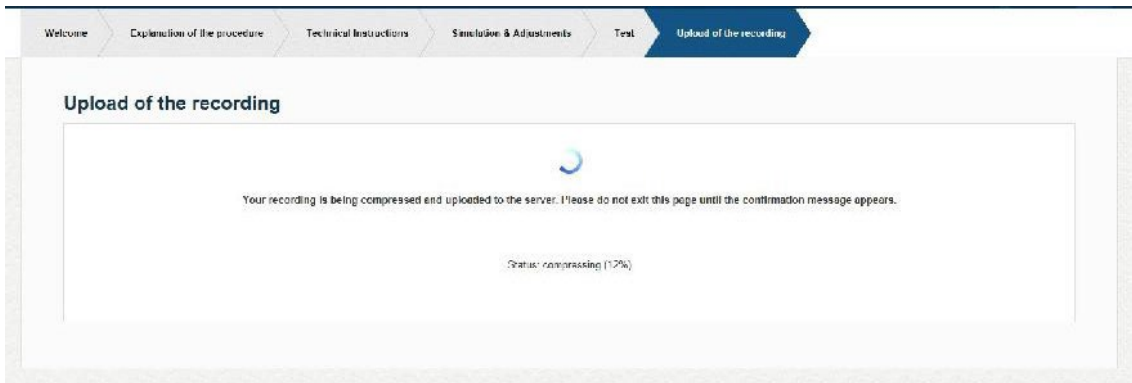

Figure 13 – Test video running

Your recording will then be compressed and uploaded to the server (Figure 14). Please do not close the browser or leave the page until the process has been completed.

Please note that, depending on the browser, internet connection speed and other technical parameters of the device you are using, it may take several minutes for the recording file to be uploaded. Do not log out, leave the page or close the browser until you have been notified that your recording has been uploaded to the server (see Figure 15).

Figure 14 – Upload of the recording

The system will display a message telling you when it is safe to log out (Figure 15).

Figure 15 – End of test

18.   Logging out

You can click on the **Logout** link in order to log out from the OTIS application.

19.   Help, support and contact

The banner of the OTIS application features links to pages that contain useful information, such as **Contact**, **Help**, **FAQ** and the **Privacy Statement**.

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