

1. INTRODUCTION

Please go directly to section 2 “Using the EC Webcast Player” in this document for knowing how to work with the application.

For whom is this manual? This is a concise manual containing info for basic (see section 2) and additional info for more advanced users including first-line helpdesks.

All essential information for the user to operate the EC Webcast player is provided. This manual includes a description of the different options, alternate modes of operation and step-by-step procedures for access and use.

Why this player? When a high number of users watch a stream simultaneously, this would require a very performing network infrastructure and server installation. Even though SCIC has invested in new performing streaming server infrastructure actually each user is consuming an amount of network bandwidth¹ that by the number of them can even saturate an entire network. In order to offload the Commission internal IT-network and SCIC’s Streaming infrastructure, this player makes use of a network technology called “multi-cast”. Instead of users connecting individually (called “uni-cast”) to the streaming infrastructure via the network, only one connection is established and redistributed via the different network switches. This way of working reduces the impact on the network and servers at the same time. However not all networks or sites in the Commission can propagate this multi-cast, here the player will automatically switch back to the uni-cast method and establish a direct connection with the streaming server without a user intervention.

When will this player be used? It will be used for live events that could have a potential high number of viewers inside our organisation. SCIC will make such events available via this player.

Who should use this player? Any person who works in the Commission office and wants to watch a popular streaming like the State of the Union. Teleworkers CANNOT use this player due to way they are connected to the network and the Commission server infrastructures. The Teleworker environment was not conceived for multi-media experiences like streaming or watching videos like on YouTube. Most popular events are also broadcasted via internet means e.g. EUTube, EbS or even via Facebook or Twitter. Teleworkers must CUT their connection with the Commission (VPN) and access these resources via their normal internet connection as any other citizen would do.

Why not a commercial product? There are hardly any commercial products that exists on the market and if it is the case it comes with a very high cost and installation requirements on the PC’s that might not even be fit for our secured environment. The solution that SCIC developed in 2018 is an open-source free-of-charge implementation based on the “VLC-libraries”. The advantage of this player is that it has a user interface just for the essence of watching and language selection, removing all complex menus and parameters of advanced products for the user and providing an automated fail-back mechanism between multi and uni-cast.

Will SCIC continue to develop this player? Yes SCIC will follow-up and when necessary release a newer version of this player. However keeping the initial concept in mind of simplicity and stability. Therefore changes have to be well thought as new versions have to be pushed to tens of thousands of PC’s each time.

¹ *Aside streaming also mail, network documents, internet access, PC-installations and software distribution, video-conferencing, telephony via PC (VoIP), etc. ... it all passes over the “network-motorways”. Same principle as commuting during rush hours it can become quite crowded if everyone is moving at the same time.*

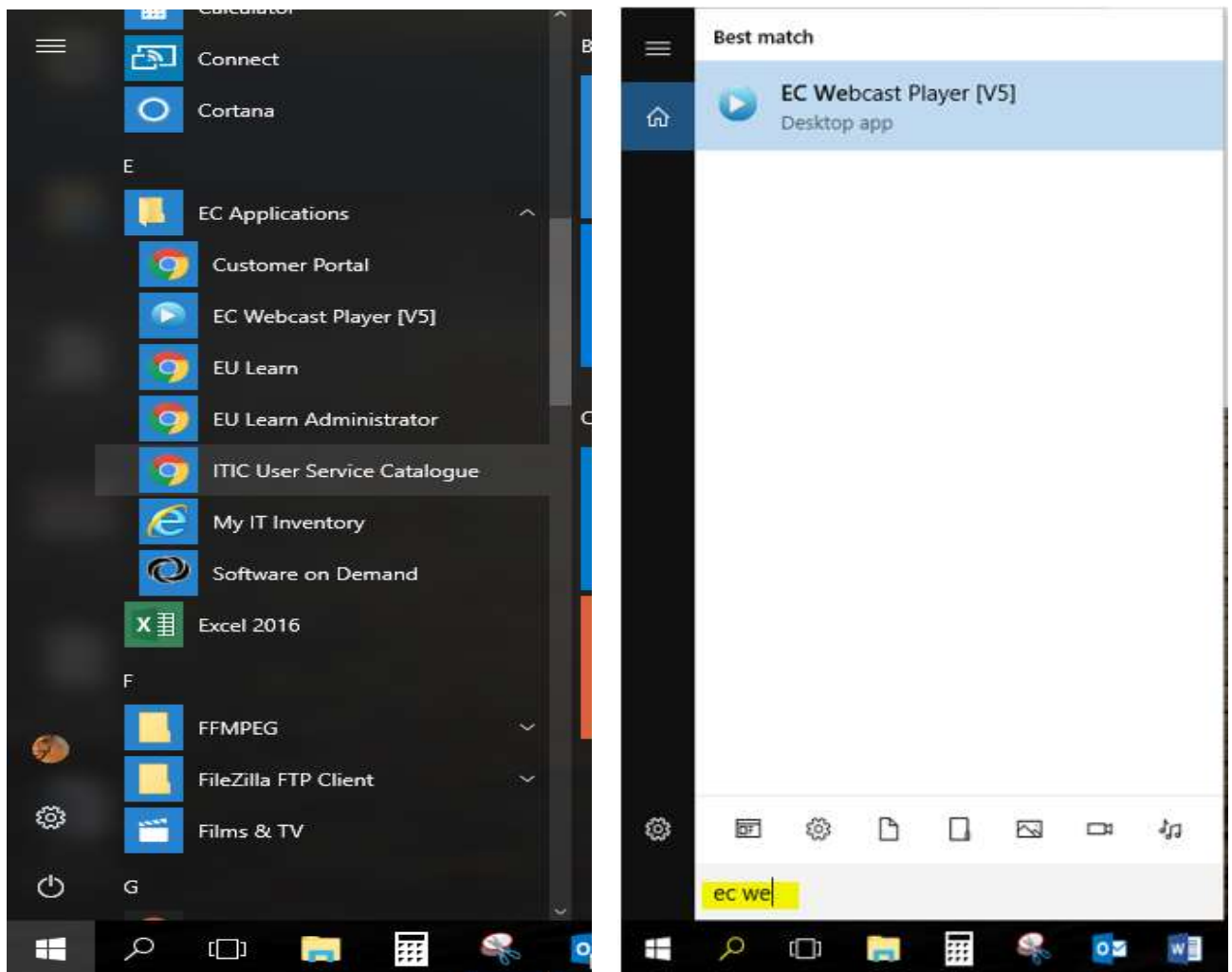
2. USING THE EC WEBCAST PLAYER

The EC Webcast Player is installed by default on your PC. You can find the player on your PC via Start Menu -> EC Applications. **The first time you use the player it can take some time** ($\pm 30\text{sec}-1\text{min}$) before the application opens as it might have to download files from a central server.

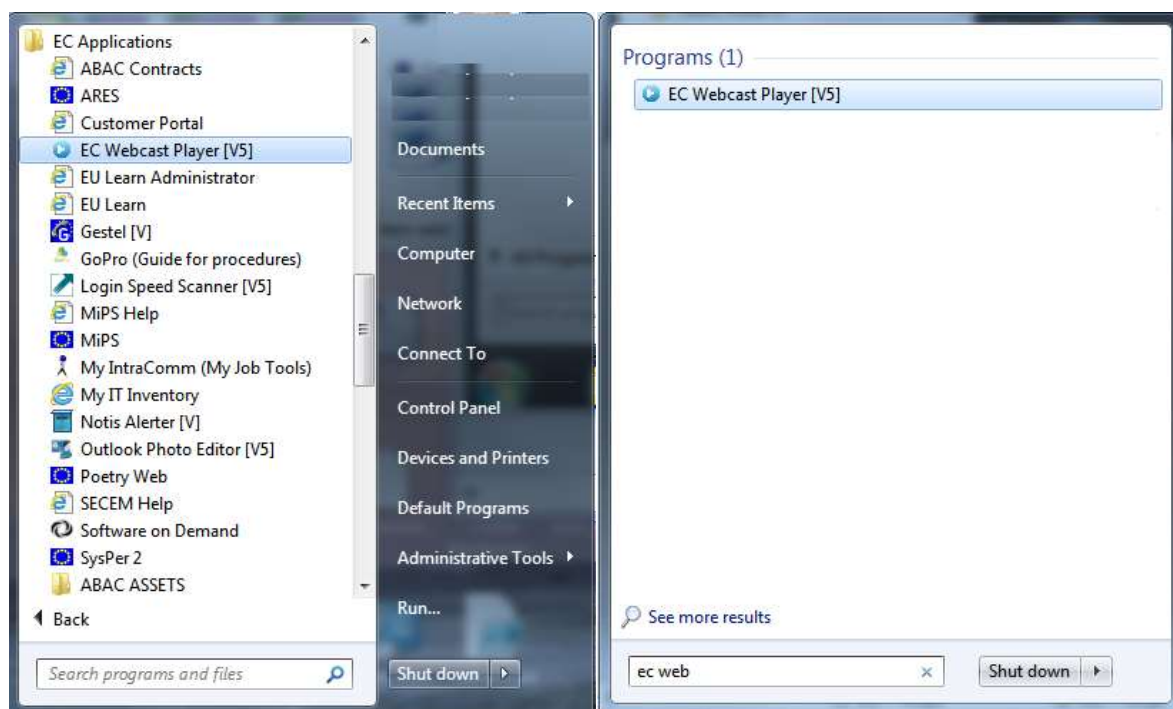
If you don't have the player or face issues to start it, please contact the IT Helpdesk (77777 for ITIC DG's).

2.1. Starting the player

In Windows 10 you can launch the EC Webcast Player from the Windows Start Menu, or by using "Search Windows".



In Windows 7 it is also available on Windows Start Menu, or by using “Search programs and files”.



2.2. Interface [Main Page]

Number of events available since the last refresh

The screenshot shows the 'Sessions overview' page of the EC Webcast Player. The page title is 'Sessions overview' with a notification bubble containing the number '2'. Below the title, the date 'Wednesday, August 1, 2018' is displayed. There are two event entries: 'TEST Multicast CCAB 01/08' with a 'live' status and 'TEST Multicast BERL-EbS 01/08' with a 'planned' status. Each entry includes a start and end time and a duration. Annotations include: a red arrow pointing to the '2' notification bubble; a blue arrow pointing to an 'About' button; a purple arrow pointing to a 'Refresh' button; a blue arrow pointing to the 'live' status; a blue arrow pointing to the 'planned' status; a blue arrow pointing to the time range; and a green arrow pointing to the list of sessions.

Info related to the Player and its version

Click this “Refresh” button to update the list and the state (“Live/Planned”) of the events currently available.

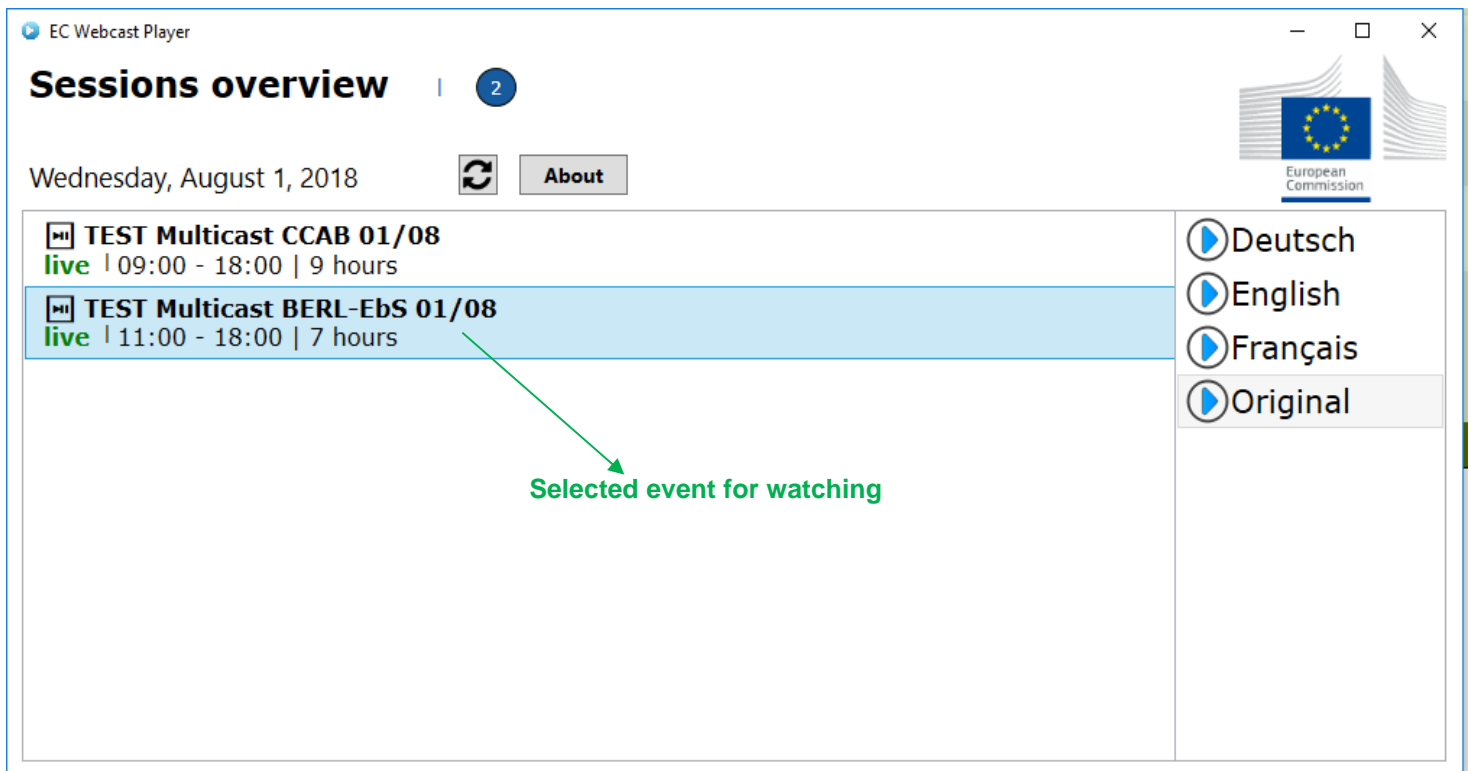
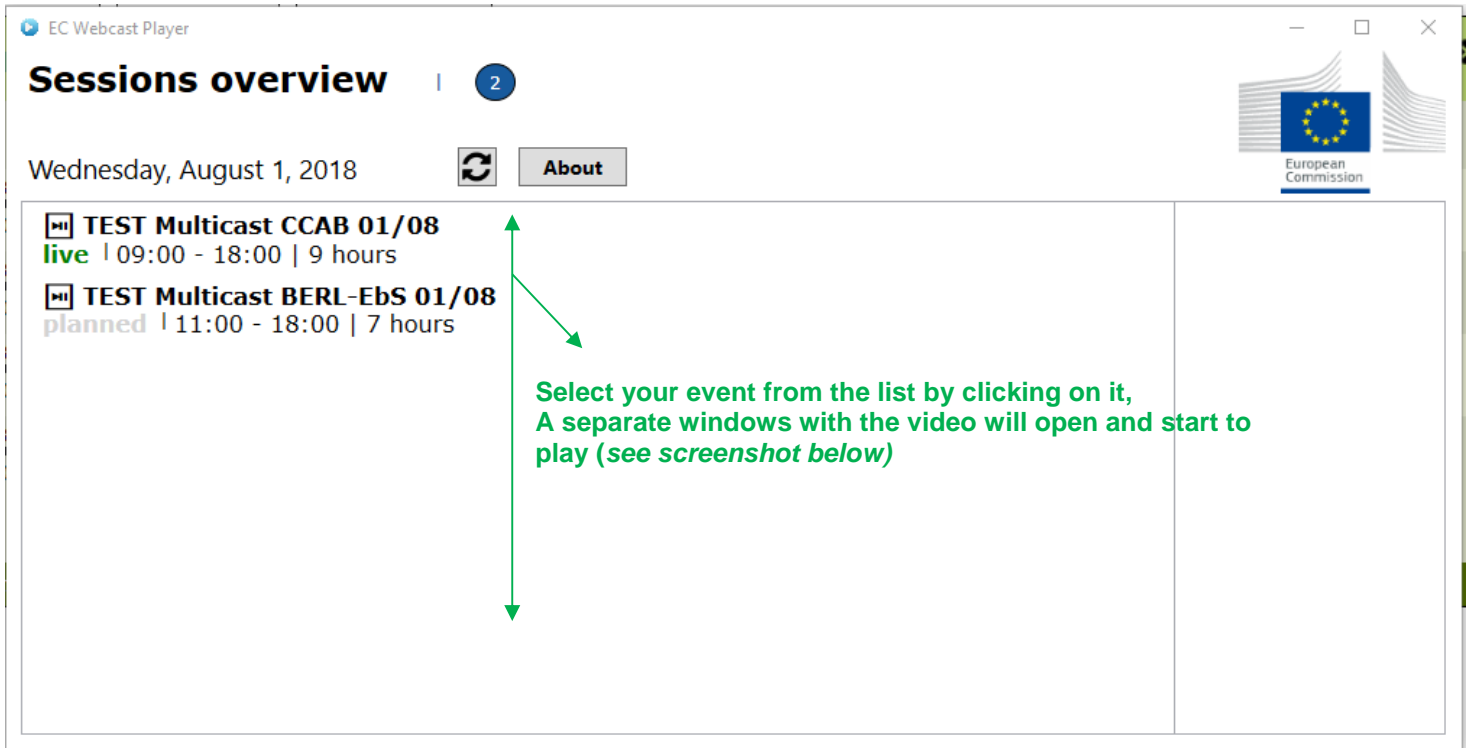
Indicative start and end-time of the live streams

“live” status indicates that event can be watched now

“planned” status indicates that it is not yet available for viewing. Press “Refresh” button at a later stage (see indicated schedule) to update.

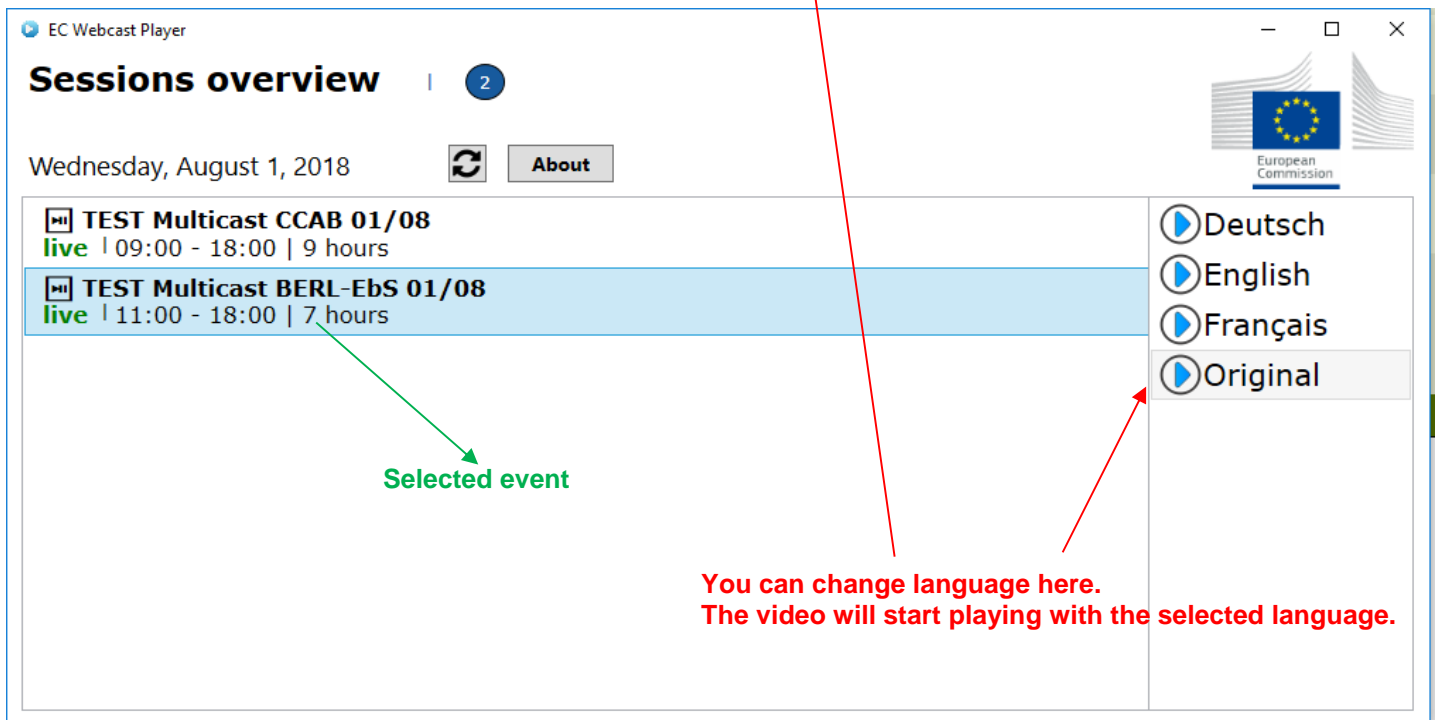
List of the sessions available

2.3. Starting a stream [Main Page]



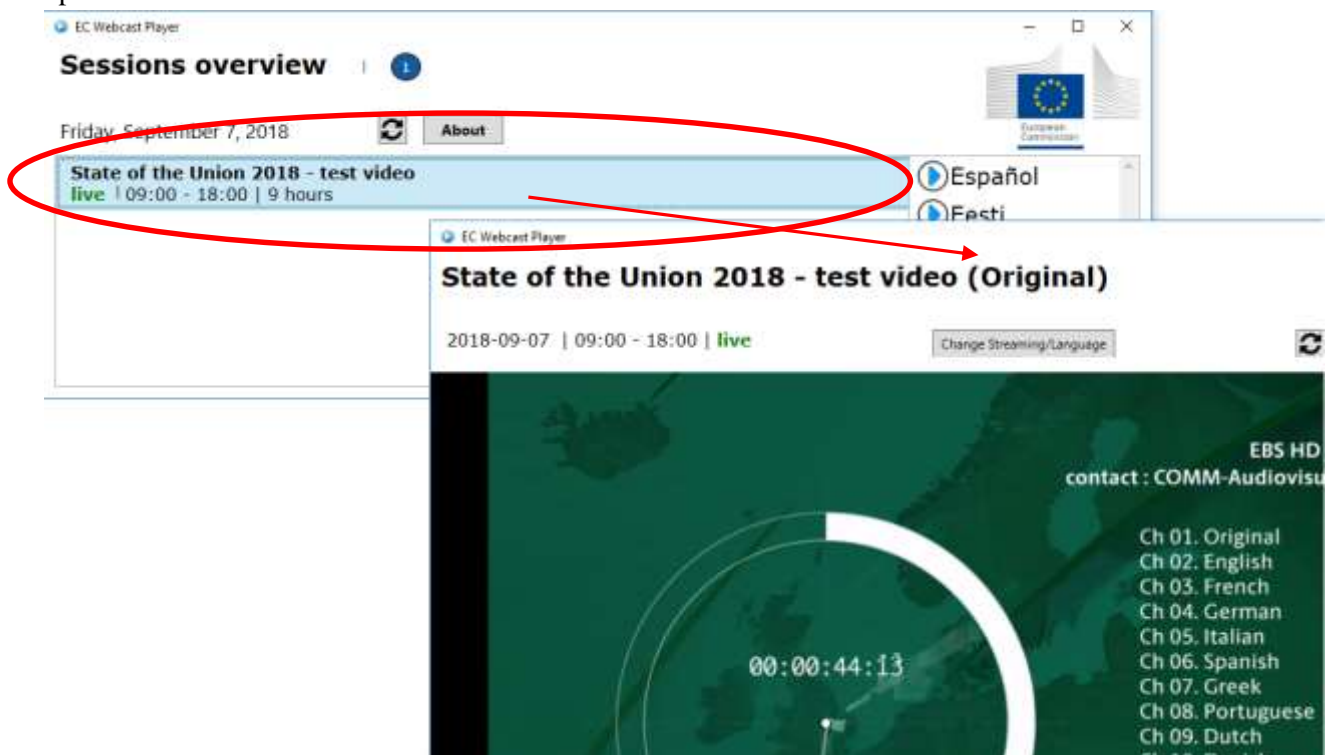


2.4. Language selection



3. FAQ

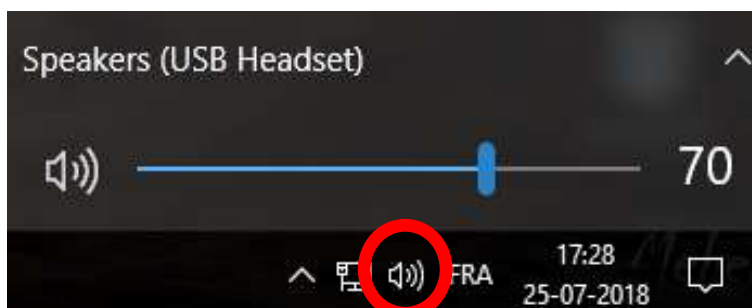
- **The player takes very long to start is this normal?** The player is a virtualized application, this means it gets downloaded to the user computer only when the user launches the application for the first time. Nevertheless to minimise the player start-up time, an automated system is implemented to download all the application components before it is launched for the first time. For this your PC must have been on-line for a while on the network. If despite this automated download the player still doesn't appear or doesn't start-up on your computer, please contact the Helpesk.
- **When I start-up the player, no video is played?** At start-up only a list of available events that can be viewed since it was running. If you want to watch it, you must click on it and the video window will open.



- **When contacting the helpdesk, please press the “about” button** in the main EC Webcast player window to know the version you have currently on your PC.



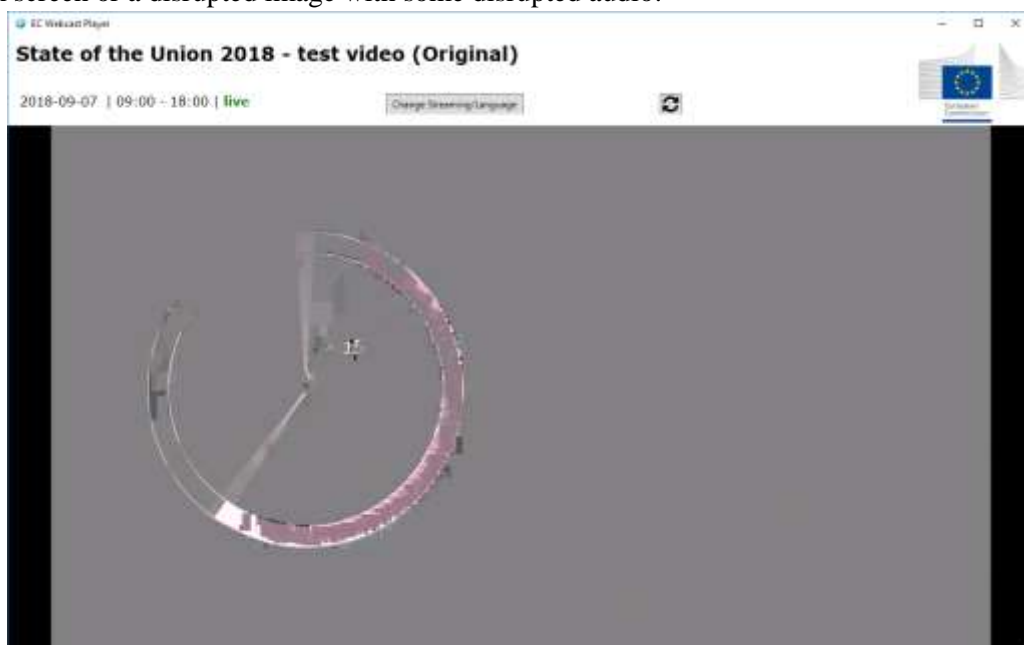
- **How to change the Sound?** Use the settings sound in the taskbar of your PC or on your external loudspeakers



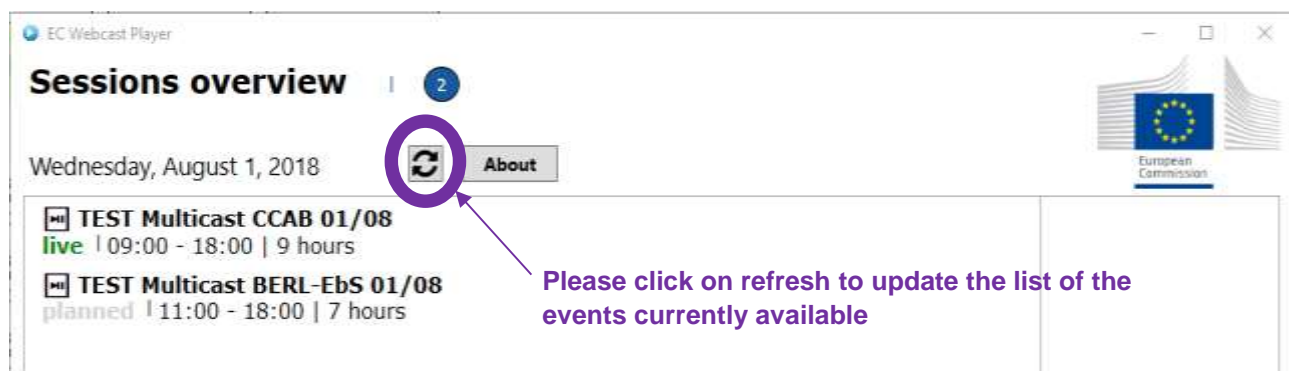
- **The player doesn't run full-screen, there is always a frame around it?** This is normal, the player plays in a "framed" window.



- **Each time I select a stream from the player it takes a while before the video/audio plays smoothly:** This is normal and can take up 30-60 secs before the stream is fetched and stabilized. It might appear with a black screen or a disrupted image with some disrupted audio.



- **My player still shows the event with “Planned” / “Live” but I cannot click on it:** Only “Live” sessions can be clicked on and viewed. Press the refresh button in the player to update the list of events and their status



- **The Player freezes, I cannot do anything?** Try to close and restart the player and/or other applications you have currently opened. If other applications that requires network (e.g. Outlook, Skype for Business, document on network drives ...) expose a similar problem you are probably facing a network issue.
- **The video in the player plays sloppy:** Please close all unnecessary applications, make sure you don't have several video windows playing on your PC or reboot your PC to make sure nothing is left in memory consuming resources. If this persists you need to have your PC (graphics card driver) or network connection checked. This could also happen if the PC is behind a firewall or you are using this player as a Teleworker (which is not a suitable environment for multi-media applications) or because of an erroneous configured local switch.

Please contact the IT helpdesk (77777 for ITIC DG's) to assist or to learn about general issues impacting your PC environment.