

Re: Recognition of Italian Sign Language (LIS)

18 May 2011

Dear Sir / Madam,

We hereby would like to stress the importance of the recognition of Italian Sign Language (LIS) as a language in the new Italian legislative bill.


Our association, the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efсли), represents the interests of sign language interpreters across Europe. The efсли membership consists of 27 national associations of sign language interpreters and nearly 300 associate and individual members. We hereby represent approximately 7500 sign language interpreters in Europe.

Sign language interpreters throughout Europe are educated to interpret in the sign language of their country. It is of utmost important that in formal documentation this is recognised as a formal language, and not a gesture system. As is stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD), which was ratified by Italy on 15 May 2009, each member state should facilitate the use of sign language and recognize and promote the use of sign languages (article 21). In addition, the UNCRPD states in article 24 that members states must facilitate the learning of sign language and the promotion of the linguistic identity of the deaf community.

Considering the ratification of the UNCRPD by Italy and the wishes of the users and owners of Italian Sign Language, the Italian Deaf Community, I urgently hereby ask you to please recognising Italian Sign Language (LIS) as a language in the new Italian legislation.

Sincerely,

On behalf of the efсли board,



Maya de Wit
efсли president