

***NEW SKILLS AND PROFESSIONAL PROFILES  
REQUIRED FOR THE SIGN LANGUAGE  
INTERPRETER PROFESSION IN EUROPE***

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*Report by Lourdes Calle, efsli project coordinator*

## I. INTRODUCTION

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The sign language interpreter profession is facing changes across Europe. This is due to new situations arising, such as changes within the Deaf community, technological improvements, development of the profession of the Deaf interpreter, etc.

In regards to this challenging context efsli decided to run a survey (see Appendix I) within its full members, the national associations of sign language interpreters (hereafter NASLIs). This questionnaire aimed to identify and forecast the new skills required for this new panorama, matching those skills with the demands of the consumers. The survey (see Appendix I) consisted of two parts. The first part was focused on identifying the new skills required for sign language interpreters. The objective of the second part was to have a general outlook of the Deaf interpreter profession across Europe.

Seventeen NASLIs out of twenty-seven (the total number of efsli full members) filled out the survey, which is 63, 37%. The names and countries of the respondents are listed below:

- Belgium, ABILS
- Belgium, BVTG
- England, Wales and Northern Ireland, ASLI
- Estonia, EVKTÜ
- Finland, SVT
- France, AFILS
- Germany, BGSD
- Greece, SDENG
- Italy, ANIOS
- Netherlands, NBTG
- Norway, Tolkeforbundet
- Poland, STPJM
- Serbia, ATSZJ

- Slovakia, ALTPRENES
- Spain, FILSE
- Switzerland, BGD
- Switzerland, ILISSI

This report deals in the first place with the new skills required in the sign language interpreting field across Europe. The questions regarding this topic were divided into six subsections:

- Remote interpreting
- Team interpreting (Deaf and hearing interpreters in a team)
- Third language interpreting
- Interpreting in international settings
- Interpreting for clients with a cochlear implant
- Other emerging fields

In the second part of the questionnaire the topic of Deaf interpreters was raised. In the last years an increasing number of Deaf people became interpreters and a few formal training programmes for Deaf interpreters have been established across Europe. The objective of this part of the survey was to have an overview of this field, with questions concerning the following topics:

- Training
- Employment
- Professionalism
- Research

This report sheds light on the new skills required for the professionals of the sign language interpreter field, which should be taken into account by the training programmes, companies in the field, public bodies and the rest of the stakeholders involved in the field. It also provides some recommendations on improvement measures, based on the information and the opinions of the NASLIs that have completed this survey.

The issue of Deaf interpreters is also brought to centre stage. This new profession and how it is being developed in each European country is set out in the report.

At the end of the report conclusions and recommendations for the NASLIs and for efsli are presented in order to fill the identified gaps and to further develop the profession of sign language interpreters according to the needs of the current time

## 2. NEW SKILLS AND PROFILES REQUIRED

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The issue of new skills and profiles required for the sign language interpreter profession is a matter of utmost importance. The profession should be adaptable to the consumer's requirements and be flexible to include these new skills into the training programmes, interpreter's lifelong learning projects and companies' internal trainings.

This part of the report is divided in six subsections, each one focused on a different interpreting skill. Training, interpreters working in the field and possible improvement measures are the topics addressed in each subsection.

### 2.1 REMOTE INTERPRETING

Remote Interpreting uses video devices or web cameras to provide sign language interpreting services, through a remote or offsite interpreter

#### *2.1.1 Training on remote interpreting*

Firstly, there are only 5 NASLIs (29, 4% of the total number of responses) which affirm to have formal training in their countries on remote interpreting. In those cases, the training is given either through workshops (BVTG-Belgium, BGSD-Germany, BGD-Switzerland, ILISSI-Switzerland) or it is included as a module/subject in formal educational programmes (SVT-Finland).

### **2.1.2 The field of remote interpreting: current situation**

14 NASLIs (82, 4%) consider the field of remote interpreting of growing importance in their countries (ABILS-Belgium, BVTG-Belgium, EVKTÜ-Estonia, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, AFILS-France, BGSD-Germany, SDENG-Greece, Tolkeforbundet-Norway, STPJM-Poland, ATSZJ-Serbia, ALTPRENES-Slovakia, FILSE-Spain and BGD-Switzerland ) and recognise that there is a need of interpreters with this specific skill. Almost all the NASLIs, (all of them except SVT-Finland, which is 94, 1% of the total number) assume that further training in this field is needed.

### **2.1.3 Improving measures for the remote interpreting field**

Twelve NASLIs think that there is a need for further formal and standardised training in the field (BVTG-Belgium, EVKTÜ-Estonia, AFILS-France, BGSD-Germany, SDENG-Greece, ANIOS-Italy, NBTG-Netherlands, Norway-Tolkeforbundet, ATSZJ-Serbia, ALTPRENES-Slovakia, FILSE-Spain, and BGD-Switzerland). Two of these NASLIs (ALTPRENES-Slovakia and ATSZJ-Serbia) remark upon the fact that in their respective countries there is no formal training for sign language interpreters. For this reason training on remote interpreting would not be one of their priorities.

Two other NASLIs point out that a remote interpreting service has not been set up yet in their countries (EVKTÜ-Estonia and SDENG-Greece). Some other NASLIs comment on the fact that in their countries the training on remote interpreting skills is given by the companies that run the service (Tolkeforbundet -Norway and FILSE-Spain)

FILSE-Spain points out the necessity of training on diverse dialects of Spanish Sign Language for the professionals working in this service, as Deaf people from all across Spain can use the service. Training in technical issues is also mentioned as a need by two NASLIs (FILSE-Spain and BGD-Switzerland)

ASLI- England, Wales and Northern Ireland mentions that remote interpreting is an unregulated area and no advice is stipulated in relation to the level of qualification an



interpreter needs in order to work in this field. ASLI states the need of working with the leading providers and government to establish best working practices.

A different approach is given by NBTG –Netherlands, which indicates to be in the process of searching for a new board member to focus on this specific issue, although the NBTG has already been involved in a research project on this specific field with the Dutch national association of the Deaf.

## 2.2 TEAM INTERPRETING (DEAF AND HEARING)

The Deaf-hearing interpreting teams consist of two interpreters, one hearing and one Deaf, who work together using a consecutive interpreting process. The message is being relayed from one consumer to the first interpreter. The second interpreter interprets the message into the language of the second consumer involved in the situation.

### *2.2.1 Training on team interpreting with Deaf and hearing interpreters*

At present, six of the NASLIs (35, 3% of the total number) declare to have formal training on team interpreting (Deaf and hearing interpreters in a team) in their countries. In one third of the cases this instruction is given through workshops (BVTG-Belgium and ASLI- England, Wales and Northern Ireland). In the rest of the cases each country has a different situation: in Spain, this training is included in the educational programmes for both sign language specialists and development agent of the Deaf community. In Estonia so far the interpreting agencies have organised some training courses according to specific needs and tasks arising. SVT-Finland points out that this topic was included in the European Master in Sign Language Interpreting (hereafter EUMASLI). NBTG- Netherlands declares to have had workshops for hearing interpreters on how to cooperate with a Deaf interpreter.

### *2.2.2 The field of team interpreting with a Deaf-hearing team: current situation*

The view on the growing importance of this field is quite diverse: just over half of the NASLIs consider that the importance of team interpreting with Deaf and hearing interpreters is increasing in their countries (BVTG-Belgium, EVKTÜ-Estonia, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, BGSD-Germany, Tolkeforbundet-Norway, STPJM-Poland, ATSZJ-Serbia, ALTPRENES-Slovakia and FILSE-Spain), while slightly less than half of the NASLIs present the opposite opinion regarding their own countries. In contrast with these

percentages 88, 2% of the NASLIs affirm to have a need in their countries for interpreters with that specific skill and for that reason further training in this field is needed.

### ***2.2.3 Improving measures for the team interpreting field***

Most of the NASLIs indicate the need for further training in order to improve the situation of this field. Some mention the possibility of including this topic in the existing formal training programmes (BVTG-Belgium, ASLI- England, Wales and Northern Ireland BGD-Germany and FILSE-Spain,) or teaching it through workshops (BVTG-Belgium, EVKTÜ-Estonia, NBTG-Netherlands and ALTPRENES-Slovakia). Some other NASLIs remark the necessity of establishing training programmes for Deaf interpreters (BVGT-Belgium, EVKTÜ-Estonia, ANIOS-Italy and FILSE-Spain). It has been also pointed out the lack of trainers in this specific field (BGSD-Germany and STPJM-Poland). Cooperation with the Deaf community and the Deaf associations is also one of the possible improvement measures proposed by ALTPRENES-Slovakia and NBTG-Netherlands.

The Deaf person as sign language interpreter is a new profession, still in a developing stage, only a few countries have yet a formal training for Deaf interpreters. In the second part of this report this topic will be examined in more depth, but in this part some NASLIs have already mentioned the challenges arising due to this new situation. For example, SVT-Finland points out that the Finish government is not willing to pay extra money to have Deaf and hearing interpreters working together.

ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland relates that 2012 saw the first group of Deaf translators graduate with an officially recognised qualification in the United Kingdom that allows them to register as fully qualified interpreters. Further qualifications are being brought on stream that will allow Deaf people to qualify as interpreters between two different sign languages.

## 2.3 THIRD LANGUAGE INTERPRETING

Third-language interpreting means interpreting from and to a language which is an additional language than the first two languages the interpreter is trained in.

### *2.3.1 Training on third language interpreting*

There is formal training on interpreting on/from a third language in only 23, 50% of the countries represented at this survey. In two countries it is included in the curriculum of formal training: FILSE-Spain states that in the Spanish regions with another co-official spoken language, such as Catalonia or Galicia, students receive training on interpreting from/to both spoken languages (Spanish and the other co-official language). BGD- Switzerland also has this training included as a module in their formal training. SVT-Finland notes that this training is included in the EUMASLI programme and in the educational programme specific for Deaf interpreters. NBTG- Netherlands states that in their country training in this field is provided through workshops.

### *2.3.2 The field of third language interpreting: current situation*

More than three quarters of the NASLIs (76,5% of the total) consider this field to be of increasing importance in their countries (BVTG-Belgium, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, EVKTÜ-Estonia, SVT-Finland, AFILS-France, BGSD-Germany, SDENG-Greece ANIOS-Italy, NBTG-Netherlands, Tolkeforbundet-Norway, STPJM-Poland, ALTPRENES-Slovakia and FILSE-Spain,) and the vast majority (94,1%) state to have a need in their countries for interpreters with that specific skill and further training in this field (all the NASLIs abovementioned plus ATSZJ-Serbia, ILISSI-Switzerland and BGD-Switzerland).

### *2.3.3 Improvement measures for the third language interpreting field*

Concerning improvement measures, most of the NASLIs think that further training in this field would benefit the development of this field. Depending on the NASLI, the focus point is different. Some NASLIS, as STPJM-Poland and ALTPRENES-Slovakia admit that their priority would be to have interpreters being able to speak fluently in English before interpreting into/from that language. The need for further training in English skills is also mentioned by ANIOS-Italy, BGDS-Germany and SVT-Finland (which also mentions Swedish as a spoken language with a high demand in Finland). SVT-Finland also declares that interpreters who are able to interpret from/to a third language are not paid accordingly. Consequently, only a few interpreters are motivated to get trained on third language interpreting even if the demand has increased. AFILS-France thinks that the training for this specific skill should not be in the basic training but afterwards, for those interpreters who already have the basic interpreter qualifications. ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland comments on the situation in the United Kingdom; the number of Deaf people coming from foreign countries living in the United Kingdom is increasing, and so there is a need for interpreters able to interpret from other sign languages beside British Sign Language. There are no training courses focused on this specific need, and ASLI points out that this is an issue that has to be researched.

## 2.4 INTERPRETING IN INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS

International settings are assumed to be situations where interpretation is provided in several spoken and sign languages.

### *2.4.1 Training on interpreting in international settings*

Only 29, 40 % of the respondents (five NASLIs in total) replied yes to the question concerning the existence of formal training on interpreting in international settings in their countries. SVT-Finland has this training included in the EUMASLI and in the educational programme for Deaf interpreters. AFILS-France has it included as a module in the formal training for interpreters, NBTG-Netherlands, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland and BGD-Switzerland notes to have training on interpreting in international settings provided through workshops.

### *2.4.2 The international settings field: current situation*

The represented countries present different views on the importance of this field. Slightly more than half of the respondents (52,90%) consider this field of increasing significance (EVKTÜ-Estonia, SVT-Finland, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, SDENG-Greece, ANIOS-Italy, NBTG-Netherlands, STPJM-Poland, ATSZJ-Serbia, ALTPRENES-Slovakia, FILSE-Spain and BGD-Switzerland ) and the other half (47, 10%) think the opposite regarding their own countries.

Twelve NASLIs (70,6 % of the total number) think that there is a need of interpreters with this specific skill in their own countries (BVTG-Belgium, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, , EVKTÜ-Estonia, SVT-Finland, SDENG-Greece, ANIOS-Italy, NBTG-Netherlands, STPJM-Poland, ATSZJ-Serbia, ALTPRENES-Slovakia, FILSE-Spain, and BGD-Switzerland) and

fourteen NASLIs (82,4%), which are the aforementioned plus BGSD-Germany and ILISSI-Switzerland, think that further training on this specific field is needed.

### ***2.4.3 Improving measures for the international settings field***

Six NASLIs think that further formal training in this field would be desirable (BVTG-Belgium, ANIOS-Italy, NBTG-Netherlands, STPJM-Poland, FILSE-Spain, and BGD-Switzerland). FILSE-Spain also mentions the possibility of having exchange programmes for students and professional interpreters as a possible improvement measure. Three NASLIs mention the importance of third language training as a previous step for interpreting in international settings (SVT-Finland, BGD-Switzerland and EVKTÜ-Estonia). ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, as in the previous section, relates the specific situation of United Kingdom, where the number of Deaf people from foreign countries living there is increasing. There is also a demand for interpreters to work in International Sign at academic levels at the University of Central Lancashire (Institute for Sign Languages and Deaf Studies) that now attracts post graduate level students who are Deaf from over the world.

## 2.5 INTERPRETING FOR CLIENTS WITH A COCHLEAR IMPLANT

Persons who have a cochlear implant can require a kind of interpretation (adapted to their knowledge of sign language and spoken language) that can differ from the interpretation services offered to Deaf clients without a cochlear implant

### *2.5.1 Training on interpreting for clients with a cochlear implant*

According to the survey outcomes, in the vast majority of the countries (15 NASLIs, 88, 2% of the total number) there is no formal training on interpreting for clients with a cochlear implant in their countries. Only in Norway and in the Netherlands this topic is explicitly included in the formal training as a module. In the Netherlands it is also taught through workshops.

### *2.5.2 The field of interpreting for clients with a cochlear implant: current situation*

Almost half of the NASLIs (47, 10 %) consider this field of growing importance in their countries (ABILS-Belgium, BVTG-Belgium, EVTKÜ-Estonia, SVT-Finland, Tolkeforbundet-Norway, NBTG-Netherlands, FILSE-Spain and ILISSI-Switzerland) while the rest of the countries think the opposite. Five NASLIs (29,4%) think that there is a need of interpreters with this specific field (SVT-Finland, NBTG-Netherlands, Tolkeforbundet -Norway, FILSE-Spain, and ILISSI-Switzerland) and further training within this area (SVT-Finland, SDENG-Greece, NBTG-Netherlands FILSE-Spain and ILISSI-Switzerland).



### ***2.5.3 Improvement measures in the field of interpreting for clients with a cochlear implant***

Some NASLIs, such as ABILS-Belgium, BVTG-Belgium, EVTKÜ-Estonia, BGSD-Germany and ALTPRENES-Slovakia think that so far there has not been the need for specialists on interpreting for clients with a cochlear implant, since there are not many Deaf people with an implant yet, but in the future it might be an issue and special training might be needed.

FILSE-Spain thinks that this topic is covered by the existing formal training, in which interpretation to/for people with a variety of linguistic skills is taught and allows trained interpreters to be adaptable and able to deal with the demands of clients with a cochlear implant.

Another point of view is raised by SVT-Finland, which says that Finish interpreters think that before having a specific training for interpreters in this specific field, a Deaf language model for children with a cochlear implant is needed. At present in Finland there is a wide diversity of languages and communicating methods used by children with a cochlear implant.

ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland thinks that for those people who have an implant and who have used their own voice to communicate before, will continue doing so and if they need a language service professional they will use palantypist or speech to text reporters. This NASLI also notes that those Deaf people who are sign language users and who are then implanted will continue to use British Sign Language interpreters.

## 2.6 OTHER EMERGING PROFESSIONAL FIELDS

NASLIs were asked in the questionnaire about different skills or professionals profiles required in their countries and which were not included in the broached topics. The answers were very varied, except for one topic: legal interpreting, that was mentioned by several NASLIs. BVTG-Belgium, SVT-Finland and STPJM-Poland point out that specialised interpreters for legal settings are needed. BVTG commented on the situation in Flanders, where any interpreter can work in legal settings but some do not have the skills required to deliver a good performance in this specific setting. SVT-Finland mentions the TRAFUT (Training for the Future) project, organised by EULITA (European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association), which is aiming to deliver workshops for interpreting in legal settings. Within the TRAFUT project there will be a new professional training for spoken language interpreters who work in legal settings in the coming months and sign language interpreters have been part of the TRAFUT project but will not be part of it in the first round.

Other skills required in different countries are listed below:

- Interpreting from spoken language to written text (Tolkeforbundet-Norway)
- Interpreting in the media (FILSE-Spain)
- Interpreting music and performing arts (BGSD-Germany)
- Interpreting in Christian settings (BGSD-Germany)
- Interpreting for children (EVKTÜ-Estonia)
- Interpreting for people with an intellectual disability (EVKTÜ-Estonia)
- Interpreting from sign language to spoken language (NBTG-Netherlands)
- Interpreting for foreign Deaf people (AFILS-France)
- Interpreting for Deafblind clients (ANIOS-Italy)
- Interpreting in mental health settings (STPJM-Poland)

ATSZJ-Serbia comments that all the skills mentioned in the questionnaire are too advanced and are far from what is currently needed in Serbia concerning the education of sign language interpreters.

## 3. DEAF INTERPRETERS

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The Deaf person as an interpreter is a rather new profession and not many researches have been conducted on this topic. The second part of the survey sent to the efsli full members aimed to address this issue and collect some information concerning the situation of this young profession across Europe. The information is subdivided in four topics: training, employment, professionalism and research.

### 3.1 TRAINING FOR DEAF INTERPRETERS

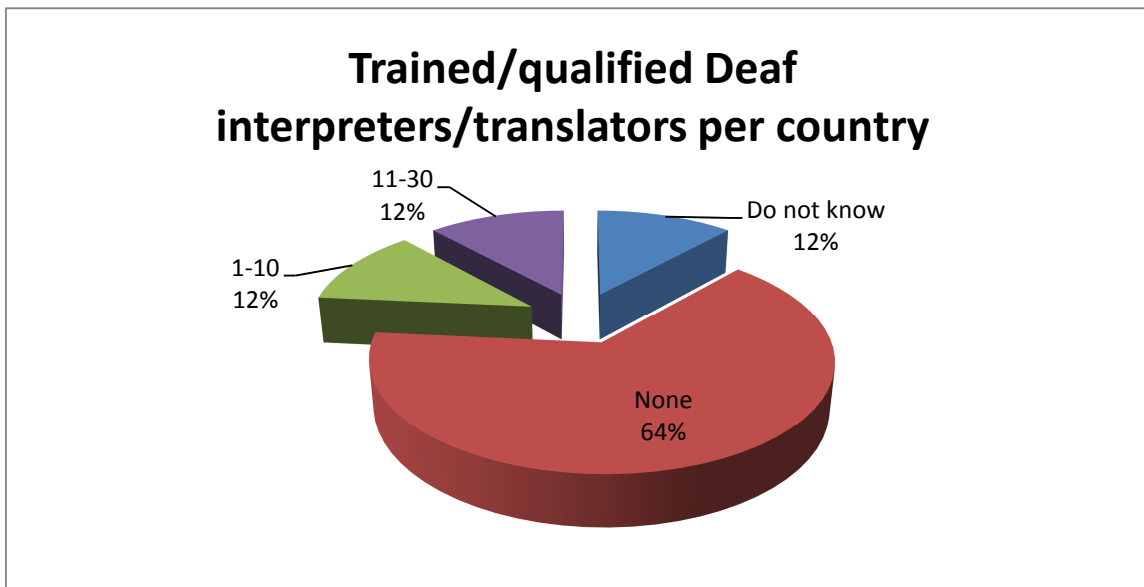
There are not many formal programmes for Deaf interpreters; only four NASLIs responded to have one in their countries (23, 52% of the cases): ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, SVT-Finland, AFILS-France and BGSD-Germany. However, 70, 6% of the NASLIS (BVTG-Belgium, EVKTÜ-Estonia, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, SVT-Finland, AFILS-France, BGSD-Germany, ANIOS-Italy, NBTG-Netherlands, STPJM-Poland, ALTPRENES-Slovakia, FILSE-Spain and BGD-Switzerland) state to have Deaf interpreters/translators in their countries who are working as Deaf interpreters/translators without formal training.

The existing training programmes are hosted by the following institutions:

TRAINING INSTITUTION	Qualification and date when the programme was formally established
Humak University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki and Kuopio, Finland	The Sign Language Interpreter Degree Programme. For Deaf and hearing students. Formally established in 1978, training at university level 1998.
Centre de Traduction, d'Interprétation et de Médiation Linguistique Université de Toulouse - Le Mirail (Toulouse II), France	Deaf students can study translation, but their qualification is not officially recognised yet. Formally established in 2007
Institut für Deutsche Gebärdensprache und Kommunikation Gehörloser, University of Hamburg, Germany.	Academic Education for Deaf Sign Language Interpreters. Formally established in January 2010
Signamic. London, United Kingdom.	Level 6 Diploma in Translation. Formally established in 2010

The large majority of the NASLIs (88,2%) think that in their countries there is a need for Deaf interpreters and also for further training within this area (BVTG-Belgium, EVKTÜ-Estonia, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, SVT-Finland, AFILS-France, BGSD-Germany, SDENG-Greece, ANIOS-Italy, NBTG-Netherlands, Tolkeforbundet -Norway, STPJM-Poland, ALTPRENES-Slovakia, ATSZJ-Serbia FILSE-Spain and BGD-Switzerland)

So far, the number of trained/qualified Deaf interpreters/translators is as shown in the pie chart below:



More than half of the NASLIs respond that there are no trained Deaf interpreters/translators in their countries. Two NASLIs (see the table below) say that in their countries there are between one and ten Deaf interpreters/translators, and two other NASLIs affirm to have between eleven and thirty Deaf interpreters/translators. Two other NASLIs do not know how many qualified Deaf interpreters are in their countries.

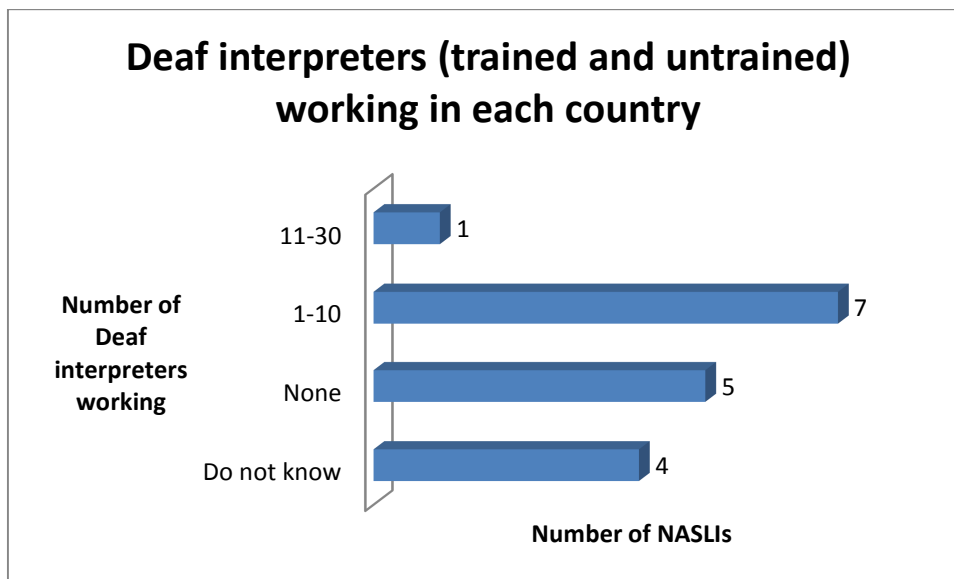
NUMBER OF TRAINED INTERPRETERS	NASLIs AND COUNTRIES
None	ABILS-Belgium, BVTG-Belgium, EVKTÜ-Estonia, AFILS-France, SDENG-Greece, Tolkeforbundet-Norway, STPJM-Poland, ATSZJ-Serbia, FILSE-Spain, BGD-Switzerland and ILISSI-Switzerland
1-10	SVT-Finland and ALTPRENES-Slovakia
11-30	BGSD-Germany, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland
Do not know	ANIOS-Italy and NBTG-Netherlands

There are plans to launch new training programmes for Deaf interpreters in three countries: Italy, Poland and United Kingdom.

<b>TRAINING INSTITUTION</b>	<b>Qualification and approximate date when the programme will be launched</b>
Ca'Foscari University, Language Sciences Department, Venice, Italy.	Master in theory and techniques of interpretation and translation Italian/Italian Sign Language. Deaf students are admitted for the classes related to translation but not for those concerning interpreting. Starting in November 2012.
University of Warsaw, Poland.	Polish Sign Language postgraduate studies, for Deaf and hearing students. Starting in the first half of 2013.
Signamic, London, United Kingdom	Level 6 Diploma in sign language to sign language interpreting. Starting in 2013.

## 3.2 EMPLOYMENT

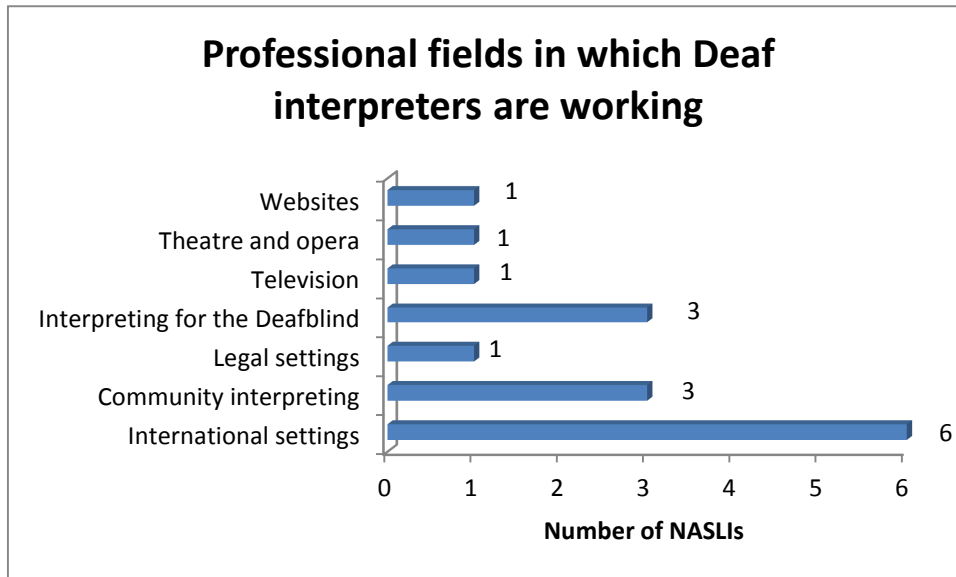
Despite having a very small number of qualified Deaf interpreters/translators (if any), the number of Deaf interpreters (trained and untrained) working in each country is shown in the following bar chart:



NUMBER OF DEAF INTERPRETERS WORKING	NASLIs AND COUNTRIES
None	ABILS-Belgium, SDENG-Greece, ATSZJ-Serbia, BGD-Switzerland, ILISSI-Switzerland
1-10	BVTG-Belgium, EVKTU-Estonia, SVT-Finland, ANIOS-Italy, Tolkeforbundet-Norway, ALTPRENES-Slovakia, FILSE-Spain,
11-30	AFILS-France
Do not know	BGSD-Germany, NBTG-Netherlands, STPJM-Poland, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland



These are the professional fields and the number of countries in which Deaf interpreters are currently working in:



PROFESSIONAL FIELD	NASLIs AND COUNTRIES
International settings	BVTG-Belgium, FILSE-Spain, SVT-Finland, AFILS-France, ALTPRENES-Slovakia and EVKTÜ-Estonia
Community interpreting	SVT-Finland, ANIOS-Italy and ALTPRENES-Slovakia,
Legal settings	FILSE-Spain
Interpreting for the Deafblind	FILSE-Spain, EVKTÜ-Estonia and SVT-Finland
Television	BVTG-Belgium
Theatre and opera	SVT-Finland
Websites	AFILS-France

## 3.3 PROFESSIONALISM

### *3.3.1 Deaf interpreters and the national registration bodies.*

Not all the countries have a national registration body, actually only eight countries of all respondents have a registry in their country: Belgium, Finland, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland and United Kingdom. Of the eight countries mentioned only in two of them, Finland and United Kingdom, Deaf interpreters/translators are allowed to register. In both cases Deaf interpreters can register as full members.

### *3.3.2 Deaf interpreters and NASLIs*

From the 15 NASLIs that answered this question, one third of them state that Deaf interpreters cannot register as members of the national association of sign language interpreters (ABILS-Belgium, ANIOS-Italy, NBTG-Netherlands, Tolkeforbundet-Norway and BGD-Switzerland). ANIOS points out that this issue is being discussed and the regulation towards Deaf interpreters might change in order to let them become ANIOS members. In BVTG- Belgium, ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland, SVT-Finland, AFILS-France, BGSD-Germany, STPJM-Poland, ALTPRENES-Slovakia and FILSE-Spain Deaf interpreters can become members of their respective NASLI. In ATSZJ-Serbia Deaf interpreters can become associate members. In EVKTÜ-Estonia, if the Deaf interpreter has a certificate they can become a full member. If he/she does not have a certificate they can become an associate member, without voting rights.

There is just one NASLI in which board there is a Deaf interpreter (STPJM-Poland).

### *3.3.3. Deaf interpreters and Code of Ethics*

Just ASLI-England, Wales and Northern Ireland ATSZJ-Serbia (11, 8% of the total number) specifically mention the special role of Deaf interpreters in their Code of Ethics.

## 3.4 RESEARCH

None of the NASLIs that have responded to this survey are aware of any research focused on the topic of Deaf interpreters in their countries, nor on Deaf and hearing interpreters working in a team.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Some conclusions can be drawn from the results of this survey:

### *4.1 New skills and profiles required*

At present, due to different reasons, sign language interpreters are required to have some skills for which most of them have not been trained at their training programmes. Some of these skills are learned at their work place, such as remote interpreting or team interpreting with Deaf and hearing interpreters. Some other skills depend more on the personal decision and motivation of the interpreter, such as interpreting from/to a third language, which is not included in most of the training programmes. However, the situation is quite diverse and depends on the country. In some of the countries there is not even a basic training programme established yet. For this reason in these countries these specific skills seem to be far from the priorities of the interpreting community.

In most of the countries there is a need for further formal and standardised training in some of these fields, such as remote interpreting, team interpreting (with Deaf and hearing interpreters), third language interpreting and interpreting in international settings. Training programmes should be updated according with these new needs arising in the field.

- **Remote interpreting**

Although it is a field of growing importance, in most of the countries there is no formal training. Research, specific training and regulation are needed in this field.

- **Deaf and hearing interpreting in a team**

In half of the countries represented in this survey interpreters with this specific skill are required, but no formal training is set up yet. The development of this skill depends also on the development of the Deaf interpreter profession. Lobbying for the recognition and valuation of this kind of interpretation is also needed.

- **Third language interpreting**

There is a big contrast between the figures; just one third of the NASLIs declare to have formal training on third language interpreting but three quarters admit to need more interpreters in the countries with that specific skill. . Depending on the country, the focus is on a different issue: to speak fluently a third language (before interpreting), to interpret between a third language and the national spoken/signed language or to develop the skill of interpreting between two sign languages (for those countries with a large number of Deaf foreigners). Official recognition and an appropriate fee also need to be claimed.

- **International settings**

Not even a third of the countries have this topic included in their training programmes. It should be taken into account that being able to interpret from/to a third language would be the required step prior to learning how to interpret in international settings

- **Interpreting for clients with a cochlear implant**

Many respondents suggest that clients with a cochlear implant is a topic that will have to be addressed in the future, but not in the present... It is recommended that research on this topic should be carried out in order to be able to face this topic in a proactive way.

- **Other professional fields**

Another important field that needs to be improved and developed is interpreting in legal settings. Specialised interpreters in this field are needed and this requires specific training. Also some kind of control over the professionals interpreting in this specific field, such as a specific register for legal/court interpreters would be desirable.

Regarding the training of interpreters, NASLIs must approach the different stakeholders involved in the regulation of the interpreting education and services, in order to give advice on how to proceed. In addition, NASLIs should lobby for the recognition of all these special skills. More precisely, the respondents suggest that a proper economic reward should be given to those interpreters to compensate their efforts and special training.

One of the new situations that interpreters are facing is the increasing number of foreign Deaf people living in their countries, with different sign languages. To interpret between two sign languages or between a foreign sign language and one spoken language is another field that needs to be researched and developed. In this field Deaf interpreters should have an important role.

Sign language interpreting students and professionals might gain skills by participating in exchange programmes between different countries. Exchange programmes could also help to the transfer of knowledge among NASLIs. For example, in regards to how to set up a training/workshop on specific skills or how to lobby for the recognition of a specific skill, etc. Concerning the lack of specialised trainers, a list of specialised trainers for each field could be made and shared among NASLIs through efсли.

NASLIs that offer workshops to their members should be aware of the educational needs of the interpreters in their countries. A good practice to align NASLIs' training courses to interpreters' educational needs would be that NASLIs were informed and updated of the latest research carried out in the field and/or to promote themselves some further research. Moreover, collaboration with Deaf associations must be further developed in some of the fields dealt in this report, such as research on some topics (Deaf interpreting, team interpreting, cochlear implant communication and interpretation models, etc.) , new interpreting needs arising in the Deaf community, etc. It is of the highest importance for the NASLIs to be updated and informed of the latest needs by the representatives of the Deaf community.

## 4.2 Deaf interpreters

The profession of Deaf interpreter/translator is rather young and considerable work remains to be done in order to be in equal conditions with hearing sign language interpreters.

There is a lack of formal training in most of the European countries, even though it is a growing profession and most of the NASLIs admit to have a need for Deaf interpreters/translator in their countries. Currently there are only four educational

programmes for Deaf interpreters and three new training programmes are planned to be launched in the near future. Therefore it is difficult for a Deaf interpreter/translator to get qualified in most of the countries.

Not to have a degree or a training programme for interpreting/translating presents a problem for the professionalisation of this group. Most of the NASLIs would not admit a member if she/he has not an official recognition.

Concerning the NASLIs it must be highlighted that most of the Code of Ethics do not mention to the special role of Deaf interpreters yet. This contrasts with the fact that most of the NASLIs consider the Deaf interpreter as a profession that has to be further developed. As long as this lack is present, Deaf interpreters cannot be integrated into the sign language interpreting community with the same rights and duties as their hearing colleagues.

The professional profile of the Deaf interpreter must be defined and for this purpose research into the field should be conducted. All the NASLIs asked were not aware of any research run in this field in their countries.

To conclude, the Deaf interpreter profession is in a developmental stage. In the first place there is a need for educational programmes in order to properly train Deaf interpreters/translators. Existing training programmes should adapt to Deaf students and offer the chance to attend the programme with the necessary adaptations in the curriculum. To have a qualification will lead this collective to gain further recognition, both from their NASLIs and, hopefully, from the public bodies in their respective countries. Furthermore, specific research into the field would give some indications of how to guide this process and make it run smoothly.



## ANEX I: SURVEY

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AGM 2012 Survey - New skills and professional profiles

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Introduction

**Dear full members,**

**The profession of the sign language interpreter is facing changes across Europe. This is due to new situations arising, such as changes within the Deaf community, technological improvements, development of the profession of the Deaf interpreter, etc. In regards to this challenging context, this survey aims to identify and forecast the new skills required for this new panorama, matching those skills with the demands of the consumers.**

**The survey consists of two parts. The first part identifying these new skills and the second part, specifically at the profession of Deaf interpreters. A summary of the results of the survey will be presented at the AGM in Vienna. A full report will be published on the efsli website. The results from part two focusing on Deaf interpreters will also be used as input for the efsli Working Seminar for Deaf interpreters on 13th September.**

**The deadline for filling out the survey is 1st June.**

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Your association

On behalf of which national association of sign language interpreters are you reporting?\*

Your name:\*

Your email address

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### REMOTE INTERPRETING

*Remote Interpreting uses video devices or web cameras to provide sign language interpreting services, through a remote or offsite interpreter*

Is there any formal training on remote interpreting in your country?\*

Yes

No

What kind of training (tick all that apply)?\*

Included as a module/subject in formal educational programmes

Workshops

Other (please specify)

Is the field of remote interpreting recently of growing importance in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for interpreters with this specific skill (remote interpreting) in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for further training within the field of remote interpreting?\*

Yes

No

What improving measures should be taken in your country to develop the remote interpreting skills necessary, considering the demands of the consumers?

If you have any additional comments on this topic, please leave them here:

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## **DEAF-HEARING INTERPRETING TEAMS**

*The Deaf-hearing interpreting teams consist of two interpreters, one hearing and one Deaf, who work together using a consecutive interpreting process, relaying the message from one consumer to the other interpreter. This last interpreter will*

*interpret the message into the language of the other consumer involved in the situation.*

Is there any formal training on team interpreting (Deaf and/or hearing interpreters) in your country?\*

Yes

No

What kind of training (tick all that apply)?\*

Included as a module/subject in formal educational programmes

Workshops

Other (please specify)

Is working as a team interpreter recently of growing importance in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for interpreters with this specific skill (team interpreting Deaf/hearing) in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for further training within the field of team interpreting Deaf/hearing?\*

Yes

No

What improving measures should be taken in your country to develop the skills to work in a Deaf/hearing team, considering the demands of the consumers?

If you have any additional comments on this topic, please leave them here:

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## THIRD LANGUAGE INTERPRETING

*Third-language interpreting means interpreting from and to a language which is an additional language than the first two languages the interpreter is trained in.*

Is there any formal training on interpreting to/from a third language for sign language interpreters in your country?\*

Yes

No

What kind of training (tick all that apply)?\*

Included as a module/subject in formal educational programmes

Workshops

Other (please specify)

Is this skill recently of growing importance in your country?

Yes

No

Is there a need for interpreters with this specific skill (third language interpreting) in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for further training within the field of third language interpreting?\*

Yes

No

What improving measures should be taken in your country to develop the skills required as a sign language interpreter with a third language, considering the demands of the consumers?

If you have any additional comments on this topic, please leave them here:

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## INTERNATIONAL SETTINGS

*International settings are assumed to be situations where interpretation is provided in several spoken and sign languages.*

Is there any formal training on interpreting in international settings in your country?\*

Yes

No

What kind of training (tick all that apply)?\*

Included as a module/subject in formal educational programmes

Workshops

Other (please specify)

Is this working field recently of growing importance in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for interpreters with this specific skill (interpreting in international settings) in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for further training within the field of interpreting in international settings?\*

Yes

No

What improving measures should be taken in your country to develop the skills required in international settings, considering the demands of the consumers?

If you have any additional comments on this topic, please leave them here:

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## INTERPRETING FOR CLIENTS WITH A COCHLEAR IMPLANT

*People with a cochlear implant require a kind of interpretation (adapted to their knowledge of sign language and spoken language) that can differ from the usual interpretation services offered to Deaf clients without cochlear implant.*

Is there any specific formal training on interpreting for clients with a cochlear implant in your country?\*

Yes

No

What kind of training (tick all that apply)?\*

Included as a module/subject in formal educational programmes

Workshops

Other (please specify)

Is this area of expertise recently of growing importance in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for interpreters with this specific skill (interpreting for clients with CI) in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for further training within this area of expertise?\*

Yes

No

What improving measures should be taken in your country to develop the skills required in this field, considering the demands of the consumers?

If you have any additional comments on this topic, please leave them here:

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Others

Do you think there are any another emerging professional fields for sign language interpreters which have not been mentioned in the previous questions?\*

No

Yes, namely: \_\_\_\_\_

What would be the skills required for sign language interpreters to match these demands from the consumers in the professional fields mentioned in last question?

If you have any comments on the first part of this survey, please note them here:

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Deaf interpreters and translators

## TRAINING OF DEAF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS

Is there any formal training for Deaf interpreters/translators in your country?\*

Yes

No

Please briefly describe the training using the following topics:

a. Institution, city, name of the qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Requirements to access the training: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Contact teaching hours/ECTS: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Modules/subjects: \_\_\_\_\_

e. Examination: \_\_\_\_\_

f. Trainers: \_\_\_\_\_

g. When was the training formally established?: \_\_\_\_\_

Are there in your country any Deaf interpreters/translators who are working as Deaf interpreters/translators without formal training?\*

Yes

No

Do not know



Is there a need for Deaf interpreters/translators in your country?\*

Yes

No

Is there a need for further training within this area?\*

Yes

No

Are there plans to launch any (new) training programmes for Deaf interpreters/translators in your country?\*

Yes

No

I do not know

Please briefly describe the new training using the following topics:

a. Institution, city, name of the qualification: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Requirements to access the training: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Contact teaching hours/ECTS: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Modules/subjects: \_\_\_\_\_

e. Examination: \_\_\_\_\_

f. Trainers: \_\_\_\_\_

g. When will the training formally be established?: \_\_\_\_\_

How many qualified/trained Deaf interpreters are there in your country?\*

None

1-10

- 11-30
- 31-50
- More than 50
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

How many qualified/trained Deaf translators are in your country?

- None
- 1-10
- 11-30
- 31-50
- More than 50
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any formal training for working in a team or co working between Deaf and hearing interpreters?\*

- No
- Yes, namely (short description): \_\_\_\_\_
- Do not know

If you have any additional comments on this topic, please leave them here:

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Deaf interpreters and translators

## EMPLOYMENT OF DEAF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS

How many Deaf interpreters/translators (trained and untrained) are there working in your country?\*

- None
- 1-10
- 11-30
- 31-50
- More than 50
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- I do not know

In which professional fields are Deaf interpreters and translators working (tick all that apply)?\*

- International conferences
- Community interpreting
- Legal interpreting settings
- Mental health settings
- Deafblind settings
- Other (specify)

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Deaf interpreters and translators

## PROFESSIONALISM OF DEAF INTERPRETERS AND TRANSLATORS

Can Deaf interpreters/translators register with your national registration body?\*

- Yes
- No
- NA

Deaf interpreters can register with your national registration body as...

- Full member
- Associate member
- NA

Can Deaf interpreters become members of your NASLI (National association of Sign Language Interpreters)?\*

- Yes
- No
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- NA

Are there Deaf interpreters in your NASLI board?\*

- Yes
- No
- NA

Is there any mention to the specific role of Deaf interpreters in your Code of Ethics?

- Yes
- No
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

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Deaf interpreters and translators

## RESEARCH

Has any research focused on Deaf interpreters been conducted in your country?\*

- No
- NA
- Yes, namely: \_\_\_\_\_

Has any research on Deaf and hearing interpreters in a team or coworking been conducted in your country?\*

- No
- NA
- Yes, namely: \_\_\_\_\_

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Deaf interpreters and translators

## COMMENTS

If you have any comments on the second part of this survey (Deaf interpreter and translators), please note them here:

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Thank You!

Thank you for providing us with this information. A summary of the results of the survey will be presented at the AGM in Vienna. A full report will be published on the efsli website. The results from part two focusing on Deaf interpreters will also be used as input for the efsli Working Seminar for Deaf interpreters on 13th September.

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