



A European Non-Governmental Organisation in official liaison with  
European Parliament, European Commission and the Council of Europe

Dear whom it may concern,

I would like to state that European Union of the Deaf fully supports the ENS proposal "*Measures for the removal of barriers of communication, for the recognition of LIS, the LIS tactile and for the promotion of social inclusion of deaf people and deaf-blind*", which was submitted to the XII Social Affairs Commission.

EUD is based in Brussels, Belgium. It is a not-for-profit European non-governmental organisation (ENGO) comprising National Associations of the Deaf (NADs). It is the only supranational organisation representing Deaf people at European level and is one of the few ENGOs representing associations in all 28 EU Member States, including Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland. Aiming to establish and maintain EU level dialogue with the European Union institutions and officials in consultation and co-operation with its member NADs, it also has participatory status with the Council of Europe (CoE). EUD is a full member of the European Disability Forum (EDF) and is a Regional Co-operating Member of the World Federation of the Deaf to tackle issues of global importance. It is supported by the Equality Unit within the Directorate General Justice at the European Commission.

It is EUD's aim to achieve equality in public and private life for Deaf people all over Europe to ensure they can become full citizens. Its main objectives are the recognition of the right to use an indigenous sign language, empowerment through communication and information, and equality in education and employment.

Considering Italy has signed and ratified the groundbreaking UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2009, EUD urges the Italian government to follow the request of the Italian Deaf Association (ENS) to recognise Italian Sign Language (LIS) in national legislation and to develop policies and services that enable deaf citizens to participate fully in public and private life, including employment and education. And EUD would like to point out that out of all 28 EU Member States, 25 have sign language recognised in the justice system and Italy is one of the last countries that still have not.

EUD urges the representatives of the Italian Council to co-operate with ENS to ensure the ratification of LIS and also support their forthcoming protests in order to achieve equality for all Deaf citizens in Italy.

Yours sincerely,

Markku Jokinen  
President