



EUROPEAN UNION
OF THE DEAF



Impact
Report 2024

Acknowledgements

Based in Brussels, Belgium, EUD is a not-for-profit European non-Governmental organisation (ENGO) whose members comprise of National Associations of the Deaf (NADs).

CERV Work Programme

EUD would like to thank the European Commission for funding this 2024 Impact Report under the CERV Work Programme. Without their substantial financial contributions, the publication of this report would not have been possible.

The support of the EUD Board and President an accurate and up-to-date account of the activities in 2024.

Our member associations are at the heart of our work and we thank them for assisting and co-operating with us throughout the year.

The European Disability Forum (EDF), our European disability umbrella organisation, has been a great partner in all our work, informing us and collaborating with our board and staff via email and in person, in and outside of Brussels.

In support of its daily work, EUD has been in contact with a large number of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and other EU policymakers and aspires to continue this fruitful co-operation in the coming years.



2024.

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Foreword

Greetings to all members and supporters of the European Union of the Deaf (EUD) as we reflect on the significant milestones of 2024.

This year, we gathered for our General Assembly in the vibrant city of Brussels, Belgium. The General Assembly remains a cornerstone of our organisation, providing us with the opportunity to come together, discuss pressing issues, and chart the course for the future of our work. In Brussels, we continued our mission to advocate for the rights and inclusion of deaf people across Europe in line with the principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

EUD has continued to fulfil its work under the EU Commission's CERV Work Programme (Citizens, Equality, Rights, and Values) with the publication of several policy, capacity building, and communications deliverables. Notably, EUD's policy work took a focus on gender equality with the publication of the Report on Combatting Gender-based Violence and Discrimination against Deaf Women and Girls in the EU, in addition to the Toolkit on Gender Equality. Furthermore, EUD published a position paper "National Sign Languages as EU Official Languages" which will support our wider advocacy work towards the fulfilment of this right for all deaf EU citizens.

One of the noteworthy achievements of 2024 was the EU's adoption of the Directive establishing an European Disability Card. EUD, along with the wider disability movement, called for this Card to become a reality for many years, so its adoption marks a great step forward. In the period running up to its adoption, EUD worked hard advocating to ensure its full consideration of the deaf perspective and specific requirements to exercise their right to freedom of movement.

A further achievement of 2024, was the progress made toward the fulfilment of EUD's petition (no.1056/2016) from 8 years ago, which would allow deaf EU citizens to table petitions to the European Parliament in one of the 29 national sign languages in the EU. Whilst this has not quite become a reality, progress has been made towards its fulfilment by way of support shown by several MEPs on the PETI Committee, as well as concrete measures taken.

2024 saw the European Elections take place. Disappointingly, for the first time since 2009, there are no Deaf Members of the European Parliament (MEPs). This serves as a powerful reminder of the work that still needs to be done to ensure deaf representation in all spheres of political life.

As we navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead in 2025, EUD stands strong in its mission. We continue to champion the right to use national sign languages, advocate for empowerment through communication and information, and push for equality in education and employment for deaf people throughout Europe. Notably, this year we are a mere year away from celebrating the 40th anniversary of EUD, a milestone that underscores our enduring commitment to the fulfilment of deaf rights as human rights.

In closing, I would like to extend my appreciation to all members, partners, and supporters who make our work possible. Together, we are creating a more inclusive and accessible Europe for deaf people. Here's to a year of progress, collaboration, and positive change.



2nd anniversary of the British Sign Language (BSL) Act - 18th March 2024



European Regional Disability Summit - 6th December 2024



European Disability Forum General Assembly - 11th May 2024



EUD President,
Sofia Isari

Introduction

European Union of the Deaf

Based in Brussels, Belgium, EUD 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 from all of the 27 EU Member States, in addition to Iceland, Norway, Switzerland and the UK. National Association of the Deaf in acceding, candidate and potential member countries can choose to be affiliated members with the option of becoming full members as soon as they officially enter the EU.

EUD aims to establish and maintain EU-level dialogues with its relative institutions and officials, in consultation and co-operation with its member NADs.

EUD is a full member of the European Disability Forum (EDF) and a Regional Co-operating Member of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) to tackle issues of global importance. Moreover, it also has participatory status with the Council of Europe (CoE).

EUD also has signed memorandums of understanding with the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efsl), the European Union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY), the European Deaf Sports Organisation (EDSO), the European Deafblind Union (EDbU), European Deaf Students Union (EDSU) and the European Network of Sign Language Teachers (ENSLT).

Since 2017, it has held special consultative status with the United Nations.



Full Members

- Austria** – Österreichischer Gehörlosenbund (ÖGLB)
Belgium – Doof Vlaanderen & Fédération Francophone des Sourds de Belgique (FFSB)
Bulgaria – Съюз на глухите в България (СГБ / UDB)
Croatia – Hrvatski savez gluhih inagluhih (HSGN)
Cyprus – Ομοσπονδία Κωφών Κύπρου
Czech Republic – Svaz neslyšících a nedoslýchavých v ČR (SNNČR)
Denmark – Danske Døves Landsforbund (DDL)
Estonia – Eesti Kurtide Liit (EKL)
Finland – Kuurojen Liitto (FAD)
France – Fédération Nationale des Sourds de France (FNSF)
Germany – Deutscher Gehörlosen-Bund (DGB)
Greece – Ομοσπονδία Κωφών Ελλάδος (HFD)
Hungary – Siketek és Nagyothallók Országos Szövetsége (SINOSZ)
Iceland – Félag heyrnarlausra
Ireland – Irish Deaf Society (IDS)
Italy – Ente Nazionale Sordi (ENS)
Latvia – Latvijas Nedzirdīgo savienība (LNS)
Lithuania – Lietuvos kurčiųjų draugija (LKD)
Luxembourg – Solidarität mit Hörgeschädigten
Malta – Għaqda Persuni Neqsin mis-Smigħ
Netherlands – Dovenschap
Norway – Norges Døveforbund (NDF)
Poland – Polski Związek Głuchych (PZG)
Portugal – Federação Portuguesa das Associações de Surdos (FPAS)
Romania – Asociația Națională a Surzilor din România (ANSR)
Slovakia – Asociácia nepočujúcich Slovenska (ANEPS)
Slovenia – Zveza društev gluhih in naglušnih Slovenije (ZDGNS)
Spain – Confederación Estatal de Personas Sordas (CNSE)
Sweden – Sveriges Dövas Riksförbund (SDR)
Switzerland – Schweizerischen Gehörlosenbund, Fédération Suisse des Sourds, Federazione Svizzera dei Sordi (SGB-FSS)
United Kingdom – British Deaf Association (BDA)

Affiliated member

- Ukraine** – Ukrainian Society of the Deaf (UTOG)

Board Members



Sofia Isari
EUD President
Greece



Ronit Laquerrière-Leven
EUD Vice President
France



David Buxton
EUD Board Member
United Kingdom



Paal Richard Peterson
EUD Board Member
Norway



Andy Van Hoorebeke
EUD Board Member
Belgium



Staff Members



Frankie Picron
Executive Director



Alexandre Bloxs
Policy Manager
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David Hay
Communication and
Media Manager
United Kingdom



Charlotte Olhausen
Policy Officer
Ireland



Davy Van Landuyt
Project Officer
Belgium



Rehana Omardeen
Project Officer
Trinidad and Tobago



Mission Statement

It is the core mission of EUD to promote, advance and protect the rights of and opportunities for deaf people in the European Union to ensure they can become full citizens in their own right. These key values are also mirrored in the daily work of its Brussels headquarters.

The office provides a fully accessible signing

environment with international staff from many different countries across the EU. Most staff are deaf sign language users and all hearing staff must know or learn one national sign language as well as International Sign. Gender equality is also taken into account in all employment policies and when organising events and speakers.

To achieve equality in both public and private life for deaf people, EUD has laid out three main long-term objectives:

Recognition of the right to use an indigenous sign language;

Empowerment through communication and information; and

Equality in education and employment.



Board Meetings



→ Lisbon

2 March
2024



→ Brussels

22 May
2024



→ Budapest

21 September
2024



→ Brussels

30 November
2024



→ Summary

In 2024, the four quarterly board meetings of EUD took place in Lisbon, Portugal; Brussels, Belgium; Budapest, Hungary; and Brussels, Belgium. These strategic gatherings continue to be instrumental in fostering European-wide cooperation among deaf communities. Alongside the General Assembly, these meetings remain the bedrock of EUD's democratic structure, facilitating crucial discussions and decision-making processes that drive our mission forward.





General Assembly 2024

Brussels, Belgium

Our EUD General Assembly, workshops, and seminar held in Brussels from the 23rd to the 25th of May. This remarkable event was made possible by the dedication and active participation of our delegates.

The workshops focused on three vital themes: deaf participation in politics related to the upcoming European Elections, an outline of key pieces of EU Accessibility legislation, and an overview of EUD's campaign plans for the EU's recognition of national sign languages. Participants engaged in enlightening discussions, sharing their expertise and exploring innovative solutions. In partnership with Doof Vlaanderen and Fédération Francophone des Sourds de Belgique (FFSB), we organised a thought-provoking seminar addressing the rights of Deaf people to Community Support. This seminar emphasised the intersectionality within the Deaf community, covering topics such as gender violence, BIPOC experiences, mental health, and specific communication needs in national sign languages.

The GA was an important platform for decision-making and debate. During the session, our members approved the annual and financial reports and brought forward a range of motions. The motions spanned various topics, such as the issue of deaf education, 112 emergency services accessibility, and a proposal to create a new European deaf forum.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to Doof Vlaanderen and Fédération Francophone des Sourds de Belgique (FFSB) for their invaluable support and collaboration during our time in Brussels. Their contribution significantly contributed to the success of this event.



Webinars

The aim of EUD webinars is to strengthen the capacity of national member organisations to enable them to actively contribute to the implementation of the European Disability Rights Strategy 2021-2030, the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), the European Pillar of Social Rights and other relevant policies and initiatives.

| Topic | Date |
|--|--------------|
| 1. Combatting Gender-based Violence and Discrimination against Deaf Women and Girls using the EU Pillar of Social Rights | 2 March |
| 2. Is it time for an EUD Census? | 23 April |
| 3. Volunteering and access to Healthcare in European deaf communities | 24 May |
| 4. How Deaf-inclusive is the EU Disability Employment Package? | 21 September |
| 5. National Sign Languages in the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages (ECRML) | 20 November |



European Parliament

The European Parliament (EP) is an important forum for political debate and decision-making at the EU level. The Members of the European Parliament are directly elected

by voters in all Member States to represent people's interests with regard to EU law-making and to make sure other EU institutions are working democratically.

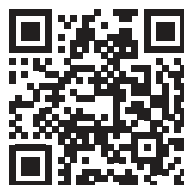
European Elections 2024

In 2024, 6-9 June, the EU elections took place. EUD undertook a great deal of work ahead of the elections, under the ADPA-EED project. This project was to ensure as many election materials and information could be translated into International Sign as possible. This enhanced the accessibility of the EU elections 2024 for deaf EU citizens.

Running up to the election, EUD held interviews with Adam Kosa (former MEP) and Helga Stevens (former MEP) about how to

ensure the political participation of deaf EU citizens in the EU elections.

Unfortunately, there are no deaf Members of European Parliament (MEPs) remaining, as MEP Adam Kosa (Hungary), stepped down following the political mandate. However, a number of MEPs were re-elected who are allies to the EU Disability Movement. EUD will work to grow its network with newly elected MEPs from September 2024 onwards.



European Parliament

Sakharov Prize

On 18th December, EUD was honoured to participate and contribute to the 2024 Sakharov Prize Programme, celebrating human rights and freedom of thought, organised by the European Parliament in Strasbourg.

EUD Executive Director, Frankie Picron, and Policy Manager, Alexandre Bloxs, attended the event, to ensure the perspective of National Sign Languages as the most fundamental human right for deaf people is not left behind

in the workshops and networking events. They had the privilege of meeting Sophie Wilmès, Vice-President of the European Parliament, to build a future where all deaf people will be included everywhere in the European Union, including within the EU Institutions, in their national sign languages.

The Sakharov Prize is a significant platform for promoting human rights and the European Union of the Deaf is grateful to have received the opportunity to be a part of it.



CRPD

EUD aims to ensure that the UN CRPD is meaningfully implemented at the EU and national levels for deaf persons in the EU.

Support for National Associations of the Deaf (NADs)

Concluding Observations are key recommendations issued by the UN CRPD Committee based on its evaluation of how States Parties implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). These recommendations play a vital role in shaping policies and practices related to the rights of persons with disabilities, including deaf people.

In preparation for the upcoming reviews of Sweden (March 2024) and the Netherlands, Denmark, and Belgium (August 2024) by the CRPD Committee at the UN Headquarters in Geneva, EUD offered specialised training sessions to its members. These trainings aimed to equip National Associations of the Deaf (NADs) with the tools and strategies needed to effectively engage with the CRPD Committee and advocate for the inclusion of deaf people's needs in the Concluding Observations.

While Sweden, represented by Sveriges Dövas Riksförbund (SDR), and Austria chose to take up this offer to strengthen their advocacy

capacity, other NADs, including Dovenschap (Netherlands), Danske Døves Landsforbund (DDL), Doof Vlaanderen, and Fédération Francophone des Sourds de Belgique (FFSB), opted to proceed independently, having already established their preparations.

The training provided by EUD Policy Manager focused on guiding delegates on how to effectively engage with CRPD Committee members and ensure the perspectives of deaf people are fully considered in the Concluding Observations. These recommendations are crucial in guiding States Parties on how to prioritise the implementation of the CRPD at the national level.

EUD remains dedicated to supporting all its members, regardless of the approach they choose, and is always ready to provide tailored guidance to ensure that the rights of deaf people are effectively represented in the CRPD process. By working collaboratively, EUD and its members continue to advance the rights of deaf people on the international stage, fostering equality and inclusion.



CRPD

The UN CRPD Committee’s List of Issues Prior to Reporting for the EU & EUD alternative report

EUD has submitted its Alternative Report to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) as part of the European Union’s second review cycle. This significant document, developed in collaboration with 31 National Associations of the Deaf (NADs) and various civil society organisations, highlights the European deaf community’s perspective on the EU’s response to the CRPD List of Issues.

The report provides an in-depth analysis of the EU’s progress in implementing the CRPD, focusing on key areas where gaps in legislation and policy continue to impact deaf people’s rights and inclusion. One of the central recommendations of the report is the official recognition of 29 national sign languages (NSLs) as EU languages, an essential step toward ensuring linguistic equality for deaf communities across Europe.

In addition to linguistic recognition, the report addresses several critical issues, including the need for enhanced measures to promote equality, accessibility, and non-discrimination for deaf individuals. It calls for improvements

in areas such as access to emergency services, inclusive employment opportunities, and the provision of public information in national sign languages. These gaps highlight the barriers deaf people continue to face in achieving full participation in society.

EUD’s Alternative Report is a testament to its ongoing commitment to aligning EU policies with the principles and obligations of the CRPD. The report not only defends the linguistic and cultural rights of deaf individuals but also seeks to address their broader status as persons with disabilities. It underscores the importance of ensuring that EU legislation reflects the lived experiences of deaf people and protects their rights at every level.

This landmark report reinforces EUD’s role as a key advocate for the European deaf community and a leading force in ensuring that the EU fully implements its commitments under the CRPD. By amplifying the voices of deaf individuals and organisations across Europe, this document aims to foster a more inclusive and equitable future for all.



CRPD

Conference of State Parties to the CRPD (COSP)

Every year, the Conference of State Parties to the CRPD (COSP) takes place in June at the UN Headquarters in New York City. The COSP serves as a platform gathering delegates from States Parties to the CRPD and Civil Society Organisations' representatives to discuss the priorities to meaningfully implement the Convention. The theme of the 2024 COSP General Debate was: "Rethinking disability inclusion in the current international juncture and ahead of the Summit of the Future".

During every COSP, there is an election for the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This year, for the first time, the EU nominated a candidate – Ms Inmaculada Placencia Porrero – who was elected.

We wish to congratulate Inmaculada and look forward to working with her to further the rights of deaf people in the EU, in line with the CRPD. Moreover, this year, Hiroshi Tamon, was the second deaf candidate to ever be elected to the Committee! We wish to congratulate Mr Tamon – we are delighted to have a deaf Committee member, representing the perspective of our community!

EUD submitted an intervention for the General Discussion of this year's COSP, calling the EU to legally recognise the 30 National Sign Language as official EU languages and the European Parliament to allow deaf people to table petitions in their national sign languages.



EU Disability Rights Strategy 2021 – 2030

EUD supports the implementation of the European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021- 2030 (ESRPD) to ensure it is ambitiously implemented for deaf persons in the EU.

The EU Disability Rights Strategy 2021 – 2030 (ESRPD) was adopted in 2021. It contains a number of actions that the EU and its Member States must undertake to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons at the EU and national levels. EUD welcomed this important initiative in 2021 and has continued advocating for and supporting its ambitious implementation in 2024.

EUD & flagships initiatives of the EU Disability Rights Strategy

→
**EU Disability
Platform**

→
**Social
Services**

→
**AccessibleEU
Centre**

→
**Disability
Employment
Package**

→
**European
Disability
Card**



→
**EU Disability
 Platform**



One of the flagship initiatives of the ESRPD is the establishment of the new Disability Platform. The European Commission fulfilled this commitment and established the Disability Platform at the end of 2021, replacing the High-Level Group on Disability.

The European Disability Platform supports the implementation of the ESRPD as well as national disability strategies. It brings together national UN CRPD focal points, organisations of persons with disabilities and the European Commission. The online presence of the Disability Platform contains information on its meetings, activities, analysis, and country information, including promotion of accessible and inclusive good practices. As of 2021, EUD has been a member of the EU Disability Platform.

In 2024, EUD supported the implementation of the activities planned until the end of 2024 and prepared for the future actions of the ESRPD and ensured they are developed by consulting EUD, taking into account deaf rights and being ambitiously implemented for deaf persons in the EU, especially for deaf women and girls as well as deaf persons with intersecting identities.

In order to support and enable this work, EUD is an active member of the EU Commission’s Disability Platform. The Platform meets three times per year to discuss progress and to receive input from Organisations of Persons with Disabilities. The Platform comprises a number of subgroups – one for each of the Strategy’s flagship initiatives as follows:

Subgroup on the AccessibleEU Centre – this subgroup finished its work with the launch of the Centre in July 2023.

Subgroup on the European Disability Card – this subgroup finished its work, with the adoption of the Card.

Subgroup on the Disability Employment Package – this subgroup finished its work in 2024, with the completion of all deliverables under the Package. EUD contributed to nearly all the deliverables within the Package in order to ensure the deaf perspective was included.

Subgroup on establishing a Framework for Social Services of Excellence for persons with disabilities – This was established in 2024, and EUD has since joined this subgroup.



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**Social
Services**

In 2024, the EU Disability Platform established a new subgroup on Social Services, which EUD became a member of. This subgroup was established to support the development of a further initiative under the ESRPD 2021-2030 – Framework for Social Services of Excellence for persons with disabilities. The Subgroup creates a forum of discussion where OPDs are meaningfully consulted and can represent the perspectives of the disability groups they represent. EUD will continue to work with the wider Subgroup in 2025, to ensure this initiative, under the Strategy, considers the deaf perspective.

The EU Disability Platform will established a new action plan to ensure the delivery of the Strategy from 2025-2030. EUD has actively participated in discussions with the wider EU disability movement, to ensure that these flagships are inclusive of deaf people.

EUD attended and participated in the European Day of Persons with Disabilities, which was held on 28th November 2024.



→
**AccessibleEU
Centre**

Another important flagship of the ESRPD is the establishment of the AccessibleEU Centre. The initiative for the Centre was launched in 2022 and aims to support the implementation of EU accessibility legislation by facilitating access to relevant knowledge, best practices, and resources. Prior to the establishment of the Centre, EUD provided input to the EU Commission on how to ensure that the work of the Centre focuses on the topics that are important for the deaf community when

ensuring accessibility. In July 2023, the Centre was officially launched and attended by EUD. EUD continues to work in close cooperation with the European Commission and the Centre by feeding its data base with relevant policies and good practices enhancing the inclusion of deaf people in all areas of society through accessibility features. In 2024, EUD was invited to speak at one of the Centre’s EU level events focusing on “Smart Cities: Enhancing Urban Design and Mobility for All”.



→
**Disability
 Employment
 Package**

In 2022, the EU Commission launched its Disability Employment Package to support Member States in ensuring that persons with disabilities enjoy social inclusion and economic autonomy through employment. The Package is part of the ESRPD and is in line with the UN CRPD. To support the package and inform the EU Commission on how well the right to work and employment is realised in the EU for deaf persons as well as which barriers remain. The Package contains several deliverables which, through consultation with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities

(OPDs) in a dedicated subgroup, have now been achieved. EUD provided feedback to a number of these deliverables to ensure the deaf perspective was represented, including the following – Reasonable Accommodation at Work – guidelines and good practices; Catalogue of Positive Actions to encourage the hiring of persons with disabilities and combat stereotypes; Practitioner Toolkit on strengthening Public Employment Services (PES) to improve labour market outcomes for persons with disabilities.



One of the flagship initiatives under the European Commission's European Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030 is the Disability Employment Package. The Package supports Member States in ensuring that persons with disabilities, including deaf people, enjoy social inclusion and economic autonomy through employment. Importantly, it aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

The Package contains several deliverables which, through consultation with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) in a dedicated subgroup, have now been achieved. EUD provided feedback to a number of these deliverables in order to ensure the deaf perspective was represented, including the following:

How can the EU Disability Employment Package support the increased employment of deaf EU citizens?

The EU Disability Employment Package aims to enhance employment for deaf citizens through initiative aligned with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Key elements include toolkits for public employment services, guidelines for reasonable accommodation, and efforts to combat stereotypes. The package highlights best practices and offers practical examples of deaf-inclusive services across Europe.

[Read about how each deliverable supports the deaf community](#)





European Disability Card

On 24th March 2024, the EU institutions officially adopted the EU Disability Card and the EU Parking Card, as well as the report on extending the EU Disability Card to third-country nationals being approved. Following years of advocacy by the EU Disability Movement, including EUD, its adoption marked a significant milestone towards ensuring that all persons with disabilities in the EU can exercise their right to freedom of movement, in line with the CRPD. EUD advocated for the final version of the Directive to be as deaf-inclusive as possible.

In doing so, EUD met with a number of Members of European Parliament (MEPs) to outline its position. As part of its advocacy efforts, the EUD policy team also joined the

European Disability Platform Expert Group on the EU Disability Card in order to share knowledge with relevant stakeholders and collaborate on advocacy work. Furthermore, EUD was a member of the Disability Platform Subgroup on the EU Disability Card to ensure consultation with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) across the EU. This subgroup has now closed as the Directive has been adopted. Whilst the Card will offer some positive improvements towards ensuring deaf peoples' right to freedom of movement in the EU, the Directive fell short in some ways. EUD published an analysis of how the Card will support deaf people and how it could be improved from the deaf perspective. It is a step in the right direction, however more work at the EU level is required.



Accessibility Legislation

EUD aims to ensure that all the EU's accessibility legislation is meaningfully implemented at the EU and national levels for deaf persons in the EU.

The EUD team is dedicated to pursuing policy-oriented and innovative solutions for inclusive emergency communications, in line with the CRPD. During its General Assembly, the EUD Policy Manager held a workshop to outline three key pieces of EU accessibility legislation to NADs – the EU Accessibility Act (EAA), the European Electronic Communications Code Directive (EECC), and the Audiovisual and Media Services Directive (AVMSD). This workshop included an interactive survey with NADs to gather information about the knowledge within the EUD membership of EU accessibility legislation, to highlight gaps. The EUD policy team will use this data to decipher how to increase understanding and knowledge within EUD membership on this topic.

On 7th May 2024, EUD, represented by its Policy Manager, attended the European Accessibility Summit 2024. The focus of EUD's contribution was on the essential inclusion of national sign languages in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a crucial step towards enhancing digital accessibility for

all deaf people. EUD's message at the Summit was clear and impactful: while advancements in ICT have significantly improved the inclusion of deaf people, they often overlook the specific requirements of deaf people. This gap in accessibility emphasises the necessity of integrating national sign languages into digital platforms and technologies. The EUD position sheds light on the diversity within deaf communities and the importance of acknowledging this diversity while developing ICT solutions.

On 14th March 2024, EUD Policy Manager attended the first meeting of the Permanent Group on Disability Rights of the European Economic and Social Committee. The meeting was titled "Potential and challenges of Assistive Technology and Artificial Intelligence on the life of Persons with Disabilities." EUD ensured the perspective of deaf people and national sign language users was not left out of the debate.



Human Rights

The goal of EUD is to achieve the fundamental human rights of all deaf people, irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, age, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, and any additional intersecting identities, to achieve equality in all spheres of life in the European Union. Therefore, EUD aims to meaningfully promote, protect, monitor, and raise awareness of the human rights of all deaf persons in the EU through its policy, capacity- building, and communications work.

EUD’s National Sign Languages Recognition & position paper:

In 2024, EUD continued its advocacy journey to advance the rights of all deaf people to use their national sign languages within the European Union through the legal recognition of the 30 EU National Sign Languages (NSLs)

as official EU languages on an equal footing with the 24 spoken languages. To support this work, EUD published a Position Paper on why the EU must recognise its 29 NSLs at the EU level.



Human Rights

Petition (no.1056/2016)

In 2024, important advocacy work was carried out by EUD, the EU Parliament, with regards to progress its Petition (no.1056/2016) which has remained stagnant for 8 years. This Petition would allow for the possibility to table petitions in the national sign languages of the EU. Currently, the lack of possibility to table petitions in national sign languages of the EU, contradicts Articles 9 and 21 of the CRPD, of which the EU is a State Party.

EUD has been working hard to progress this petition during 2024 given the lack of progress on it for the past 8 years. Specifically, EUD made a further statement in March 2024 in the EU Parliament's Petitions (PETI) Committee and worked with supportive MEPs to further progress this long overdue petition to become a reality. This would signify a step towards deaf people's full and equal enjoyment of their right to political participation in the EU.

As a result, there has been a growing support from the EU Parliament. The most recent development, on 11th April 2024, during a plenary session, the EU Parliament adopted the two amendments (submitted by the Social Democrats (S&D) and the European People's Party (EPP), in support of this petition, to the Committee on Budget Control (CONT) Report on the discharge (final approval) of the the EU Parliament 2022 Budget. Although this is a non-binding recommendation, it is still very influential and promising for officially implementing the option to table petitions in national sign languages of the EU in the coming legislature. This marks a pivotal moment as the European Parliament has unequivocally endorsed our longstanding request and, as a result, should feel compelled to take action on it.



Human Rights

EUD's Report highlights the barriers faced by deaf women and girls in the EU to accessing their right to protection from all forms of violence

In March, EUD did the publication of its new report, *Combating Gender-based Violence and Discrimination against Deaf Women and Girls in the EU*. This important work is the result of extensive engagement and consultation with female representatives from EUD's member organisations, offering a comprehensive perspective on the lived experiences of deaf women and girls across Europe.

This report represents a significant step in advocating for the rights of deaf women and girls, shedding light on the unique challenges they face. It critically analyses the implications of the forthcoming EU Directive on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence from a deaf perspective. Furthermore, it integrates the objectives of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and aligns with the principles of the EU Pillar of Social Rights to ensure a more inclusive and equitable framework for addressing gender-based violence.

EUD collaborated closely with its network of member organisations to gather real-life experiences, concerns, and recommendations from deaf women. Their contributions have been pivotal in shaping this in-depth report, which aims to influence policy and improve outcomes for deaf women and girls across the EU.

Through this report, EUD reaffirms its commitment to fostering a deaf- and gender-inclusive society. We extend our gratitude to all the contributors who shared their insights, making this comprehensive analysis possible.



Human Rights

Toolkit on Gender Equality

EUD is proud to announce the launch of its latest toolkit, “Maximising the Effectiveness of Your Women’s Committee in the Context of National Associations of the Deaf”.

This resource aims to empower Women’s Committees within National Associations of the Deaf (NADs) to serve as influential advocates for gender equality in the Deaf community.

The toolkit offers practical guidance on establishing, managing, and optimising Women’s Committees, equipping them to effectively monitor and implement key EU and international legislation. It addresses the Istanbul Convention, the UN CEDAW, the CRPD, the EU Directive Combatting Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence, and

the EU Gender Equality Strategy.

Through an intersectional approach, the toolkit explores the varied experiences of Deaf individuals and considers factors such as race, ethnicity, language, gender identity, disability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and age. By doing so, it aligns with EUD’s Intersectionality Statement and ensures that advocacy efforts encompass the full spectrum of challenges faced by the Deaf community.

This toolkit is a strategic resource for NADs, providing them with the tools needed to strengthen their Women’s Committees and contribute to the advancement of gender equality.

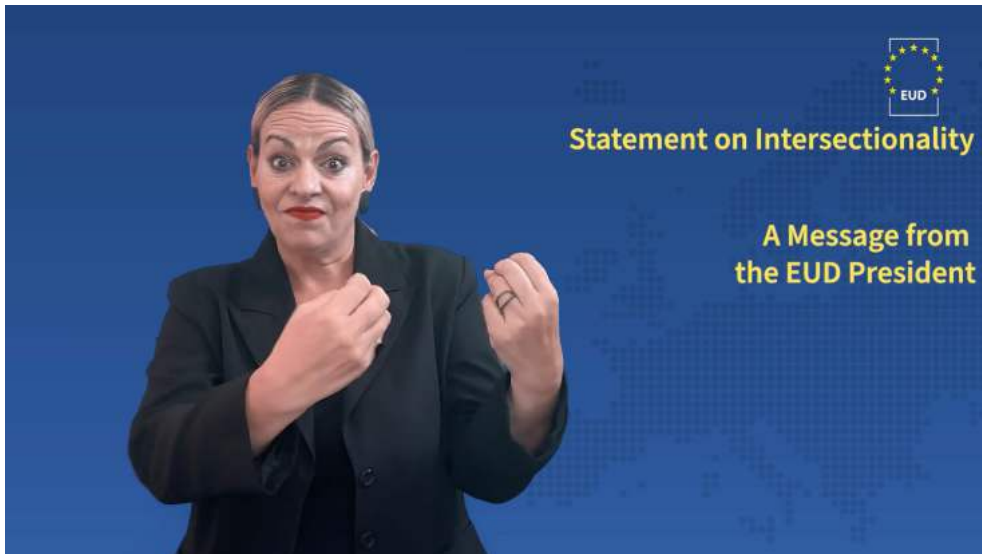


Human Rights

Revised Statement on Intersectionality

This year, EUD also published a revised version of its Statement on Intersectionality. The Statement was revised in collaboration with several NGOs representing other marginalised groups – the European Network against Racism (ENAR), the European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE), European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual,

Trans, and Intersex Association (ILGA-Europe)**** in order to ensure the Statement reflected diverse perspectives. As a result of EUD’s strengthened relationship with these organisations, it is committed to improving its intersectional approach to all its work going forward.



Human Rights

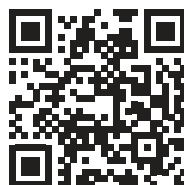
3rd European Deaf Women Forum

The 3rd European Deaf Women’s Forum, hosted by The Union of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the Czech Republic (SNN v ČR), took place from 21 to 24 November 2024 in Brno, with delegates from nine countries. The event focused on gender equality, reflecting on the 30 years since the dissolution of Czechoslovakia and setting goals for future progress.

EUD President Sofia Isari and Vice President Ronit Laquerriere-Leven, who chairs EUD’s Working Group on Gender Equality, represented the organisation alongside other members of the Working Group. The forum opened with a roundtable discussion where delegates shared updates on their gender equality initiatives, fostering cross-border collaboration.

The conference on 22 November, themed “30 Years: Then and Now?”, featured speeches by EUD leaders and other prominent voices. Topics included the evolution of gender equality work, the empowerment of deaf women in leadership, and gaps in accessibility for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Workshops on 23 November focused on strategy development, addressing SRHR issues, leadership training, and sustainable development linked to the UN Global Goals.

The forum concluded with a gala evening and a joint statement, emphasising the importance of deaf women’s leadership and SRHR as priorities for EUD’s gender equality efforts. Delegates urged EUD to continue supporting these initiatives to build a stronger and more inclusive Deaf community across Europe.



Working Groups

EUD has six Working Groups (WG) and launched two more in 2022. The purpose of the WGs is to gather diverse deaf experts from across Europe who meet once to twice a year to discuss and analyse current issues and policies relevant to the deaf community, providing a professional forum of exchange.

The members of the groups provide good practices from their home countries, as well as giving negative examples and formulating possible recommendations at both EU and Member State level. The WGs serve as a focal point to support the EUD staff in highly specialised matters. An EUD Board Member chairs each of the Working Groups:

Deaf Lawyers

- focuses on the legal provisions regarding sign language and human rights, using the UN CRPD as the guide for discussions.
Established in 2011.

Intersectionality

- focuses on intersectionality within the deaf community where members can explore how we can work collaboratively to ensure equality, equity, diversity, and non-discrimination.
Established in 2021.

ICT and Accessibility

- focuses on the physical and digital accessibility of information and communication for deaf persons which is predominantly through national sign languages.
Established in 2011.

BIPOC

- stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour and has the purpose to identify and discuss issues faced by BIPOC deaf persons in the EU.
Established in 2022.

Gender Equality

- focuses on issues of inequality facing deaf women and to discern important efforts to ensure the rights of deaf women are ensured, in line with the UN CRPD, at EU and Member State level.
Established in 2017.

ECMRL

- stands for The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages and has the purpose to discuss the ways in which EUD can effectively raise awareness about and advocate for the respect, recognition and promotion of national sign languages.
Established in 2022.

Co-operation

EUD has signed memorandums of understanding with several NGOs with which it has common goals.



European Disability Forum



Dr Humberto Insolera
Executive Committee



Lolo Danielsson
Women's Committee



World Federation of the Deaf



European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters



European Union of the Deaf Youth



European Deaf Students' Union



European Deaf Sports Organisation



European Deafblind Union



European Network of Sign Language Teachers



European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness

Social Media

Platforms



Facebook

166 posts

60,519 likes

Reached Audience

+243k



LinkedIn

161 posts

1,945 likes

Reached Audience

+58k



X

188 posts

8,795 followers

Reached Audience

+95k



Instagram

128 posts

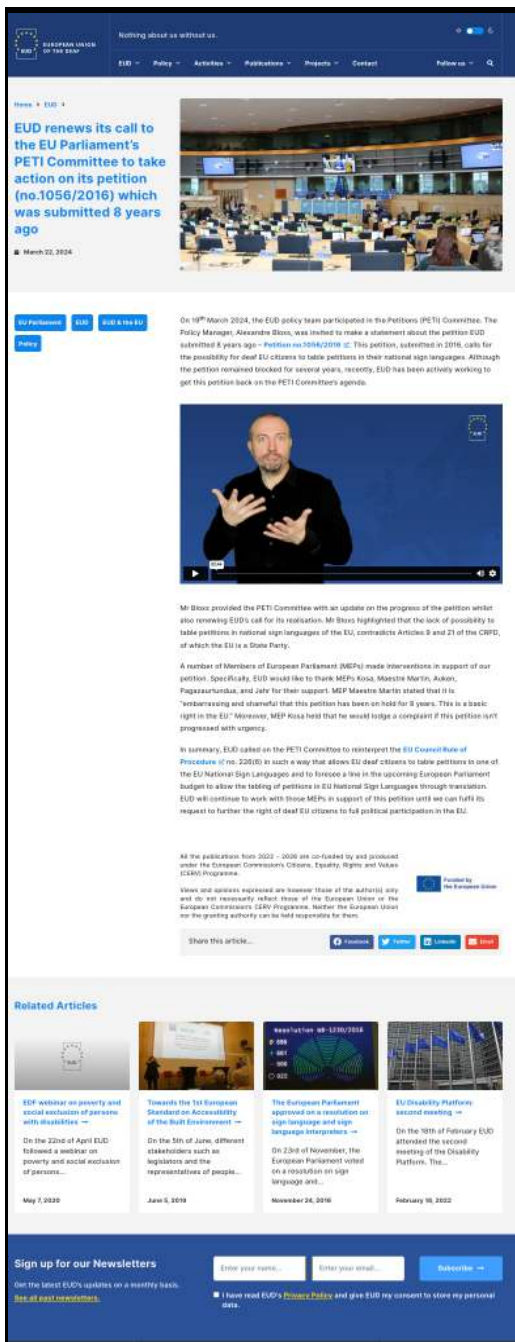
734 followers

Reached Audience

+40k



Website



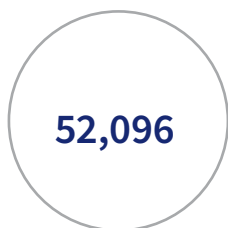
EUD’s website (www.eud.eu) is one of the main sources to communicate and disseminate the information about EUD, it ensures all EUD’s communication and information is available to the key audiences and the wider community. It is an open-access website and provides details on EUD’s activities and progress, including the deliverables produced in each stage of the Work Plan, as well as meetings, events, and workshops. It communicates these details through video announcements, press releases, website articles, and links to articles and projects relevant to the EUD’s lobbying



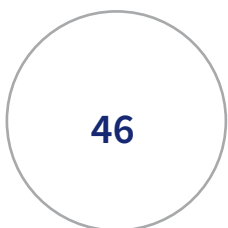
www.eud.eu



International Sign friendly.

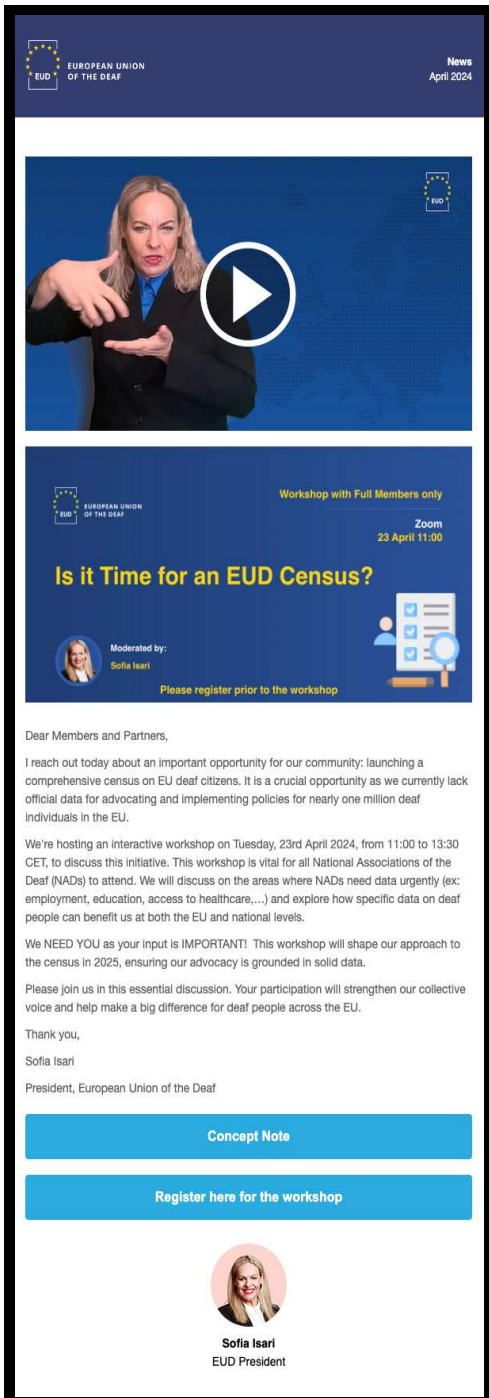


Number of page views in 2024



Number of articles added in 2024

Newsletters

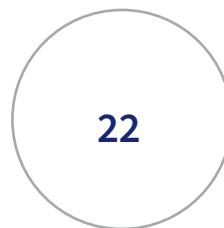


Newsletters enables EUD to raise awareness of EUD’s core values, objectives, lobbying activities and expected achievements through publishing material about its activities on its website, social media channels, and in the newsletters sent to its subscribers and posted on its website, ensuring that these are carefully targeted to the interests of specific key audiences.

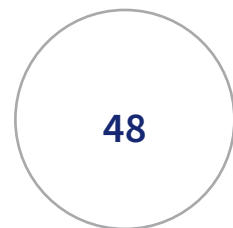
Please sign up for our Newsletters.



Informative.



External Newsletters sent in 2024



Internal Newsletters sent in 2024

Projects

European Parliament



ADPA-EED

Empowering Deaf Europeans in EU Elections
eu-election.eu

Erasmus+



QSA4D

qsa4disability.eu



SWING CAMPUS

DEF

DEIMAN4FINANCE

IDE – Interpreter
mediated Deaf
Education at Primary

Horizon Europe



AccessS

euproject-access.eu



SKILLAIBILITY

skillaibility.eu

European Union of the Deaf

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