

UKRAINE

GENERAL

Population: 45,750,000

Capital City: Kyiv

DEAF PEOPLE

National Association of the Deaf:

- Ukrainian Society of the Deaf (UkSD), established 1933, member of World Federation of the Deaf since 1956

How many Deaf people?

- Unofficial figures suggest more or less 180,000 functionally deaf people in Ukraine;
- UkSD's members – more or less 47,000

Laws to protect their rights:

- Law of Ukraine “On the basis of social protection of disabled people in Ukraine” (On the legal status of sign language: Article 23. State recognized a fingerspelling-sign language as a means of interpersonal communication, as well as a means of learning disabilities with hearing impairments. The legal status and scope of fingerspelling-sign language defined by the legislation of Ukraine ...)
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (signed September 24, 2008; ratified February 4, 2010).

Deaf Education:

- An extensive system (more 70) preschool special education, secondary education boarding schools for children with hearing impairment; deaf people are able to obtain special and higher education in special deaf groups in some schools, colleges, technical schools, higher education institutions.

Sign Language(s):

- Ukrainian Sign Language, Russian Sign Language.

Spoken Language(s):

- State language is Ukrainian;
- minority languages - Russian, Hungarian, Polish, Belarusian, Bulgarian, Romanian, Crimean Tatar.

SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS

How many interpreters?

- About 450 sign language interpreters, 350 of them work in the system of UkSD.

Do you have an Interpreters Association?

- De jure - we have the NGO “Association “Union of Sign Language Interpreters”;

- De facto – the NGO “Association “Union of Sign Language Interpreters” is out of action.
- In November, 2007 established Kyiv Council of Sign Language Interpreters (Kyiv CSLI), which is a consultative and advisory activity of the Kyiv Deaf Organisation. CSLI’s activities aimed at addressing sign language interpreters' matters in Ukraine and in the city of Kyiv in particular.

How many members?

- NGO “Association “Union of Sign Language Interpreters” - not available.
- Kyiv CSLI - 7 persons (President, 2 Vice-presidents, 4 members)

Details of your Interpreter Training

- Get training for a profession of Sign Language Interpreter can only in Training and Recreation Centre of the UkSD (licensed by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine on July 9, 2009, № 2673-L).
- Initial Training Courses (ITC) lasts about 4.5 months and includes 186 academic hours of theoretical lessons and 324 academic hours of practical training (total 510 academic hours). Lessons are held daily (except holidays), 6-8 academic hours a day. Teachers - native sign Language users (6 persons) and sign language interpreters (3 persons). Education is fee-paying. Upon ITC completion students receive state Certificate of assigning workers' qualifications for the profession of Sign Language Interpreter.
- Advanced Training Courses (ATC) last about a month and includes 32 academic hours of theoretical lessons and 132 academic hours of practical training (total 164 academic hours). Lessons are held daily (except holidays), 6-8 academic hours a day. Teachers - native sign Language users (6 persons) and sign language interpreters (3 persons). Education is fee-paying. Upon ATC completion students receive state Certificate of upgrade workers' qualifications for the profession of Sign Language Interpreter.

Drawbacks of Training:

- The high cost of training. Not all of those who wish to qualify as a sign language interpreter have the financial means to afford the full training course. No state-guaranteed order on sign language interpreters training.
- Centralization of training. Courses are held in Kyiv only and then students from other regions of Ukraine are forced to leave their homes, families and work for full time education.
- Intensity. The students physically and psychologically unable to learn a large number of educational materials in a short time.
- Undifferentiated groups in terms of Sign Language’s knowledge and Interpretation’s skills. In one group can be as those who learn sign language “from scratch”, and those who owns sign language (e.g. CODA's). About ATC, in one group may be students with various training levels.
- Logistical support. Training and Recreation Centre of the UkSD does not provide students and teachers of visual materials, manuals etc., inappropriate technical maintenance of lessons.
- Training of teachers. In Ukraine there is no training of qualified Sign Language teachers. Teachers based in work only on own Sign Language's knowledge and Interpretation's skills.
- Non-concurrence in the pedagogical staff leading to disruption of the educational process.
- Lack of the unified language concepts in the sign language interpreters training. 2/3 of the educational process is given to studying ‘loan-word signed language’ and only 1/3 to studying Ukrainian Sign Language.

Details of your Interpreter Testing/Assessment

- Assessment of the quality of training/advanced training of interpreters is at the end of the relevant courses. Assessment conducted by Examination Board consisting of 7 persons (5 deaf, 2 hearing) from among teachers of courses.
- The exam consists of three main tasks: simultaneous interpreting from spoken language to sign language, simultaneous interpreting from sign language to spoken languages, fingerspelling. Additionally verified knowledge and skills in other content areas that been lectured on the courses.
- Criteria for assessment:
- The volume of word-stock and sentence construction competent in simultaneous interpreting from sign language to spoken language;
- The volume of sign-stock and success of the selection forms of signed equivalents of words in simultaneous interpreting from spoken language to sign language (loan-word signed language);
- Mechanism of fingerspelling: fineness of fingers (manual dexterity), speed of demonstrating, intelligibility;
- Intelligibility of articulation;
- NMF (non-manual factors).
- Tasks are rated on a 12-point scale; the results of the examination are entered in the Annex to the Certificate of assignment (increasing) of the workers' qualifications.

Details of your Interpreter Accreditation/Certification

- Upon completion of courses students get the state sample Certificate of assignment (increasing) of the workers' qualifications for the profession "sign language interpreter." Moreover, after successful ATC completion may be confer a qualification of "senior sign language interpreter."
- Additionally in Ukrainian Society of the Deaf is the division into categories of sign language interpreters: interpreters-fingerspellers without category, 2nd category, 1st category, the highest category. Upon ITC completion Accreditation Commission assign the categories (without category, 2nd category) followed by issuing an appropriate authorization document. Upon ATC completion Accreditation Commission assign the categories (2nd category, 1st category) followed by issuing an appropriate authorization document and gives recommendation for a highest category.

What have been the important events since 2007?

- In the UkSD established consultative and advisory activity - the Kyiv Council of Sign Language Interpreters (November, 2007), which operates and develops until now.
- February 4, 2010 the Verkhovna Rada (Parliament) of Ukraine ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol.
- 1st Ukrainian Conference of Sign Language Interpreters «Sign Language Interpreter in Ukraine – Profession or Mission» took place in Kyiv (Ukraine) on May 20-22, 2011. Approximately 80 people from different parts of Ukraine attended the conference.
- Established contacts with foreign associations of interpreters, CSLI members actively participate in international conferences, seminars and other events at the international level.

What are your goals for the future?

- The main goal of the present Kyiv CSLI's activities is expand influence area across the country and establish National Association of Sign Language Interpreters.
- In addition, Kyiv CSLI cooperates with Ukrainian Society of the Deaf towards raising the statuses of Ukrainian Sign Language and sign language interpreters at the legislative level,

improvement of interpreting services, making its proposals to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.