



Deutscher Gehörlosen-Bund e.V. · Am Zirkus 4 · 10117 Berlin
Presidente della Camera dei Deputati
Gianfranco Fini

Deutscher Gehörlosen-Bund e.V.

CAMERA DEI DEPUTATI
Palazzo Montecitorio - Piazza Montecitorio
00186 - Roma (Italia)

DER PRÄSIDENT

Berlin, 25. May 2011

LIS – Lingua dei Segni / Recognition of Italian Sign Language

Dear President Mr. Fini,

The German Deaf Association is the national association of the Deaf people in Germany. We have become aware of the situation in Italy, that the Italian Government wants to recognise the Italian Sign Language, Lingua dei Segni Italiana, or (LIS). However certain parties have brought it to my attention that there is a desire to replace the recognition of Italian Sign Language by a rudimentary system called Linguaggio Mimico Gestuale (LMG). The German Deaf Association doesn't accept this motion and wishes to remind you of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was signed and ratified by Italian Government on 15th of May 2009. In this Convention, Sign Languages have been recognised as natural languages equal to spoken languages. Like each sign language, Italian Sign Language has its own distinct grammatical structure. LMG is not a natural language, it is a system of communication that has been artificially created to supplement the spoken Italian language, much like a pidgin system. Giving support to LMG as a system of communication for deaf people in Italy would be breaching the spirit of the Convention.

Deutscher Gehörlosen-Bund e.V.

Bundesgeschäftsstelle
Am Zirkus 4
10117 Berlin
Deutschland

Kommunikation

Telefon +49/8999269895
Telefax +49/8999269895
E-Mail info@gehoerlosen-bund.de
Internet www.gehoerlosen-bund.de

Geschäftsführender Vorstand

Präsident Rudolf Sailer
Vizepräsidentin Christine Linnartz
Vizepräsident Alexander von Meyenn
Schatzmeister Edgar Brandhoff

Bankverbindung

Deutscher Gehörlosen-Bund e.V.
Bank für Sozialwirtschaft
Konto-Nr. 7470400
Bankleitzahl 10020500

The National Sign Languages of many and European countries have already been recognised. The highest recognition of a Sign Language has been achieved in New Zealand, with New Zealand Sign Language being recognised as an official language alongside English and Maori. German Sign Language has been recognized by a German law in 2002.

There is strong international support for the unique status of LIS to be recognised, and 7370 people have signed a petition supporting LIS over LMG. (*statistics current as of 24 May 2011*). The petition can be accessed online at <http://www.petiziononline.it/petizione/lingua-dei-segni-italiana/848>

We urge further consultation and understanding of this situation with the users of Italian Sign Language.

We pledge for the same respect to be given to LIS, and to recognise it as a a distinct language equal to the spoken Italian language.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rudolf Sailer'. The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Rudolf Sailer