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Chess Platform for Deaf People

CHED – Chess Platform for Deaf People

EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL REPORTS



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1 History of Deaf Languages in Europe

Historically, throughout Europe any unusual behaviour was frowned upon. This meant that people with disabilities, including Deaf Communities, were shunned from society.

The first public demonstration of the successful education of Deaf People was in 1500, when Pedro Ponce de León began educating some noble children. Pedro was a Benedictine Spanish Monk, who's aim was to allow Deaf children to communicate at school through the simplification of spoken language [1].

Charles Michel de l'Épée was a French educator who set up a small school to study and implement the use of a signed communication system. This was following his meeting of two Deaf-Mute twin sisters in 1760, who's use of complex sign language amazed him. This was a turning point in the history of Deaf languages in Europe, as people began to realise it's possible to express human thoughts through gestures alone. Charles began to organise a system of signs by adapting language developed by Deaf people throughout the past 200 years. By doing so, he created a sign language adapted to teach French [1].

1.1 Oralism

l'Épée's method was known as the French, or gestural, method. At this time there was also another school focusing on teaching language to Deaf people. This was known as the German, or oralist, practice.

The origins of this method stemmed from religious beliefs. At this time, many believed that Deaf people's spiritual salvation, and their salvation as human beings, depended on their capability of being brought to language [2].

1.1.1 The Milan Conference

In 1880, the Second International Congress on the Education of Deaf People held a conference in Milan. The congress comprised of 163 Deaf educators from multiple countries. Of these

Delegates, all but 5 were Europeans. Only one was Deaf [3].

At this conference, it was declared that the oral method of teaching was superior to its gestural counterpart. Resultantly, sign language was then banned in Deaf schools, impacting the lives and education of Deaf people immensely [4]. The first two of eight resolutions implemented at the Milan Conference were as follows:

- 1) "The Convention, considering the incontestable superiority of articulation over signs in restoring the deaf-mute to society and giving him a fuller knowledge of language, declares that the oral method should be preferred to that of signs in the education and instruction of deaf-mutes."
- 2) "The Convention, considering that the simultaneous use of articulation and signs has the disadvantage of injuring articulation and lip-reading and the precision of ideas, declares that the pure oral method should be preferred [4] [5]."

1.2 Resurgence of Gestural Languages

The restrictions imposed at the Milan Conference remained in place for more than eighty years. In May 1968, sign language began to re-emerge in society. Due to an increasing sensitivity to cultural diversity, Deaf people and other minorities began to gain more rights and freedom of speech [1].

In 1973 the "Union Nationale pour l'Intégration Sociale des Déficiants Auditifs" (National Union for the Social Integration of the Hearing-Impaired) was established in France. Its aim was to support the Deaf Community and fight for its own education system. Subsequently, the availability of sign language courses soared, and soon French Sign Language (LSF) and the bilingual LSF education system was born. This soon spread to other European countries, with Spanish Sign Language (LSE) soon originating [1].

2 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People in Europe

2.1 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) was adopted on 13th December 2006 in New York, at the United Nations Headquarters. It was subsequently opened for signature on 30th March 2007, when it received the highest quantity of signatories to a UN Convention on its opening day in history. There was a total of eighty-two signatories to the convention, forty-four to the Optional Protocol and one ratification of the Convention [6].

2.1.1 Article 9: Accessibility

Article 9 of the CRPD focuses on accessibility, acknowledging it is a precondition to enabling persons with disabilities to receive equal opportunities within their societies. The Article recognises the necessity of accessibility measures in order to reach this goal, and as such is one of the principles upon which the CRPD is based [7]. The right to accessibility for all disabled persons, including the Deaf Community, is discussed within this protocol. Resultantly, adaptations specific to Deaf people are not outlined in detail.

The Article stipulates that: “to enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communication, including information and communication technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas” [7].

The aforementioned “appropriate measures” include implementing protocols within the following areas:

- a) Roads, buildings, transport and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces;

- b) Information, communication and other services, including electronic services and emergency services [7].

2.2 European Accessibility Act

The European Accessibility Act is a landmark directive, currently undergoing a three-year period, during which it will be written into law. It was published in the Official Journal of the EU on 7th June 2019. This is after ten years of EU disability movements campaigning in its favour [8].

The European Accessibility Act aims to set common functional accessibility requirements for key products and services, such as:

- Computers;
- Telephones;
- TVs;
- Transport and banking services;
- Online shopping services.

Like the CRPD (Section 2.1), the European Accessibility Act utilises “disability” as an umbrella term, under which the Deaf Community is included. Despite this, the European Union of the Deaf (EUD) actively advocated the Act, due to its focus on ICT products and services [9].

2.3 Directive 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council

Directive 2010/64/EU on the right to interpretation and translation was written on 20th October 2010. This directive establishes the minimum requirements and rules regarding translation in criminal proceedings. All countries of the European Union must be compliant with these rules [10].

2.3.1 The JUSTSIGNS Project

JUSTSIGNS is an EU Commission funded project. It aims to deliver vocational educational training (VET), focusing on the adaptation of sign language interpretation within a legal setting.

The project believes that the protection of a Deaf individual's rights is brought into question when systems assume Deaf people can access resources in the same way as their hearing peers.

JUSTSIGNS highlights the following reasons for this problem:

1. The lack of, or limited status, afforded to sign languages, which inhibits access to information at all stages of the legal process for Deaf people;

2. Limited understanding in legal settings of the constraints imposed by the interpreting process when working between any two languages, with additional challenges arising when working between a spoken (auditory-verbal) and signed (visual-spatial) language;
3. A lack of awareness (among legal professionals) of the historical educational and cultural background of Deaf people, which gives rise to challenges in legal settings [11].

The aforementioned VET training will target both qualifying and qualified interpreters. This will allow identification of key competencies required to implement their skills within criminal proceedings [11] [12].

3 Deaf Sports in Europe and Their History

3.1 European Deaf Sports Organisation

The European Deaf Sports Organisation (EDSO) organises Deaf sports events across Europe. EDSO maintains 50,000 members, from 1,000 Deaf sports clubs across 40 different countries [13].

The following Sections 1.1.1 and 3.1.2 outline the historic events leading up to the foundation of EDSO in 1983.

3.1.1 European Championships of the Deaf

Before the establishment of EDSO, there was a pre-existing international Deaf sports games known as the European Championships of the Deaf. These were established in 1967 and were under the jurisdiction of the Comité International des Sports (CISS). CISS was the world federation of Deaf Sports and organised international Deaf sporting events across the globe. CISS were effective at authorising European championships on a regular basis. However, due to the quantities of international events undertaken by CISS, they were unable to organise European Championships themselves [14].

The European Championships of the Deaf were very successful. There were some periods of time when six to ten championships were being held per year [14]. However, this was unsustainable, with the European countries involved being unable to finance this.

3.1.2 European Deaf Sport Federation

Due to the financial struggles incurred due to the current arrangement with CISS, the European countries took it upon themselves to establish a new organisation. Hence, the European Deaf Sports Federation was founded by Belgium, France, Germany and the Netherlands.

The foundation of the Federation was met with reluctance from CISS, who viewed it as a rival organisation. Subsequently, CISS managed to boycott the Federation's first planned meeting by urging Eastern Europe not to attend [14]. There was a second meeting in 1981, the aim of which was to fully define the tasks to be undertaken by the European Deaf Sport Federation.

It wasn't until 7th July 1983 when these responsibilities were concretely defined. The organisation was then founded and given a new name; "the European Deaf Sports Organisation" [14].

3.2 International Chess Committee of the Deaf

The International Chess Committee of the Deaf (ICCD) was founded on 14th August 1949. ICCD was established under the name of the International Committee of Silent Chess (ICSC). This was changed in October 2012.

Establishment of the organisation occurred following the 1949 CISS International Games for the Deaf (now known as Deaflympics). The organisation originated when Mr. L.G. Dronkers met with representatives from the Netherlands, Denmark, Norway and Finland. International Deaf chess matters were discussed, and a committee was formed, with Dronkers as its president.

The ICCD organises international chess events for Deaf men and women, World Teams Deaf Chess Championships, European, Asian (Continental) Clubs Chess Championships and friendly international tournaments. ICCD is recognised by both the Federation Internationale des Echecs (FIDE) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC) [15].

4 History of Deaf Languages in Armenia

In 1961, Vachagan Khalatyan created the Armenian Manual Alphabet. Six years later he established a boarding school for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children in Yerevan. Khalatyan led this school for more than 20 years alongside his teaching and research.

Following this, Khalatyan completed a PhD in Education from the Moscow State Pedagogical University in 1983. He also participated in international conferences as a speaker, majorly contributing to discussions regarding issues with education for Deaf people.

Khalatyan is the author of several publications, namely:

- Armenian Sign Language – Dictionary (study guide) 2001;
- Dictionary of Special Education (manual) 2001;
- Talking hands – Armenian Sign Language, Dictionary (study guide) 2004.

Khalatyan created the Armenian alphabet of spoken word, as well as a concise glossary of sign language. Since its inception, the Armenian Sign Language Dictionary has been regularly updated. This is due to the language being living and evolving, constantly undergoing changes [16].

5 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People in Armenia

5.1 Special Education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children

In Armenia, special education for Deaf children was introduced in 1931. This followed the decision to initiate universal education for Deaf people. Resultantly, two classes containing twenty Deaf pupils were opened at Yerevan Secondary School.

During the 1940-1941 academic year, these two classes were moved to a different educational building. This became a new school for Deaf children located in Yerevan.

In 1949, a second school for Deaf children opened in Leninakan. This school operated for six years, before all students were transferred to the aforementioned school in Yerevan in 1955.

5.1.1 Special School Number 15

In 1959 the Yerevan school for Deaf children was once again moved to a new building. This school was located at 193 Nork Gardens, which still functions as a "Special Educational Complex for Children with Hearing Impairments" (Section 5.1.2) today.

A separate boarding school was opened in 1969 and focused on education for Hard of Hearing students. This was to accommodate the differences in teaching requirements for Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.

The Yerevan school for Deaf children was subsequently renamed "Government School Number 15 / Deaf / Special School" for Deaf children, whilst the boarding school for Hard of Hearing children became "School Number 9 / Hearing Impaired Children / Special School".

Preceding the foundation of the school for Deaf children in Yerevan, fourteen other special schools had been established in Armenia. However, School Number 15 was the first to adopt and implement the use of the Chester language. It was initially introduced as a taught subject. Sign language courses have since been organised for teachers and parents of students.

In the school year 2005-2006, the bilingual teaching system was tested and implemented by the Kamkor Korov NGO as a new, up-to-date teaching method in Armenia.

5.1.2 Special Educational Complex

In 2008, by decision of the Government of Armenia, Yerevan Special School Number 9 for Children with Hearing Disabilities joined Special School Number 15. These merged schools were managed by Lusine Babayan and renamed the "Special Education Complex for Children with Hearing Disabilities".

This educational complex remains the only one in the Republic of Armenia. It organises the teaching and upbringing of Deaf and Hard of Hearing children.

The Special Educational Complex provides twelve years of secondary education. It has the right to carry out general and basic elementary education, as well as full and general secondary education programmes.

The Educational Complex contains a preparatory group for five-year-old children. High school students receive pre-vocational education in subjects such as:

- Carpet weaving;
- Hairdressing;
- Sewing;
- Clothing design;

In addition to the educational programmes, there are extracurricular groups. Here, students are taught skills such as:

- Table design (design);
- Chess;
- Dance;
- Fine art;
- Greco-Roman wrestling. [17]

6 Deaf Sports in Armenia and Their History

6.1 Protocol Decision N38: Disabled Sports Development of the Republic of Armenia 2017

Protocol decision N38 was made following a sitting of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. This took place on 7th September 2017, when it was signed into law by the Prime Minister.

N38 approved the Concept for Development of Disabled Sports in the Republic of Armenia. Specific points from this concept are outlined in the following Sections 6.1.1 and 6.1.2.

6.1.1 Section 33 of the Concept for Development of Disabled Sports

Section 33 of Protocol N38 ensures the following sports are to be organised in the Republic of Armenia for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people:

- Golf;

- Arm wrestling;
- Weightlifting;
- Table tennis;
- Athletics;
- Jogging;
- Mountain skiing;
- Judo;
- Volleyball;
- Chess.

6.1.2 Section 47 of the Concept for Development of Disabled Sports

Chess is to be a subject in all schools, including special schools for children with disabilities and schools for Hard of Hearing and Deaf children.

In 2014 the Armenian team of deaf chess players participated in the Olympic Deaf Chess Championship held in Opatija, Croatia.

In 2016, the Deaf World Chess Championship was held in Yerevan with ninety-two chess players from twenty-four countries participating. Seven Armenian chess players took part in the tournament, two of which won prizes [18].

6.2 Approval of Programme and Project Implementation Measures

6.2.1 Disabled Sports Development & Physical Culture and Sport Development 2013 - 2017

Disabled Sports Development and Physical Culture and Sports Development were two strategies over the period of 2013 to 2017 within the Republic of Armenia.

These focused on approving programmes and projects which implement non-governmental physical education and sports organisations for persons with disabilities.

Section 18 states that athletes of the Armenian Deaf Sports Committee shall attend a variety of sports competitions. These include, but are not limited to, the Deaflympic Games and World and European Championships.

Section 39 focuses on the physical development and education of people with disabilities. Ideas from this concept are as follows:

(1) The aims of the concept are:

:

- a) Enabling organisation of events that will deliver physical education for people with disabilities, especially for young people;
- b) Development and improvement of the educational system for young people with disabilities;
- c) Regulation of the physical education and sport for people with disabilities through

educational programmes, standards and regulations;

- d) Medical care for people with disabilities that are engaged in physical culture and sports.

3) The difficulties of the concept are:

- a) Improvement of the system of physical education for people with disabilities through the improvement of the legal field;
- b) Development and improvement of educational programmes that engage people with disabilities in sport and physical education;
- c) Deliverance of medical checks at all preschool institutions at the beginning of every academic year. This will allow students involved in physical education to be placed in special groups;
- d) Improvement of the medical-pedagogical system for people with disabilities [19].

7 History of Deaf Languages in Greece

Greek Sign Language is used to communicate with Deaf and Hard of Hearing people living in Greece. It is a visual-motion language, based on movement of the hands and body. Additionally, facial expression is utilised for the rendering of meaning and is received visually. Greek Sign Language has an autonomous language system and syntactic structures, with which speech is structured and communication is achieved.

In the ancient Greek bibliography, there are references to Deafness and the existence of Deaf people in works by Aristotle and Plato. Aristotle believed that language and speech are the same. In the Platonic dialogues, it seems that existence of sign language and advantages of its use are known. In particular, in Socrates' work "Kratylos", he refers to sign language as a necessary means for Deaf people to communicate.

Although there is no official registration, it is estimated that there are approximately 40,000 users of Greek Sign Language, with this number constantly increasing. This has arisen due to increased interest from people outside of the Deaf Community. Many people wish to enhance their knowledge and qualifications, looking to further their professional careers and increase dissemination.

This is especially prominent following the approval of Law 4488/2017. This recognises Greek Sign Language as the official language of the Greek Deaf Community. Also, the law stipulates that the state must take measures to promote the language's implementation, enabling it to cover all the communication needs of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens.

7.1 History of Education for Deaf People in Greece

In the relatively short history of education for Deaf people in Greece (less than 70 years), ENG was either banned or marginalised. It has only recently begun to be accepted and increasingly used in the education system. Even when sign language was included in the Special Education curriculum as an alternative way of communication, it was simply mentioned as a purpose and didactic goal.

The first efforts to educate Deaf people began in 1907. However, the first school for Deaf children was founded in 1923 on the Greek island of Syros. This school was founded for ten Deaf people. These students were young orphans who arrived in Syros as refugees from Smyrna, following Greco-Turkish War. Later, this group (teachers and students) relocated to Athens.

Until 1984, the use of Sign Language in schools for Deaf people throughout Greece was strictly prohibited. This was as a result of the conclusions made during the Milan Conference in 1880 (Section 1.1.1). However, children still learned Sign Language in boarding schools from their classmates, especially those with Deaf parents. The Greek Sign Language has been kept alive all these years within the Deaf Community through their club unions for Deaf people.

7.2 Deaf Organisations in Greece

In 1948, the "Association of the Graduated Students of the School for the Deaf" was founded in Athens. This was later renamed as the "Association of the Deaf of Greece". Later, branches of the Association were established in Patras, Thessaloniki and Piraeus, which later became independent associations. The Athletic Club for the Deaf in Greece was also created. This was followed by the establishment of other unions in Athens, Thessaloniki, Patras and Crete. Towards the end of the twentieth century, organisations had been formed almost nationwide.

In 1968, the Federation of the Deaf of Greece (OMKE) was founded. Today, the OMKE represents the Greek Deaf Community both nationally and globally.

7.3 Special Education

Law 1566/1985 establishes, in general, the Special Education and Training regulations in Greece. Law 2817/2000 recognises the Greek Sign Language and Law 3699/2008 institutionalises bilingual education with both ENG and Greek. Today, the education of Deaf people in Greece follows the same modern standards as those practised across Europe and the USA. Additionally, Greece has previously elected their

first Deaf Member of Parliament, who worthily represented the Deaf Community until 2009 [20] [21] [22] [23] [24] [25].

8 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People in Greece

Article 21 explicitly states that the State takes care of the health of citizens, taking special measures to protect those with a disability (whether it be mental, physical or sensory). Consequently, the State must, by taking specific legislative, institutional and administrative measures, express its interest in people with disabilities in practice.

According to Article 26, the human rights of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people as members of society are, like all other citizens, under the guarantee of the State and its institutions are obliged to ensure their exercise without hindrance.

Recognition of GSL (Greek Sign Language) came after many years of efforts and claims, and the full equivalent of the Greek Sign Language was succeeded, according to law 4488/2017 [26].

Specifically, Article 65, paragraph 2, stipulates: "The Greek sign language is recognised as equivalent to the Greek language. The state takes measures to promote it, as well as to cover all the communication needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens ". Provisions for the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Section 2.1) have been incorporated into the bill. This was the culmination of chronic and persistent struggles for the Greek Deaf Community.

In 1989, the training of interpreters of Greek sign language began. In 1993, an interpreter's service was created by the Greek Federation of the Deaf, with the provision of free interpretation to its members. In article 67 of law 4488/2017, it is stated that means of access for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to audio-visual media services is to be mainly through use of Greek sign language and subtitling.

Television subscribers are required to:

- a) Broadcast news bulletins in Greek sign language each day, lasting at least five

minutes, with simultaneous subtitles in the Greek language;

- b) Broadcast other programmes with simultaneous subtitling for at least twelve hours per week. These programmes can fall within the following categories:

- News programmes of informative or non-informative content, such as: speech, art, culture, theatre or various subjects;
- Light entertainment, such as; video games, shows, events, etc.;
- Greek and foreign series;
- Children's programmes;
- Documentaries;
- Sports content.

In 2019, a relay service was established in Greece by the National Institute of the Deaf [27] [28]. This is a telephone service through which people who are Deaf, Hard of Hearing or possess a speech impairment are able to communicate with a person who can hear. The manner of telephone communication using this service is "functionally equivalent" to the ability of an individual without a disability.

After the establishment of the Relay service in Greece, an effort has been made to set up service kiosks in common areas. Specifically, MINETTA Insurance proceeded, first from the insurance industry, to create a point of service for its Deaf or Hard of Hearing visitors, using the IRIS application (relay service) [29].

An increasing number of cultural events are providing interpretation in sign language or subtitling. Currently, more than 67% of Deaf people who graduated

secondary school are enrolled in a college programme of their choice, with 3% not being accepted due to insufficient places. The exception to this are schools or departments for which the faculty provides a reasonable explanation as to why Deaf people would be at a disadvantage. This must be approved by the Senate of the Foundation, where it is decided whether the nature of the subject makes the needs of Deaf students difficult to monitor.

The issue of vocational training and rehabilitation of Deaf people is the most serious problem faced by both themselves and their family members, as well as the State. There is no special vocational school for Deaf people in Greece, but there are various vocational training programmes lasting a few years.

9 Deaf Sports Organisations in Greece and Their History

The Association of the Deaf of Greece is historically the first association for Deaf people in the country, and currently the largest. It was founded in 1948 under the name "Association of the Graduated students of the School for the Deaf", until 1958 when it was renamed "Association of the Deaf of Greece". This foundation was a milestone for Deaf people in Greece. Since its inception, the foundation has offered invaluable services to the Deaf Community. It later became a member of the World Federation of the Deaf (WDF), as well as a founding member of the European Union of the Deaf (EUD) and the National Confederation of Persons with Disabilities (ESAMEA). Additionally, it is affiliated with the Deaf Sports Club. This was the first sports club for Deaf people in mainland Greece and the Greek island Kos. Branches were established in Piraeus, Patras and Thessaloniki.

Another Deaf Sports organisation in Greece is the Athletic Club of the Deaf. This is based in Athens and was founded in 1959. This establishment was a sister club of the Deaf Association and was the forerunner of the Deaf Sports Federation.

Greece competed at the Deaflympics for the first time in 1957, when a male Deaf athlete participated. This was officially the 8th Summer Deaflympics Games, an international multi-sport event that was held from 25th August 1957 to 30th August 1957. The Games were hosted by Milan, Italy [31].

Issuing of driving licenses for Deaf people are at the discretion of the Secondary Medical Committee, which takes into account the degree and form of hearing loss and the possibility of using an electroacoustic device. Deaf people who are insured are entitled to hearing aids and artificial aids, but the full cost is not covered. The Benefit Organisation of the Organisation for the Care of the State Insured (OPAD), also provides a special analogue clock for deaf people.

An effort is made by OMKE to make benefits horizontal and equal for all Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. Advantages should not depend on the insurance company of which the individual is a member [30].

The next Deaflympics games in which Greece participated were Washington DC 1965. Greece participated with seventeen athletes [32]. In Belgrade 1969 [33], Greece participated in the Games with twenty-eight athletes, all of whom were men. In Köln 198 [34], four male Greek athletes participated. In Sofia 1993 [35] thirty-six male athletes competed. Greece won its first Deaflympic medal in 1993. Greece has never competed at the Winter Deaflympics.

After participation in four Deaflympic Games (Milan 1957, Washington 1965, Belgrade 1969, Koln 1981), the Hellenic Federation of Deaf Sports (EOAK) was formed. EOAK was established in 1988. Following this, all Greek participants in the Games were members of the Foundation. Details of these Games are shown below in **Table 1**:

YEAR	LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS		
		MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
2017	Samsun	31	23	54
2013	Sofia	58	38	96
2009	Taipei	26	23	49
2005	Melbourne	46	18	64
2001	Rome	47	19	66
1997	Copenhagen	34	2	36

Table 1: Tabulation of Greek participants in Deaflympic games since 1997 [31].

The EOAK is a secondary sports federation for people with a disability, including Deaf people. The Federation

is recognised by the Greek State under Ministerial Decision No. C / 18446 / 27.7.1999 of the Ministry of Culture. EOAK is governed by the principles of Law 2725/1999 (Government Gazette A'121 / 17.6.1999), the supplementary Law 2947/2001 (Government Gazette 228) and Law 3057/2002 (Government Gazette A'239).

The EOAK is a member of the following organisations:

a) International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD):

- ICSD is a Confederation and recognised organisation by the International Olympic Committee (IOC);
- ICSD was recognised by the Greek State under Law 2947/2001.

b) European Deaf Sports Organisation (EDSO):

- EDSO is a regional confederation;
- EDSO is a member of ICSD and is responsible for the development of sport for Deaf people in Europe.

The EOAK is governed by an eleven-member Board of Directors for a four-year term, in which only Deaf people who meet the legal requirements are elected. The Federation operates under the auspices of the General Secretariat of Sports and is funded by the Ministry of Culture and Sports.

The EOAK has eight member associations. It has 1,200 active athletes and members, registered in the above sports clubs for Deaf people. Collectively, there are about 5,000 Deaf and Hard of Hearing members nationwide.

The Greek Sports Association for the Deaf organises sports competitions for Deaf people at a national level. Currently, national championships are organised in Romania and contain the following sports:

- Soccer;
- Futsal;

- Basketball;
- Athletics;
- Uneven Road
- Swimming;
- Shooting;
- Bowling,
- Martial arts, including Tae Kwon Do, Karate-Do and Wuhu Kung Fu;
- Beach Volleyball;
- Tennis;
- Table tennis;
- Wrestling.

9.1 The Greek Sports Law (179/30-01-2004)

A very important impetus to sports was given by Law 179 / 30-01-2004, which was passed in 2004. This equates the privileges of distinguished Deaf athletes with their hearing peers and those with mental and motor disabilities. Specifically, the law provides the following:

- Financial reward to distinguished Deaf athletes and coaches;
- Public appointment of distinguished Deaf athletes in European or World Deaf Championships.

Since the first participation of Deaf athletes in the Olympic Games for the Deaf in 1957, Greece has participated continuously in all Deaf Olympic Games, collecting medals and distinctions. From 1957, Greek Deaf Athletes have participated in local pan-European and world championships and events [36] [37].

10 History of Deaf Languages in Ireland

10.1 Historic Signing

Signing in Ireland can be traced back to Medieval times. Ogham was an Early Medieval alphabet, which was utilised in the development of both Early and Old Irish languages. Ogham is thought to have been used since the 4th century. However, the Book of Ballymote, a Medieval manuscript published circa 1390, states that several forms of Ogham existed. Of these, we know that three versions were signed. These were known as srón, cos and bos Ogham, translating to nose, leg and palm Ogham respectively [38]. In these versions, the speaker's fingers are used to represent letters on the nose, leg or palm.

10.2 Educational Development

10.2.1 Protestant Schools

In modern times, the development of Irish Sign Language (ISL) was closely tied to educational evolution. The first school for Deaf people, the Claremont Institute, was established by Dr. Charles Orpen in 1816. This Institute was situated in Dublin, with initially 8 pupils enrolled [39].

The aim of the school was to educate children in preparation for pursuing a "useful occupation", whilst bringing them closer to God. As such, training was focused on industrial, agricultural, gardening, mechanical and household occupational skills.

Students at the Claremont and other such institutions were not taught to speak, with all teaching being done manually. Oral teaching methods were introduced in 1887, and up until the 1900s the two-handed British Sign Language (BSL) alphabet was used by Claremont graduates.

10.2.2 Catholic Schools

The Catholic Institution for the Education of the Deaf and Dumb was established in 1846. Prior to this, all schools for Deaf people were protestant, with the exception of St. Mary's School for Deaf Girls in Cork. As

a result, many Catholic students attended Protestant schools. Introduction of Catholic establishments was a means to eliminate the proselytisation of students.

The Catholic Institution was created following a visit by Fr. Thomas McNamara to Caen, France. His experiences here led him to want to build an institution in Ireland following similar teaching methods. The aforementioned St. Mary's school also had ties to France. The Dominican Sisters who ran St. Mary's recognised that they needed to develop a system for teaching Deaf children. Resultantly, two sisters and two Deaf students travelled to Le Bon Sauveur school in Caen (the same school visited by Fr. McNamara), where a form of French Sign Language (LSF) was used for teaching. This French system was brought back to Ireland by the Sisters. Here it was adapted for use within St. Mary's.

10.3 Irish Sign Language (ISL)

By the time St. Mary's school began developing their signing system, there were already many graduates of the protestant schools. These people communicated using a language developed from variants of BSL, combined with those spoken by uneducated Deaf people. This language could be referred to as "Old ISL".

The French signing system referenced in Section 10.2.2 was further developed by the Dominican Sisters so that English grammar could be mapped onto it. A combination of this new variant of LSF origin, integrated with the aforementioned Old ISL contributed to the evolution of what is known as "Modern ISL". Therefore, ISL spoken today is most closely linked to LSF, with additional BSL influences.

The segregated nature of the Catholic education system has also affected ISL. The first Catholic school for Deaf boys was established a decade after St. Mary's. It is believed that the Christian Brothers who ran this school adapted Modern ISL to make it more masculine so as to be appropriate for young boys. This, and the relative isolation of boys and girls in the education system, resulted in gender variant versions of ISL [39] [40].

11 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People in Ireland

11.1 The Deaf Community

In Ireland, there is not a nationally accepted definition of what constitutes the Deaf Community. For example, it could be defined as those whose first language is ISL, as those who are Deaf, or could be extended to those Hard of Hearing. As such, the size of the Deaf Community is somewhat ambiguous, but it is estimated to comprise of approximately 5,000 people.

Marginalisation of Deaf people remains problematic in Ireland. Here, Deaf people are two to three times more likely to suffer abuse than their hearing peers. Additionally, Deaf people are two to four times more likely to undergo clinically significant emotional distress [41].

11.2 Education

As outlined in Section 1.2 the education sector played a key role in the development of ISL. However, education of Deaf students is still lacking in many areas.

It is estimated that close to 80% of Deaf adults possess literacy skills comparable to that of an eight to nine-year-old. Furthermore, Deaf people in Ireland are ten times less likely to attend university, and two to four times more likely to be unemployed when compared to their hearing peers [41].

11.3 Access to Public Information and Services

Only a small fraction of publicly available information is provided in ISL. For those whose first language is ISL, this makes accessing such information difficult.

Within the Deaf Community, it is generally felt that public officials receive an insufficient amount of disability awareness training. Training specific to Deaf awareness is even more lacking. Many feel a significant barrier is the lack of knowledge regarding the special needs of Deaf citizens compared to those who are Hard of Hearing.

11.3.1 ISL Interpretation

For ease of access to public information and services, it follows that sign language interpreters should be readily available.

Research by the Citizens Information Board reports a “large gulf” between the availability of sign language interpreters within organisations as outlined by policy versus reality [42]. The vast majority of organisations do not currently provide ISL interpreters, making access to frontline services limited. Many people must rely on family, friends and Deaf organisations to translate for them. This can have an adverse effect on an individual’s self-esteem if they have to rely on younger family members to translate for them.

There is the added risk of miscommunication if translation of professional services is required by a translator who is unfamiliar with the sector. An example of this may be an appointment with a medical professional, the mistranslation of which could lead to clinical implications.

The shortage of ISL interpreters is especially prominent in non-urban areas. Resultantly, members of the Deaf Community living in rural areas are increasingly isolated. Additionally, the availability of interpreters varies seasonally. Fewer translators are available during the academic year due to increased demand in the further and higher education sectors [42].

11.4 Laws and Regulations

11.4.1 The Irish Sign Language Act 2017

On 14th December 2017, The Irish Sign Language Act was passed, with it subsequently being signed into law ten days later. This was an historic moment for the Deaf Community in Ireland, symbolising a vital step towards equal rights for its Deaf citizens.

The approval of this Act was the result of years of campaigning throughout the country. Recognition of ISL was something the Irish Deaf Society (IDS) spent thirty years fighting for. Throughout this time, support

for the cause grew, with many individuals and organisations nationwide pledging their allegiance.

Despite its support from the Deaf Community, gaining recognition from the Seanad Éireann proved difficult. The Bill was brought forward by Senator Mark Daly three times before it was finally approved [41]. The final Act was signed into law by President Michael D. Higgins. The regulations enacted by the ISL Act 2017 are as follows [43]:

- Principles will be set down to guide operations of public bodies;
- Public bodies will be required to prepare and implement action plans on ISL;
- Classes will be provided for parents of Deaf children;
- Use of ISL will be permitted in legal proceedings;
- Provisions will be made for the availability of sign language and Deaf interpreters as well as ISL teachers. An ISL council will be established for this purpose;
- Statutory targets will be introduced regarding the accessibility of television programming;
- Provisions will be made for the establishment of registers;
- Provisions will be made for offences;
- Amendments will be made to the Broadcasting Act 2009;
- Provisions will be made for related matters.

11.4.2 National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017 – 2021

The National Disability Inclusion Strategy outlines a whole of government approach to improving people's lives. It endeavours to do so by improving the practicalities of the lives of people with Disabilities. Additionally, it aims to provide the best possible

opportunities for people to fulfil their potential. The Minister of State, Finian McGrath, highlights numerous "life-changing" initiatives of the strategy. Within these, several are related to ISL and the Deaf Community as follows [44]:

- Extension of ISL Remote Interpretation Service to evenings and weekends.
- Resourcing of the Sign Language Interpretation Service to increase the number of trained Sign Language and Deaf Interpreters, the establishment of a quality-assurance and registration scheme for interpreters, and on-going professional training and development;
- Legislation that will ensure all public bodies provide Irish Sign Language users with free interpretation when accessing or availing their statutory services.

The strategy itself is divided into eight different areas of action. These are separated into categories as follows:

1. Equality and choice;
2. Joined up policies and public services;
3. Education;
4. Employment;
5. Health and wellbeing;
6. Person-centred disability services;
7. Living in the community;
8. Transport and Accessible places.

McGrath describes the strategy as "underpinned by a vision of an Irish society in which people with disabilities enjoy equal rights and opportunities to participate in social and cultural life, can work if they want to do so, have choice and control over how they live their lives, and can reach their full potential" [44].

12 Deaf Sports in Ireland and Their History

12.1 Deaf Sports Ireland

Deaf Sports Ireland (DSI) is one of the longest running organisations in existence within the Deaf Community. It is the national governing body for Deaf sports within all thirty-two counties of Ireland [45] [46].

12.1.1 History of DSI

DSI was established in 1968 under the name of the Irish Deaf Sports Association (IDSA). It was known as IDSA until it was renamed in 2012. It was founded following the 1968 British Athletics Championships, held in Coventry, England. Here, a group of Deaf people named Larry Coogan, Christy Foran, Kevin Lynch, Andrew O'Grady, Sean Kelly and James Woulfe met. The aim of the gathering was to discuss the establishment of a Deaf sports organisation in Ireland.

In September 1968, IDSA formed a provisional committee and applied for membership to the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (ICSD), previously known as CISS (Section 3.1.1). Upon their acceptance they attended the CISS Congress at Belgrade, Yugoslavia in 1969. Coogan and Foran were both present, making them the first Irish Deaf delegates to attend [46].

12.2 Deaflympics

The Deaflympics is an International Olympic Committee (IOC)-sanctioned event. It's held every four years, with the first games occurring in Paris in 1924. These games were organised by CISS and were originally named the World Games for the Deaf. Excluding the Olympics, they are the longest running multi-sport event and were the first ever international sporting event for athletes with a disability [47].

YEAR	LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS		
		MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
2017	Samsun	1	1	2
2013	Sofia	23	0	23
2009	Taipei	39	2	41
2005	Melbourne	21	0	21
2001	Rome	24	0	24
1997	Copenhagen	23	9	32
1993	Sofia	26	14	40
1989	Christchurch	19	0	19
1985	Los Angeles	23	2	25
1981	Köln	5	3	8
1977	Bucharest	23	3	26
1973	Malmö	4	5	9

Table 2: Tabulation of Irish participants in Deaflympic games since 1973 [48].

Table 2 shows the number of Irish athletes who competed in Deaflympic games since 1973 [48]. From this data it is evident that participation fluctuates year on year, from the highest attendance being forty-one in 2009 to only two athletes in the most recent 2017 games.

It is also apparent from **Table 2** that there is a greater number of male Deaflympians than females in each of the games listed.

The mean total number of Irish participants is 22.5. This is low compared to British Deaflympians, where the mean total number of competitors across the same games is 52.4 [49].

Further comparison with other country's data shows that Ireland were rather late in joining the games, with many other nations competing from the first games in 1924. Additionally, **Table 2** only shows data from summer games as, unlike other countries, Ireland has no winter team.

13 History of Deaf Languages in Italy

Italian Sign Language (LIS) was known in Italy as the "mimic", "gesture" or "gestural mimic" language until the mid-twentieth century. LIS owes its name to researchers at the Institute of Psychology from the CNR in Rome. These researchers developed a linguistic description of Italian Sign Language in 1981, when it was defined as a "productive iconic" language. This is due to the language being able to express images and visual concepts that are difficult to translate into words.

LIS is structured in minimum units called cheremes, the combination of which gives life to the signs. Cheremes, or formational parameters, were first identified by William Stokoe in 1960. This was the result of his study of American sign language. This research concerned the way a sign is executed. For example; the configuration of the hands whilst signing, the orientation of the palm and fingers, their position relative to the signer and the movement of the hand whilst performing the same sign. The combination of these specifications are the origins of signing. However, these manual components are not the only distinguishing feature of LIS. These features are combined with other nuances, such as facial expression and mouth formation. A sign, therefore, can be more or less marked according to the speed of execution and amplitude of visual components.

It should be remembered that the users of sign languages, Deaf or hearing, are always bilingual. These people have varying levels of knowledge of spoken and written language from the country in which they live. These include people who are Hard of Hearing and hearing children of Deaf people, who usually learn LIS from the earliest years of life. Such people make up five to seven percent of the entire Deaf Community, approximately 360 million people worldwide (Oms data). Additional groups who use sign languages are; those born to hearing parents and who learn sign language in their own times and ways, and Deaf children with Deaf parents, for whom LIS is their mother tongue. Finally, there are those who are passionate about the study of LIS through hearing, for personal or professional reasons. The wide internal diversity of language skills within the Deaf Community has long held back the process of standardising Deaf languages.

The tendency to develop a form of visual-gestural communication has always existed in Hard of Hearing and Deaf people. Resultantly, it has manifested itself everywhere since antiquity. As neuropsychologist Virginia Volterra recalls in her essay "The Italian Sign Language," traces of the use of non-verbal language date back to the days of Plato and Aristotle. However, the true evidence of a sign-based communicative system is due to the abbot French Charles Michel de l'Épée, who, in 1700, founded the first Institute for the Deaf in France for all.

Many educators studied in the Abbot's school to learn the method of sign language. Amongst them was Tommaso Silvestri who later went on to bring education for Deaf people to Rome. Another such educator was Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet, who brought the knowledge he learned overseas to the United States. "In those years there was a lot of discussion about what was the right method for educating Deaf people," Volterra says, "Supporters of the "German" method, based on oral communication, contrasted with those in favor of the "French" method also called mimic. Both aimed to teach Deaf people to read and write. However, while verbal language was the only possibility of learning for the "Germans", signs were indispensable for the latter".

Even in Italy, between the end of the 18th century and 1850, schools similar to those in France and America developed. In the writings of Italian and French educators of Deaf people from that period, there was a deep awareness of the importance of sign languages. These include the short essay in favor of the sign languages of Giacomo Carbonieri in 1858, and the written testimonies of L. Clerc, Fr. Pélissier and F. Berthier in France. During this time, early theories developed about the similarities and differences between sign languages and vocal languages and between the same sign languages.

However, especially in Italy, the research of sign languages was abruptly interrupted by decisions taken during the Milan Congress of 1880. In congressional papers it was stated that the oral method of teaching was superior to that of sign language, at the time considered a "mimic". Deaf people, therefore, were obliged to learn exclusively the oral language of their country, without being able to use signs. All the

progress made up to this date was halted. From that moment on, throughout the following century, sign languages were banned in all official contexts. Deaf people could use their "natural" language only on rare occasions and secretly; the limitation of communication in this mode caused a linguistic impoverishment of these languages.

It was not until the late 1950s that William Stokoe, an American linguist, began doing research on sign

languages. From that moment on, more and more scholars began to take an interest in sign languages. Since then, research has flourished and sign languages have experienced a moment of rebirth, being increasingly recognised as true languages, with the same principles as all other vocal languages in the world.

14 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People in Italy

14.1 General Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People

In Italian legislation, Deafness is seen in two ways:

- I. If you encounter serious difficulties due to the onset and extent of hearing loss, you may apply for recognition of the state of civil Deafness.
- II. In the event of the onset of hearing loss, but of a less serious nature, it will be possible to assert the recognition of L.118/1971, i.e. obtain the status of possessing a civil disability. Those who have already been recognised for civil Deafness (As per the above point) can still seek and obtain recognition of civil disability for another pathology.

This law is relevant because "disability" is considered generally, therefore overcoming the segregation of those with specific disabilities. This results in a focus on medical-social parameters rather than medical-legal ones. Therefore, the degree of participation of a person with a disability in social life is considered. Article 3, paragraph 1 of L.104/92 defines a disabled person to be someone who possesses a physical, mental or sensory condition, either stabilised or progressive, which causes learning, relationship or work integration difficulties, resulting in social disadvantage or marginalisation.

The third paragraph of L.104/92 concerns the distinction between a "non-serious" and "severe" disability. It focuses on whether the individual or group of people has reduced personal or age-related autonomy, resulting in the need for permanent or ongoing care for the individual or group. The lack of which could produce serious consequences, requiring public service programmes and interventions.

The requirements for an assessment under L.104/1992 are:

- a) Possession of a stabilised or progressive disability that causes difficulties in learning, relationships or work integration, such that it can lead to a social disadvantage or marginalisation.
- b) Possession of single or multiple minor symptoms, which reduce personal or age-related autonomy, such that welfare intervention is necessary on a permanent and continuous basis.

Those who meet these requirements can apply for disabled status. This isn't just available to Italian citizens, the following individuals may also be eligible: community citizens provided they live permanently in Italy; Non-EU nationals, stateless citizens and political refugees if they hold the residence permit. Recognition of L.104/92 does not interfere with the assessment of the condition in question or any other disability. Therefore, an individual may be required to undertake assessment more than once if they possess multiple disabilities.

Even if a Deaf person already possesses recognition of the state of civil Deafness, it is important that they apply for disabled status as well. This will entitle them to additional rights, concessions, and diverse benefits.

In order to access these different economic and welfare benefits, legislative requirements must be completed to allow:

- (1) Identification of the essential conditions for submitting an individual application;
- (2) Navigation of the necessary administrative process;
- (3) Knowledge of the type of benefits associated with the accepted disability status, as identified by questions asked and any appeals filed.

Essentially, the entire legal system needs to be reordered, Ministerial decrees, tables, judicial interpretations, etc. to understand exactly which questions must be referred to in order to submit the right application for investigation. There are no articles of law on the subject.

Regarding interpretation at universities; an LIS interpreter or trainee interpreter can only work if they are accredited. They must subsequently be enrolled in an ad hoc ranking, specific to the university. The establishment then selects interpreters from this ranking when required. This results in many different lists of interpreters. For example, in the Emilia-Romagna region, there are such lists for each province.

In this regard, the university, regardless of the nature of a student's hearing loss, offers accessibility to interpreters in classes for a limited number of hours per year (usually 150 hours). In 92% of cases, the interpreter takes notes for the Deaf student during their class; in rarer cases (1.5%) a lesson blur service is offered. This entails producing an audio recording of the lesson and then using speech recognition software as required. With regard to live accessibility, 2.5-4% of cases utilise subtitles with a stenotype, but this is only available for a few hours per year.

Regarding television, the Stanca Law of 2005 and the national contract between the RAI and the government on which it depends, imposes a gradual increase in use of subtitles in broadcasts to 100% in

2009. At present, only 15% of RAI programmes (25% in summer when old TV shows already subtitled in the past are rebroadcast, and 8% of Mediaset TG programmes (14% in the summer) are subtitled. Only two TGs per day and all Mediaset weather forecasts are subtitled live. The interpretation in LIS is only provided for one hour per week by RAI and Mediaset TG.

Many of the LIS courses offered by the ENS are divided into three levels, at the end of which you can choose whether to attend courses to train as a communication assistant or pursue a career as a freelance interpreter.

Teaching can be dispensed by the National Deaf Authority (last year only ten courses of the third level were activated throughout Italy) and local authorities (courses for the unemployed). Other institutions include governmental organisations and universities, mostly in the form of high-level training or masters courses. Only in one case (SSLMIT Trieste) are curricular degree courses in Sign Language available.

Regarding sign language research centres, LIS is poorly addressed as a university discipline. However, a remarkable and worthy of mention is the work carried out by the CNR in collaboration with the Institute of the Deaf in Rome.

14.2 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility to Sport for Deaf People

In June 2008, the National Council of CONI approved resolution No.1379. This covers sports equipment and provides for the removal of architectural barriers and accessibility to facilities for disabled people.

In addition to these rules, there are those in design, construction and exercise laws such as hygiene, urban planning and safety regulations, as well as specific laws to overcome architectural barriers.

In general, we can say that Resolution 1379 aims to establish the minimum quality and quantity levels to be met in the refurbishment or construction of a new site. These rules apply both to facilities where competitive sport and exercise sports are practiced, i.e. at amateur, preparatory and training level. All

these facilities must be built and equipped to suit the disabled sportsperson.

Finally, given the breadth of the heritage of sports facilities in Italy; CONI, with the Presidency of the

Council of Ministers, have launched a national census. The aim of this is to get an up-to-date picture of the situation and allow all disabled people to play sports freely and without obstacles.

15 Deaf Sports Organisations in Italy and Their History

The beginning of the sports movement for Deaf people is conventionally considered to be in 1924, when the first Deaflympic Games were held in Paris. However, for many years before this, tournaments and competitions took place between Deaf athletes. These were especially prominent at "Special Institutes". In Italy there was no national organisation that dealt with the sport for Deaf people at this time. Sports clubs also hadn't been formed.

In Paris in 1924, the French Rubens-Alcais, together with the (then very young) Belgian Dresse, founded CISS (Comiteè International des Sport des Sourdes). In the same year, the Silent World Games (Deaflympics) were held. Roberto De Marchi, a Deaf Italian emigrant, signed the accession for Italy.

De Marchi not only represented Italy as a constituent at the first World Games, but also participated as an athlete, winning two Gold Medals. Sordi's first Italian sports clubs were formed the following year. In 1925 the Silent Sports Society of Milan and the "Ottavio Assarotti" Sports Club of Genoa were established. The national organisation was established in 1929 at the behest of Emilio Pacenza, a Deaf Neapolitan of great ability and intelligence. Pacenza had transferred to Milan for work and became the founder of the Italian Sports Committee (CSSI), which kept this name until 1949. The first years of the fledgling sports organisation were very difficult. So much so that between Amsterdam 1928, Nuremberg 1931, London 1935 and Stockholm 1939, Italy participated only in the German edition of the Games.

After the Second World War things improved, and at the 1949 Copenhagen Games, Italian athletes participated thanks to the intervention of the National Deaf Agency (ENS). This had recently been formed due Antonio Magarotto, a Deaf Italian educator. Magarotto was supported by Giulio Andreotti, Under-Secretary for the Presidency of the Council of Ministers. Italy has participated in every Deaflympic Games from this moment on.

An important moment for Italian Silent Sport occurred on November 1st, 1953, when Delegates of the Italian Sports Companies unanimously decided to continue, not as a Committee, but as a National Sports Federation. Hence, the administrative and organisational skills of Italian Silent Sport were entrusted to ENS. With this, the organisation was renamed the "Center of Physical and Sports Education" (CEFS). CEFS maintained the same functions as CSSI, entrusting its direction to the Executives of the National Deaf Organisation, and electing amongst them a Federal Commission composed of three people who were experienced in the field of sports.

CEFS operated for two years, until 1955, when the new Italian Sports Federation (FSSI) was formed. FSSI was as an organisation of the Center for Physical Education and Sport of the National Deaf Organisation.

Things did not change until 1990, when the FSSI joined the Federation of the Disabled. They first joined as FISHa then FISSD. They left after a difficult five years and subsequently became the Italian Federation of Silent Sports (FISS). They were no longer associated with FISD but aggregated with CONI as an Associate Discipline.

Following the complicated events of FISS, in September 2003 the Italian Deaf Sports Committee (CSSI) was born. Following the Constitutional Act of 18th June 2005, CSSI becomes the new Federation Sport Sordi Italia (FSSI). It continued to operate and be recognised by the International Comite Sport Deaf (formerly the International Committee of Silent Sport (CISS)) and the ESDO (European Organisation of The Deaf Sport). On February 4th, 2006, the FSSI was recognised by the Italian Paralympic Committee (CIP). It is currently recognised as the Paralympic Sports Federation, with which 105 companies, practicing 44 sports, are affiliated.

Across all Italian participations within both the Summer and Winter Deaflympics throughout time, the

sum of medals won by Deaf athletes is 391. This can be broken down as follows:

- Summer Deaflympics: 137 Gold, 100 Silver and 121 Bronze;
- Winter Deaflympics: 11 Gold, 9 Silver and 13 Bronze.

16 History of Deaf Languages in Poland

Polish Sign Language, just like other sign languages in the world, originated from the need for communication of Deaf people with one another. It was also due to individuals believing the ability to communicate with the Deaf Community was both necessary and possible.

A noticeable development in communication with Deaf people began with the establishment of schools for Deaf people in the 18th – 19th centuries. This resulted in communities of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people being formed, leading to the development of a described and unified system of communication dedicated to Deaf people. The enduring characteristics of these communication techniques were passed down from generation to generation amongst the Deaf Community.

It was only at the beginning of the 19th century when the first mentions of a sign language in Poland were registered. These were connected with Father Jakub Falkowski, who is known as the first Polish educator of Deaf people. This meant Falkowski was a specialist at dealing with education, therapy, diagnosis and developmental support for children and adolescents who were Hard of Hearing or Deaf.

Fr. Falkowski undertook the teaching of Deaf children in a class he had set up in Szczuczyn. The effects of his work with these children were noticed by the educational authorities of the time. Resultantly, Falkowski was tasked with opening a school for Deaf people in Warsaw. This was to be similar to others in existence at the time in Paris, Dresden and Vienna.

In 1817, Fr. Jakub Falkowski opened the Institute of the Deaf-Mute and Blind at the Casimir Palace in Warsaw. It created the possibility to educate Deaf people in their natural language. The Institute of the Deaf-Mute was later relocated to the Three Crosses Plaza, where it functions still today.

Early observations and analyses of the language of Deaf people in Poland (not yet called Polish Sign Language) were included in the first sign language dictionary published in 1879 (J. Hollak, T. Jagodziński, *Mimic Dictionary for Deaf-Mutes and People Having Contact with Them*, Warsaw 1879).

Polish Sign Language uses the one-handed manual alphabet prevalent in the Old French Sign Language, indicating the two might be connected. It may also have common features with Russian and German Sign Language. This is due to periods in the country's history when occupation of Russian and German forces significantly influenced the language. Polish Sign Language may also possess influences from the sign language used in Austrian-occupied lands.

There is a possibility that Fr. Falkowski, without native models for sign language, was in part the author of Polish Sign Language (PJM). It is also believed that a portion of the new signs he introduced were borrowed from French Sign Language, whose creator was Charles-Michel de L'Épée.

Aside from the sign language emerging from the Warsaw Institute, the so-called "home" sign languages also functioned. Deaf children, isolated from the Deaf Community, used these in order to communicate with their household and closest surroundings. Home languages disappeared as contact between these children and the Deaf Community became easier.

For about one hundred years, from the middle of the 19th century to the middle of the 20th century, the oralistic doctrine dominated in Deaf education. According to this, Deaf people had to learn to lip-read. Deaf people were forbidden from signing and there were cases of hand-tying in schools, so that the practice would stop. Because of this, many Deaf people believe that sign language was marginalised by hearing people who wanted to impose their views onto the communication of Deaf people.

In 1984, Waclaw Kur, who dealt with Deaf education in the education ministry, went to Stockholm, Sweden. Here he saw teaching in sign language in a school for Deaf people. The results he witnessed were much better results than those obtained from learning to lip-read. After returning, he allowed for the auxiliary introduction of the Language-Sign System in teaching Deaf people to speak. The teachers were also then being taught the Language-Sign System. Polish Sign Language, however, was not introduced in schools. As a result, an artificial communication system, being a hybrid form of signs and manually coded Polish, was introduced into the Deaf Community.

There is no school in Poland where Polish Sign Language is the classroom language or at least a mandatory subject in school. There are no Polish Sign Language teaching programmes nor standards required by teachers in the language. Because of this, a Deaf student at school does not have the possibility to study or develop abilities in using his or her natural language. The beginnings of professional preparation in terms of Polish Sign Language interpretations took place only in 2008 at the University of Warsaw.

The initiator of introducing the name “Polish Sign Language” was Michael Farris, an employee of the Institute of Linguistics at UAM in Poznań. Farris used PJM in his research into Sign language and Polish Sign Language from 1994 („Lingua Posnaniensis” 1994, nr 36). Until the 1990s there was no scientific research on Polish Sign Language. The Section for Sign Linguistics (PLM) of the Faculty of Polish Studies of the University of Warsaw is one of the four biggest bases in the world collecting sign data, along with bases for Australian, German and British languages. Until March 2014, PLM identified 6610 lexemes in PJM, over 200 thousand instances occurring in the corpus. Based on this collection, a Corpus-based Dictionary of Polish Sign Language was created, which presented ambiguity of signs and their use in a certain context. As part of working together with the Ministry of National Education, the Section prepares textbooks for learning sign language.

For Deaf Poles using Polish Sign Language as the native language, Polish is a foreign language which they can acquire only to a certain degree. So even though they can write in Polish, they make grammatical mistakes typical of foreigners.

16.1 PJM grammatical structure

For a long time in Poland, sign languages were considered to be primitive languages, void of grammar rules. In reality PJM, like other sign languages, forms a system of its own grammatical structure, distinct from Polish. Against common belief, using sign language one can express complex ideas on every subject known to hearing people.

16.2 Phonology

In PJM there are no sonic counterparts of phonemes; but there are their visual realisations.

16.3 Non-manual elements

An important role in PJM messages is played by non-manual elements, especially the position of the body and the head (leaning, turns) and facial expressions. The presence of these elements belongs to the language (is grammaticalised), even though hearing people might see them as improvised.

16.4 Simultaneity / Synchronicity

The difficulties in distinguishing phonology, morphology and syntax in PJM are connected with a structure of messages in that language, slightly different from that of phonic languages. Due to the functional independence of articulators (whether they use their left hand, right hand or face) there is the possibility of signing a several signs. In many cases, the way of connecting these signs is strictly described by grammatical rules.

In conclusion, one can assert that even though there is little data on the subject of the history of sign language in Poland (as it was of no special interest to scientists), humanity has signed since forever, even if it was very disorganised. Sign language remains ever-changing, adjusting to the current needs of Deaf people [50] [51] [52] [53] [54] [55] [56] [57] [58] [59] [60] [61] [62] [63] [64] [65] [66] [67] [68].

17 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People in Poland

Every person has rights and responsibilities. It is no different with Deaf people. Their situation, however, is exceptional. As such, the list of their rights and responsibilities is also unique. Deaf people have to be viewed from two perspectives. On the one hand, they are people with a disability which affects their hearing. From this point of view, they are treated as people with disabilities. However, one must not forget that the lives of Deaf people throughout history has led to the emergence of a Deaf Community. Therefore, Deaf people are also a part of their own community, which has its own rights. However, awareness regarding the existence of a Deaf Community is not globally accepted. People everywhere should be made aware of this community and its culture. Additionally, people should be able to fight for their rights, the barriers to which arise not only from limited access to the world of sounds, but mainly from the lack of consideration towards the Deaf Community and their culture.

The basic legal document concerning the use of sign language is the Sign Language and Other Means of Communication Act of 19 August 2011 (Ustawa z dnia 19 sierpnia 2011 r. o języku migowym i innych środkach komunikowania się; Dz. U. 2017, poz. 1824).

Because of the social aspect of the aforementioned regulation, whilst working on the bill special importance was given to societal integration, i.e. organisations supporting Deaf, Hard of Hearing and Deaf-blind people.

The Act concerns people who are permanently or temporarily experiencing difficulties with communicating, here called “eligible persons,” along with members of their families and people who have permanent or direct contact with the eligible persons.

According to the SLOMCA, eligible persons are people permanently or temporarily experiencing difficulties with communicating. This definition states that someone can be declared an eligible person for various reasons, such as due to a medical implication. For example, if an individual is struggling to communicate due to a cardiovascular malfunction they can qualify as

an eligible person, despite being neither Hard of Hearing or Deaf. Other examples include elderly people, who often lose hearing because of reaching a certain age, or those who experience hearing loss as a result of another illness. The category of eligible persons was, therefore, defined broadly and was not limited exclusively to people who can provide a declaration of disability.

The Act invoked the following:

1. The use of the help of a selected person by eligible persons who are in contact with the public administration authorities, system units, medical entities, police, State Fire Service and municipal police units, as well as voluntary units working in these areas;
2. Attending to the eligible persons in contact with public administration authorities;
3. Subsidised costs of education for eligible persons, members of their families and other people who have permanent or direct contact with them and communicate via Polish Sign Language or Language-Sign System. This also includes Deaf-Blind People Communicating Methods on various levels;
4. Monitoring of solutions which support communication with and access for the eligible person.

A new element in the law, absent from other regulations up to that point, is the representation of a Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing person by a selected person. This is of special importance to eligible people because the selected person is chosen directly by the eligible individual. This aims to facilitate communication and help complete tasks with the public administration authorities, system units (i.e. State Emergency Medical Service units), medical entities, police, State Fire Service and municipal police units, as well as voluntary fire service units.

The right to use the help of a selected person in communicating can be limited only due to protection

of classified information, to which the eligible person, but not the selected person, has access.

The term “selected person” is used to describe a person who is sixteen years or older and was chosen by the eligible person. They work to facilitate communication with that person and aid in completing undertakings with the public administration authorities, emergency medical services, medical entities, police, State Fire Service and municipal police units, as well as voluntary units working in these areas. These are called “obligated entities.”

The eligible person, a member of their family or a person having permanent or direct contact with them, can apply for a training-costs subsidy at their local PFRON (State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled People) branch. For the eligible person, the subsidy is no more than 95% of training costs. For their family member or person who is in direct or permanent contact with them, the subsidy is no more than 90% of training costs.

This Act addresses public institutions, giving them the responsibility of providing Deaf people with communication in a manner chosen by them. These are mostly public administration authorities, emergency medical service units, medical entities, police units, State Fire Service units, municipal police units, as well as voluntary service units working in these areas.

Public institutions are also obligated to providing support in communication, which de facto means the obligation to assure participation of a sign interpreter in contact between a Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing person and the public institutions.

Public institutions are therefore obligated to provide the service of a sign language interpreter or a trained employee. A Deaf person, however, is obligated to give notice of their desire to use the interpreter’s service at least three working days earlier, excluding emergency situations. This is the time necessary for institutions during which, for example, the town hall should request from the voivode (governor) responsible for maintaining the local roster of interpreters, that they indicate an appropriate person. The voivode picks the interpreter who satisfies the request of the eligible person by selecting the next interpreter in alphabetical order. The eligible person does not, therefore, have

influence over choosing the interpreter who will participate in their contact with the public institution.

SLOMCA allows for subsidising the costs of sign language education for eligible persons, family members and other people having permanent or direct contact with deaf people. On the central level, the Polish Council of Sign Language was founded as an advisory body to the appropriate minister responsible for social security. This body is composed of fifteen members, including the government plenipotentiary for disabled people, with the condition that only a person who knows sign language or deals with the issue professionally, excluding representatives of individual ministries, can become a member of the Council.

The Act also places on the voivode the obligation of maintaining a roster of interpreters offering services in the area of the voivodeship. It should be noted that the voivode is responsible for creating PJM (Polish Sign Language), SJM (Language-Sign System) and SKOGN (Deaf-Blind People Communicating Methods) rosters. The voivode maintains the roster of interpreters in an electronic format, considering the division of the data within based on the type of services rendered, especially on the scope of executed interpretations.

Sports Act of 25 June 2010 (Ustawa o sporcie z dnia 25 czerwca 2010 r.; Dz.U. Nr 127, poz. 857)

This Act, in regard to Deaf people, mainly regulates the terms of receiving the Olympic pension by Deaf Olympic athletes. The Olympic pension is a colloquial name for a monetary benefit, which the Ministry of Sports and Tourism has paid out since 2000 to Polish medalists of the Olympic games. Since 2006 it has also been paid to the medalists of Paralympic and Deaf games. Its payout is regulated by the Sports Act of 25 June 2010.

The benefit is provided on the request of the athlete. The pension is paid out to the athletes who meet the following conditions:

- Possess Polish citizenship and live in Poland or another country of the European Union;
- Won a medal during games (From 2007 this includes medalists of Friendship-84 games, these substituted the games in Los Angeles, in which Poland did not participate);

- Are 40 years or older;
- Do not practice sports actively anymore;
- Have a clean record in terms of disciplinary wrongdoings in relation to doping.

People who were penalised for these kinds of wrongdoings, cannot receive the Olympic pensions, regardless of the number of won medals or successes.

A retired athlete, who has met the conditions above, may receive the pension to the amount of 2623.38 zloty. This is a fixed amount, independent of the financial situation of the athlete. It should be noted that the Olympic pension is a benefit, out of which the social or health insurance dues are not collected.

Game regulations of the international chess federation (FIDE)

“FIDE Game Regulations” were confirmed on the 88th FIDE Congress in Gonyuk, Antalia in Turkey and have been in effect since 1 January 2018. The English text adopted during the FIDE Congress is the original version of the “Game Regulations” and is in effect in case of any doubts regarding the reading of individual articles.

The Polish Association of Deaf Sports is a member of the International Chess Committee of the Deaf (ICCD). As part of the organised 2019 Winter Deaf Olympic Games in Valtellina-Valchiavenna, for the first time in the history of the Olympic Games, chess games were organised after chess was accepted as an Olympic sport [69] [70] [71] [72] [73] [74] [75] [76] [77] [78].

18 Deaf Sports Organisations in Poland and Their History

“Sport is for all people”, “sport is health” - we often meet similar slogans in the media. Sport can be practiced for pleasure or competition. Deaf people very often engage in various types of sports. They have their favorite disciplines and are doing well winning medals and cups. Sport does not interfere with anything because it often does not require verbal contact, it is about competition. It is important that the trainer knows sign language so that they can correctly and successfully lead the athlete in a given sport.

18.1 The hard beginnings

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries many environments, including the Deaf Community, became more active in Europe, including Poland. This mainly became apparent after the end of the First World War. Most of these communities were active in the capital city.

The beginnings of the sports movement for Deaf people in Poland are inextricably linked with the Institute of the Deaf and its director at the time, Dr. Władysław Jarecki. He knew that young people closed in their environment needed to improve and develop their sports skills in a wider circle than the school community. He was the one who initiated the

organisation of the first sports team of fourteen alumni of the Institute of the Deaf in Poland, headed by Henryk Konrad and Kazimierz Włostowski. His initiative was met with a positive response and on June 17 1922, fourteen boys in the Institute's garden established the first sports club in Poland under the name "Deaf Sports Club", later renamed the "Warsaw Sports Club of the Deaf". The first sport practiced in the club was football, a year later an athletics section was created.

In 1924, the first International Games for the Deaf took place in Paris. Nine countries took part in the Games, including Poland, represented by Kazimierz Włostowski. The Games contributed to the establishment of the International Committee for the Sports of the Deaf - CISS. The aim of the CISS was to supervise the organisation of the games and to bring together sports unions from other countries. In 1949 it was decided to organise winter games for the deaf.

The Olympics for Deaf people usually take place every four years. Both summer and winter Olympic Games are organised. The Games' original name, in the years 1924–1966, was the International Games for the Deaf. Later, in the years 1966–1999, it was the World Games for the Deaf. However, since 2001, the Olympics are called the Deaflympics. Then, in 1951, the IOC

(International Olympic Committee) recognised the CISS. Today, CISS is known as ICSD.

After returning to the country, our heroes began wide-ranging propaganda activities to encourage Deaf youth throughout Poland to set up Deaf Sports Clubs (polish abbreviation KSG). Some of these include Świt ('Dawn') in Lviv, KSG in Poznań, Jewish KSG in Warsaw, ŁKSG in Łódź, Jedność ('Unity') in Kraków and KSG in Bydgoszcz. As a result of such intensified activities, on January 1-2, 1927, delegates from these clubs established the Polish Sports Association of the Deaf with its seat in Warsaw.

In 1926, there were already eight Deaf sports clubs. These established the Organising Committee of the "Union of Deaf Sports Clubs". The same year, in September, the Conference of delegates of the eight active clubs established the Polish Sports Association and elected representation for the first CISS Congress in Brussels - namely K. Włostowski and K. Anders.

Deaf athletes and activists, being aware that they themselves have to take care of their own development, began to build a structure that coordinates the development of physical culture in the environment and abroad on a national scale. The first steps in this direction were already made at the aforementioned conference establishing the Polish Sports Association of the Deaf in September 1926.

On January 1-2, 1927, the 1st National Congress of the Polish Sports Association of the Deaf (PZSG) met and elected the authorities of the Association and approved the Association's statute.

Karol Anders was elected the president of the Association (PZSG), other election results include the following:

- I-first vice-president - Kazimierz Włostowski
- II-second vice-president - Józef Backer
- Secretary General - Witold Wroczyński
- Treasurer - Telesfor Eder

On August 14-15, 1927. PZSG organised the 1st Deaf Championships in athletics and football in Warsaw. The title of the Polish team champion in both of these

disciplines went to the Warsaw Sports Club of the Deaf.

In the same year, the PZSG became a member of the Association of Polish Sports Associations. In December 1927, the Committee for the Care of the Physical Education of the Deaf in Poland was established. The Committee was headed by the director of the Institute of the Deaf and the Blind in Poland, dr. Władysław Jarecki.

In August 1929, the 3rd General Assembly of the PZSG approved the new statute of the Association, which was registered under number 69 at the City Hall of the Capital City of Warsaw. A few days later, on August 28, PZSG was accepted as a member of the Polish Olympic Committee.

18.2 Postwar reality – time of duty and struggle

The outbreak of World War II in 1939 interrupted the thematic work and sports activities of the PZSG. Deaf athletes, however, did not remain idle.

In 1941-1942, a large group joined the association ranks. A group of thirty sportsmen who were mostly members of the Warsaw Sports Club of the Deaf joined the ranks of the Polish resistance movement (Union for Armed Struggle ZWZ and then the Home Army AK).

After the end of World War II, pre-war associations gradually resumed their activities and new ones were created. In 1946, there were already eight associations and six sports clubs.

The day after the XIII PZSG Congress in Poznań, on April 15 1946, the first Post-War Deaf Athletics and Football Championships took place where players of seven deaf sports clubs were represented.

The 14th National Congress of the PZSG began on April 2, 1947 in Poznań, and after a break of several days, it ended in Warsaw. The 15th National Congress, held on February 20, 1949, elected a new board of directors:

- President: Jan Klimczewski
- Vice-president: Wiesław Jabłoński and Jan Maciejczyk

- Secretary-General - Zdzisław Bielonko

The main task of the newly elected Board was to bring all organisations together into one body.

In 1983, the European Deaf Sports Organisation was established in France. It was primarily aimed at organising the European Championship to coordinate the work of European unions. Poland immediately declared formal accession to this organisation.

18.3 90's – Political Freedom and New European Context

In 1987, the CISS Congress was held in Oslo at the same time as the European Deaf Sport Organisation EDSO congress, at which Poland was designated as the third host of the European Volleyball Championships in 1990. At the next congress in Gdańsk, Poland was entrusted with the organisation of the sixth European Basketball Championships in 1996 in Krakow.

1989 was a time of great political and social changes in all areas of life in Poland. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare ceased to finance sports, cultural and tourist activities. The burden of costs in the field of sport was transferred to the economic activity of the Polish Association of the Deaf, which was in a critical situation. The new president of the Polish Association of the Deaf - Mieczysław Grajek started the process of rapid independence of sports for Deaf people in Poland, with the reactivation of sports clubs and their Association - the Polish Sports Association of the Deaf (PZG). Attempts were made to reactivate sports structures similar to those in operation until September 1 1939.

On October 5 1991, the Sports Council convened in Wrocław and established a group for reactivating KSG and PZSG.

On February 5 1992, an historic meeting of sports activists from the reactivated sports clubs took place at the Polish Association of the Deaf headquarters in Warsaw. A decision was made to formally reactivate and establish the Polish Deaf Sports Association and to adopt the statute.

The years-long campaign of creating clubs and training from scratch began to bear fruit. By the end of 1993, eighteen school and student sports clubs had registered with 1,500 members.

Both men's and women's teams participated in the 4th Volleyball World Championships in Bolzano, Italy in May 1994. The debuting women's team took a very good 6th place, at the same time being promoted to the finals of the World Deaf Games, Copenhagen 1997. The men's team took the same 6th place.

Spartakiads, which was held for the first time in 1994 (winter - Racibórz, summer - Wrocław) gathers the most talented youth.

Between 6th and 10th September, the 6th EDSO European Championships in swimming took place. After a 20-year break, Polish young swimmers were promoted to the finals, although without medals yet. The 12-person team was led by Antoni Morawski and the coach, Renata Wilczek. Many records of Deaf Poland for short distances have since been set.

18.4 XXI Century – Obstacles, Questions and Revival

Unfortunately, the situation of the Polish Deaf Sports Association deteriorated year on year due to enormous financial and organisational problems until, in 2000, it ceased sports activities due to lack of funds from the Ministry of National Education and Sports.

As a result of the turmoil surrounding the Polish Deaf Sports Association in 2005, a new association was established under the name of the Polish Federation of Sports of the Deaf (PFSN) with its seat in Lublin.

Thanks to the support of the Polish Paralympic Committee in 2005 and the Ministry of National Education and Sport (since 2006), the Polish Federation of Deaf Sports organises summer sports camps, the so-called Sports and rehabilitation camps for sports clubs, as well as summer and winter training camps for the national team of Poland. Trips to the mountains or the coast are aimed at promoting sport and are the best form of rehabilitation. This allows optimal preparation of Deaf athletes for the upcoming most important sports events in the country, ensuring active recreation for young people.

The most frequently undertaken sports disciplines, both in the case of Deaf women and men, include basketball, volleyball, football, athletics, table tennis, chess, and swimming. In these disciplines, there are integration competitions for hearing and Deaf people.

Recently, there is more and more interest in sports such as bowling, sailing, canoeing, bicycle rallies, skiing, skating, chess, and many others. It is interesting that the only woman who currently takes an active part in motorcycle racing is a Deaf person. She takes on hearing competitors on the track in Poznań, winning very good places.

The Polish Federation of Deaf Sports was established at the Spartan club of Deaf Sportsmen in Lublin. From the very beginning, its activities were aimed at taking over the competences of the Polish Deaf Sports Association (PZSG), primarily to maintain the continuity of sports events.

However, the federation could not represent the country. This was because in the eyes of the international authorities, the only representative of the Polish deaf sport was the PZSG.

In September 2007, an unprecedented event occurred. PFSN and PZSG laid down their weapons after many years of hard fighting. They decided to conclude an agreement on the joint organisation of national competitions and joint trips abroad. The federation received money from the Ministry of Sport, and the PZSG signed the players for trips abroad. The first competition after twenty years was the Polish Indoor Athletics Championships, which took place in February 2008 at the Warsaw Physical Education Academy.

After several similar tournaments and several trips, the conflict revived and the agreement was severed. The next Polish athletics championship in the hall (Warsaw 2009) was organised only by the Lublin federation.

The international authorities began to take notice of the situation in Poland. The first step to sanctioning the activities of the Polish Federation of Deaf Sports was to award it the organisation of the youth European basketball championship of the Deaf. The tournament took place in June in Lublin and, on the wave of organisational success, the city was awarded the next year's youth world championship in this discipline.

During the vote in Taipei in 2009, almost everyone supported the Polish Federation of Deaf Sports, believing that the crisis in Polish Deaf sports had been going on for too long and that it should be stopped, which subsequently came to pass.

In 2012, pursuant to the Act on Sports at the General Reporting and Election Meeting of PFSN Delegates, the Polish Deaf Sports Association was established and new authorities were appointed as a continuation of the activities of the PSFN. The Polish Deaf Sports Association (abbreviation: PZSN) officially started its activity on January 1 2013, and is a Polish sports association uniting sports clubs, sports unions, and other legal entities whose statute, agreement, or incorporation act provides for activities in the sport of Deaf people.

According to the PZSN Statute, the Association is the only representative of the Polish sport of Deaf people in international sports organisations.

The Association is a member of the International Committee for the Sports of the Deaf (ICSD), the European Organisation for the Sports of the Deaf (EDSO), the International Basketball Federation of the Deaf (DIBF), the International Deaf Chess Committee (ICCD) and the International Deaf Football Association (DIFA) and complies with their rules.

The association organises sports activities for Deaf people in the following sports: athletics, basketball, volleyball, beach volleyball, swimming, football, tennis, judo, wrestling, bowling, badminton, cycling, golf, handball, orienteering, shooting, karate, taekwondo, chess, sailing, skiing, snowboarding, curling, and ice hockey.

PZSN data shows that in Poland there are over 1,500 people with the status of Deaf or Hard of Hearing athletes. Apart from seniors, there are also juniors, youths, and children practicing over one hundred disciplines in thirty clubs [79] [80] [81] [82] [83].

19 History of Deaf Languages in Romania

Sign language is, for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, a tool for communication, thinking and learning, as well as a tool for building identity.

The first attempt at organised education for Deaf and Deaf-Mute people, was recorded in Transylvania between 1827 and 1831. This was as a private institute, organised after the model of the National Institute for the Deaf Young, established in 1789 in Paris. In the training process of Deaf students, the mimetic-gestural method was used. In 1846 the institute closed due to a lack of financial resources.

In 1863, the first Romanian school for Deaf people was founded in Bucharest. The first teacher of the school was a Hard of Hearing person, who trained in Vienna and Paris and educated students using mime signs, graphemes and dactyl methods. Gradually, the network of Romanian schools for Deaf people expanded by setting up new establishments and special institutes in the big cities of Romania, where mime signs, graphemes and dactyl education methods were used. These methods were gradually replaced by the "oral" (German) method of demutisation, a method accepted in all European countries after the Congress of Teachers for the Deaf in Milan in 1880.

The period between 1950 and 1970 included changes in the organisation of education for Deaf people and in the methods of recovery, with emphasis on the Romanian method of demutisation. Mimed gesticulation and dactylation (spelling) were auxiliary methods enslaved to the formation of oral speech, along with other methods specific to demutisation.

In 1960, the first department of Defectology in Romania was established, later called Special Psychopedagogy, within the Babes-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca. This aimed to prepare psychoeducators for special education and special speech therapy centres or for mass education schools. Here, the integration of children with various disabilities, including Deaf and Hard of Hearing children, was attempted. In the period between 1966 and 1989, a strong emphasis was placed on speech therapy in the special education of Deaf of Hard of Hearing children.

Although the general trend of promoting oralism in schools for Deaf people could not be stopped for over one hundred years, this policy has proven to be a failure. In recent years, more attention has been paid to the formative valences of sign language through the recommendations of the World Federation of the Deaf and the European Parliament. Parents who have Deaf children are also encouraged to learn this language in order to communicate early with their children, knowing that this early communication in the natural language of Deaf children will stimulate the further development on all levels of these children.

With the establishment of the National Authority for Persons with Disabilities (ANPH) in 1990, the premises for development of social protection measures for people with special needs were created.

On March 27, 2020, the Law on Romanian Sign Language, hereinafter referred to as LSR, was promulgated. Through this law, the LSR became the mother tongue specific to the Deaf Community. This law defines the community of people who use LSR as a linguistic and cultural minority, with the right to use, preserve, develop and maintain the culture of Deaf people and to enhance and inherit their own mother tongue. The Romanian Sign Language is an independent Mimetic-Gestural Language. It is composed of manual signs combined with gestures, facial expressions and words spoken without sounds. LSR has its own structure, lexicon and grammatical rules.

Up to this date, sign language was officially recognised only as a communication tool specifically for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. Therefore, it was not recognised as a mother tongue, as it should be.

Training of interpreters paves the way for Deaf people to various educational institutions of all levels. However, this does not exclude the concerns of defectologists for the formation of verbal language as a means of communication. This position is, in fact, a continuation of the tendency of balance, of avoiding extremes, manifested by the defectology specialists in Romania over time [84].

20 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People in Romania

20.1 General Regulation and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People

According to the Romanian Constitution [85], "persons with disabilities benefit from special protection. The state ensures the implementation of a national policy of equal opportunities, prevention and treatment of disability, in order to effectively involve persons with disabilities in community life, respecting the rights and duties of parents and guardians".

In recent decades, there has been a new approach to recognising the right to equal opportunities, non-discrimination and the participation of people with disabilities. This period marked an important change in terms of public policies on people with disabilities both globally and in Romania.

In 1990, immediately after the fall of communism, the National Authority for Persons with Handicap was established. After several name changes and mergers, since 2019 the National Authority for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Children and Adoptions, briefly called ANDPDCA, has been operating. The current Authority has the role of protecting and promoting the rights of children and persons with disabilities in Romania.

In 1992, the Laws no. 53 [86] and 57 [87] on the social protection of people with disabilities and to support their employment were voted in by the Romanian Parliament.

These laws have been permanently improved and starting with the year 2000, people with disabilities can retire ten years earlier compared to able-bodied people, if they have contributed at least twenty-five years (women) and thirty years (men) to the social insurance budget.

Currently the provisions of Law no. 448 on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/2006, republished in 2020, are in force [88].

According to this Law, persons with a severe hearing disability benefit from the following rights: monthly allowance, regardless of income; free urban transport with public transport; free intercity transport, at choice, with any type of train, bus or river transport vessel, for six round trips per calendar year; exemption from income tax; exemption from building and land tax; exemption from the fee for issuing the operating license for economic activities and their annual visa; hotel tax exemption; exemption from the toll of national roads (rovinieta); tax exemption on pension income; tax exemption on income from independent activities, performed individually; tax exemption on income from agricultural, forestry and fish farming activities, carried out individually; granting a living room, in addition to the minimum living norms provided by law, based on rental contracts for homes belonging to the public or private domain of the state; the exemption from the payment of the rent for the residential areas destined for dwellings owned by the state or its territorial administrative units and which are in the use of these persons; free medical care, including free medicines, within the limits established by the Framework Contract; free outpatient medical devices, one free spa treatment ticket per year, based on the recommendation of the family doctor or specialist; free tickets for admission to shows, museums, artistic and sporting events; subsidizing interest for a loan, in order to purchase a car and to adapt the home to individual access needs; legal protection in the form of guardianship or curatorship, in the case of disabled persons who are unable to manage their personal property, etc.

In recent years, more attention has been paid to sign language, thanks to the recommendations of the World Federation of the Deaf and the European Parliament, which advocates for the training of sign language interpreters in all countries of the world. In this sense, in 2002, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health and Family elaborated the Regulation on the procedure and conditions for authorizing interpreters in sign language and language specific to Deafblind people. The training of interpreters will pave the way for access to various educational institutions of all levels for Deaf people.

A support for the financing of hearing aids is provided in Law no. 95/2006 on health reform [89]. The state grants a share of the value of the hearing aid, the payment of the difference remaining the responsibility of people with hearing disabilities.

Very recently, in March 2020, the Law on the Recognition of Romanian Sign Language as a mother tongue for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Romania was promulgated [90]. This law stipulates that Romanian Sign Language (LSR) is recognised as the mother tongue of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Romania. Deaf and Hard of Hearing people are defined in the law as people with hearing disabilities, totally or partially Deaf, who use LSR and a bilingual communication system to communicate. The community of people who use LSR represents a linguistic and cultural minority, with the right to use, preserve, develop and maintain the culture of the deaf, to increase and inherit their own mother tongue.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing people will have the right to use the LSR in their relations with central and local authorities and institutions, public or private, in order to exercise their civil rights. The authorities will have the obligation to provide free of charge to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people interpreters authorized in the LSR, according to the legislation in force. Access to an interpreter authorized in the LSR will be granted upon request or ex officio (example: taking the exam in order to obtain a driver's license, as well as in situations involving courts of inquiry or court).

In the next 2 years, all subordinate ministries and institutions are obliged to correlate their legislation with the provisions of this law and to take all necessary measures to respect the right of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people to use LSR in relation to Romanian state institutions.

Teaching LSR, as a first language, is optional from kindergarten to university, the Romanian state having the obligation to provide the necessary means to meet the needs of Deaf or Hard of Hearing people and their families. The teaching of LSR will be ensured by Deaf or hearing teachers who have attended training courses and obtained the qualification for the use of LSR, according to the legislation in force.

The Ministry of Education and Research authorises and accredits university study programmes for the LSR

discipline, at the request of higher education institutions.

The Romanian state guarantees and ensures to Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and students the right to learn, be instructed and to take the school exams in LSR.

For compulsory education, the Romanian state finances special schools for Deaf people. Teaching in special schools can be done only by teachers authorised by the competent institutions or who have graduated higher education courses for learning LSR. Teaching by the bilingual method both in kindergartens and in schools can be done only by persons specialised in teaching with bilingual methods.

Deaf or Hard of Hearing students enrolled in mass education will be provided, upon request, the right to take the exams in their mother tongue, respectively LSR. Those who take written tests in Romanian, regardless of the form of education, will be provided for examination by knowledgeable teachers of LSR.

The National Association of the Deaf in Romania (ANSR) is the largest and most important official association of Deaf people in Romania, which was founded on November 9, 1919, under the patronage of Queen Maria (Queen of Romania between 1914 and 1927). According to law 448/2006, republished in 2020 [88], ANSR, receives subsidies from the state budget. The association provides through thirty-seven branches with employees dealing with cultural and socio-cultural issues of deaf people and sign language interpreters to facilitate communication with state institutions, since 2004. It should be noted that ANSR provides an authorized LSR interpreter to all contributing members, upon request. Since its establishment, ANSR has provided sports activities to its members, until 2004, when sports organisations for Deaf people were established in major cities in Romania. Since 2004, ANSR has been collaborating with these Sports organisations for various sports events.

20.2 Regulations and laws relating to accessibility to sport for deaf people

In 2000, the Law no. 69, on Physical Education and Sports [91], which ensures equal rights to participate in sports activities, for all citizens, entered into force:

- Practicing physical education and sports is a right of the person, without any discrimination, guaranteed by the state. The exercise of this right is free and voluntary and is carried out independently or within the associative sports structures.
- The state recognises and guarantees to the natural and legal person the right to free association for the purpose of establishing sports structures.
- b) To organise, in collaboration or partnership with legal, public or private persons, cultural and sports events and leisure activities;
- c) To ensure conditions for the practice of sports by persons with disabilities;
- d) To support the activity of sports organisations of persons with disabilities.

Also, art. 21 of Law no. 448 on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/2006, republished in 2020 [88], facilitates the participation of persons with disabilities in sports activities, as follows:

- (1) The competent authorities of the public administration have the obligation to facilitate the access of the disabled persons to the cultural values, to the patrimony, tourist, sports and leisure objectives.
- (2) In order to ensure the access of persons with disabilities to culture, sports and tourism, the public administration authorities have the obligation to take the following specific measures:
 - a) To support the participation of disabled persons and their families in cultural, sports and tourist events;
 - (3) The disabled child, as well as the person accompanying them, benefit from free tickets to shows, museums, artistic and sports events.
 - (4) Adults with disabilities receive tickets to shows, museums, artistic and sporting events, as follows:
 - a) The adults with severe or accentuated disability, as well as the person accompanying them benefit from gratuity;
 - b) The adults with medium and mild disability benefits from entrance tickets under the same conditions as for pupils and students.

21 Deaf Sports in Romania and Their History

Sport in the lives of Deaf people has taken an official form since the Friendly Association of the Deaf in Romania was founded on November 9, 1919. This was under the patronage of Queen Maria (queen of Romania between 1914 and 1927) and was the first official group of people with hearing disabilities in Romania. This association is to become what is currently the National Association of the Deaf in Romania (abbreviated ANSR), the largest and most important official association of Deaf people in Romania.

In 1924, ANSR joined the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (now known as ICSD - The International Committee of Sports for the Deaf, responsible for organising the Deaf Olympics and sports events worldwide). Romania was a founding member of this international forum, along with France, Belgium, England, the Netherlands, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Czechoslovakia [92].

At the first edition of the World Deaf Games in August 1924, in Paris, Romania had the first international participation of a Romanian Deaf athlete. Later, in 1939, at the 5th edition of the World Deaf Games in Stockholm, twelve Romanian athletes participated.

Between 1957 and 2005, ANSR, with the help of state authorities that provided technical assistance and organisational and financial support, ensured the participation of representative sports teams in nine editions of the World Games for the Deaf, renamed in May 2001 the Silent Olympic Games (Deaflympics). The 13th edition of Deaflympics, in 1977, was organised by Romania and took place in Bucharest [93]. Romanian Deaf athletes have also participated in world, European and Balkan championships as well as various other international competitions over time (European Table Tennis Championship, Bucharest, Romania, 1975; European Athletics Championship for the Deaf, in Piraeus, Greece, 1999; Balkans of the Deaf, 1970 and 1997, etc.). The results obtained by Deaf Romanian athletes over the years in these international competitions were remarkable [94].

Internally, for Deaf or Hard of Hearing sportspeople, national competitions were organised. These included championships in athletics, football, table tennis,

handball, chess and other sports. Within ANSR, sports (especially performance sports) were done in parallel with cultural and socio-educational activities. Therefore, since 2004, the EU has imposed the separation and establishment of an individual sports association for Deaf people. The reason for this was the organisation of European / world sports championships by international sports organisations dedicated solely to Deaf people, such as: EDSO (European Deaf Sport Organisation), DCL (Deaf Champions League – for futsal European championships) and ICSD (The International Committee of Sports for the Deaf).

The Sports Club for the Deaf "Silence" from Cluj (CSST Cluj) was founded in May 2004, together with thirteen other sports clubs in Romania from various cities. This was in order to establish them as a federation of deaf sports.

According to Law no. 69/2000 on Physical Education and Sports, the "National Sports Federations shall be established only with the express approval of the Ministry of Youth and Sports. For a branch of sport, only one national sports federation may be established under the law. As an exception, the National Sports Federation "Sport for all" and the National Paralympic Committee may be established, for persons with special needs, as legal persons, of public utility, having as members individuals and legal entities with specific activity in the field."

For this reason, the Ministry of Youth and Sports didn't approve the establishment of a national sports federation dedicated to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in order to promote sports in the country and abroad, as well as to develop programmes. The Romanian Sports Association for the Deaf (in short ARSS), only remained on paper, despite the documents submitted to the line ministries. According to Romanian legislation, Deaf sport should be integrated into the National Paralympic Committee, which would not be recognised by the EU's international Deaf sports forums (EDSO, ICSD). At present, unofficially, ARSS aims to promote and publicise internal competitions, organised independently, at the level of sports clubs for Deaf people in Romania.

Currently in Romania, are national championships for Deaf people are held for the following sports: futsal, fishing, chess, table tennis, beach volleyball, football, tennis, darts, bowling and backgammon.

Within the National Association of the Deaf in Romania (ANSR) only mass sports and recreation and relaxation activities through sports are carried out.

Because of this, since 2004, Deaf people representing Romania have not participated in the Silent World Games or European championships.

At present, within ANSR, mass sports and recreational and relaxing activities through sports are still carried out. The performance sport activities are carried out independently, at the level of sports clubs for Deaf people that were established in 2004.

CSST Cluj, like other sports clubs in the country, Remains, for the time being, a club registered at a

county sports forum and the Ministry of Sports. It is therefore, obtaining too modest amounts of funding from state institutions for the smooth running of sports activities.

The greatest performance of CSST Cluj is a bronze medal obtained at the European Chess Championship for the Deaf, which took place in 2019, in Lviv, Ukraine. Two female athletes from CSST Cluj participated in this championship, representing Romania.

Currently, amongst the most loved and practiced sports by Deaf people within the CSST associations in Romania are chess, futsal and table tennis. In Romania there are high value athletes who are talented and passionate about sports, eager to participate in various international competitions. Unfortunately, the lack of a national sports federation for Deaf people is a major obstacle to achieving Romanian sports performance at an international level.

22 History of Deaf Languages in Turkey

Although there is limited information about the existence of Turkish Sign Language in sources since the earliest periods, there is no information about the lexicography, grammar and syntax features of sign language. During early times, Deaf and Hard of Hearing people were named Dilsiz or Bi Zeban and served very close to the sultan. Turkish Sign Language (TİD) started in the Ottoman Palace. This is confirmed by many confidential sources, but we don't know how similar the sign language used in the Ottoman Palace is to TİD used today.

Deaf and Hard of Hearing people were charged during the rule of Mehmet the Second. Deaf and Hard of Hearing people had critical positions under the rule of .I. Selim, III. Mustafa, III. Mehmet, I. Ahmet and II. Osman (1500 -1600). These positions were not limited to internal work in the Palace, they also had some responsibilities outside of the Palace. Research shows that Deaf and Hard of Hearing servants used a sign language, which they also used to communicate with the Sultan. Therefore, they could easily communicate with the other servants in Palace, as well as the Sultan.

During the rule of Kanuni Sultan Süleyman (1520-1566), knowing sign language was obligatory for some positions. By the 17th century, there were approximately sixty Deaf and Hard of Hearing servants in Ottoman palace. However, there is not enough evidence from this time period to suggest that TİD was developed from the Ottoman sign language.

The first school for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people outside of the Palace was established in 1899. This school educated students through the use of sign language. Here, they also tried to teach verbal communication to Deaf and Hard of Hearing people [95].

In 1923, another school for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people was established. However, this school focused on teaching verbal communication instead of sign language.

The Deaf and Blind school was established in 1944, With it being assigned to the Ministry of National Education at 1953. Sign language was forbidden on a

national level in 1953. Until 1992, there was no activity related to sign language under the supervision of Ministry of National Education. This was a different policy to those seen in the modern World. After the 1960's, sign language started to be popular in most countries. However, Turkey made no development between 1953-1992 as its citizens were forbidden to use sign language. Sign language was not used in schools for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. The purpose of this policy was to enforce the verbal communication of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. This policy ceased the use of Turkish sign language for 60 years. In this period, many countries developed their sign languages.

The Ministry of National Education formed a database with experienced teachers from special schools for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and organised a forum in Ankara. Here, they developed a sign language phrase book in 1995. This was named the Sign Language Phrase Book for Adults and was the main source to learn sign language for a long time.

The Turkish Disability Law (Law no: 5378) of 2005 permitted the use of sign language. In reality, it had been used since 1992, but the prohibition dating from 1653 was officially abolished with this law. The responsible government organisation for sign language studies, the Turkish Language Organisation, was then established.

The Turkish Sign Language Dictionary was prepared in 2012 by Ministry of National Education.

As a result; many Deaf and Hard of Hearing people must learn sign language after they've finished school. On the most part, this is too late for people to learn easily and effectively. There are some other standardisation problems too. For example, there are seven schools for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people in Turkey. There are differences between the sign languages used at each of them [96].

23 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People in Turkey

23.1 General Regulation and Laws Relating to Accessibility for Deaf People

Deaf and Hard of Hearing people are classified as one of the main disability groups in Turkey. Legislation mostly considers “disability” as a general term. The Turkish Disability Law was put into force in July 2005.

The main objectives of the Law are as follows:

- Prevention of disability;
- Solving problems experienced by disabled people in the areas of health, education, rehabilitation, employment, care and social security;
- Undertaking measures to remove barriers which prevent disabled people from participating in social life;
- Improving independency in everyday activities.

The Law has two parts. In the first part, you can find definitions related with disability, basic principles in disability area, and regulations related to services for disabled people. In the second part, you can find new regulations for solving the shortcomings in existing disability related legislations.

The Law includes provisions and gives frameworks and guidelines in the areas of classifications of disabilities, types of care services, types of rehabilitation, early diagnosis of disability, job and occupation analysis, employment and sheltered employment, education and training. For the first time, the definition of sheltered workshops is made by this Law. Sheltered workshops are adapted especially for the employment of people with severe mental health conditions. This Law gives responsibility of social rehabilitation of disabled people to related organisations/institutions and municipalities. There is a fine for employers who don't hire people with disabilities. The Law also makes the collection of fines easier. Fines are collected from employers who do not fill their quota

requirement. There are also some provisions about public employment. If requested, disabled civil servants will be appointed to a job according to their educational background, disability and vacancies.

In this Law, definitions of care, kinds of care and need for carers are made.

All children whose special education needs are determined by Evaluation Councils has the right to supportive education which is paid for by the government. The service is delivered by private organisations. This education system supports people with disabilities according to their needs. At the higher education level, Disabled Students Counselling and Coordination Centre will be established in every university. These centres will be funded so that they can supply materials, stationery, special education materials, accommodation arrangements and all related educational needs of disabled university students.

The Law also addresses accessibility. All public buildings, roads, pavements, zebra crossings, recreational areas and similar social and cultural infrastructural areas will be made accessible for people with disabilities. The Law gives some responsibilities to grand municipalities and municipalities. They have to take measures in order to make public transportation accessible for people with disabilities and also establish “disability service units” that will provide information, raise awareness and offer guidance and consultation facilities for disability issues. During the year after the Law have been put into force, sixteen regulations have been published to increase the implementation of the anticipated provisions of the Law.

Special Education Law (Law no: 573) was put into force in 1997. This Law describes the implicit and explicit services that should be provided to disabled individuals, and also determines the programmes, schools and institutions that will provide these services. As this Law stated the right of disabled individuals to benefit from early intervention, preschool, elementary, secondary, and high school education facilities, mainstreaming facilities were

guaranteed. Disabled people have the right of free and equal access to any kind of education in all partner countries. There are some supportive educational institutions in Turkey to help the main educational system. Children with a disability have the right to personal training with experts in these centres. These institutions are known as special education centres. The cost of this supportive education is paid by government.

The employment of disabled people is mainly provided by the Quota. There are special legislations on the employment of people with disabilities. There are provisions and articles under the Labour Law (Law no: 4857), and Regulation grounded on the Labour Law, as well as the Civil Servants Law (No. 657), and Regulation grounded on Civil Servants Law.

In Turkey, companies with at least fifty employees are obliged to ensure that 3% of their workforce consist of disabled people. There is a monetary penalty awarded to employers who don't obey this regulation.

Governmental institutions are obliged to ensure that 4% of their workforce comprises of people with a disability. If an employer hires a person with a disability, a portion of their social security payment will be covered by the treasury. There are also sheltered workshops for people with disability.

Disabled people who don't have private healthcare receive treatment under the public health system. Care centres are paid for by the government in Turkey. There is legislation in place that regulates payment to parents who care for a disabled person at home. These payments are reserved for those with a low income.

In Turkey, there are several financial supports for people with disability. If a person with a disability is self-employed, they pay a smaller amount of income tax. There are additional tax discounts on cars for people with severe disabilities. This discount is approximately 36% per car.

The Government pays a salary for people with disabilities who have low levels of income.

In addition to these general legislative perspectives, there is some specific legislation for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. For example, the Regulation on Training Principles and Training Principles for Sign Language Interpreting Service. These refer to staff members who are responsible for sign language

translation of all public services across Turkey. Governmental bodies may need sign language translation services and the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs is responsible for providing this service to all Ministries and governmental bodies. The legislation is related to this staff and their working conditions.

Regulation on the Determination of Procedures and Principles for the Formation and Implementation of the Turkish Sign Language System was published in 2006. This declares that all family members of Deaf and Hard of Hearing people have the right to sign language classes. The Ministry of Family and Social Affairs coordinates all tasks related to this regulation. The Ministry of National Education, Federation of People with Disabilities and the Turkish Language Organisation are co-responsible organisations. There is also a Council who is responsible for determining the sign language in Turkey. Regulation determines the necessary skills for sign language interpreters, trainers etc.

Regulation on the Procedures and Principles Regarding Improving Access of the Deaf, Hearing and Visually Impaired to Broadcast Services was published in 2019. This relates to sign language services that media shall provide during their broadcasting. There are minimum requirements for TV broadcasts that are suitable for those who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing. As a result of this regulation, it is mandatory for all TV channels to make sign language available for their broadcasts. The regulation gives minimum time requirements. For example, during prime time or morning television programmes.

The Law About People with Disabilities (Law no: 5378) gives the responsibility of coordination of Turkish sign language related works to the Ministry of Family and Social Affairs. The Ministry of National Education and Turkish Language Organisation contributes to the work related to Turkish sign language.

Some of the laws related to public services have provisions regarding the provision of a sign language translator for Deaf or Hard of Hearing people if it is necessary.

Banks are obliged to provide an online system for call centre services.

There is a supportive education mechanism in the Turkish education system called Special Education.

Rehabilitation centres give supportive education to people with disabilities. The rehabilitation centres that provide training for Deaf or Hard of Hearing people are under the supervision of the Ministry of National education. Regulations regarding Special Education Institutions gives their responsibility to the Ministry of National Education, who determine the details of the special education. Deaf and Hard of Hearing people are under this special education system. There are special education rehabilitation centres adapted for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people, and regulations on Special Education determines the standard of education for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people. There are also some special VET institutions for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people [97].

23.2 Regulations and Laws Relating to Accessibility to Sport for Deaf People

The main legislation for sport activities in Turkey is Youth and Sport Services Law (Law no: 3289). This law outlines the role of the State in

supporting sport activities, but there is no direct information about sport activities for people with disabilities. The Law on Giving Salary and Title of State Athlete to Successful Sport People (Law no. 5774) mentions supporting successful athletes with disabilities.

These sport federations are working according to the Regulation on Working Procedures and Principles of Independent Sports Federations. This is important legislation that is directly related to sport for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people and is the main status for Hearing Impaired Sports Federation. The main purpose of this Statute is the formation of the board, management, audit and discipline boards, duties, powers and responsibilities, and working procedures of Turkey Deaf Sports Federation. This Federation is responsible for the organisation and regulation of the principles for the field in general [98].

24 Deaf Sports in Turkey and Their History

Organised Sport activities for people with disabilities became popular at the beginning of 90's in Turkey. The Disabled Sport Federation was established in 1990 and started its activities in 1991. Developing activities caused this establishment to be divided into four federations in 2000.

These are :

1. Hearing Impaired Sports Federation;
2. Physically Disabled Sports Federation;
3. Visually Impaired Sports Federation;
4. Mentally Disabled Sports Federation.

Hearing Impaired Sports Federation now contains twenty-four active branches. These branches support the following sports: Football, Basketball, Volleyball, Handball, Wrestling, Taekwondo, Badminton, Athletics, Cycling, Tennis, Beach Volley, Karate, Judo, Table Tennis, Skiing, Swimming, Bowling, Taekwondo, Futsal, Shooting and Orienteering.

Like other sport federations for people with disabilities, the Hearing Impaired Sports Federation has close links with the General Directorate of Youth and Sport (a directorate under the Ministry of Youth and Sport).

As the sole institution with regulatory and supervisory powers on all national and international activities in Turkey, the Federation is responsible for;

- Creating archive of athletes with disabilities;
- Increasing the recognition of athletes in cooperation with all individuals and organisations including schools, clubs and written and visual press;
- Contributing to the social inclusion of athletes who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing;
- Representing Turkey at the highest level in international activities.

There are 114 clubs affiliated with the Federation. The Federation contains 10259 athletes (1727 female and 8532 male) at national level. There are also categories according to age. The Hearing Impaired Sports Federation has more athletes and more sport branches than the other three sport federations for disabled people. This federation is also a member of EDSO, CISS and the Deaflympics. The Hearing Impaired Sports Federation organises Olympics for Deaf and Hard of Hearing people once every four years [98].

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