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The JUSTISIGNS project has been funded with support from the European Commission.

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If you have any sign language interpreter news, what is happening with your national association, details of your Annual General Meeting or your Conference, knowledge of upcoming training events or other related events, then please share them with us. Send details to the Editor at **team@efsli.org**

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Foreword

The Spring edition of the efsli Newsletter is dedicated to the JUSTISIGNS project (2013-2016).

JUSTISIGNS has laid a solid foundation for the development of professional skills of sign language interpreters working in legal settings and achieved commendable results, which was presented by distinguished project partners at the European Parliament on 27th April 2016. This special issue of the efsli Newsletter briefly highlights some of those results from a partnership angle.

This is not the first time that efsli has expressed its interest in the legal domain. A survey on sign language interpreting in legal settings was launched among efsli members in 2012. Outcomes were presented at the InDialog Conference in Berlin the same year. Efsli partnership in the TRAFUT Project, led by EULITA, was another experience that contributed to raise awareness of accessibility and equal opportunities for Deaf people involved in legal issues.

JUSTISIGNS represents a further step forward. efsli together with EULITA have been the leading actors for dissemination of information through their networks and social media channels. The present issue of the efsli Newsletter is meant to be not only an informative tool, but also aims at paying tribute to all the professionals who have been involved in developing the project contents. Expertise, professional knowledge and invaluable human resources have been the key to the success of JUSTISIGNS.

We would like to acknowledge all of our partners:

- Interesource Group (Ireland) Limited
- KU Leuven (Faculty of Arts, Campus Antwerp)
- EULITA, the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association
- The Centre for Deaf Studies (CDS), Trinity College Dublin
- The University of Applied Sciences for Special Needs Education (HfH, Switzerland)
- Centre for Translation & Interpreting Studies in Scotland (CTISS), Heriot-Watt University

The project is now in its final chapters and has achieved a great deal since it began in 2013. The commitment and capability of each of the project's partners have contributed to its remarkable results. JUSTISIGNS has evolved through a series of events, seminars, a workshop and a evidence-based research which has guided the development of the training resources. In particular, efsli has been working on developing a template of a portfolio of competencies which SLIs can use to record their continuous professional development (CPD) activities, and we look forward to sharing this with you in the very near future.

Some of the other results we now look forward to in 2016 are a series of handbooks for the police force in each of the partner countries, a comprehensive online course for legal professionals, interpreters and the Deaf community and a research documentary which features experiences of legal professionals, policy makers, educators and the Deaf community. We are also excited and of course efsli's continued cooperation with the partners in various ways.

It is thanks to the passion and zeal of the consortium partners and individual contributors that JUSTISIGNS has indeed achieved its goals thus far. Please follow the activities on the project website (www.justisigns.com) and follow us on Twitter @JUSTISIGNS.

Our sincere gratitude to all of the partners for their expertise and hard work and a special thanks is extended to Haaris Sheikh, Chief Executive of Interesource Group (Ireland) Limited, project coordinator and project chair for his enthusiastic support and continued contribution to the organisation of project activities over the past three years.

We hope you will enjoy reading this special issue of the efsli Newsletter and, even more, you will find it inspiring with new food for thought for future achievements.

On behalf of the efsli Board,
Marinella Salami – efsli Executive Director

Background and Context Setting

In recent years, the experiences of Deaf people entering the criminal justice system have taken the spotlight. The findings of researchers who have focused their studies on this area of Deaf life have clearly demonstrated that this minority group encounter serious obstacles, and consequently, severe issues surrounding awareness, communication and accessibility in any legal setting. It is necessary for individuals who encounter Deaf people professionally to have an awareness of the fact that Deaf people belong to a linguistic minority group with their own language, educational background and culture. In general, professionals interacting with Deaf people are not aware of these cultural and linguistic aspects. Due to his lack of Deaf awareness and consequently, training, for professionals such as barristers, solicitors, police, and interpreters working in legal settings, Deaf people experience inequalities when accessing the criminal justice system, despite a number of European Directives that require appropriate provisions to be put in place to facilitate linguistic access. Knowledge and understanding will contribute to resolving the issues and barriers that are present in our current system.

Since December 2013 a team of international experts comprising hearing and deaf researchers and signed language interpreter practitioners across Europe have been collaborating on the JUSTISIGNS project. The consortium is made up of 7 partners from Ireland, Belgium, Switzerland and UK. They are Interesource Group (Ireland) Limited, Trinity College Dublin in Ireland, efsli (European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters), EULITA (European Legal Interpreters & Translators Association), KU Leuven in Belgium, University of Applied Sciences of Special Needs Education in Switzerland and Heriot-Watt University in Scotland. JUSTISIGNS is co-funded through the European Commission's Leonardo Da Vinci Lifelong Learning programme.

JUSTISIGNS aims to address the barriers that Deaf people encounter when they interact with the criminal justice system, the goal being to develop material, workshops, and training for professional people working within the legal setting in order to provide a better or more accessible service for Deaf people. The project focuses on promoting equal access in the justice system for Deaf sign language users and seeks to understand the experiences of professionals who interact with Deaf people.

The project also has a remit to develop training courses to be made available to sign language interpreters, legal professionals and Deaf sign language users.

The first part of project was the JUSTISIGNS survey which was developed to provide an overview of the current

status of sign language interpreting in legal settings across Europe to better understand what the training needs of interpreters, and other stakeholders such as police officers and deaf people themselves might be. The questionnaires built on data collection protocols from the Co-Minor/IN-Quest project and the goal was that data collected would help to gain an understanding of ways to improve the professional collaboration between all parties when involved in interpreted-mediated settings. Drawing on key themes from the European Commission survey on legal interpreting in the EU (Hertog & Van Gucht, 2008) and the survey of ASL legal interpreters in the United States (Roberson, Russell & Shaw, 2011) as well as the Medisigns project, a questionnaire instrument was developed and delivered through an online survey tool. Among the respondents were 4 deaf associations, 18 SLI associations, 10 educational/research institutions, 10 service providers and 1 translator's association. The final number of responses for the purposes of analysis was 49 from 21 countries.

The results of the survey as well as qualitative responses from focus groups confirmed that there was a clear need to develop best practice guidelines, training materials and recommendations for training and certification, and to promote a consistent approach to access to justice for deaf sign language users. Although there are some established provisions for legal sign language interpreting across Europe, it is inconsistent. It appears that there is no uniform approach across Europe to the training or certification of legal interpreters, and the availability of interpreters for legal settings is a Europe-wide issue.

Complementing the quantitative survey was the qualitative research conducted in the partner countries. In order to benchmark the experiences of key stakeholders in Ireland for example, the Irish team prepared a series of protocols to elicit data: the research process included a questionnaire for Deaf and hearing sign language interpreters and focus group interviews.

One of JUSTISIGNS' points of focus has also been capacity building for prospective Deaf Interpreters and the development of good collaborative strategies for working in Deaf-hearing interpreting teams in police settings.

A major part of the project is engagement with the stakeholder through information sessions, piloting training and delivering masterclasses and workshops. Let's have a look at the partners' synopses of events throughout the project.

JUSTISIGNS in Ireland

Team: Prof Lorraine Leeson, Haaris Sheikh, Teresa Lynch, and Lucia Venturi

The Irish JUSTISIGNS team is led by Interresource Group (Ireland) Limited and the Centre for Deaf Studies (CDS), Trinity College Dublin (TCD). The project team in Ireland set out to compare awareness levels and provisions made locally vis-à-vis other European countries. This starting point allowed the researchers to compare and contrast contexts and bring best practice ideas back to Ireland. Researchers identified some of the gaps in Ireland's services and have begun to draw attention to these with stakeholders who can respond appropriately (e.g. Gardaí, Judges, etc.).



Prof Lorraine Leeson

One of the key points of focus in Ireland was on the development of opportunities to support prospective Deaf Interpreters (DIs) who have worked interpreted in legal settings and those would consider working in legal domains. With a very small number of DIs who are qualified as interpreters, and with others who have little to no professional training of any sort, this had become an issue in a number of cases that had been before the Irish courts. To address this concern, the Centre for Deaf Studies at Trinity College Dublin established a masterclass series to train DIs – the first of its kind in Ireland. The DI series was coordinated by Teresa Lynch who is a trained DI and also Assistant Professor CDS.



Teresa Lynch



Dr Robyn Dean

Dr Robyn Dean (Rochester Institute for Technology) and Prof Robert Pollard (Rochester University) delivered a two-day workshop on Demand-Control Schema (DC-S) in September 2014. The first day focussed solely on DIs on and day 2 brought together the DIs and hearing interpreters who together considered issues relating to the demands (and the controls they could bring) to police interpreting contexts.



Participants at the Deaf Interpreter's masterclass in Dublin



Roundtable research event at University College Cork.

When looking for resources in Ireland, the project team drew on the work Dr Gill Harold, a researcher at University College Cork (UCC) at the Centre for Criminal Justice and Human Rights, School of Law, and Irish Research Council Postdoctoral Fellow.

Dr Harold's research explored the experiences of Deaf victims in the spaces and processes of the Irish Criminal Justice System. Dr. Gill Harold delivered a lecture where she discussed her results and her research.

A critical success factor for the JUSTISIGNS project in Ireland has been the involvement of key stakeholders from the Deaf community, interpreting profession, undergraduate students at the Centre for Deaf Studies (CDS) and An Garda Síochána. Prof Lorraine Leeson, Teresa Lynch and Lucia Venturi were invited to a Roundtable Research event at University College Cork to showcase JUSTISIGNS in May 2015.

Other events included Professor Terry Janzen from the University of Manitoba, Canada and Professor Barbara Shaffer's masterclass who together with Professor Lorraine Leeson delivered an advanced workshop on police interpreting within the Deaf Community (June 2015). The workshops delivered at CDS, Dublin and also the Deaf Community Centre in Limerick focused on contextualisation, where the speaker or signer includes information to assist the addressee in understanding assertions made in the discourse.

While carrying out its research, JUSTISIGNS remained focused on spreading awareness of the project. On 30th September 2015, for the International Translation Day, JUSTISIGNS invited Dr Mary Phelan from Dublin University City (DCU) to talk about 'Foreign Language Interpreter Provision 1800-1922' and Ph.D student Cormac Leonard to talk about 'Deaf People in Irish Courts, 1815 – 1924'. The talk highlighted the massive changes that have already been made, while reinforcing the fact there is still much more to be done.

A two-day intensive workshop was also delivered Leonie O'Dowd and Jane Baird from the Dublin Rape Crisis Centre (DRCC) as part of CPD training of qualified interpreters and also for student interpreters. The sessions were designed to prepare Deaf and hearing interpreters to work with victims of sexual violence and their role and interaction within the legal processes. This very emotional and intensive session provided an opportunity to consider the beliefs that exist in society in relation to sexual violence and how they are internalised by, and impact upon the victim. Participants learned about the impact of childhood abuse and of rape and sexual assault. The legal process and its impact on the victim who reports the crimes were also explored, along with the issues such as vicarious trauma, which arise for the interpreters. Arising from the resounding success of the DRCC masterclasses and positive feedback which sought more training - the Centre for Deaf Studies co-hosted the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreter's (efsi) autumn 2015 school.

With authorisation from the Garda Commissioner Nóirín O'Sullivan, the JUSTISIGNS team were able to engage with the Garda Racial, Intercultural and Diversity Office (GRIDO), meet with officers at the Garda College Templemore (the national police service of Ireland's training college) and some Diversity Liaison Officers. In parallel, Sgt. Andrew Geary from Cork (Ireland's second largest city) organised information events for the local Deaf community this past year.

Project Chairman, Haaris Sheikh, and Prof Lorraine Leeson visited the Garda Training College in January 2016 to showcase the project. There, they met with Inspector Brian Conway, Sergeant Sandra Masterson, Superintendent Pat McCabe, Superintendent Séamus Nolan and Chief Superintendent Anne-Marie McMahon to discuss how the training resources including Deaf Awareness Training, could be utilised. Discussion included consideration of how working with interpreters could be built into basic training and continuous professional development opportunities for Gardaí.

Team Ireland's most recent success was the pilot training programme with Gardaí in Limerick in February 2016. This



(from l-r) Haaris Sheikh, Chief Superintendent Anne-Marie McMahon, Prof Lorraine Leeson and Inspector Garda Brian Conway



Workshop on Sign Language Interpreting in Police Stations delivered at Henry Street Garda Station in Limerick, Ireland.

session was attended by some 30 Gardaí who had been designated as Diversity Liaison Officers along with members of Deaf community organisations Deaf Community Centre and DeafHear in Limerick. CEO of the Irish Deaf Society, Mr Eddie Redmond, delivered an impactful presentation leaving Gardaí more aware of the current situation regarding the Deaf community, followed by Prof Leeson's workshop covering issues as fundamental as booking a professional trained and qualified interpreter to linguistic nuances and conducting interviews properly in interpreter-mediated interactions.



Lucia Venturi

JUSTISIGNS continues to engage with our appointed liaison person, Garda Darren Coventry-Howlett from An Garda Síochána's Garda Racial, Diversity and Intercultural Office (GRIDO), who said "We cannot change society, we can only play a role in it."

In May 2016 the Irish team will be convening an expert group of interpreters and An Garda Síochána to discuss the translation of the Police caution in Ireland.

We would like to acknowledge The Office of the Garda Commissioner, Garda Training College Templemore, GRIDO, the Irish Deaf Society (IDS), Bridge Interpreting, SLIS, the Deaf Community Centre, Limerick and DeafHear Limerick, participants at the training sessions as well as our research participants. Of course a big token of appreciation to our own JUSTISIGNS partners. We would like to also acknowledge Lucia Venturi who compiled the content for this Irish contribution for this newsletter.

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JUSTISIGNS - The EU's legal interpreter and translator network

EULITA is the European Legal Interpreters and Translators Association. It was founded in November 2009 – a few months before Directive 2010/64 EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings was adopted by the European Parliament as the first of several Directives on procedural safeguards for citizens.

The Constitution of EULITA states that national or regional associations of sign language legal interpreters in EU Member States can become full members of EULITA and that such associations outside of the EU can become associate members of EULITA. Depending on the specific situation in a given country, individual sign language interpreters may also join EULITA. From the very moment that EULITA took up its activities, sign language interpreters have been part of the family of legal interpreters and translators and were also represented on the Executive Committee of EULITA.

As Directive 2010/64 EU on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings states explicitly states in Recital 27 that "... the prosecution, law enforcement and judicial authorities should [therefore] ensure that [suspected or accused persons who are in a potentially weak position because of any physical impairment] are able to exercise effectively the rights provided for in this Directive, for example by taking into account any potential vulnerability that affects their ability to follow the proceedings and to make themselves understood," Article 5 is even more explicit and requires that "suspected or accused persons who do not speak or understand the language of the criminal proceedings concerned are provided, without delay, with interpretation during criminal proceedings before investigative and judicial authorities, including during police questioning, all court hearings and any necessary interim hearings." Paragraph (3) then stipulates that "the right to interpretation ... includes appropriate assistance for persons with hearing or speech impediments."

When EULITA was asked to join the JUSTISIGNS consortium it was grateful for the opportunity to contribute with expertise to this EU-funded project and, in particular, to help disseminate the content and result of this valuable initiative. EULITA believes that EU projects can have a major impact on the transposition of EU law on the national level and help promote general understanding for the essence of Directives. Immediately after the adoption of Directive 2010/64 EU, the TRAFUT project (Training for the future – see the EULITA website www.eulita.eu for details) served to communicate EULITA's views on important aspects to consider when transposing the Directive.

A representative of efsli was invited to each of the four



regional workshops held in the course of the TRAFUT project and presented the special situation of sign language interpreters and their clients. LIT Search was another EU-funded project, which served the purpose of exploring the feasibility of a European database of legal interpreters and translators. The ministries of justice of several EU Member States, together with the professional associations of legal interpreters and translators of those countries, cooperated to establish a pilot database (lit.interconnect.dk), which is currently open for testing by interested individuals this project. In this project, too, EULITA made sure that sign language interpreters were part of the consortium – this time by involving the Dutch sign language interpreters' association NBTG. One of the two representatives chosen by NBTG was Peter Llewellyn-Jones, former efsli President.

While these two projects were "outward bound", i.e. addressing the other judicial stakeholders, JUSTISIGNS is "inward bound". This means that EULITA's task in connection with JUSTISIGNS is to draw the attention of its spoken language legal interpreters to the very special situation of sign language interpreting. After all, one of the key features of the JUSTISIGNS project is to reduce the limited understanding among judicial stakeholders of sign language interpreting. There are always constraints imposed by the interpreting process when working between two languages, and there are additional challenges that arise when working between a spoken (auditory-verbal) and a signed (visual-spatial) language.

The results of the JUSTISIGNS project were presented at the Pre-Assembly Conference of EULITA in Strasbourg on 8 and 9 April 2016 to spoken language legal interpreters and translators.

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JUSTISIGNS in Switzerland

Team: Prof Tobias Haug, Flurina Krähenbühl, Barbara Bucher, Barbara Diaz and Prof Patty Hermann-Shores, Gertrud Hofer and Prof Michaela Albl-Mikasa

The project team in Switzerland have been working on establishing the basic framework for the online course and on various information materials. The Swiss project team have also developed resources such as:

- Project flyer (in German)
- Project summary (videos in Swiss-German Sign Language and International Sign)
- Posters for the police and the deaf community including dos and don'ts for the contact with each other (in German, videos in Swiss German Sign Language)
- Masterclasses for the deaf community
- Legal terminology in Swiss German Sign Language (in collaboration with the Swiss Federation of the Deaf SGB-FSS and Procom, see <http://signsuisse.sgb-fss.ch>)
- Establishing contacts with the police and the judicial system
- Interviews for research purposes with sign language interpreters, deaf persons and representatives of the police, the prosecutor's office and the local courts
- Video recordings of interviews with sign language researchers, sign language interpreters, deaf persons and representatives of the police, the prosecutor's office and the local courts (for use in the course and as a compilation on YouTube)

Even when the project officially comes to a close at the end of May 2016, the work is far from done. As the training materials begin to roll-out we have successfully piloted and distributed content. A first training course with police officers in Winterthur was already successfully delivered in collaboration with the central office for court interpreting services in the canton of Zurich.



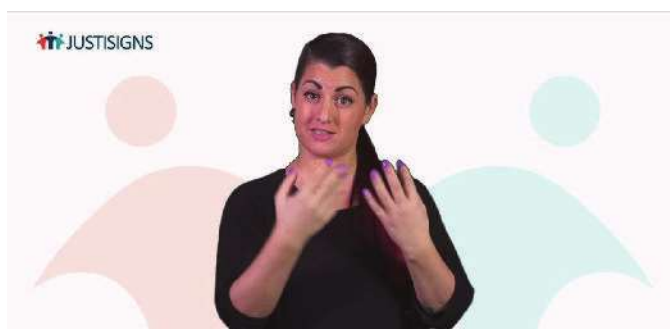
(from l-r) the JUSTISIGNS Team includes: Haaris Sheikh, Robert Skinner, Prof Jemina Napier, Prof Tobias Haug, Prof Heidi Salaets, Prof Myriam Vermeerbergen, Peter Llewellyn-Jones (eflsi - 2013-2014), Liese Katschinka, Prof Lorraine Leeson and Teresa Lynch. (far right - Irish Sign Language Interpreters Ali Stewart and Cormac Leonard).

Also, the legal terminology in Swiss-German Sign Language will soon be available in the SGB-FSS's online dictionary. Furthermore, we are currently translating the course content developed together with the European project partners into German and adapting them to the Swiss context. We now hope to be able to train police representatives on how to deal with deaf persons on a continuous basis.

We are also very excited at collaborating with the partners in related areas and harness the relationships we have developed in ongoing research and teaching.

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Guide in Swiss-German Sign Language (DSGS)



Prof Tobias Haug at the opening of the masterclass for police training

JUSTISIGNS in Scotland

Team: Prof Jemina Napier, Robert Skinner and Prof Graham Turner

One of the key areas that the Scottish team was involved in was leading the primary research and administering the JUSTISIGNS survey jointly with Prof Tobias Haug. A series of training sessions and masterclasses were run as part of the JUSTISIGNS project.

In November 2015 a masterclass was organised between the Heriot-Watt University BSL/JUSTISIGNS team and Police Scotland and included CID/police interview advisors, Deaf community representatives and BSL/English interpreters. The workshop involved joint and group sessions on the potential barriers for deaf people in accessing police interviews, the challenges for interpreters to accurately convey the goals of police interviewers, and deaf/sign language awareness raising for police interviewers, as well as interactive simulation role plays of BSL interpreted police interviews. One of the issues raised during the discussions was the lack of standardisation in a translation of the Scottish police caution, so interpreters may produce different versions of the caution in BSL. As the police caution is legally binding, the words are used specifically and are read out verbatim by police interviewers and sometimes followed up by an explanation if the person being questioned does not understand the formal caution.

Although a BSL translation of the English police caution is available (www.northeast-bslenglish-interpreters.co.uk/righttosilence.html), the wording of the caution is different from the Scottish caution, and therefore the BSL translation is also different from what is needed in Scotland (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7OWJboP_bCI&feature=youtu.be).

At the masterclass workshop it was identified that having a BSL translation of the Scottish Common Law Caution available on video as a reference point for police, interpreters and the Deaf community would be a useful development. The ideal would be for a BSL translation to be accessible online for police to access on a mobile device (for example if detaining someone before an interpreter arrives) or for interpreters or deaf people to access at the point of a police interview (e.g. through an iPad or computer). At no point



would the availability of the BSL translation circumvent the need for a BSL/English interpreter, as it is a legal requirement for interpreters to be present for any interaction between a police officer and a person who uses a different language.

As a follow-up to the masterclass, the Heriot-Watt University BSL/JUSTISIGNS team organised a translation workshop and invited key stakeholder representatives to be involved in discussing, developing and finalising a standard BSL translation of the Scottish police caution. Participants included deaf community members, deaf and hearing BSL/English interpreters, police officers, and linguists.

The workshop involved participants preparing draft BSL translations of the Scottish police caution, and then examining the legal terminology and dissecting the various options for translation. A final standard translation was created along with an explanation of what the caution means in BSL. This translation and accompanying documents will soon be available on various websites, including the Heriot-Watt University Centre for Translation & Interpreting Studies in Scotland and Police Scotland websites. As part of the development of other resources, Robert Skinner has been working with Haaris Sheikh in developing a communication guide which will be launched by mid-2016.



Police Caution in BSL for Scotland

Police Caution in BSL for Scotland

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JUSTISIGNS in Flanders, Belgium

Team: Prof Myriam Vermeerbergen, Prof Heidi Salaets, Lien Soetemans and Els Van Themsche

The Faculty of Arts, Campus Antwerp of KU Leuven, previously known as “Lessius University College”, has a strong tradition of involvement in European projects and initiatives related to legal interpreting and translation. KU Leuven colleagues have been coordinating or participating in highly successful DG Justice projects like Grotius, TRAFUT, QUALETRA, IMPLI, LIT Search, AVIDICUS 1,2 and 3, TRaiLLD and Co-MINOR-IN/QUEST, among others. A project that had particular impact was the EULITA project which led to the establishment of the European Legal Interpreters' and Translators' Association (EULITA) in Antwerp on 26 November 2009.

Another achievement emerging from the work of colleagues like Prof Erik Hertog and Ms Yolanda Vanden Bosch, an established lawyer with expertise in the area of legal interpreter training, is the establishment of a specific programme in legal interpreting and translation. This programme has been running since 2000 and modules are taught by experienced legal translators and interpreters as well as legal experts. Indeed, within the framework of this programme a strong collaboration with legal professionals has developed.

It is in this context that the Flemish team has been building our JUSTISIGNS project work, working towards the inclusion of sign language interpreting within the broader context of initiatives related to legal interpreting and translating. A major event that emerged as a result of such work was seen at a mock trial held at the Antwerp Court of First Instance on 7 May 2015 and organised by Prof Heidi Salaets and Prof. Katalin Balogh in collaboration with the President and Vice-President of the Court Mr Bart Willocx and Mr. Roland Cassiers. The trial showed subsequent phases of the legal proceedings in a case of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. One of these phases featured a deaf suspect and a sign language interpreter. Feedback on this joint training



Judges sitting at the mock trial

initiative was very positive, with participants saying that they found this exercise both informative and enriching.

In the winter of 2015-2016, information on sign languages, the Deaf community and working with sign language interpreters was included in two training initiatives involving the Belgian Federal Police. The first initiative consisted of training for some 500 police officers specialised in T.A.M. (Technique of Audio-visual questioning of Minors), the second initiative was a train-the-trainers event targeting T.A.M. trainers. The latter included a role play featuring a deaf minor and a sign language interpreter.

On 6 February 2016, in collaboration with Tenuto vzw, an organisation offering further training for SLIs, we presented a workshop on legal terminology for sign language interpreters. On 16 April 2016 we hosted a full day event inviting the three JUSTISIGNS target audiences (SLIs; members of the police and other legal actors and members of the Deaf community) to our campus. In the morning there were presentations for the whole group, including a talk by Ms Helga Stevens, lawyer and Member of the European Parliament, and one by our colleague Ms Carolien Doggen presenting research on the experiences of Flemish deaf people in contact with the justice system.

The afternoon sessions were dedicated to a series of parallel sessions. For SLIs, Prof Lorraine Leeson delivered an engaging



Workshop on language use in legal settings and terminology. Prof Myriam Vermeerbergen with workshops contributors



Workshop on language use in legal settings and terminology

masterclass on interpreting in emotionally challenging situations. For members of the Deaf Community, there was information on the organisation of victim support in Flanders, followed by a presentation by Mr Luc Clerbout, a member of the police force and SLI, who has been very active in improving the access of deaf people to police services.

A third activity, specifically addressing members of the police, included role plays, showing contact between a deaf suspect/victim and a police officer communicating both with and without an SLI present.

The final products include an online course (in Dutch) developed together with the other project partners which will be adapted to the Flemish/Belgian context. Other resources include posters and leaflets for the police and the Deaf community (in Dutch and VGT) and a guide book in Dutch.

Throughout the project our team has been supported by, and collaborating with a growing number of organisations and individuals, including the Flemish Deaf association Fevlado and the centre of expertise on Flemish Sign Language VGTC; members of the police, lawyers and judges; the professional organisation for SLIs BVGT and Tenuto vzw; SLI and LIT training providers. The Belgian JUSTISIGNS team are most grateful for their support and very much look forward to future collaboration.

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Ms Helga Stevens MEP - discusses communication gaps and terminology



JUSTISIGNS workshop for sign language interpreters using video technology



JUSTISIGNS Masterclass - interpreting in sensitive settings



Audience at the mock trial



Prof Myriam Vermeerbergen delivering a workshop for members of the police

JUSTISIGNS at the European Parliament

27th April 2016, Brussels, Belgium



A public seminar, entirely dedicated to the JUSTISIGNS project, hosted by MEP Helga Stevens and supported by the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efsli), Trinity College Dublin and Interresource Group (Ireland), took place at the European Parliament on 27th April 2016. The objective of the seminar was to discuss the policy and practice implications of our work. Panelists from across Europe presented on findings and examined the implications for key stakeholders.

Helga Stevens MEP hosted the event and commenced the proceedings. Having been a supporter of the project from its early days, Ms Stevens highlighted the barriers that Deaf communities continue to face when interacting within legal settings. She pointed to a number of problems indicating that a lack of interpreters or appropriately qualified interpreters and training along with Deaf communities are a major source of the problem.

Mr Carlos Alegria, the European Commission's Acting Director General for Interpretation (SCIC) spoke of the diversity of languages in use within the EU institutions and the importance of good communication through proper interpretation and also applauded the Commission for funding the project.

Mr Haaris Sheikh, Project Chair set out the context for the project as well as the key priorities that JUSTISIGNS set out to achieve. He called upon the stakeholders to support campaigns and initiatives that recognise the Deaf community as a linguistic and cultural minority, and appealed to the EU institutions, in particular those responsible for funding, to provide supplementary funding for interpretation costs which should not be borne by the normal project budgeted



costs. He explained that projects such as JUSTISIGNS are disadvantaged and have a proportionately lesser budget available for translations, production of outputs and development of results as the interpreting costs are seen as normal project operational costs.

To engage the audience Mr Sheikh invited everybody to tweet "I support access to justice for the deaf community #justisigns", which was rapidly re-tweeted across the continents, translated in to several languages and picked up momentum throughout the day.

"I SUPPORT ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR DEAF PEOPLE #JUSTISIGNS"

Prof Jemina Napier (Heriot Watt University) discussed the importance of evidenced-based research and drew on the results from the JUSTISIGNS survey and report of which she was co-author with **Prof Tobias Haug** which was conducted across all EU members states. According to Napier "there

is no one particular standard across Europe. Some countries may have particular standards about interpreting in court, some don't. So what we need to see is standardization across Europe. And standards also are important in terms of training of interpreters, but also those who are police or in the judiciary, it is important they have a better understanding of working with interpreters and the Deaf community."



JUSTISIGNS panelists (from l-r) Prof Lorraine Leeson, Mr Carlos Alegria, Ms Helga Stevens MEP, Mr Haaris Sheikh, and Prof Jemina Napier



Dr Ádám Kósa MEP summing up the discussion

Prof Lorraine Leeson (Centre for Deaf Studies, Trinity College Dublin) spoke on the impact and implications of the project results on the legal professionals, interpreters and the deaf community. She highlighted that from the research, police had limited know-how on how to operate in interpreter-mediated settings and felt that they had little control within an interview process, where an interpreter was involved. Prof Leeson also discussed how interpreters had few opportunities to learn about police processes and were not aware about protocols, interviewing techniques and aspects such as the reading of rights and cautions. In addition, most interpreters' sign language is not their first language (L2) and capacity around working with vulnerable groups is also a limitation. For the Deaf community, those who are most likely to come in contact with the police in criminal settings will more than likely have little knowledge nor experience working with interpreters and will probably have low levels of literacy as well as limited knowledge of the legal processes. A key challenge that Prof Leeson highlighted was the need to increase awareness about some of the fundamental issues of interpreter-mediated settings amongst each of the target groups.

Prof Myriam Vermeerbergen (KU Leuven) and Prof Erik Hertog both spoke about the tradition of the University's involvement in legal interpreting projects. Prof Vermeerbergen discussed the need to ensure that joint training is prioritised in order to engage in dialogue amongst the three target groups.

After a discussion from the project partners, key stakeholders were invited to share their views and insights about the JUSTISIGNS project.

Being an avid supporter of the project since its inception, **Prof Erik Hertog** said "JUSTISIGNS is, to me, in my mind, the

perfect synthesis, the perfect synergy of all the projects that focused on the more general quality issues, the training issues, the certification issues, etc., legal interpreting and translation and at the same time now what we are seeing is this focus on particular target groups and target issues. And I must say that the results and the achievements that have been presented by the partners have been truly, truly impressive. A follow up project that would actually start taking the results to the target group so what I would suggest is, take your work to the police and to the legal professionals, publish in their journals. Go to their conferences set in your interdisciplinary workshops and thus transfer, transcend your achievements from the the consortium, and take it to these target groups, because the thing you have to convince them that quality, that you provide as legal interpreters, simply helps them to do a better job."

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Mr Christian Peters, President of efsli, outlined the importance of having qualified interpreters and to also increase awareness of sign language interpreting and deaf awareness across public sectors. He stressed the need for policy makers to understand the tenets of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities (UNCRPD) the

need for educators to collaborate with legislators and policy actors.

Recounting the success of the JUSTISIGNS project, **Mr Mark Wheatley**, Executive Director of the European Union of the Deaf (EUD) said "I think we cannot underestimate it. When we think about interpreters involved in legal settings, some of the examples and stories I have heard are horrific and numerous. And sometimes we think that these situations have happened in the bygone days, in fact some of them are very recent. When we look at Europe, we see that there are particular regions of Europe that have very strong training and standards for their interpreters, including Scandinavia



Prof Tobias Haug addressing the audience at the EU Parliament with Prof Erik Hertog



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and western parts of Europe. But when we look at the South and the Eastern parts of Europe and we don't see the same thing. Sometimes we will see children of Deaf adults or CODAs who are not trained as interpreters working as interpreters in very critical settings".

Recurring issues and questions posed by some legal professionals (as well as from those in other public sector domains such as healthcare) include if it is acceptable to have family members as interpreters. The advice to to procurer of the service is simple. As in any profession, sign language interpreting training is generally governed by an explicit set of competencies and the attainment of a professional qualification. No different to lawyers, doctors or expert witnesses in court - if you can't verify a person's skills to do the job, then you shouldn't hire the person.

It is simply not possible, nor should it be acceptable for a police officer or a judge to determine whether a person who is able to sign (irrespective of fluency) is qualified to interpret. We are not suggesting that a family member of a Deaf person might not have excellent sign language competency, but here we are talking about a very specific set of competencies in a complex and specialised context (see for example International Standards ISO13611 - Interpreting – Guidelines for community interpreting). Even where a CODA is a professionally trained interpreter and possesses the requisite skills to interpret, by their very nature of

being a family member, impartiality and confidentiality is compromised.

Concluding the session, **Dr Ádám Kósa MEP** said "I think that it [sign language interpreting provision] is a pivotal, fundamental right as a citizen. It ensures equality. Deaf people, for many years, have been passive acceptors of barriers due to lifelong experiences of being hindered for access. It is projects like this that can provide inner confidence for people to assert themselves in life. (...) We need Deaf people to be proactive about the barriers that they experience. Otherwise, the system

will never change. So that is my first point I would like to address. The second point, when I think about the Deaf community, I also think about sign language interpreters working together. And we also should think about those people in the community who have Intellectual Disabilities. Our

sphere of influence can extend beyond the Deaf community, and that is my hope that this will benefit all citizens. And I am very much looking forward to the next iteration of what the JUSTISIGNS project could look like. And I do hope that all the materials and this experience will be shared across Europe".

The JUSTISIGNS consortium would like to thank all of the speakers and delegates who attended. A special thanks to Ms Helga Stevens MEP for hosting the event our gratitude to Ms Annika Pabsch for her support and assistance in bringing this event together.

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JUSTISIGNS Team outside the European Parliament



eflsi board - Christian Peters (President), Marinella Salami (Executive Director) and Ms Ivana Bučko (Vice President)

JUSTISIGNS memories



Switzerland



Belgium



Ireland



Ireland



Guests at the JUSTISIGNS events - clearly excited to be there!



The European Parliament (EP), Brussels

Calendar of Events

Training on Demand - Training Deaf Trainers

(FIRST PART)

Belgrade (Serbia), 20th–22nd May 2016

efsli Summer school "Interpreting for refugees"

Pristina (Kosovo), 8th–11th July 2016

Training on Demand - Training Deaf Trainers

(SECOND PART)

University of Hamburg, 12th–13th October 2016

2016 efsliDI Working Seminar & Meeting

Athens (Greece), 7th–8th September 2016

2016 efsli AGM & Conference

Athens (Greece), 9th–11th September 2016

"It's all Greek to me": Versatility in the Sign Language Interpreting Profession"

efsli Autumn/Winter School - "Interpreting in mental health settings"

Rijeka (Croatia) - November 2016, dates to be confirmed

See www.efsli.org for a full calendar and more information.

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