



**WORLD FEDERATION
OF THE DEAF**



**INTERNATIONAL WEEK
OF DEAF PEOPLE**



**INTERNATIONAL DAY
OF SIGN LANGUAGES**

**#IWDeaf
#IDSL**

Celebrate International Week of Deaf People 2021!

The International Week of Deaf People (IWDP) is an initiative of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) and was first launched in 1958 in Rome, Italy. It is celebrated annually by the global Deaf Community during the last full week of September to commemorate the same month the first World Congress of the WFD was held. The International Week of Deaf People is celebrated through various activities by Deaf Communities all around the world. These activities and events welcome the participation of all members of deaf communities, which include families of deaf people, professional and accredited sign language interpreters, peers, as well as the involvement of various stakeholders such as national governments, national and international human rights organizations, and Organisations of Persons with Disabilities.

The theme of the 2021 International Week of Deaf People is:

“Celebrating Thriving Deaf Communities”

The theme of the 2021 International Day of Sign Languages is:

“We Sign for Human Rights”

Find more information, as well as the official International Sign version of the themes on our webpage:

<http://wfdeaf.org/iwdeaf2021/>

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An International Non-Governmental Organisation in official liaison with ECOSOC, UNESCO, ILO, WHO and the Council of Europe. WFD was established in Rome in 1951.

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Daily Themes

As part of our celebration, we will have daily themes during the 2021 International Week of Deaf People.

Monday 20 September 2021 - Cherishing Deaf History

Deaf communities and our sign languages have existed for several centuries. Today, we take the time to cherish the proud histories of deaf peoples and our thriving communities, and the many people, deaf, CODAs, allies, who have worked together to enable the flourishing communities found today around the world.

Tuesday 21 September 2021 - Sustainable Deaf Leadership

Deaf communities throughout the world have organized into representative associations to advance their human rights. These organizations need funding, capacity building, and empowerment to carry out the principle of “Nothing About Us Without Us”

Support the WFD in our work by donating to our human rights work and by signing our [Charter on Sign Language Rights for All!](#)

Wednesday 22 September 2021 - Sign languages for all deaf learners

Acquisition of sign language from birth from fluent sign language models is critical to the cognitive and social development of deaf children. A strong foundational language is necessary to learn other languages. As many deaf children are born into families who are not yet sign language users, services must be in place to provide sign language learning and support to families so that they can learn and use their national sign languages.

Thursday 23 September 2021- We Sign for Human Rights

We Sign For Human Rights! On this International Day of Sign Languages, we celebrate our collective efforts- deaf communities, governments, and civil society representatives- to recognize and promote the over 200 different national sign languages around the world. Together we sign onto a declaration of support for sign languages as an essential human right for deaf people, and sign for human rights!

On the International Day of Sign Languages, we work together to support and protect the linguistic identity and cultural diversity of all deaf people and others who use national sign languages.

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This celebration arises from Resolution A/RES/72/161 of the United Nations adopted in 2017, which recognizes the 23rd of September as the International Day of Sign Languages.

The WFD is proud to announce a Global Leaders Challenge to be achieved during the 2021 International Day of Sign Languages. This challenge aims to promote the use of national sign languages by national and global leaders in partnership with their national associations of deaf people.

Your country leaders - might they be Prime Ministers, Presidents, other government officials, members of parliaments, members of city council - should sign in your national sign language "We sign for Human Rights!"

The Global Leaders Challenge is an opportunity for national associations of deaf people to establish and maintain sustainable collaborations with their national leaders through the use of their national sign languages.

National associations of deaf people can contact their leaders and ask them to make a video in their national sign language, with their technical support. Videos should be published on social media with the hashtag #IDSL #GlobalLeadersChallenge tagging @Wfdeaf.

See our previous [Global Leaders Challenge 2020 webpage](#) for more information.

Friday 24 September 2021 - Intersectional Deaf Communities

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how social and political identities can be seen holistically, and as such, create experiences of discrimination and privilege. These can include aspects such as race, gender, sex, disability, sexuality, religion and language. Deaf communities are both a cultural-linguistic group and members of disability populations. This intersectionality is highlighted in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that outlines disability rights and linguistic and cultural rights for deaf people.

Saturday 25 September 2021- Deaf Culture and Arts

Deaf people regularly come together to share their language and culture. Deaf culture involves the behaviours, traditions, beliefs, values, history, humour, art that exists within Deaf communities. Deaf communities are proud of their linguistic and cultural identity and celebrate these identities through cultural and artistic expressions in a variety of artistic mediums.

Sunday 26 September 2021- Human Rights in time of Crisis

The past year has shown us new needs and new ways of guaranteeing the well-being of deaf people

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in situations of crisis. Under the circumstance of different crises, including infectious diseases, climate change, natural disasters, and armed conflict, deaf people all over the world experience language deprivation, socioeconomic disadvantages, and audism. Today, we emphasize the importance of securing and maintaining the human rights of all deaf people during the different, multiple, and overlapping crises we face today.

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