



# STT IN ESTONIA

## HOW IT WAS BORN?

## HOW STT LIVES NOW?

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# How STT was born in Estonia?

- Personal experiences from international events arose interest - why shouldn't we have the same;
- STT in Estonia was born on June 13, 2014, when the EVL delegation visited Minister of Social Affairs – Mrs. Helmen Kütt to say that we need STT interpreters in Estonia. Minister understood the problem and began to deal with it.;
- On November 6, 2014, we met with the Minister of Education - Mr. Ossinovsky, who was left cold by our topic - we could not get through;
- On 9 December 2014, the Finnish STT interpreters coordinators visited the Ministry of Social Affairs, including Hanna Putkonen-Kankaanpää, interpreters trainer (from vocational school), Iida Bernhardt, interpreter, member of the board of the Finnish Association of STT Interpreters, Sirpa Laurén, interpreter, trainer and specialist of the Finnish HoH Association. It was decided there that the first interpreters would learn the profession in Finland.

# First training, coordinating, funding

- On June 24, 2015, EVL announced a competition to find the first interpreters who will go to Helsinki to study at Humaki School. This was preceded by the writing of a project for Ministry of Social Affairs. The project received funding with the help of Mrs. Helmen Kütt. At that time 4 people were chosen, two of these interpreters were already trained sign language interpreters, who got excellent results in the competition. The training started in autumn, lasted until spring 2016.
- On 28.05.2018, the possibility of a free STT interpretation service was launched for the first time, at that time it was coordinated by Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre, financed by the European Social Fund. A few years later, the interpretation service came under the coordination of the Social Insurance Board, and this system still works today, also financed by the European Social Fund.

# Training in Estonia, worries

- In 2018-2019, the first training of STT interpreters took place in Estonia
- In 2019-2020, a new training for interpreters took place.
- We currently have a total of 13 interpreters.
- Covid mainly influenced the last study group of interpreters, as there were few graduates there. The number of orders also decreased.
- The problem is low awareness, there is also the problem that the conditions for ESF funding are rigid. It is not possible to offer a free STT service to pensioners within the Project. The free service is only available for disabled people of working age. Pensioners can ask support from local government.
- Asking for help from a local authority is a very bureaucratic process and many find it humiliating to ask about income, bank statements, property ownership, and so on.
- We are definitely trying to expand the target group of the Project and the number of orders.

# How STT lives now?

- The ESF-funded pilot-project will run until the end of 2022;
- From then on, funding has not yet been agreed;
- Our wish would be for the service to be coordinated by the state, not the local government.
- In terms of work, translators have merged sign language interpreters into one company;
- EVL has constantly pressured STT interpretators to bring new and flexible translation opportunities to the market;
- EVL provides feedback on the quality of the STT service. For example, we do not like interpretators who do not translate the full text but make it an abbreviated version. There are also concerns that the general level of education of interpreters does not allow them to translate university lectures

# What would we do other when start again?

- The training of Russian interpreters will also start immediately. Or take a multifunctional group in Estonian who is able to translate in both Estonian and Russian.
- The interpreter must be required to work a certain number of hours after completing the training.



Thank You!