

REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND SPORT  
Masarykova cesta 16, 1000 Ljubljana

The Slovenian Association of Teachers of the Deaf  
Černetova ulica 17  
1000 Ljubljana

Number: 092-83 / 2020/103 Date: 17. 7. 2020 T: 01 400 52 00 F: 01 400 53 21

Subject: Letter of support to The Slovenian Association of Teachers of the Deaf  
with the organization of the international conference DHI - Deaf History International

The Ministry of Education, Science and Sport welcomes and supports the activities of The Slovenian Association of Teachers of the Deaf (DUGS) in organizing the international conference DHI - Deaf History International, which will be held in August 2021. We agree with your proposal to participate in the opening and welcome participants.

The Ministry is aware of the importance of learning and teaching Slovenian Sign Language for the Deaf in the educational process. Slovenian Sign Language, as stated in the Report - Concept of Introducing Slovenian Sign Language into the Slovenian School System (ZRSŠ, 2019), is a means of communication and it allows the development of the child's brain at the earliest period. All this is necessary to ensure equal opportunities for every individual to succeed in life - for personal, social and professional development.

To this end, the Ministry, together with the Association of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Societies of Slovenia (ZDGNS), in 2016 initiated the formation of a working group that prepared a proposal within the National Education Institute Slovenia for the placement of Slovenian sign language in educational programs from pre-school to secondary school level. Representatives of all three educational institutions for deaf and hard of hearing children, as well as representatives of the ZDGNS and the Ministry were involved in the preparation of the concept document. The concept represents a professional basis for modernizing the upbringing and education of deaf children.

The Ministry has already started activities that will lead to comprehensive system solutions. Among other things, with the 2019/20 school year, three primary schools and two educational institutions for deaf and hard of hearing children have started teaching Slovenian sign language as a compulsory elective subject, whose curriculum was adopted in December 2018 by the Professional Council of the Republic of Slovenia for General Education. The Ministry has also been providing funds for Slovenian sign language interpreters in pre-school, primary and secondary education programs for many years and is aware of the importance of their appropriate education and training.

We want the international conference to contribute to the study, preservation and dissemination of the history of deaf people, which is the purpose of the international association DHI - Deaf History International, within which you will organize this event. We also want it to contribute to the visibility and reputation of your society and the challenges facing the deaf community in Slovenia and elsewhere in the world to the general public.

With respect,

prof. dr. Simona Kustec Lipicer

MINISTER