

EN
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Answer given by Ms Lahbib
on behalf of the European Commission
(27.5.2026)

The Commission, through the Strategy for the rights of persons with disabilities 2021-2030 is advancing to address the needs of persons with disabilities, including deaf persons. This Strategy will be further enhanced by an upcoming Communication. The Commission is committed to lead by example as a public administration. In 2024 and 2025, it provided International Sign at 60 press conferences and midday briefings and at 14 events¹.

The consultation process for the enhanced Strategy included different meetings with stakeholders, in which International Sign was available for providing feedback. However, as the open public consultation was done in writing format; hence it only sought written feedback. In this regard, it accommodated different accessibility needs by providing a standard and easy-to-read (ETR) form² to fill online, and offline with an accessible word document to send by email. ETR versions for the call for evidence and the Have Your Say data protection statement were also provided.

Since 2022, the Commission has been updating and aligning its web presence to comply with the European accessibility standard EN 301 549, which does not require the provision of sign language as an alternative or complement to content in text or video. The Commission is nevertheless working on increasing the availability of International Sign in video. For example, the weekly College readout and the live broadcast of the President's State of the Union include International Sign.

¹ Including, for example, the Erasmus+ Sport Info Day or the European Day of Persons with Disabilities Conference.

² The standard forms and the easy-to-read versions were provided in all EU languages.