

Annual report 2012

Review of 2012

The European Sign Language Centre (ESLC) was founded in 2009 as a non-political, non-profit organization based in Örebro, Sweden. ESLC works with accessibility issues for sign language and is running the world's largest web-based translation tool for sign language, www.spreadthesign.com, established in 24 countries.

ESLC is working to meet the rights of all deaf children in their own language and to make sign language available all over the globe. From the perspective of inclusive technology, gender and trans-nationality work ESLC is working to increase the availability for sign language citizens worldwide.



Picture from our meeting in Loka Brunn, Sweden.

The organization

The organization 'European Sign Language Center' (ESLC) has a main objective to manage, improve and develop Spread the sign. ESLC is a non-profit organization where most work is done by unpaid volunteers. The association has a few employees whose salaries come from the various projects. ESLC are hiring mainly deaf people and sees this as an important part of the work of Spread the sign.

The project manager for the Spread the sign is Lydell Thomas Olsen. He is also the person behind the idea of this web based sign language dictionary. Thomas is a volunteer of the association, and therefore he doesn't get any salary from the organization.

Organization work

We have had a total of five employees during the year. In November, we moved to the civic building in Örebro, where we now have our headquarters. In our staff we now have systems developers, illustrators, administrators in the production of Swedish sign language to Spreadthesign.com.

We have submitted a new project application for our new project - with the working title T3 - "text to sign." This will act as a sort of "Google translate" with text to signs. The project manager is Dennis Lennartsson.

The efficiency in the production has increased. Experience, studies and demographic surveys we contributed gives a picture of the needs that exist in the target group. This facilitates the process of seeking partnerships and sponsors as the cost can be clearly recognized for a country's national sign language and its availability.

In 2012, we received the support of Reach for Change, Swedish Institute, Jochnick Foundation and the EU's Leonardo da Vinci's program for lifelong learning.

This has helped to increase the number of partners and countries to several countries outside Europe.

ESLC has decided to develop business operations. Activities to develop products and services for next year has begun. This is in line with the 3-year plan of developed in collaboration with the R4C.

The work of search engine optimization has intensified and the number of visitors has doubled during the year to over 50 000 visitors per month. Its position as the world's largest sign language dictionary is stable so even setting up on Google's first page in both "sign language" and "sign language dictionary". Even a search on "sign" is on the first page. Production-wise, there are now +120,000 signs, which is double the quantity from last year.

Establishments are located in the following countries: USA, Austria, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, the UK, Ukraine.

Countries and cooperation:

One of the biggest events we had were the training days at Loka Brunn. Nearly 50 people from 14 countries visited Sweden to be trained by us in sign language documentation and communication. We had a couple of intense days. In three years, we will document 15 000 signs per country. We will focus a lot on the disseminations and information in all countries. Thanks to support from the

EU, we can, together with Örebro University, try to ensure the availability of a large part of Europe's sign language.

During the fall, Thomas Lydell has taken part of a conference in Rio, Brazil, where he held a lecture on Spread the sign. There he met people from their special education school who were interested in participating as partners of Spreadthesign in the future.

Response

During 2012, we received the following awards:

Best innovation

In competition with 404 candidates, Spreadthesign took home the prize in the category "Innovation". The prize was awarded by the Spanish Minister for Employment and Foundation Alares, working to combine work and family through social responsibility of citizens, businesses and institutions.

Best practice in 2012, the European Commission

Swedish development attention in Europe.

A Swedish further development projects within the Leonardo da Vinci program has been highlighted as particularly successful by the European Commission.

The project highlighted Spread the Sign and aims to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in education and employment.

The aim has been to facilitate the hearing impaired and deaf students in vocational school programs that do an internship abroad.

The project gets attention because it aims to improve the skills of people with special needs, says Marianne Feldt, officers at the International Program Office.

Statistics

Overall, we have had nearly 370,000 visitors and 170,000 unique visitors in 2012. We went from an average of 800 visits a day to the 1500.

Source: Google Analytics

8109 users downloaded our app.

42 510 children and young people visited and used Spreadthesign.com.

657 direct contacts with children.

Coaching of 64 parents.

6 lectures for 450 professionals who work with children.

1.175 million children receiver via radio and television.

66 important persons ministers, party leaders, decision makers.

Summary

We have had a lot to do during the year. We have got new partners in new countries and the association has grown - both in new facilities and new

employees. Finally, we have a great project for Spread the sign grant from the European Commission, which secures production to 15 countries for three years.



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