

FOSTERING INCLUSION, SUPPORTING PEOPLE, ADVANCING IN SOLIDARITY

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE DEAF 2017

30 September

FIAPAS MANIFESTO

A LAW OWNED BY ALL. AND FOR ALL

On occasion of the International Day of the Deaf and on the 10th anniversary of the adoption of Act 27/2007, which recognises Spanish sign languages and regulates the means for supporting the oral communication of the deaf, the hearing-impaired and the deafblind, the Spanish Confederation of Families of Deaf People (FIAPAS) seeks to bring its 2017 Manifesto to the attention of Society and of the Public Authorities.



On 23 October 2007 Act 27/2007 was adopted, recognising Spanish sign languages and regulating the means for supporting the oral communication of the deaf, the hearing-impaired and the deafblind.

In drafting this Act, **FIAPAS participated actively and effectively** in favour of all deaf people, convinced that regulations should **address present situations** but **should always look to the future**. A future in which, in this case, today's deaf children should be guaranteed access to all existing scientific, technological and learning advances.

WHAT THE ACT PROVIDES

Within the broad framework of this Act, which recognises that individual deaf people (not groups or organisations) as **rights holders**, whichever their choice of communication, may exercise their rights and fulfil their obligations as citizens on equal terms. At the same time, the Act ratified the rights that empower and protect us as parents in the existing legal order: the choice of our children's mother tongue as well as of the educational model and the language of instruction that we desire for them.

Among the different measures it establishes, Act 27/2007 guarantees that **people with deafness who communicate in oral language and are users of hearing devices (hearing aids and implants)** have available any medium that makes possible their independent living, inclusion and participation in their environment, making use of **means that support oral communication such as subtitles, magnetic loop, assistive listening systems or any other device that operates in connection with their hearing devices.**

The legislator took care to expressly enshrine the intention of referring to the “means that support oral communication” and not the means that support communication in general, wishing to specifically mention those that identify deaf people who communicate in oral language and to include them in the framework of this Act.

We consequently aspire to making Act 27/2007 a comprehensive standard for the different communication choices of deaf people, whether oral language or sign language, and to making it guarantee the different resources that every individual requires for having access to communication and information.

For all these reasons, at **FIAPAS WE DEMAND:**

- ☑ That the **regulatory development of the Act** be completed with the intended scope and equality in treating the different communication options, transferring this approach from the state-wide standard to the corresponding developments in the autonomous regions.
- ☑ The balanced and reasoned planning of the **budgetary allocation that should accompany the development and enforcement of the Act**, basing it on the analysis of needs, the identification of demands and on existing resources.
- ☑ That the mandates regarding the **funding and access to technical support for deaf people** be made effective.
- ☑ That the **double purpose of the Act** be communicated and made visible both in regard to deaf people who use sign language and to deaf people who communicate in oral language. Disregarding the latter blocks out more than 97 % of deaf people (INE, 2008) in our country, those who communicate in oral language and require means that support oral communication.

Only in this way will it become the Act we wanted for all. And is owned by all.

LET US FILL THE SILENCE WITH LIFE

LET THE WHOLE WORLD HEAR IT



**FIAPAS IS COMMITTED.
AND YOU?**

Prevalence of deafness in Spain

- In Spain there are more than one million people with a hearing impairment of varying type and degree. Of these, **more than 98 % uses oral language to communicate**. According to the INE (National Statistics Institute), 13,300 people employ sign language. (Survey on Disability, Personal Independence and Situations of Dependency. 2008 – INE)
- More than **97 % of deaf children is born to families with hearing parents**. (Gallaudet University Research Institute. United States. 2002)
- **Five out of every thousand newborns** present varying degrees of deafness, which in Spain amounts to almost **2,500 new families with a deaf child each year**. (Commission for Early Detection of Childhood Deafness (CODEPEH))
- 50 % of adolescents and young people between 12 and 35 years of age in more developed countries is at risk of presenting **hearing loss caused by overexposure to noise in a recreational context**. (World Health Organisation)
- **One out of every thousand people from the general population** will develop **hearing loss** in their lifetime.