

AI and Access: Promising for deaf communities?

🕒 Tue Jun 10 2025, 4:45pm - 6:00pm

☰ Calendar

COSP18

👤 Organizer

Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Belgium to the United Nations in New York

🕒 Format of the Event

👤 In-Person

📍 Location

Conference Room 12

📖 Description

This side event is organized under the second overarching theme, "Leaving No One Behind: Using AI as a Tool for Supporting Inclusivity to Strengthen the Participation of Individuals with Disabilities." Its primary focus is to showcase recent developments in accessible technology that utilizes AI in relation to sign languages, particularly addressing whether these technologies adequately meet the communication needs of deaf communities who use sign language. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in private businesses creating various AI-driven technologies, such as automatic captioning, sign language avatars, and sign language translation. However, many of these initiatives have been implemented without the direct involvement, consultation, or participation of deaf communities in the decision-making processes. We aim to answer the following questions: What ethical limits exist in creating and providing AI solutions for accessibility in sign languages? What is considered acceptable or unacceptable? To what extent are deaf communities involved in developing these accessibility solutions? What actions must key stakeholders take to ensure meaningful and binding participation of deaf people in designing and implementing these solutions?

Side Event Objectives:

1. To underscore the significance of accessibility in national sign languages, ensuring that deaf individuals can fully participate in UN processes and national decision-making.
2. To address the recent setbacks in accessibility and their impact on the rights of deaf individuals and their equal political participation.
3. To evaluate the new advancements and pros and cons of technological and AI-powered solutions for sign language translation.

4. To highlight the importance of collaboration with deaf communities (the "deaf gain") when working with private businesses, technology creators, and government representatives to ensure the development of inclusive and effective technological solutions for access in sign languages.

5. To promote collaboration among UN entities, Member States, and disability organizations to develop a sustainable and CRPD-compliant accessibility framework to ensure no one is left behind.

◎ UN Webcast

No Webcast

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