

Hearing impairment seminary draft

<http://www.who.int/disabilities/en/>

According to WHO (World Health Organization) 15 % of the world population are living with disability.

More than a billion people in the world today experience disability.

These people generally have:

- * poorer health,
- * lower education achievements,
- * fewer economic opportunities and
- * higher rates of poverty.

This is largely due to the barriers they face in their everyday lives, rather than their disability.

Disability is not only a public health issue, but also a human rights and development issue.

- * People with disability are the ones less reached by the gospel.

Especially people with hearing impairment have no access to sermons preached in churches or on the internet. People born with severe hearing impairment face more difficulties with reading than hearing people. Grammar in written and grammar in sign language are totally different.

<https://www.hear-it.org/hearing-loss-in-europe>

One in six suffering from hearing loss

Sixteen percent of adult Europeans suffer from hearing loss great enough to adversely affect their daily life.

In Europe, about 71 million adults aged 18 to 80 years have a hearing loss greater than 25 dB, the definition of hearing impairment recognised by the World Health Organisation, WHO. In the EU alone, the number of people with hearing loss is more than 55 million.

The data on hearing loss in Europe is reported in the scientific Survey, Evaluation of the Social and Economic Costs of Hearing Impairment.

Hearing loss affects every family. It has now been documented that one in six adults suffers from hearing loss and that only a fraction of those with hearing impairment actually use hearing aids.

Hearing loss in different countries

Some examples:

Germany: 10.2 million

France: 7.6 million

United Kingdom: 7.5 million

Italy: 7.2 million

Spain: 5.5 million

Poland: 4.7 million

The Netherlands: 2 million

most people with hearing impairment suffer some social, psychological and physical problems as a result of their hearing loss.

The psychological implications of hearing loss may include everything from:

- * shame and
- * problems concentrating to
- * depression and
- * low self-esteem.

Physical consequences may vary from

- * headaches and
- * tense muscles to
- * stress and increased blood pressure.

Furthermore, there are also social consequences which occur as a result of untreated hearing impairment, for

- * example isolation and
- * communication problems.

We all lose our hearing sooner or later.

[Hearing loss](#) is a natural consequence of getting older. Our hearing ability worsens from our 40s and onwards and when we reach our 80s, more than half of us suffer from significant hearing loss. Despite that, more than half of all hearing-impaired people are of working age.

Another common reason for hearing loss is exposure to noise.

We live in a noisy world. Noise may come from our work or from voluntary exposure to noise, such as noisy motors or loud music at rock concerts, night clubs, discos and from stereos - with or without the use of headphones. Also the increasing use of portable MP3 players are causing hearing damages. The players are capable of delivering high sound levels and the user risks exposing their ears to highly excessive dB levels. Read more about [noise and hearing loss](#).

Hearing loss may also occur as a result of disease, infections or drugs. It may be inherited or be a result of physical damage to the ears or serious injuries to the head.

Causes of sudden hearing loss

The causes of sudden sensorineural hearing loss vary widely. Among the many possible causes of sudden hearing loss are viral infections, tumours, traumas and drugs.

Causes of hearing loss in children

Hearing loss in children can be inherited or can be caused by illness or injury, or drugs such as certain antibiotics. Premature born babies have great risk to get visual or/and hearing disability.

Hearing loss are divided into categories. The most common categories of hearing loss classifications are mild hearing loss, moderate hearing loss, severe hearing loss and profound hearing loss.

Mild hearing loss

What is mild [hearing loss](#)? On average, the most quiet sounds that people can hear with their better ear are between 25 and 40 dB. People who suffer from mild hearing loss have some difficulties keeping up with conversations, especially in noisy surroundings.

Moderate hearing loss

What is moderate hearing loss? On average, the most quiet sounds heard by people with their better ear are between 40 and 70 dB. People who suffer from moderate hearing loss have difficulty keeping up with conversations when not using a hearing aid.

Severe hearing loss

What is severe hearing loss? On average, the most quiet sounds heard by people with their better ear are between 70 and 95 dB. People who suffer from severe hearing loss will benefit from powerful hearing aids, but often they rely heavily on lip-reading even when they are using hearing aids. Some also use sign language.

Profound hearing loss

What is profound hearing loss? On average, the most quiet sounds heard by people with their better ear are from 95 dB or more. People who suffer from profound hearing loss are very hard of hearing and rely mostly on lip-reading, and/or sign language.

Adapted from: European Group on genetics of hearing impairment. Martini A (Ed.), European Commission Directorate, Biomedical and Health Research Programme (HEAR) Infoletter 2, November 1996, 8.

The number of people with hearing loss is steadily increasing, according to several studies. The causes are our noisy lifestyle and increased age.

There are good reasons why we should learn to find ways to include people with hearing loss in our churches and everyday life.

Any ideas what could help us communicating with people who have some kind of hearing impairment?

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eye contact

beginning of conversation tell what subject you are talking about

this will help with lipreading for many words have the same mouth image. Only about 30% of a conversation is clear to read from lips, most words must be guessed from context. The difference of "b" and "p" and "t" "d" "F" and "V" "s" and "z" or "k" and "g or ch", "j" "sh" for example you can not see. To know the topic helps a lot to discern the words.

Example:"I love you" can easily be mistaken as: "olive juice" or "elephant shoes."

Try it out!

Clear sight to your mouth is important. Chewing something while speaking or a beard does hinder reading from lips

good light, too dark or if the deaf person is dazzled hinders him from seeing and understanding you

deaf people can not speak clear and often it's difficult to understand them. You can ask again and again or ask the deaf person to write down what he wants to say. Or if you have the feeling the deaf persson did not really understand you, ask him.

Speak slowly and clear but not too slow that makes your lips distorted while speaking.

don't get loud

a deaf person will not understand you screaming at him, it makes what you say only less clear and appears aggressive to him.

Use short sentences and easy language

use facial expression and show with your hands to make thinks more clear

In German speaking countries we have once in a while evangelistic events which are broadcasted from one big hall all over the countries and any church can take part and invite people to watch on a screen. This is also available with sign language interpretation. At a church in Linz, Austria those responsible for technical stuff used the opportunity and had the extra screen for sign language. Some deaf people came to faith and since then joined the church. What could they do now with

this deaf new believers? The Church can not afford sign language interpretation for every Sunday. They are now having someone typing everything with beamer so they can read and the deaf people explain to each other to fully understand.

SIGN LANGUAGE

For people with hearing loss, taking conversations is always connected with stress as they have to guess all the missing letters and words. This not seldom brings them in embarrassing situations.

One lady who is hard of hearing and can understand fairly well and speaks almost clear herself, explained this to me:

“After 30 Years trying to keep up with hearing and always sitting at the edge of the chair from strain to understand correctly, she got a mental breakdown and had to go to a clinic. After she learned sign language she had for the first time in her life the possibility to have relaxed conversations she could enjoy.”

Sign language for hearing impaired people is important and for the rest of us it is also enriching.

Sign language has its own grammar, is a three dimensional language using space, mimic, gesture, posture.

Example:.....

jokes: <https://www.bslzone.co.uk/watch/deaf-funny-programme-3/>

Spain signlanguage videos pixeled:

<http://resources.wycliffe.net/apps/stories/default.aspx?id=8390&pg=1&ml=eng&cl=eng>

<http://www.bibliaselsc.org/>