

## “Estonian Sign Language [eso] (A language of Estonia)

- **Alternate Names:** Eesti viipekeel, EVK, Viipekeel
- **Population:** 1,500 (Paales 2011). 4,500 users out of 1,600 deaf and 20,000 hearing impaired. 2,000 persons need regular help from interpreters (1998 U. Sutrop). 1,500 signers (2014 Estonian Deaf Association). 6,300 (2014 IMB).
- **Location:** Scattered, mostly in Tallinn and Pärnu.
- **Language Status:** 5 (Developing). Recognized language (2011, No. RT1, Language Act, Article 3(2)).
- **Dialects:** Some local dialects. The dialect in Pärnu is most archaic. Influences from Finnish [fse] and Russian Sign Languages [rsl].
- **Typology:** One-handed fingerspelling.
- **Language Use:** First deaf school 1866. Deaf associations. All ages. Also use Russian Sign Language [rsl].
- **Language Development:** TV. Videos. Dictionary. Grammar.
- **Other Comments:** Fingerspelling system unlike other European countries. Sign language interpretation service started 1996. Estonian Sign Language was first recognized in 2007. Systematic teaching and research since 1990 at Tartu University. (2014 Estonian Association of the Deaf). Sign language instruction for parents of deaf children in Tallinn.”

Lewis, M. Paul, Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.)

2015. Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Eighteenth edition. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

### Related Readings

Hollman, Liivi, and Urmas Sutrop

2011 Basic Color Terms in Estonian Sign Language. *Sign Language Studies* 11(2): 130-157.

Paales, Liina

2010 On the System of Person-Denoting Signs in Estonian Sign Language: Estonian Name Signs. *Sign Language Studies* 10(3): 317-335.

Hein, Kadri

2014 Switching Between Estonian Sign Language and Spoken Estonian in a School Environment. *Eesti Rakenduslingvistika Ühingu Aastaraamat = Estonian Papers in Applied Linguistics* 10(10): 91-106.

Paabo, Regina, Monika Fodisch, and Liivi Hollman

2009 Rules for Estonian Sign Language Transcription. *Trames* 13(4): 401-424.

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2013 Quantitative and Qualitative Aspects of Switching Between Estonian Sign Language and Spoken Estonian. *Eesti Rakenduslingvistika Ühingu Aastaraamat*.

Hollman, Liivi, Mari Uusküla, and Urmas Sutrop

2012. Basic Colour Terms in Five Finno-ugric Languages and Estonian Sign Language: A Comparative Study. *Eesti Ja Soome-ugri Keeleteaduse Ajakiri* 3(1): 47-86.

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2010 The Estonian Deaf Community. *Sign Language Studies* 10(3): 304-316.

Last Updated: April 13, 2015