



The Deaf of Austria The Austrian Sign Language Community

Austria has seven schools for the Deaf and numerous Deaf clubs. The national language of the country is German but many Deaf have trouble reading at more than a 3rd or 4th grade level due to a low vocabulary in German, which is a second language for them. Schooling is often dependent on good oral lip-reading skills and many Deaf struggle with understanding German and have a lack of vocational training, so can only find work in menial jobs. An additional difficulty is that Austrian Sign Language is not officially recognized nor is it recognized as a main means of communication. The country has a strong Roman Catholic influence, but many Deaf seem to be somewhat apathetic about religious things. This means that many Deaf and hearing in Austria are repulsed by institutionalized religion. The greatest need is for Deaf to understand God’s word and become believers who are grounded in their faith. There are only a handful of full time workers in the entire country working with the Deaf. The New Testament is in the process of being translated by a woman from Great Britain who has worked with the Deaf for many years but has a full time job working with the Deaf in an evangelical church. The process is very slow as there are only a few born again Deaf Christians in the whole country and these Deaf have families and jobs and it is very hard to find time to work on the Bible Translation.

Primary Religion:
 Non-religious

Disciples (Matt 28:19):
 Less than 3%

Churches:
 6

Scripture Status (Matt 28:20):
 Translation started

Population (date):
 8-10,000 (2010)



The Deaf of Austria

Have They Heard The Gospel?

Call Themselves Christian	Fewer than 15%
Believe In Jesus As God And Only Savior	Fewer than 3%
Prophet/Good Man, But Not God's Son	Fewer than 5%
Have Not Heard Who Jesus Is	Greater than 95%
Comment (Pastors)	Fewer than 1:100 (pastor ratio)
Comment	Missionary ratio is fewer than 1:100
Response To The Gospel	Most Deaf when they have had the opportunity have responded eagerly and almost immediately have had a desire to reach other Deaf that they know.
Number Of Churches	6
Is The Word Of God Translated?	The New Testament is in the process of being translated by a woman from Great Britain who has worked with the Deaf for many years but has a full time job working with the Deaf in an evangelical church. The process is very slow as there are only a few born again Deaf Christians in the whole country and these Deaf have families and jobs and it is very hard to find time to work on the Bible Translation. Deaf do have access to the whole Bible in German. German as the national language, which is a second language for most Deaf. Sign is the first and heart language for most Deaf. Availability of Scripture the heart language of sign In process, no complete book as of yet has been fully translated. There may be some videos with sermons or rough translations available but the entire New Testament is not available at this time.
Any Hindrance To Scripture Distribution?	No, religious freedom is allowed in this country. If the scripture is put in video form where there is no need for a literacy program, this will help in the receptivity of the Scriptures. The process of Scripture translation is very slow as there are only a few born again Deaf Christians in the whole country and these Deaf have families and jobs and it is very hard to find time to work on the Bible translation.
Forms Of Gospel Presentation Available	Literature and films/videos are available in German. The Jesus film has NOT been translated into Austrian Sign Language.
What Kind Of Missionaries Are Needed?	Missionaries who want to come along side of the current evangelical Deaf workers would be welcome. Training of leaders is a critical need. More Deaf workers to help in the translation process would be welcome.

The Deaf of Austria

Group Description

Countries Where People Group Lives

Country Name Austria

Population

The number of Deaf sign language users is 8 to 10,000 for 2010 according to the Austrian Deaf Association as reported by the European Union of the Deaf

Language & Linguistics

Primary Language

AUSTRIAN SIGN LANGUAGE

Second Languages

GERMAN

Comment

German is a second language for most Austrian Deaf.

Literacy

Comment

Few Deaf read German at more than a 3rd or 4th grade level

The Deaf of Austria

Status of Christianity

Religion & Response

Comment

Grace Baptist Mission is involved in Bible translation and church planting among Austrian Deaf. One expatriate worker, eight national missionaries, and fifteen local workers are engaged in ministry among Austria's Deaf.

Comment

There are Deaf churches in Vienna, Graz, Klagenfurt, Dornbirn, Worgl Rattersdorf and Linz. These are all interpreted ministries associated with hearing churches.

Items For Prayer

Need for workers for the Deaf to teach Chronological Bible Storying to reach the Deaf with the gospel.

Need for the translation project to proceed with plenty of help and resources.

Need for Deaf to become Believers and become grounded in their faith.

Need for Deaf pastors and workers to work with the Deaf.

Scripture

Translation Status

In Progress

Comment (Scripture)

Literature and films/videos are available in German. Some videos in Austrian Sign Language may be available. The Jesus film has NOT been translated into Austrian Sign Language.

Other Forms Of Gospel Available

Literature: Yes

Recordings: No

Film/Videos: Yes

Radio: No