



# European Speech and Language Therapists Manifesto 2024-2029



European Speech and Language  
Therapy Association

## The right to communication is a basic human right!

As a basic human right, the right to communicate is enshrined in international declarations and conventions, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Upholding this right is essential for promoting inclusivity, social justice, and democratic participation in societies worldwide. It underscores the importance of individuals being able to freely express themselves, seek and receive information and engage in meaningful interactions with others. This right encompasses various forms of communication, including verbal and nonverbal communication as well as written, visual, and digital forms.

By acknowledging communication as a human right, societies can strive towards greater inclusivity, equality and empowerment for all individuals, regardless of their communication abilities or disabilities.

## Speech and language therapists are essential!

Speech and language therapists are vital because they play a critical role in helping individuals overcome communication disorders and swallowing and feeding difficulties. They work with people of all ages who may struggle with speech, language, voice, feeding and swallowing, enabling them to improve their communication skills and quality of life. Additionally, speech and language therapists provide valuable support to individuals with neurological conditions, developmental delays, injuries or other health issues that affect their ability to communicate effectively. Through assessment, diagnosis, therapy, and counseling, they empower their clients to enhance their communication abilities, social interactions, academic performance and overall well-being. In essence, speech and language therapists contribute significantly to improving the overall health and functioning of their clients by addressing communication and feeding challenges comprehensively.

Empowering speech and language therapists in their unique role in promoting public health, enhancing education, facilitating employment and reducing healthcare costs, will foster equity and inclusion in society. **Support speech and language therapists caring for individuals with communication disorders and swallowing and feeding difficulties.**

**Speech and language therapists, also known as a logopedists, specialize in communication, voice, speech, language, hearing, feeding, and swallowing. They also address the social and cognitive dimensions of communication.**

## Promoting public health

Speech and language therapists play a crucial role in promoting public health by addressing communication disorders and swallowing and feeding difficulties. By supporting these professionals, governments can improve the overall well-being and quality of life of their citizens.

## Enhancing education

Speech and language difficulties can significantly impact a child's academic success. By providing support for speech and language therapists in schools, governments can help ensure that children receive the necessary interventions to overcome these challenges in a timely manner and succeed academically.

## Facilitating employment

Communication skills are essential for success in many professions. By investing in speech and language therapy services, governments can help individuals develop the communication skills they need to enter the workforce and contribute effectively to the economy.

## Reducing health care costs

Addressing communication and swallowing and feeding disorders early can prevent them from becoming more severe and costly to treat later on. By supporting speech and language therapists, governments can help reduce the long-term healthcare costs associated with untreated disorders.

## Ensuring equity and inclusion

Access to speech and language therapy services is essential for promoting equity and inclusion in society. Governments can support these services to ensure that individuals from all backgrounds and abilities have equal access to the resources they need to communicate effectively and participate fully in their communities.



**We call for your support to ensure that individuals with communication disorders and disabilities receive the treatment they need!**

**The European Speech and Language Therapy Association (ESLA) represents over 40.000 Speech and Language Therapists across 32 European countries. ESLA is the leading organisation representing the interests of the Speech and Language Therapy profession in Europe.**



[ESLAEUROPE.EU](http://ESLAEUROPE.EU)

ESLA aims to increase the visibility and awareness of Speech Language Therapy in Europe and beyond, by actively promoting the profession and safeguarding professional and educational standards.

[esla@eslaeurope.eu](mailto:esla@eslaeurope.eu)