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## THE LEGAL RECOGNITION OF SIGN LANGUAGES Advocacy and Outcomes Around the World Edited by Maartje De Meulder, Joseph J. Murray and Rachel L. McKee

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*Only a small number of the thousands of endangered languages are legally recognized or protected, but among them, the 19 sign languages discussed in this volume show how acknowledgement in national legislation reveals a significant advance in 21st century language management. This collection detailing the way this happened is a major contribution to the study of language policy.*

Bernard Spolsky, Emeritus, Bar-Ilan University, Israel

*Formal recognition campaigns have recently elevated the 140-year battle for Deaf children's rights to access their sign languages, cultures and Deaf educators to new levels of political discourse. The authors of this book have succeeded magnificently in illustrating current progress and highlighting some of the obstacles which remain to be overcome.*

Paddy Ladd, author of *Understanding Deaf Culture*

*This is a timely and important book. It provides the first comprehensive analysis of the growing legal recognition of sign languages internationally, as well as the wider social and political advocacy movements underpinning these developments. Drawing together deaf and hearing contributors, academics and activists, this volume traverses the fields of language rights, language policy, and sociolinguistics. Expertly curated, it will be an essential guide and benchmark for academic and legal discussions of sign languages for years to come.*

Stephen May, University of Auckland, New Zealand

*This book gives the reader a deep understanding of the complex process of sign language recognition. It serves as a wonderful source for those who plan to advocate for sign language recognition or who would like to improve the current status and legislation of sign language and rights of its users in their respective countries.*

Markku Jokinen, Finnish Association of the Deaf, Finland

### THE LEGAL RECOGNITION OF SIGN LANGUAGES ADVOCACY AND OUTCOMES AROUND THE WORLD



EDITED BY  
MAARTJE DE MEULDER,  
JOSEPH J. MURRAY AND RACHEL L. MCKEE

This book presents the first comprehensive overview of national laws recognising sign languages, their impacts and the advocacy campaigns which led to their creation. Each chapter is grounded in a collaborative writing approach between deaf and hearing scholars and activists involved in legislative campaigns.

Maartje De Meulder is Postdoctoral Research Fellow at the Namur Institute of Language, Text and Transmediality (NaLTT), University of Namur, Belgium. Her research interests include sign language policy and planning, sign language rights, family language policy, multilingualism and sign language maintenance and revitalisation.

Joseph J. Murray is Professor in the Department of American Sign Language and Deaf Studies, Gallaudet University, Washington, DC, USA. A trained historian, his work explores ways in which deaf people navigate their societies as sign language minorities.

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