

European Federation of Hard of Hearing People
Editor: Ulla Konkari Koski

April 2005

EFHOH president letter

Dear friends,

Some weeks ago we had our EFHOH AGM 2005 in The Hague, the Netherlands. It was special for me as EFHOH president, that the NVVS (my mother organisation) was the host. The programme was very good and it was also nice to see that so many people from across Europe had participated in the EFHOH AGM 2005. Special thanks to all the speakers for wonderful presentations. And I will say very much welcome to Jan Lamby from Sweden as the new general secretary of EFHOH.

International Mènière Federation (I.M.F.)

I will also say; Welcome to I.M.F. It was very fine that they were able to come to the EFHOH AGM 2005 in The Hague and give a presentation about what is I.M.F. and also in this EFHOH newsletter can you find more information about I.M.F. In the next at the bi-annual AGM in Croatia we will talk about the membership of I.M.F. of IFHOH. It is not possible for I.M.F. to be a member of EFHOH so that we will work together on European level.

FEPEDA

In January I had a very nice and good meeting with the FEPEDA board in Valkenburg (near Maastricht). It was good for me to see that FEPEDA and EFHOH have a lot of common targets, FEPEDA especially for hard of hearing children and EFHOH for the adults. We have agreed that we will cooperate on a new subject of telecommunication and of course we work in a good co-operation together on the subject subtitling. It is good to see that Guus Coenen, board member of FEPEDA is able to give a presentation about FEPEDA on the 2nd day of the EFHOH AGM in the Hague, the Netherlands.

Flanders

At the end of February Kees Twilt and I had a very nice meeting with our Flemish friends (for Kees and me also our neighbours). On Monday morning we had a meeting with most board members of "Onder Ons" ("Amongst Ourselves") in Antwerp. Onder Ons have their 50th birthday on the 23rd of April. It was good to see that a small organisation with just one employee, but with a lot of enthusiastic volunteers, can do a lot for hard of hearing people. I hope that this visit will be a new step towards a better contact with our members in Flanders (Belgium) and we hope that "Onder ons" and the NVVS in the Netherlands also will exchange more information and learn from each other.

Text messaging

EFHOH has commented on text telephoning in Europe to EDF and to the EU commission. We know that text phones in the EU generally are not interoperable across borders, and sometimes there are interoperability problems on one side. In the EFHOH opinion it is important to look to the new generation of telephones and networks. It is important that in EU member states and other European countries there will not appear any new borders amongst different (mobile) telephone networks operators.

Subtitling

On Thursday and Friday, the 17th and 18th of March I attended the 5th EBU Conference on Public Service Broadcasting. I was one of the participants in the panel discussion about Information for all. Mr. Phil Laven, EBU Technical Director, gave an introductory presentation on the question: "What could Public Service Broadcasting do for disabled people. Other participants of this panel discussion were Jean-Paul Philippot, General Manager of RTBF and Siegfried Bracke, Journalist of VRT, who was the moderator.

It was very nice that Mr. Giuliano Pirelli, European Commission Joint Research Centre, and Miss Gonzalez, European Disability Forum, also were present on this EBU conference and supported me in the discussion. Most of the time we expressed our opinion (the fact) that subtitling is expensive and that technically it is very difficult. Of course we know that subtitling is not cheap, but it is not too expensive when you look to the total of the cost of making a movie or television program, sometimes PR costs alone are higher.

From Pat McKenna, president of IHHA in Ireland, I received wonderful papers about the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland and the very good BCI Guidelines of Subtitling.

Also in this newsletter you find our comparison of Subtitling in different European countries. Please send me the up to date percentage of subtitling on television in your country.

I wish you all a very good spring and summertime!

Marcel Bobeldijk
President of EFHOH



Marcel Bobeldijk

European Comparison of Subtitling

Dear all, this is the EFHOH comparison about subtitling in the different European countries. When the information about your country is not correct please inform me what are the correct amounts etc. We like to have the up to date information about 2005 and the next years. When you miss your country on this list please send also information about your country to me. My email address is marbob32@hotmail.com lot of thanks of your support.

In the next EFHOH newsletter we will publish also this comparison of Subtitling in Europe with up to date information. I think it will be nice to follow the growing of the % amount in the European countries.

Marcel Bobeldijk

	COUNTRY	Subtitling at this moment	100% in Year?
	AUSTRIA	ORF = in 2003 2,751 hours	?
	BELGIUM	Flanders: 2003 2004 2005 2006 VRT = 35% 40% 45% 50% Commercial channel: VTM = 1 program VT4 = 0% KA2 = 0% Some regional Channels have subtitling as WTV and AVS.	? ?
	BULGARIA	No subtitling only one the national tv gives summaries on the news program at 19.30.	
	DENMARK	2002 DR1 = 16% TV2 = 4% Commercial channel DR2 = 18%	? ? ?
	FINLAND	YLE 1 = 20% YLE 2 = 20% MTV 3 = 5% Nelonen = 0 % SEBTV = 0%	? ? ? ? ?
	FRANCE	2003 2004 France 2 23% 30% France 3 14% 18% France 5 8% 10% TF1 21% 28% M6 7% 9% Canal + 3,5% 4,5% TOTAL 8.700 h 11.700 h	
	GERMANY	ARD = 10% ZDF = 10% WDR = ? Arte = ?	? ?
	Hungary	Public channel less than 1% MTV: on every days the daily news 19.30-20.00 and on Saturday evening a film in prime time. M2 = Duna TV: sometimes a program by digital text (subtitling). Commercial channel: RTL, Klub, TV2 and others: sometimes a program by digital text subtitling. Broadcasting via cable network: HIR TV (news television): running news flow. BBC prime time 40% (rough estimate).	
	Ireland	2004 2005 2006 2007 RTE 60% 70% 80% 90% TV3 60% 70% 80% 90% TG4 60% 70% 80% 90% Since 2004 80% at peak time	100% would not be a final target this leaves scopes for news flashes etc.

Latvia	Lot of films on television in Latvian language have Russian subtitling. Some films are in Russian with subtitles in Latvian. In the cinema are the most films in English with two languages subtitles Latvian and Russian.	
Lithuania	1 Public channel 3 Commercial channels but 0% subtitling. Maybe after 2-3 years some channels introduce teletext.	
Netherlands	Netherlands 1 = 53% Netherlands 2 = 53% Netherlands 3 = 53% Commercial Channels RTL 4 = 2% RTL 5 = 0% SBS6 = 0,5% Net 5 = 0% Yorin = 0% Veronica = 0%	2008 2008 2008 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010
Norway	NRK 1 = 50% NRK 2 = 50% Commercial Channels no such demands Channel TV 2 0%	2005
Slovenia	Slovenia 1 = 37% 24 hours Slovenia 1 = 55% 6 pm to 11 pm Slovenia 2 = 25% Slovenia 2 = 34% 6 pm to 11 pm	Since 25-04-2001 Slovenia has a Media law.
Spain	Public Channels (state) TV1-TV2 3.300 hours Regional Channels: TeleMadrid; 1.358 hours Television Catalana (TV3): 4.721 hours Canal Sur Andalucia: 1.324 hours Television Valenciana (Canal 9): 1.185 hours Euskal Telebista: 405 hours Commercial Channels: Telecinco: 2.347 hours Antena 3: 2.691 hours Digital Channels: Cartoon Network y Disney Channels: 40%	
Sweden	Public Channels SVT 1 and SVT2 = 43% Commercial Channels TV3 = 0% TV4 = 2% Channel 5 = 100% (but there are only a few Swedish produced programs in this channel)	? ? ?
Switzerland	All together = 2,671 hours In German = 1,264 hours In French = 795 hours In Italian = 611 hours	? ? ? ?
United Kingdom	BBC channels = 80% ITV1 = 90% Channel 4 = 90% Channel 5 = 80% Cable and satellite channels = Channels without exemptions must subtitle 60%, 5 years after 2003 Communications Act (or for future new channels when they start broadcasting) and 80% after 10 years.	2009 2010 2010 2008

Review of the Television Without Frontiers Directive

This article coming from the Focus on broadcasting policy issues in the EU March 2005 of EBU-UER:

European audiovisual policy requires clear, coherent regulation so that there is an effective guarantee of such general interests for society as access to information cultural diversity and the protection of minors.

The Television without Frontiers Directive is the cornerstone of European audiovisual policy and the regulation of audiovisual content. In the new digital environment a new approach to regulating audiovisual content is necessary. It is a major challenge to adopt a regulatory framework for television broadcasting and new interactive audiovisual services which is as coherent as possible, and a graduated approach may be required.

Technological developments make no change to the general interest objectives which have to be respected by all audiovisual services. The scope of the Directive, or a future instrument which replaces it, should not be limited to removing obstacles to the internal market for audiovisual services but should take clear account of such other general interest objectives as access to information, media pluralism and cultural diversity.

Access to information

Access to information requires that all citizens should be able to enjoy major sports and cultural events on free television and that broadcasters have a right to present to the public extracts regarding any event of high interest to the national society.

The basic human rights of freedom of expression and information gathering cannot be realized without guaranteeing access to such information. Such access should include the right to be informed of all events which – even if taking place abroad – are of particular interest to society. Consequently, Member States should ensure that virtually all their citizens can view major sport and cultural events on free television, while for events taking place on their own territory, news access should be available also to broadcasters from other Member States.

Production and distribution of European works

EBU Members make an outstanding contribution to original European audiovisual production and are committed to continuing to do so. Regarding the future of the European quota system and possible new measures to achieve underlying objectives, broadcasters autonomy over scheduling and budgetary matters needs to be respected. It is important to clarify the policy objectives and to take into account the different circumstances in various Member States as well as new industry structures.

Advertising

The principles of clearly identifying advertising and separating advertising from editorial content, as well as respect for the broadcaster's editorial independence, belong to a set of fundamental principles which, in the public interest, have to be applied to all forms of traditional and new advertising.

Advertising plays a vital role in sustaining free to air broadcasting in Europe including – in most countries – public service broadcasting. Broadcasters should continue to be able to use this source of funding, with due respect for the interests of viewers/consumers.

The Directive lays down a set of key qualitative rules, which need to be maintained and applied to all new advertising techniques. The introduction of any new form of advertising must respect the interests of viewers/consumers, the editorial independence of the

broadcaster and the integrity of the signal broadcast, as well as the integrity of audiovisual works. Consequently, no commercial communication must be inserted at any level (programme production, transmission or onscreen presentation) without the prior consent of the broadcaster, not least to avoid spoiling the viewing comfort of the audience. It is for these reasons that in May 2000 the EBU adopted a Memorandum on virtual advertising, to guarantee that the technique was used in a balanced way which was satisfactory for the viewer and that it was not inserted without the broadcasters knowledge.

Protection of minors

The principle of the protection of minors is a fundamental one which needs to be extended to all audiovisual services communicated to the public.

The protection of minors should be a priority in European audiovisual policy, especially regarding the development of electronic media, including the Internet. The protection of minors is a principle which has to be respected regardless of the nature of the medium or its form of transmission. It should not be considered only from a purely defensive standpoint (parental control techniques) but should also cover key positive measures such as quality programming for children and improving media literacy. The idea of common pictograms at the European level, akin to road signs, needs to be examined in greater detail; however, there should be no obligation on broadcasters to insert visual symbols throughout television programmes.

For further information see the EBU Contribution of 15 July 2003 on the review of the Television without Frontiers Directive (available at the EBU website www.ebu.ch under "Position Papers."

State of procedure:

Television without Frontiers Directive 89/552/EEC:

3 Oct 1989

Directive 97/136/EC:

30 Jun 1997

Communication on the future of European regulatory audiovisual policy:

5 Dec 2003

Commission interpretative communication on television advertising commission:

28 Apr 2004

Proposal for updating the Council Recommendation on the protection of minors and human dignity of 24 September 1998:

30 Apr 2004

Groups of experts and independent studies:

2004/2005

Next stages:

Proposal for revision of the Television without Frontiers Directive:

End of 2005

The next EFHOH newsletter is coming out in the beginning of September 2005

Do you want to contribute to this newsletter? Send the articles before 15th August 2005 to Ulla Konkari Koski. The address for EFHOH newsletter articles is: [puppana\(at\)gmail.com](mailto:puppana(at)gmail.com) (at) = @

EFHOH AGM in The Hague Netherlands, 7th-10th April 2005

This year the AGM was hosted by NVVS – the Netherlands HOH organization. The weekend was really successful and the facilities and arrangements were almost perfect. Only the temperature could have been a little bit higher.

Thursday 7th April was the arrival day – for the participants. For the EFHOH and IFHOH board members – the day was spent by the board meetings and making the final preparations for the AGM weekend.

On Friday 8th April there was a seminar, where were handled four important issues from HOH point of view: European NGO's & co-operation, television subtitling, HOH children education, and telecommunication. It is impossible to compress the contents of all the presentations to this short article, but we try to collect the presentations to the EFHOH website at www.efhoh.org.

The AGM meeting was held on Saturday 9th April. The AGM handled EFHOH annual report, financial & auditor's reports, budget, and action plan for 2005-2007. Marcel Bobeldijk and Ritva-Liisa Schädling were re-elected to the board and to the Monika Steorn's place as EFHOH's secretary was selected Jan Lamby from Sweden. Also a couple of presentations were given, but the most impressive one was the speech recognition subtitling demonstration given by Mr. Pirelli from Italy. Ms. Tatjana Biskupic invited EFHOH AGM in 2006 to the city of Dubrovnik, Croatia. In the Saturday evening there was dinner in the pier building by the sea.

On Sunday 10th April many of the participants traveled to the home via Amsterdam city.

Ulla Konkari Koski

International Ménière Federation (I.M.F)

The I.M.F. is a non-profit, international, philanthropic non-governmental organization, registered in Belgium as No. 17644/98. Its objective is to promote the interest of Ménière's patients and their families. The I.M.F. strives to fulfil this objective by:

- a) promoting and encouraging co-operation and interchange between the associations for Ménière's patients;
- b) encouraging research into the causes of Ménière disease;
- c) collaborating with national governments and organizations that promote the interests of Ménière patients;
- d.) encouraging scientific and pharmacological research into Ménière disease and encouraging Ménière's patients to collaborate actively with such research;
- e) instilling a positive attitude in Ménière patients toward themselves and the role they can play in society;
- f) encouraging society to have more understanding for, and to adopt a positive attitude towards Ménière's patients.

The International Ménière was founded in 1991 as an initiative of the Belgian Ménière Association. The Federation brings together the Ménière self help groups (worldwide) interested in exchanging ideas and views.

Every year we gather news from the member Ménière associations. This news is published in an I.M.F. Newsletter and sent to all the members.

In August 1994 Belgium organized the first I.M.F. conference in Brussels. In 1998 The Netherlands held the second International I.M.F. meeting in Utrecht. Denmark organized the third in June 2002 in Kolding. The next one will be organized by Norway in 2007.

Associated members are: Australia, Canada, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Italy, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, USA and more to come.

I.M.F. board: Chairman: Belgium, Vice-chairwoman: USA, Vice-chairman: Denmark, Secretary: Belgium, Treasurer: Netherlands.

I.M.F. Headquarters, Weikantstraat 9, 1800 Vilvoorde, Belgium

Phone/fax: +32 22676676

E-mail: info@meniere.be

Website: www.menieres-disease.net

HLF is now the biggest HOH organisation in the world

Turning into 2005, the Norwegian association of the hard of hearing outnumbered Sweden as the largest hearing organisation in the world. Out of a population of 4.6 million people, 37.000 are members of Hørselshemmedes Landsforbund (HLF). Jan Peter Strömgren, leader of the Swedish sister-association with 36.000 members, congratulates his colleagues in Norway.

Leader of the Norwegian association, Simon Bringeland, see the link between an increasing number of members and more influence on the political arena.

- We've achieved much for the case - regarding both rehabilitation and accessibility. But there are still important matters to solve, says Bringeland. He claims there are still lessons to be learnt from Sweden, for instance their efforts for hard of hearing in working life.

In 1905 the union between Norway and Sweden was split, and Norway became an independent country. Despite the 100 years jubilee in Norway, Bringeland and Strömgren focus on what the two Nordic countries can achieve together.

- We'll increase the work on international cooperation. The Scandinavian organisations are large and have a well-developed system for influence on disability politics. We should be a strong coalition in the international work for the hard of hearing

Trym Helbostad



Simon Bringeland

World Flight for Hearing

I met Johan Hammarström in IFHOH World Congress in Helsinki 2004. I was very impressed on his charisma and the plan to "conquer" the world flying the small aircraft. Johan has fought for the right to get the pilot's certificate from the authorities despite of his hearing loss. And now he has the certificate, and the next, much bigger challenge is called World Flight for Hearing:

"World Flight for Hearing is a unique round the world flight in a small single engine aircraft, initiated to draw attention to hearing impairment and to the technical aids that are available to assist hard of hearing people. Founder of the project is the hearing impaired Johan Hammarström, 27, that, despite his severe hearing impairment has managed to become an experienced pilot. Johan will together with his two friends Henrik Ejderholm and Martin Håkansson be the first pilot with a severe hearing impairment to complete a world circumnavigation in a small single engine aircraft. Johan is a living proof that with the right attitude and the right technical aids anything is possible, even with a disability."

What is the situation now? I interviewed Johan via e-mail:

What is the current status of your WFH-project?

We are right now signing a contract with our main industrial partner. We cannot tell you who this is yet, but we will be able to do that very soon. We are also planning activities with hard of hearing organizations in the world. As an example we will visit many hard of hearing schools. One of them is Casterberggard in Denmark where we will have speeches and other events with the students.

What kind of contribution you wish from the EFHOH member organisations?

We would like the hard of hearing organizations to look at this project as a "catalyst" for marketing their own organization and get more members and also increase the general knowledge about hearing impairment in their country. World Flight for Hearing is also a good way of putting showing the politicians that the technology is very important for a hearing impaired person to succeed. It is crucial that the government support the hearing impaired people - letting them access the right technology so they can contribute to the welfare of the country.

What is the most exotic place where you will visit during your trip?

I think one of the most challenging part of the trip are the long ocean passages as between Asia and USA. Also it is very "exotic" to visit hard of hearing organizations on the other side of the world such as Japan. I have heard they have reached very far in their society when it comes to good support for the hearing impaired.

Will you have a kind of charity work - e.g. collecting used and repaired hearing-aids and giving those in poor countries?

We will make it possible for people to donate money to specific research projects within the hard of hearing field. We have not decided yet what projects that will be but that will be decided in the next few months.

What kind of reception you wish from the local organisation, when your plane arrives to the airport? Accommodation, program, charity happenings etc.?

Of course we will appreciate accommodation :) Our visits will be focused on activities in the country such as a visit at a hard of hearing school but also on attracting media so they can write about the hearing impairment.

Ulla Konkari Koski

European Disability Forum News

Sources: EDF Pre& EDF Weekly Mailing, collected by Lillian Vicanek

Norwegian project on access to general elections and political activities for disabled people

The Delta Centre, which is the Norwegian National Resource Centre for Participation and Accessibility, is currently working on a project regarding equal opportunities for people with disabilities to take part in general elections as well as political work. Today, people with disabilities face problems because of inaccessible buildings where the elections take place. It is difficult for blind people to vote when ballots are not marked in Braille, for people of short stature or wheelchair users because the ballot boxes are too high up etc. The objective of the project is therefore to make guidelines for municipalities on how to ensure universal access to general elections.

The project has a timeframe until the general elections in Norway in the autumn of 2005. A second part of the project concerns equal opportunities for disabled people to run for elections and take political assignments because public buildings where political meetings take place are inaccessible, or information in accessible formats are not available and so on. This is in reality a violation of basic human and democratic rights. The time frame for this second part of the project is 2007.

The Delta Centre would be grateful for examples of good practice in other European countries concerning initiatives to make elections and political work accessible for all. We ask national contacts to provide us with such information in order to make our guideline as comprehensive and useful for disabled people as possible.

Information can be sent to the following address:

Rudolph Brynn
Rådgiver/Adviser
Sosial- og helsedirektoratet/Directorate for Health and Social Affairs Avdeling Levekår/Department for Public Welfare Postboks 7000 St. Olavs plass Ø N-0130 Oslo, Norway Tel. +47 24 16 35 39 Fax +47 24 16 30 01 Home page: www.shdir.no/deltasenteret

The Norwegian hard of hearing association HLF has been invited to participate in the project as experts on the problems hard of hearing people meet in order to get information before an election, to follow political discussions on television and to participate in political work.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION – European Commission issues country reports on the implementation of anti-discrimination laws

The reports on the implementation of anti-discrimination laws are already available on the Website of the European Commission in the following link:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/public/pubsg_en.htm

These reports are a detailed analysis of the measures taken by the member states to implement the anti-discrimination laws. The reports describe the legal frameworks of every country and the legislation applied for the implementation. At the same time a condensed summary of all the reports as well as thematic analysis are also available on the same section.

For more information please contact: javier.guemes@edf-feph.org

NON-DISCRIMINATION – European Commission to organise training sessions for NGOs

The European Commission is organising a series of thirteen national training seminars targeting NGOs combating discrimination, which will take place during 2005, one in each of the ten new Member States and the three candidate countries.

The seminars are aimed at providing knowledge of European anti-discrimination policy and building the capacity of the civil society to support the implementation of the new legislation.

A specific training manual will be produced for the seminars, which will be made available in all EU languages.

Further information is available on the European Commission non-discrimination webpage:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/fundamental_rights/index_en.htm

Report: TCAM meeting, DG Enterprise (Brussels, 9 March 2005)

TCAM: an EU group of the European Commission, EU Member States and Industry Stakeholders, formed under the remit of the Radio and Telecommunications Terminal Equipment Directive (1999/5/EC). It is the EU Committee responsible for monitoring and updating the Radio and Telecoms Terminal directive.

Discussion of agenda item to harmonise text telephony standards for deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired people. The European Disability Forum (represented by Sophie Beaumont) and the Royal National Institute for the Deaf (represented by Mark Hoda) were asked to make presentations.

A previous pre-meeting on 4th March rejected the idea of introducing a European Commission decision to harmonise landline PSTN telephony on the grounds that it is declining. RNID contested that many people continued to rely on landline phones and therefore they should be made compatible with new networks.

Decisions made
The meeting agreed that manufacturers should draft an action plan to map out how they will secure interactive text standardisation on new Internet based telephone networks. Manufacturers will introduce a draft report at the June TCAM meeting.

Furthermore, the meeting agreed to establish a working group made up of the Commission, some interested member states, industry and a range of disability groups to assist with the formulation of a set of disabled peoples user needs for new network telephony.

A meeting will be held with user groups to discuss their needs. It was agreed that as long a notice period as possible would be given to allow as many user groups as possible to attend (since the short notice for the TCAM meeting had prevented wider participation by disability groups).

(Report by Mark Hoda of RNID)

European Day of Disabled People: Commissioner Špidla committed to fight discrimination against disabled people

• Commissioner Špidla highlights the need for a legal framework to change mentalities, as well as the integration of a non-discrimination approach in all EU policies and funding instruments

• Yannis Vardakastanis, EDF President: mainstreaming needs a proactive approach. It means assessing all policies and measures from the point of view of disabled people. "Nothing about disabled people without disabled people" is the essence of democracy.

On 2 December, during his opening speech at the European Day of Disabled People Conference, new Commissioner on employment and social affairs, Vladimir Špidla said "This Commission is determined to have progress in a concrete and visible way. I am ready to co-operate and to find solutions to fight discrimination. Society must understand that diversity is richness, and people with disabilities are a reservoir of talent that needs to be recognised".

The European Disability Forum, which worked in close cooperation with the European Commission in the organisation of the European Day Conference "Creating the conditions to promote the employment of people with disabilities", welcomed the Commissioner's commitment to ensure the mainstreaming of non-discrimination measures on the ground of disability and the development of new legal instruments.

The Commissioner, addressing more than 200 experts in the field of employment, including key representatives from the European disability movement, social partners and EU stakeholders, announced the development of a global European Commission strategy to fight discrimination, starting in 2005. He particularly stressed the need to make a better use of existing tools to fight discrimination, such as the EU Structural Funds.

EDF President, Yannis Vardakastanis positively reacted to the Commissioner's statements highlighting that "Accessibility should be a pre-condition for funding and to ensure the full participation of disabled people. The EU should not allow any longer that public money is used to develop new barriers and to develop further exclusion in the EU 25".

NORWAY - National Documentation Centre for people with disabilities established in Norway

In early 2005 a National Documentation Centre will be established to increase knowledge on the situation of persons with disabilities in Norway. The Documentation Centre, or Observatory, is established by the Ministry for Employment and Social Affairs, and has appointed as chair Mrs. Anne-Margrethe Brandt, formerly Director of the State Council for Disability Affairs. She will lead a board of 9 representatives of research institutes, the civil service, the municipalities and organisations of disabled people.

A series of measures have been implemented to improve the situation for disabled people in Norway. The Minister for Employment and Social Affairs, Mr. Dagfinn Høybråten, comments that "we need better knowledge of how these initiatives work within the fields of education, the labour market and other important fields of society. The national documentation centre is established to strengthen this knowledge" he said. Every year the documentation centre will publish an annual report on the status for disabled people's situation. The Centre's work will be useful both for the user organisations, the public administration and the political decision makers in Norway. A Director will be employed early in 2005 and the Centre will be located at the Norwegian Social Research (NOVA).

National celebrations of the International Day of Disabled Persons

SWEDEN - The Swedish Disability Federation and the Swedish Disability Ombudsman organised joint conference. This year the Swedish Disability Ombudsman and the Swedish Disability Federation have together arranged a conference on the 3rd of

December. The theme of the Day was human rights and people with disabilities. In good co-operation the two parties have also recently arranged a series of seminars focusing on the new Swedish anti-discrimination legislation.

The 3rd of December was also the 10th anniversary of the Swedish Disability Ombudsman. This governmental authority was established in 1994 as a direct result of the United Nations adoption of the UN Standard Rules. The Disability Ombudsman himself, Lars Lööw, expressed his expectations for the future; that the development will lead to such an equal society that the Disability Ombudsman would have very little to do.

Berndt Nilsson, president of the Swedish Disability Federation, declared that finally we have a real shift of paradigm, matters concerning persons with disabilities are now accepted as matters of human rights.

The very first speaker was Calle Gustafsson, only 12 years old and representing the Disability Ombudsman's newly established Children's committee. Other speakers during the day was Bengt Lindqvist, former UN Special Rapporteur of the Standard Rules, Charlotte McClain from South African Rights Commission, Lars Blomgren, Undersecretary from the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and Malin Ekman Aldén, the General Secretary of the Swedish Organisations' of Disabled Persons International Aid Association.

The work with the new UN convention made persons with disabilities visible and made it possible for persons themselves to address their own issues in the UN, said Charlotte McClain. This process is not only taking place in New York, it includes a lot of countries and persons with disabilities all around the world.

Berit Andnor, Minister of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, highlighted that our national action plan for disability policy called "From patient to citizen" shows that persons with disabilities have both rights and obligations. The plan will be linked to legislation, to the work in parliament and it covers all levels in society. The Minister ended up by saying that all citizens have the right to our Swedish welfare system. That is a right, and not a gift.

eAccessibility Conference

**The Landmark Hotel, London
21 October 2005**

A major one-day conference on eAccessibility will be held in London under the auspices of the UK Presidency of the European Union, jointly organized by the DTI, RNIB, and RNID. The conference will consider items arising from the European Commission's communication on eAccessibility due to be published June 2005.

If you are concerned with eAccessibility, then this conference will be an invaluable opportunity to hear about the emerging issues, and to discuss and comment on proposals for the future. There will be participation from the 25 EU Member States, the EU Commission, disability and age groups, as well as representatives from the telecommunications, internet, broadcasting and IT industries.

To join the mail list to receive information about this important event:

Email: eaccessevent@mib.org.uk
Telephone: +44(0)20 7391 2087

Short overview on disability policy of the European Union with special regard to anti-discrimination legislation

Article written by Laszlo Lovaszy, University of Szeged, Hungary is now available in EFHOH website in www.efhoh.org

IFHOHYP Summer Camp in Czech Republic 6th-21st Aug 2005

Read more: <http://www.summertime2005.org>



Have a nice spring and joyful summer!