



European Federation of Hard of Hearing People

# EFHOH Annual Report

## 2017

## **EFHOH Mission**

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People represents hard of hearing people at European level in dialogue with the European Union, the members of the European Parliament and other European authorities.

Our aim is a Europe where hard of hearing people can live without barriers and have the opportunity to participate on all levels in society. EFHOH will realize this vision through our actions, contacts and campaigns, involving the EFHOH members and our partners. EFHOH has close connections to the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH).

## **THE MAIN TOPICS OF ACTION PLAN 2017**

1. EFHOH organised the Hearing Awareness Day 2017 in cooperation with the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA) and the European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals (AEA). Members of the European Parliament hosted this event. EFHOH will continue this cooperation.
2. Adaptation and implementation of the European Accessibility Act (EAA).
3. Adaptation and implementation of Article 7 (Accessibility) in the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD).

## **MAIN RESULTS FOR 2017**

- EP Lunch debate in cooperation with AEA - EHIMA - EFHOH.
- Implementation of the European Accessibility Act (EAA) in the EU Members' States.
- Adaptation and implementation of Article 7 (Accessibility) in the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD).

## **World Hearing Day Theme of 2017**

### ***Action for hearing loss: make a sound investment***

At this event in the EU Parliament during the celebration of World Hearing Day, EFHOH was represented by a full EFHOH board as well as many of our members. The event drew attention to the economic impact of hearing loss. You can find the link to the WHO campaign material below and the Lunch Debate in EU Parliament is mentioned on page 3. <http://bit.ly/2ItsUEf>

## **WHO World Hearing Day Geneva 2017**

In March, EFHOH vice president participated in WHO World Hearing Day in Geneva, Switzerland and represented HoH Europeans in WHO's important work on hearing loss issues.

## **RESULTS ON ACCESSIBILITY**

In 2017, the focus was on the final stages towards approval and implementation of the European Accessibility Act. EFHOH works closely on this topic with EDF.

EFHOH members are informed via emails, the EFHOH newsletter and the EFHOH website.

The EFHOH board throughout the year has given feedback to EDF concerning different proposals and drafts. EFHOH has participated in multiple hearings in the European Parliament and has participated in different EU conferences - most of them at joint events with the EDF board meeting and the EDF AGA.

The update of the *state of subtitling* is scheduled to be carried out in 2018. In 2018, we hope to have closer contact and dialogue with the European institutions.

In 2017, the EFHOH board had contact with the EU Parliament Disability Intergroup and participated in some of their meetings.

EFHOH is also an active member of the EDF ICT Expert Group.

## RESULTS RELATED TO ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE

EFHOH president is a member of the EDF Expert Group on Public Transport supporting EDF with the revising of different drafts. The focus in 2017 was on rail accessibility for passengers.

## ACCESSIBLE TELECOMMUNICATION AND ICT FOR HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE ACROSS EUROPE

### Results in 2017:

- EFHOH vice president and telecommunications expert Arnoud van Wijk worked with the EDF ICT Expert Group on the implementation of the European Standard EN 301 549 - *Accessibility Requirements suitable for public procurement of ICT products and services in Europe*.
- EFHOH vice president participated in the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) meetings in Geneva and Macau to provide input on accessibility for hard of hearing people.
- Continued our work in relation to spectrum interference which has potential to affect hard of hearing people using hearing aids, cochlear implants and ALDs.

EFHOH vice president is a permanent delegate to G3ict for **ITU-T Study Group 16** enabling EFHOH to participate in the meetings. A new standard on remote captioning is being developed and new work is being initiated on recommendations concerning the safety of PAPS and audio augmenting devices.

### ASBU in Tunis

At the invitation of the Arab States Broadcasting Union (ASBU) and the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), EFHOH participated in a joint conference of the organisations in Tunis. We have presented the specific needs of hard of hearing people when it comes to watching audio-visual content on TV or online.

EFHOH is supporting this consortium in developing a "roadmap" on accessibility development in the region.

## **GOOGLE Brussels**

EFHOH is active in the EDF ICT Expert Group.

The group met with the team at the Google headquarters in Brussels to discuss different aspects of accessibility for PwD and ICT developments including AI. EFHOH aimed to bring issues to Google's attention concerning YouTube automatic captioning and telecoil compatibility with the Pixel mobile phone. The communication with Google will continue.

## **STRATEGY ON REHABILITATION**

**The EFHOH member-organisation countries shall offer rehabilitation to hard of hearing people**

### **Results in 2017:**

- We undertook a survey that asked members about the reimbursement of hearing aids; the findings will be released in 2018.
- We conducted a new survey on late deafened people in Europe; the report will be released in 2018.
- EFHOH also worked during this period for better implementation of the European Standard on Services offered by Hearing Aid Professionals and continued our work with the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA) and the European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals (AEA).
- EFHOH participated in a stakeholder workshop organised by the WHO and supported work on prevention and awareness of hearing loss issues.
- EFHOH is now one of the partner organisations in a major European research project **TIN-ACT** (Tinnitus Assessment Causes Treatment). EFHOH and Tinnitus Liga are participants in this project. The University of Groningen in the Netherlands

will be coordinating this project together with seven other institutions in Europe. The European Commission has pledged to fund almost € 4 million from the Horizon 2020 programme for this research project. It will last four years (2017-2021).

#### **4<sup>th</sup> International Accessibility Conference - Future Loops**

EFHOH participated in the International Accessibility Conference held in Berlin, Germany in cooperation between Deutsche Schwerhörigenbund (DSB) and the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH). At the end of the conference, a statement was signed by the DSB President Harald Seidler, IFHOH President Ruth Warick, and EFHOH President Marcel Bobeldijk.

#### **European Day of Persons with Disabilities**

This event took place in December and was celebrated in the EU Commission in Brussels. The focus was on *Citizenship*; the rights of EU citizens, the question of political participation and the right to independent living. Additionally, the possibility of living in a fairer and more inclusive environment was also discussed.

Link to more information: <http://bit.ly/2FM49kl>

#### **4<sup>th</sup> European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities: Disability Rights at the Heart of the European Union**

This event coincided with the European Day of Persons with Disabilities. Around 800 participants from the EU member countries attended. EFHOH President Marcel Bobeldijk gave a presentation on the needs of HoH people with a special focus on the need for Speech To Text which unfortunately was of a very poor quality at this event.

Link to more information: <http://bit.ly/2AX1MMX>

## STRATEGY ON ORGANISATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Encourage more European states to have a national federation for Hard of Hearing People. Maintain and develop partnerships with other European Organisations and cooperation with European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness.

### Results in 2017:

- EFHOH president was in 2017 member of the EDF ICT expert group.
- EFHOH participated in different Platform meetings.
- EFHOH president participated in the IFHOH board meetings.
- Maintained good contact with the European Federation of Tinnitus Association (EUTi).
- EFHOH board member participated in the IFHOHYP AGM.
- EFHOH continued our contact with EHIMA (European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association) and AEA (European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals).
- EFHOH participated in the Late Deafened event(s) and have good contact with national / regional Late Deafened organizations and workgroups.

In 2017, EFHOH did not succeed in doing any awareness workshops in European countries. However, we have welcomed one new associate member association and one new individual member.

Throughout 2017, we had some Platform Meetings and the partnership and cooperation with Euro-CIU, EDDB, EUD and EUDY have been maintained. The EFHOH president participated in the IFHOH board meeting in Berlin and several Skype meetings during 2017.

## **AEA Symposium**

EFHOH vice president presented our views in relation to sales of personal sound amplifiers (PSAPs), and consumer safety in order to have the market regulated. EFHOH successfully lobbied European institutions together with AEA to adapt a new Medical Regulation.

**Euro-CIU Conference** took place in Helsinki, Finland and EFHOH board member participated.

**EFHOH AGM and Conference** was held in London in May in cooperation with the NADP. The theme was *Staying connected, informed and empowered*.

## **WHO Stakeholder's Meeting in Geneva**

The meeting followed the adoption of the World Health Assembly resolution on prevention of deafness and hearing loss. EFHOH participated in the consultation and ensured our involvement in further developments including the development of the World Report on Hearing.

Read the resolution here: <http://bit.ly/2DBL6rJ>

## **Lisbon, Portugal**

This was the first ever joint meeting of a round table with hearing care professionals in Portugal. We supported the AEA in their efforts to have all hearing care professionals regulated. EFHOH plays an important role in being the voice of hard of hearing people and reiterated the importance of consumer confidence and safety. The discussions are ongoing but a positive step forward was taken to bring deregulation to an end.

## **EVOTION**

Advisory Expert Group's first meeting took place and EFHOH vice president was an invited expert to the group. We advised project members on the views from a hard of hearing people perspective to establish strong links with researchers working in the field of hearing loss.



## IFOS

EFHOH vice president chaired a session on the economic impact of hearing loss at the IFOS conference in Paris, France.

## WHO/ITU Safe Listening Initiative

EFHOH worked closely with both agencies on the "Safe Listening" initiative to provide direct contributions to the development of new guidelines for safe listening devices/ systems.

WHO prepared a resolution on the high cost for the individual as well as society on the growing numbers of people with hearing loss due to unsafe levels of music sound.

Read the resolution here: <http://bit.ly/2DBL6rJ>

## Audiologist of the Year 2017

The annual "European Audiologist of the Year" celebrated its 10-year anniversary in October at the 2017 EUHA Congress in Nuremberg, Germany. EFHOH is a sponsor of the competition. British audiologist, Robert Beiny, received the award. EFHOH is a member of **hear-it.org** and participated in the **Hear-It AGM** in Nuremberg, Germany.

## STRATEGY ON YOUTH

### Results in 2017:

- IFHOHYP president on behalf of EFHOH was elected a member of the **EDF youth committee**.
- **EFHOH** continued to invite **IFHOHYP** to EFHOH board meetings for updates and continuing cooperation.
- **IFHOHYP AGM** was held in Helsinki, Finland in 2017 and an EFHOH board member participated. There were also new elections. See more at [www.ifhohyp.org](http://www.ifhohyp.org)

## EFHOH STRATEGY ON PUBLIC RELATIONS

### Results in 2017:

- EFHOH relaunched the website [www.efhoh.org](http://www.efhoh.org) which was newly redesigned in 2017. The relaunch was carried out by our EFHOH volunteer and EFHOH board member in cooperation with our partners at Hear-It AISBL [www.hear-it.org](http://www.hear-it.org).
- EFHOH published 3 Newsletters in 2017. You can find them here: <https://www.efhoh.org/newsletter/>
- EFHOH Impact Report 2016: <https://www.efhoh.org/about-efhoh/resources/>
- EFHOH has both a Group and a Page on Facebook. Please follow, join and like us on Facebook. EFHOH is also active on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/efhoh>

EFHOH board members have promoted EFHOH and the needs of people with hearing loss throughout the year by giving presentations at different events, writing articles, granting interviews and participating in public debates.

## STRATEGY ON FUNDRAISING

### Results in 2017:

- New sponsor - **Cochlear**.

## EFHOH AND MEMBERS

### EFHOH Annual General Meeting (AGM) and Conference

The EFHOH Annual General Meeting 2017 was held in London, UK. 15 delegates from 15 members and one individual member participated in the meeting on May 5th. The Annual and Financial reports as well as the Auditors Report were all accepted.

## **New members**

EFHOH is pleased to welcome Dutch Stichting Plotsdoven as a new general member and an individual associate member from Ireland.

One general member, HLI (Hearing Loss Ireland), left EFHOH.

## **Elections**

Interim treasurer, Ritva-Liisa Schädling, completed her term. Both President Marcel Bobeldijk and Secretary General Aïda Regel Poulsen, were candidates for re-election and were re-elected.

The results of the elections are as followed:

President: Marcel Bobeldijk, the Netherlands.

Secretary General: Aïda Regel Poulsen, Denmark.

Treasurer: Darja Pajk, Slovenia.

The election of the Nomination Committee 2017 was also carried out. Zdravka Bastijan, Croatia, was elected new chair of the nomination committee.

Petra Feinkohl, Germany, was again appointed to the office of Auditor.

Marie Denninghaus, EDF transport and Mobility Officer, introduced the EDF work on the EAA (European Accessibility Act) within AVMSD (Audio Visual Media Services Directive), EEC (European Electronic Communication Code), EAA (European Accessibility act) and public transport.

HLF (Norwegian association) brought forward a motion now called the *London Declaration 2017: Hearing loss on a political agenda and in population surveys in Europe*. See the London Declaration 2017 here: <https://bit.ly/2G4Flz3>

The day after the AGM, NADP hosted a conference: “Staying Connected, Informed and Empowered” with over 130 delegates.

Dr. Laszlo Lovaszy, member of the UNCRPD Committee, presented a report on *Technology and Ethical Issues*.

Andrea Saks, Chairman of the ITU JCA-AHF gave a historic overview on the development of technology from past to present.

Sarah Herrlinger from Apple presented Apple’s initiatives on accessibility for hard of hearing people.

David Bradshaw (DTG) presented 'Involvement of users representatives at Digital TV Group Accessibility Workgroup'.  
 Gareth Ford-Williams presented the BBC work on Accessibility.  
 Søren Hougaard, EHIMA General Secretary, presented an overview of hearing aids now and in the future.  
 Brian Lamb (Alliance on Hearing Loss and Deafness) presented an Action Plan on Hearing Loss.  
 EFHOH vice President Lidia Best presented a report on a survey into deafened people's experiences in Europe.  
 AEA President, Mark Laureyns presented 'Quality of hearing care matter'.  
 In the evening there was a Gala Dinner at the Ambassadors Bloomsbury Hotel.  
 For the direct link see EFHOH Newsletter, July 2017:  
<http://bit.ly/2pn1Y17>

## FINANCIAL REPORT

In 2017, the position of treasurer for EFHOH changed hands. Many thanks to Ritva-Liisa Schading for her work as interim treasurer and for her past role of treasurer over the years. She transferred her obligations over to Darja Pajk.

The report on the financial situation of 2017 is as follows:

Incomes in the year 2017 were **16.408,01 €**

Membership fees from our members and sponsors	15.830,00 €
Extraordinary incomes	578,01€
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	16.408,01 €

The amount of all expenses in total was **16.185,35 €**

EFHOH AGM and Conference May 2017 in London	3.919,70 €
EFHOH board meetings	6.477,71 €
Participation in conferences, meetings in Brussels;	

The EU Commission, EU Parliament, Platform Meetings,  
and transferring of treasurer's work 3.791,33 €

Other expenses as follows: EDF membership fees,  
office address, website, administration costs,  
and bank charges.

1.996,61 €  
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16.185,35 €

Funds for our work stem from membership and sponsorship fees from 25  
General Members, 3 Associate Members, 3 Sponsor Members, 5 Gold  
Sponsors, and 2 Individual Associate Members.

## IFHOH

EFHOH has close cooperation with the **International Federation  
of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH)**.

The president of EFHOH, Marcel Bobeldijk, is by constitution a  
permanent member of the IFHOH board.

More information about IFHOH: [www.ifhoh.org](http://www.ifhoh.org)

## IFHOHYP

**The International Federation of the Hard of Hearing Young  
People (IFHOHYP)** held their AGM in Helsinki, Finland in the  
autumn of 2017.

More information about IFHOHYP: [www.ifhohyp.org](http://www.ifhohyp.org)

## EFHOH MEDIA AND INFORMATION

### Newsletter

Three issues of the Newsletter were published in 2017. The editor (volunteer) is Niels-Henrik M. Hansen (Denmark). The number of recipients on the EFHOH mailing rose over 500 through 2017. The Newsletter remains the best source for reports and information on events and advocacy work. Most of the events covered in this report can also be found in the Newsletters.

### Website

The EFHOH website was relaunched and redesigned in 2017 by EFHOH volunteer Bryan Bong and Søren Petersen of Hear-It AISBL. The project was overseen by Board Member Juha Hietala. The new website is sponsored by [www.hear-it.org](http://www.hear-it.org). Bryan Bong (The Netherlands) is the EFHOH webmaster. Visit us @ <https://www.efhoh.org>

### Facebook

The number of followers on the EFHOH Facebook page has risen to 464 people. The link is: <https://www.facebook.com/EuropeanFederationOfHardOfHearingPeople/>

### Twitter

EFHOH has a Twitter account with over 300 followers. As with Facebook, it is increasingly important to be visible on social media platforms. You can follow us @efhoh, @marbob32, or @best\_lidia.

## **MEMBERS, THE BOARD AND OFFICE**

### **Members**

By the end of 2017, EFHOH had 28 members, 3 Associate members, 6 gold sponsor members and 3 sponsor members. We also have 4 individual members from Greece, Cyprus, Spain and Ireland. In addition to the members, EFHOH has several persons of contact from countries where a hard of hearing organisation has not yet been fully established.

### **The Board**

The following people were members of the board in the year 2017:

President: Marcel Bobeldijk (The Netherlands) - elected 2017.

Vice-President: Lidia Best (UK) - elected 2016.

General Secretary: Aïda Regel Poulsen (Denmark) - elected 2017

Treasurer: Darja Pajk (Slovenia) - elected 2017

Member: Juha Hietala (Finland) - elected 2016

### **2017 Board Meetings**

February: Brussels, Belgium

May: London, UK

October: Berlin, Germany

### **Office**

During 2017, EFHOH continued with an internship to support the joint work of EFHOH and Action on Hearing Loss (AoHL) in the United Kingdom.

EFHOH board has decided to discontinue the internship and extends thanks to all interns for their valuable work. We would like to thank Action on Hearing Loss for their support for EFHOH.

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## ANNEXES

### Annex 1

List of General members; associate members; Gold sponsors and sponsoring members as well as individual members as per 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

<b>General Members (28)</b>	<b>Country</b>
Österreichischer Schwerhörigenbund	Austria
Vereniging voor Hardhorenden "Onder Ons"	Belgium
Hörgeschädigte Ostbelgiens VoG	Belgium
Hrvatski Savez Gluhih I Nagluhah - HSGN	Croatia
Svaz neslycicich a Nedoslychavych v CR	Czech Republic
Ceskomoravska unie neslycicich z.s.	Czech Republic
Høreforeningen	Denmark
Eesti Vaegkuuljate Liit	Estonia
Kuuloliitto r.y.	Finland
Svenska Hörselförbundet rf.	Finland
Bureau de Coordination des Ass. de Devenus Sourds et Malentendants	France
Deutscher Schwerhörigen Bund e.V.	Germany
Deutsche Tinnitus-Liga e.V.	Germany
HFD - Hellenic Federation of the Deaf	Greece
Siketek es Nagyothallok Orszagos Szövetsege	Hungary
Nagyozhallók 's Barátaik Országos Közhasznú Egyesülete - NABOKE	Hungary
Heyrnarhjálp	Iceland
Nederlandse Vereniging voor Slechthorenden	Netherlands



Nederlandse Federatie van Ouders van Slechthorende kinderen en van kinderen met Spraak-taalmoeilijkheden  
Netherlands

Stichting Plotsdoven

Netherlands

Hørselhemmedes Landsforbund

Norway

Polska Fundacja Osób Słabosłyszących

Poland

Zvesa Drustev Gluhih in Naslugnih Slovenije

Slovenia

Hörselskadades Riksförbund

Sweden

VIS - Vuxendöva i Sverige

Sweden

pro audito schweiz

Switzerland

National Association of Deafened People

United  
Kingdom

Action on Hearing Loss

United  
Kingdom

### **Associate Members (3)**

### **Country**

Udruga gluhih i nagluhih osoba "Svetlost" - Solin

Croatia

Internationaler Verband für Schwerhörigen-Seelsorge e.V.

Germany

forom écoute la Fondation Romande des Malentendants

Switzerland

### **Sponsor Members (3)**

Oticon A/S

Denmark

Humantechnik GmbH

Germany

Sonova AG ex Phonak AG

Switzerland

**Gold Sponsors (5)**

Cochlear Limited	Australia
GN ReSound A/S	Denmark
SIVANTOS GmbH former Siemens Audiologische Technik GmbH	Germany
Amplifon	Italy
Bernafon AG	Switzerland

**Individual Associate Member-s (4)**

Kalia Nicolaou	Cyprus
Sofia Kolotourou	Greece
Fluvià Artells Campañá	Spain
Freda Kenan	Ireland

## **Annex 2**

### **EFHOH Facts and History**

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing – EFHOH – was created as a legal entity and as an independent organization on March 2001 in Budapest, Hungary.

EFHOH is a benevolent federation of the European national organizations of hard of hearing people. The organization was registered in the Register of Commerce in Utrecht, the Netherlands, on 18 November 2001. EFHOH is the only European organization that represents all the 81 million hard of hearing adults (1 in 7 Europeans) in geographical Europe.

Its mission is to promote accessible communication, accessibility within the travel and the built environment and to raise awareness of the problems of hard of hearing people in society.

EFHOH has full membership as a European Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)

In the European Disability Forum – EDF – with the right to representation in the Annual General Assembly.

### **Contact information**

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