



EFHOH PRESIDENT LETTER

PAGE 4



WORKSHOP ON THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD)

Page 10



WORKING IN THE PEDIATRIC AUDIOLOGICAL FIELD INTERNATIONALLY - A PHONAK SEMINAR IN DENMARK

Page 14



EFHOH President letter

Dear Members and EFHOH newsletter readers,

I hope that all of you are ready for a nice summer with a lot of time to relax and read a good book or to go for a nice walk in nature. This way you can receive some inspiration for all your activities in your organisation after the summer holidays.

Before we as EFHOH go on summer vacation, we had a busy period of various meetings and participated in some conferences.

Our secretary Aida Regel Poulsen and our treasurer Darja Pajk represented EFHOH at the Hearing Across the Lifespan (HeAL) 2018 conference in the north of Italy. You can read more about the conference in the EFHOH newsletter.

In this EFHOH summer newsletter, you can also find different articles that give you an impression of where we as the EFHOH board represent Hard of Hearing People at the European level. We as the EFHOH board are very interested in your activities so feel free to write an article for the EFHOH newsletter about the events in your country. Also, feel free to give a presentation at the next EFHOH AGM 2019 on the first weekend of April in the beautiful capital city of Zagreb in Croatia.

EFHOH AGM 2018

It was nice to be in Ljubljana, Slovenia for the EFHOH Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2018. Thanks to the staff of the Slovenian organisation for deaf and hard of hearing people for organising this informative and interesting event. We started the event with the IFHOH UN CRPD workshop



and it was great to meet the group of hard of hearing people from Bolivia. We also thank all the sponsors who made this event possible.

At the AGM, we had to say thank you and goodbye to Juha Hietala (Finland) who served a two-year term as our board member. His work focussed on the EFHOH Impact Report and he oversaw the development of the new EFHOH website.

New on the EFHOH board is Morten Buan (Norway) as our new board member and Lidia Best (UK) was re-elected as vice president for the period 2018-2020. We wish both of them success in their work for EFHOH.

EDF News

CONGRATULATIONS ANA!

Ana Peláez Narváez is the first woman with a disability elected to the U.N. Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women. EDF and their members are very happy to announce the election of Ana as a member of the U.N. Committee on the elimination of discrimination against women. She is the first woman with disabilities ever to be elected as a member of this committee, which has existed for 37 years. We as the EFHOH board welcome her election as a very positive step which brings "Nothing about Us without Us" closer to reality.

Other news about EDF including the EDF AGA 2018 in Vilnius can be read in one of the articles in this EFHOH newsletter. New at this EDF AGA was that people at home had the possibility to follow the event via live web stream and of course with subtitling. It was also possible to follow this event in our native language (Aïda in Danish and for me in Dutch). A great example of innovation and a very welcome benefit for all people at the EU conference and at

the EDF AGA. It was an exemplary example of how public events can be and need to be accessible for hard of hearing people.

IFHOH News

At the beginning of June, IFHOH president Ruth Warick and IFHOH vice president Avi Blau participated in the 11th session of the conference of states parties to the UN CRPD at the UN Headquarters in New York. EDF was also present at this conference. This conference is held every year and takes stock of the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). The theme this year was "Leaving no one behind through the full implementation of the CRPD".

Follow Us

On our website, you can find a lot of information and for our members, we also have a special for members section. Please contact us if you have problems logging in. Visit us at www.efhoh.org.

Save the Date

It is good to make a note in your calendar:

- 6 March 2019 The Lunch Debate in the European Parliament in Brussels
- 5-7 April 2019 EFHOH AGM in Zagreb, Croatia

Dear members and all the EFHOH newsletter readers, we as the EFHOH board hope that you all have a nice and sunny summer holiday and that you start with new energy and new ideas.

Warm regards,

Marcel Bobeldijk.



The HeAL2018 - a conference *about* hearing loss - with *no adaptation* for people with hearing loss

The organizers stated on their website "that the conference becomes the place where a broad community investigating all components of hearing care across the lifespan can work together to merge contemporary research findings with cutting-edge clinical practice."

Topics at the conference were varied. Organizers stated that traditionally the central themes focused on the screening and early identification of hearing loss. However, it should not only focus on the newborn or children but

also across the lifespan. As part of these lectures, we heard about risk environments for populations, the design and application of methods, techniques, and devices for hearing and screening. The lectures discussed policy issues as well as intervention and rehabilitation. There were some very interesting lectures about the view of professionals focused on HA users and family-centered care for people with hearing loss as well as the further need of knowledge concerning the use of ALS (Assistive Listening Systems).



The two authors at HeAL.

Some lectures were focused on intervention and rehabilitation strategies such as the adaptation of hearing devices such as hearing aids or cochlear implants as well as other tools used to amplify hearing. There were many topics about medical issues concerning hearing loss and speech and language development as well as the impact of hearing disorders on communicative, psychological, social and family lives. The focus was very much on e-Health.

Many studies were done, and researchers presented different methods to assess listening effort and many of them were interesting studies on the question of how behavioral, subjective, and physiological measures relate to each other. And, how all the studies can be transferred to real-life settings or situations. Some lectures were focused on listening effort and problems with different devices in different situations. Interesting and important topics were linked under one heading - the epidemiology of hearing loss with themes concerning a change of hearing status over the lifespan and possibilities of pathways between hearing loss and other diseases as well as psychosocial health. As EFHOH, we introduced ourselves with our Impact Report 2017 for all of the representatives to learn about EFHOH as an important partner in adapting to this particular environment.

The conference was well organized, but on the other hand, it was very saddening that at this very conference that there were so many professionals that claim that they understand what hearing loss is and want to cooperate with clients, however, there were no accommodations such as induction loops or Speech To Text (STT) reporters for the hard of hearing. The sound system and technical support for presentations were very good, but this does not outweigh the ignorance regarding the necessary adjustments for CI and/or HA users. For me, this is a very strong indicator, that there is still a misunderstanding of what hearing loss is and what it is like to live with it.

Living with hearing loss and understanding it in everyday life is largely neglected. We want to live normal lives and participate in all aspects. It was important for EFHOH, representing people with hearing loss, to participate and present the aspect of the user's experience and highlight the problems that we encounter in everyday life. Many times, the human aspect of the audiological treatment is forgotten. In any case, it is necessary that we as users of hearing aids and implants become more visible and participate in these events now and in the future.

It was also nice to meet representatives from different companies of which some support and sponsor EFHOH. Thanks again for your support.

All info about the event is on the website of the organizers.

Source:

<http://www.heal2018.org/>

Written by Darja Pajk, EFHOH Treasurer and Aida Regel Poulsen, EFHOH Secretary.

Save the Date



EFHOH AGM 2019



Zagreb
CROATIA

5-7 April 2019





News from IFHOH

Greetings friends!

Just a month ago many of us were in lovely Ljubljana, Slovenia for the EFHOH AGM, IFHOH BGM, and a conference hosted by the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Clubs Association of Slovenia with many thanks for their hard work. As well, a number of us attended a workshop on the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It was great to connect with members, to share our experiences, to rekindle previous friendships and make new ones.

The May 2018 BGM was historic for IFHOH. First of all, we celebrated 40 plus years in existence with a lovely Anniversary Cake. Our thanks to our predecessors for their foresight in establishing IFHOH and for drafting a set of goals that still stand the test of time. Second, we welcomed a new region into the IFHOH family. We now have two regions, the long-standing European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) and the newest region, the Asia Pacific Federation of the Hard of Hearing and Deafened (APFHD).

A third historical note was the passage of the Slovenian Declaration at the conference. This declaration calls upon IFHOH and its members to fully support the WHO Health Assembly resolution passed in 2017. As well, it calls upon Nation States to undertake to implement the actions identified in the WHO motion. Furthermore, IFHOH and its members served notice that governments will be held accountable for improving hearing healthcare as well for

preventing and reducing hearing loss. The full text of the Declaration is available on the IFHOH website.

In addition to implementing the Slovenian Declaration to enhance hearing health care, at the BGM, the newly elected IFHOH Board was given a mandate to focus on the following objectives:

1. Promote the human rights of persons who have a hearing loss;
2. Promote awareness of the issues and concerns of hard of hearing persons
3. Advocate for technology and accessibility for hard of hearing persons.

Our activities will include:

- Promoting hearing loss issues on World Hearing Day of March 3 and to promoting World Hearing Day as an official UN Day.
- Developing a strategic plan for hearing loop developments.
- Developing an Inclusive Education Project as part of our development work.
- Working with the UN system on Speech-to-Text guidelines and processes.

The above is not an exhaustive list but a good start to making it a more inclusive, accessible world for hard of hearing and deafened persons. Thank you for your confidence and faith in us to carry out this important work for the 466 million persons who have a hearing loss.

With warmest regards,

Ruth Warick, IFHOH President - president@ifhoh.org

IFHOH BGM and EFHOH AGM Ljubljana 2018 Conference Report

This year, the IFHOH and EFHOH assemblies were held under the sponsorship of the ZDGNS during the week of hearing problems, which took place from May 7th to 12th.

The title of the conference was Accessibility Removes All Barriers and ZDGNS is a member of both organizations. The event began with various forms of public awareness concerning hearing loss, with the help of sponsors who actively participated. The main event was the IFHOH conference, organized by the Association of the Deaf and Hearing Society of Slovenia at the M Hotel in Ljubljana.

Before the conference, a workshop on the topic of human rights and the observance of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in various parts of the world was held. The workshop showed a profound difference between the care for people with hearing loss at the global level since it is extremely poor in undeveloped countries and people are left to themselves. Regardless of donations from developed countries, unfortunately, due to corruption, donated funds or hearing aids do not reach most of the users. Nevertheless, individuals are trying to improve the situation in this area and they assist IFHOH primarily with advice and presentations from the institutions where they participate. During the workshop, Slovenians organized a press conference as an opportunity to draw attention to the need for accessibility at all levels.

More than 30 people were present at the free-of-charge ZDGNS workshop, and the exchange of views was very earnest. The emphasis was mainly on articles concerning equality and non-discrimination, raising public awareness, education, accessibility, health, habilitation and rehabili-

tation, and employment and the working environment. The workshop was held in English and Spanish. Spanish-speaking participants from Bolivia were assisted by translators. The workshop was accessible through induction loops and STT.

After the workshop concluded, a tour of Ljubljana was organized, which, unfortunately, was not adapted for the participants and understanding was curtailed. During the tour of Ljubljana, a brief reception was held with the Mayor of Ljubljana at the City Hall. Afterward, a gondola ride to the Ljubljana Castle took place as well as a dinner.

The conference day at the M Hotel was well prepared with a wide range of participants and adequate technical support. Translations into English and Spanish was available. The room was equipped with an induction loop and listening was enabled via headphones. The STT was also delivered in both English and Slovenian.

The conference itself was divided into 4 sections, which offered different views on accessibility. In the introductory part, the participants of the event were the participants of the meeting which included the ZDGNS Vice-President Boris Horvat, IFHOH President Ruth Warick, and EFHOH President Marcell Bobeldijk. From the political viewpoint, European MEP dr. Igor Šoltes, Member of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia and a representative of the Ministry of Labor, Family and Social Affairs presented their speeches. Legal bases in Slovenia and views from the medical and psychosocial rehabilitation field were also presented.

The conference brought together 11 speakers who emphasized the importance of accessibility. Initiatives were suggested to be more visible and more pervasive, and that the duty and the task of the state are to regulate everything in connection with accessibility.

It was mentioned that in Slovenia there are 74 laws in relation to disability, a representative of the Health Insurance Institute provided a great deal of information regarding accessibility and the prescription and issue of hearing aids in Slovenia. It was pointed out that the costs for SA have increased from 6.91% to 8.22% in recent years. PV has more than 400 people in Slovenia and 200 persons have a bone-attached device (Slovenia has a population of 2 million). Of course, the increase in the issued tools is related to the aging of the population. In terms of architectural accessibility, which is otherwise a regulated situation in practice, is far from satisfactory. One of the reasons that accessibility in this area is not regulated is due to the ignorance and lack of knowledge of the issue and the non-reporting of offenders. Concerning the wearing of hearing aids, an emphasis was placed on psychological support and the motivation of users, and the need for personal advisers to be provided. The need for quality hearing aids from the start was also emphasized. Additionally, emphasis on preserving the skills of the elderly, intergenerational cooperation and, above all, the necessity of preparing for aging and self-evaluation, which should be based on rationality and not on emotions was also mentioned. Information was provided on how hearing loss affects the health of the individual and what kind of distress they experience due to hearing loss.

The medical part of the lectures showed the medical and technical future for people with total hearing loss - snail implants, and of course, the possibilities offered by technological developments in the field of surgical techniques and the use of robotics was also mentioned. Also, a warning about the connectivity of hearing loss to individual diseases and, of course, the impact of noisy environments on the overall health status of the population.

During the lectures, the emphasis was also on the need for cooperation at several levels, as this is indispensable for successful rehabilitation and an active life. It also emphasized the empowerment of users, referring to feelings during the use of SA, and not just sounds.

At the end of the lecture, there was a free evening where, of course, in the relaxed environment of the terrace, there was an exchange of opinions and impressions.

On the following Saturday, the EFHOH and IFHOH assemblies were held. Both were held according to the prescribed agenda with reports on the work of the committees. Both committees have prepared detailed reports on their operations and on the use of financial resources. All reports are accessible on the websites of both organiza-

tions, whereas members of IFHOH and EFHOH can enter with the acquired password. Various information is also available, which is useful for other European countries seeking the optimum integration of people with hearing loss and the elimination of communication problems. EFHOH also issued a paper version of the report on their work in 2017, which was available to each participant of the meeting.

The report highlights all the important events that EFHOH attended and the areas in which EFHOH is active.

The final report of the group of late deafened people was again presented. The survey was carried out in 2016, with many countries actively participating in it. The results of the survey pointed to the need for STT and written information and other forms of assistance in terms of communication.

Since the EFHOH assembly in Zagreb is being held next year, the representative of the Croatian Union provided some basic information about the HSGN and the organizational draft of the program.

The event was highly successful, informative and well-organized and it was pleasant to hear praise from all sides. Around 100 participants attended the conference. Accompanying media that were part of the lectures were press releases, posters that were distributed around the city, television interviews, articles in the newspapers, presentations by the sponsors as well as information stalls in the hotel hall and a presentation stand in the city center.

The materials from the assembly and conferences are available on the websites of IFHOH and EFHOH.

Special thanks to all the participants.

I look forward to seeing all of you next year in 2019 in the capital city of Zagreb, Croatia.

Darja Pajk

The 17. Goals



Workshop on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with reference to the Hard of Hearing Community

The day before the IFHOH Conference, May 2018, in Ljubljana, Ruth Warrick, president of IFHOH, presented a workshop that would give those attending an overview and present the latest development of accessibility goals and a directive for a Call to Action on the World Report on Hearing Care.



A group photo of the participants. By author

The workshop was very well attended with persons and organization from all around the world. Ruth Warick (president IFHOH), Marcel Bobeldijk(president EFHOH) and Patrick Egeessa (chairperson UNAHOH, IFHOH member at large) were the presenters. Following this is a short summary of each of the presenters. The workshop was hosted and held in the building shared by the Slovenian Deaf and Hard of Hearing Organization.

Ruth commenced with a short introduction and welcoming speech and presented a short video where Shelley Chadha, (WHO) welcomed the participants and described the importance of the CRPD and the SDGs.

Ruth then started her first presentation:
"Why does the CRPD and the SDGs matter to the people who are hard of hearing?"
 The CRPD (Convention of Rights of Persons with Disabilities) was first proclaimed by the UN General Assembly, a

decade ago. It's the first worldwide treaty for persons with disability and was a milestone of advancement of human rights.

To explain what the CRPD does for the Hard of Hearing community a situation in Nepal was presented. The WHO defines people who are hard of hearing with a 26-80 decibel loss. However the government of Nepal defines above 65 decibel as a hearing loss and therefore excludes a number of people for the benefits necessary to perform actively in everyday life.

The Nepal IFHOH Member Organization, SHRUTI, advocated directly with the government, conducted sessions to explain CRPD and implemented a draft to a resolution that was presented at the UN convention to help the government change their policy that also includes persons with a mild to moderate hearing loss. SHRUTI and IFHOH conducted sessions and presented information. SHRUTI then also attended a CRPD Committee in February 2018



Photo of Claire Sabler Landesmann

where Neeta Keshary Bhattarai, a member of SHRUTI, was able to confirm that the Nepalese Governments were hearing the concerns. The ability for the worldwide body to help support activist in individual countries is an enormous benefit of the CRPD.

IFHOH is a member of the IDA and has commented on sections of the proclamation.

Marcel Bobeldijk, started his presentation with the question of *"What does the CRPD mean in advocacy?"*

The IFHOH UNCRPD video (https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=IFHOH+UNCRPD+Video) and the Toolkit (available on the IFHOH Website) are two examples that help persons advocate for their rights in their countries.

On an EU level, the EDF (European Disability Forum) has been representing people with disabilities in Europe to support the implementation of the UN CRPD to all its members and their governments.

To advocate for better inclusion of Hard of Hearing People each country must develop a report that can be used to communicate the necessary issues to the persons in the

national disability organizations, to appropriate government officials and their departments.

The UN CRPD committee meetings and their side events are a great tool to raise awareness, increase media, and public recognition. Marcel Bobeldijk advises to prioritize and choose what one wants to highlight. There are 33 Articles listed in the CRPD dealing with many different areas of discriminations for persons with disabilities.

EFHOH concentrated on two issues concerning hard of hearing persons.

The first was an agreement that was finally reached with the Audiovisual Media Services on subtitling: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20180423IPR02332/audiovisual-media-agreement-reached-on-new-media-services-directive>

And the second was a call for all emergency information to be accessible for all. That means that the access must be available in subtitling, audio description, sign language interpretation, and spoken subtitles. These types of communication tools should also be used in both public and private broadcasting services. The implementation of these requirements will take place through the European Accessibility Act and Article 9 (the section on accessibility) of the CRPD.

Patrick Gift Egessa was the next presenter. His topic was "An overview of the Sustainable development Goals" (SDG) The United Nations developed SDGs after 2015. These 17 Goals are important in supporting the equal rights for people with disabilities across cultures and nations see this slide at page 10.

Of those listed above there are 7 which pertain to people with hearing loss.

These Goals are:

- #1: End Poverty: Eradicate extreme poverty by 2030. Persons with less than 1.25\$ a day
- #3: Good health and wellbeing: Decrease the number of maternal deaths, neonatal and infant mortality by 2030.
- #4: Education: Ensure inclusive and qualitative education for all as well as provide life long learning opportunities by 2030
- #8: Employment: Provide job opportunities available in all countries.
- #10: reduce inequality: Eliminate discrimination in law and workplace to ensure inclusive employment
- #11: Inclusive cities: Ensure physical access to buildings, transport, environments for everyone.
- #17: Means of Implementation, data: Ensure the use of all domestic and international resources to support and mobilize more accessibility.

To be able to achieve these goals it is necessary to advocate throughout your nation as well as within appropriate international Human Rights Organizations and other non government organizations representing persons with disabilities.

The last presentation was given by Ruth. Her topic was "Linking the CRPD and the SDGs to the work of WHO" WHO is called upon to form a resolution called WHA70.13 that passed at the World Health assembly in May 2017. This report will describe the increasing number of persons with hearing loss worldwide and link them to the SDG goals. In particular with Goal number 1 (end poverty) goal number 3 (ensuring health lives), Goal number 4 (improving changes in education) And Goal number 8 (promoting employment opportunities)

The objectives of the Report was to highlight the increasing population of persons with hearing loss and its causes (in particular noise induced hearing loss and preventable childhood hearing loss) as well as the consequences of untreated hearing loss.

According to the WHO:

"Around 466 million people world wide have a disabling hearing loss and 34 million of these are children. It is estimated that by 2050, 900 million people will have a dis-

abling hearing loss." (www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheet/detail/deafness-and-hearing-loss)

The report provides medical and scientific evidence of experiences with treatments available in different countries to study its effectiveness. It is to raise awareness among policymakers to pay attention to the issue of hearing loss and its consequences.

The WHO secretariat will, in collaboration with international ear and hearing care specialist, technical assistance specialist, and regional consultants develop a guide of recommendations and directives that will help implement ear health care throughout the world. That report will be released March 3, 2020.

"IFHOH is involved in the resolution activities and in the World Report. IFHOH is promoting our community to use the WHO Resolution and the World Report, as well as the CRPD Article 30 and the SDG Goal on Health for its advocacy." (pp Ruth Warick)

The afternoon session was spent working in small groups to practice developing an action plan to implement "Hearing Healthcare Priorities for the Hard of Hearing". We had a list of questions to think about and each group presented their plan.

All of us came out of the workshop with information as well as an opportunity to first hand practice global activism. Everyone would welcome more such opportunities and we thank Ruth for providing it.

By Claire Sabler Landesmann (member of the Austrian Hearing Loss Association ÖSB)

Keynote speaker was PhD Jane Madell from New York, who is a pediatric audiologist, speech pathologist and a certified Auditory Verbal Therapist (AVT). www.janemadell.com



WORKING IN THE PEDIATRIC AUDIOLOGICAL FIELD INTERNATIONALLY - A PHONAK SEMINAR IN DENMARK

Since 1983 I have worked in the pediatric audiological field as a teacher of the deaf and since 1992 as a speech and hearing therapist as well.

In the Scandinavian countries we have a long history and tradition to cooperate and visit each others' seminars and conferences in the audiologopedian area but also in the cooperation with hearing engineers. We have a very interesting interdisciplinary profession together.

Some bigger hearing aid companies also do seminars regularly in Denmark as Phonak did in March 2018.

Keynote speaker was PhD Jane Madell from New York, who is a pediatric audiologist, speech pathologist and a certified Auditory Verbal Therapist (AVT). www.janemadell.com

Jane's question was: "Are children hearing what they need to hear?"

And as for children with hearing loss the answer to this question is often "no!" because children with typical hearing have access to sound all the time.

The children, we care about, don't!

Jane had a long list of what it takes to get there:



Some of the participants in the seminar.

Early identification
 Early, appropriately fit technology
 Full time use of technology
 The better you hear the better you learn
 Therapy, preferably auditory based, involving family
 Family support
 Language rich environment
 Opportunities to learn
 Educational program willing and able to make the necessary adaptations for maximizing learning

Children need to be talked to because hearing is the auditory brain development.

According to Jane, children hear and learn best at 124 words per minute, and adults typically speak 200 words/minute. Parents and teachers need to slow down and use clear speech, which can improve speech understanding up to 40%.

Jane emphasized the use of Assistive Listening Systems (ALS) over and over again.

Even children with mild' hearing loss get some words wrong and any hearing loss reduces the auditory stimulation that gets into the brain.

Parents and pedagogical staff often do not understand the actual impact of these matters.

Children with hearing loss face delays in language, literacy and social-emotional skills, which are all components that we should all expect to be at age level for these kids.

Good classroom acoustics matter for all children

When talking about going to school, there are a number of factors that impact access in the integrated classroom. Reverberation time in the classroom (different countries different rules, (author,AR))
 noise (from furniture, playground, road, corridors, projector, refrigerator etc (author, AR))
 noise (from other students – behavioural (author, AR))

All children need a better signal/noise (S/N) ratio but in particular children with any kind of disability need optimal S/N ratio.

Once the acoustics are fine, there are different types of ALS that may support the child. There are not just different brands, there are also different types.

Different benefits from different types of Assistive Listening Systems

Over the latest 10 years or so we see more and more Sound Field systems in classrooms.

This system basically means teacher's speech comes out of a loudspeaker.

In the USA there is also use of desk top ALS (loudspeakers on pupil's desk), which is not so widespread in Scandinavian countries and Europe.

Then there is the direct ALS, teacher speaks in microphone which is transmitted to personal receiver worn by the pupil. Jane rated these three different ALS by stating, that for CI users:

- using sound field the pupil benefits 3,5 %
- using desk top ALS, pupil benefits 17,1 %
- using direct ALS, pupil benefits by 38.0 %

(source: Schafer, E and M Kleineck, 2009. Improvements in Speech Recognition Using Cochlear Implants and Three Types of FM Systems: A Meta-analytic Approach. Educ. Audiol, 15; 4-14)

These seem to be very important findings, since professionals within hearing technology and pedagogical staff teaching pupils with hearing loss may think everything is done to assist the particular pupil by eg. using a Sound Field System, but in fact the pupil is likely to not benefit enough from the ALS provided.

This leads to:

Always suspect the technology FIRST

Jane repeated over and over again: "If the child is not performing adequately, always suspect the technology first. Both HAs/CIs and ALS should be checked up on in a daily routine.

Often the children don't know if it is not working!

In this youtube film you can see the signs clearly of a HoH pupil who does not get the necessary information in class:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBBrnvGKLF_Q

Our goal is, that all kids must hear well, Jane finished. And she showed us this film of different grown up young people with hearing loss, who have all had the chance to create a life for themselves despite their hearing loss, but because they have had professional guiding to deal with what they need to develop their hearing, listening and language skills.

<http://vermillionpictures.com/the-listening-project/>

Same goal all over the World but different approaches

The goal is the same all over the world, and it is interesting how much we are alike.

It is also interesting where the differences are.

In Scandinavian countries there are not just teacher's microphone but also pupils' microphones. The dialogue is

much valued in Scandinavian education and obviously the pupil with hearing loss must hear well what peers say in class, too.

We also see that HoH pupils benefit very little from Sound Field systems.

Furthermore, we see peers who ask their teacher to turn off the loudspeaker, simply because 'I cannot hear where in the room you are' (when teacher is reading story to the class).

If the pupil with hearing loss benefits only 3,5 % from Sound Field and on top of this the system confuses classmates' directional hearing, this is the time for hearing care professionals to reconsider this recommendation.

And some Danish presentations at the Phonak Seminar On the Phonak seminar was also a presentation by Anne Mette Paarup Kristensen from Høreforeningen (Danish Association of HoH) on 'Youth Guides'.

Youth Guides are young people with hearing loss who can give a presentation in any local school/high school or university on what it means to be young and live with a hearing loss.

It is a service from Høreforeningen very much acknowledged throughout Denmark. Høreforeningen also arranges annual youth camps with many participants and great success.

Local pedagogical-psychological-advice-centres from Northern Zealand in Denmark presented how they do courses for teachers and pedagogical staff including children and pupils with hearing loss and have a network between ten counties.

This presentation was done by speech and hearing therapist, Tina Abrahamsen, Halsnæs.

Sonova's Sky B hearing aid was introduced by Signe Albech and Baby Beats as a teaching material available on CD was presented by Dorte Holst.

The Phonak seminar was accessible to professionals with hearing loss

Thank you to Phonak staff Denmark for an interesting seminar which was even accessible for hearing care professionals with hearing loss by loop in the conference room.

Aida Regel Poulsen
EFHOH secretary

State of **Provision** of Hearing Aids in Europe - a **new study** by EFHOH

EFHOH has just released a new study of the state of provision of hearing aids in different countries in Europe. The following is the central findings of the study.

THE FINDINGS

The service delivery varies across Europe and the responses showed some countries' health systems simple to navigate and others quite complex.

In Europe many countries have national health / insurance systems, where all citizens pay a tax towards provision of health services.

We also have countries who operate private insurance based systems, for example Belgium and the Netherlands.

In general we see in Europe a certain level of reimbursement, often covering the lower end of hearing aids fully and other, higher priced hearing aids are partially covered. This system can provide choice, control of service received for hearing aid users and have short referral /assessment times.

For the countries where there is national health with universal coverage such as the United Kingdom, hard of hearing people are not able to exercise choice of the device, even at the lower end of devices as the decision to purchase particular brands is with health managers. This system can have drawbacks with little or no choice and a 'drown-out' effect when getting through referrals and assessments.

Provision of hearing aids is only the first basic step, we need to ensure the provision is following quality standards and the users of the services are offered follow up care

including counselling. Involving users in planning care and enabling them to make their own informed choices we can gain better efficiency of the health system. For this reason understanding variations across Europe as well as examples of good practice can be a catalyst for better investment in hearing care across Europe.

Varied access to hearing aids and hearing care is a cause for concern as it can present a barrier to independent living and an improved quality of life. It is positive to see some countries putting hearing care and reimbursement in high priority of national health plans but more needs to be done.

Recent report by health economist Dr.Laurence Hartman has made a clear case for improved hearing care access.

According to the report the cost of untreated hearing loss in Europe is €178 Billion per year. For every Euro that is spent in hearing care, governments get 10 Euro in return (reduced overall cost of untreated hearing loss).

Hearing care has a positive effect on quality of life at reasonable direct costs and results in net savings to society. European public health policy should consider hearing loss as one of the major concern in its action plan.

The full report can be downloaded from www.efhoh.org.



A EUROPE FOR ALL ITS PEOPLE

The European Disability Movement gathers in Lithuania to demand a decent standard of living for all persons with disabilities in Europe.

European disability movement demands that "nothing about us without us" becomes reality.

Important Topics at EDF AGA in Vilnius 26th-27th May 2018

In late May, The European Disability Movement gathered in Lithuania to demand a decent standard of living for all persons with disabilities in Europe. EFHOH was represented by Marcel Bobeldijk (EFHOH president) and Aida Regel Poulsen (EFHOH secretary).

The important topics were:

We need to vote and stand for election.

Web Accessibility Directive becomes a reality..

Delegates appreciated the recommendations for transposition in the EDF toolkit <http://www.edf-feph.org/newsroom/news/edf-toolkit-web-accessibility-directive> (hyperlink, please) EDF toolkit for the Web Directives.

The General Assembly approved a resolution on the future of the Cohesion Policy 2012-2027.

Disability Assessment should never be a tool to cut disability benefits
Disability assessment should be as objective as possible, ensuring the respect and dignity of persons with disabilities.

It is urgent to adopt a strong, meaningful European Accessibility Act.
The European Disability Forum adopted an emergency resolution on the European Accessibility Act.

See full article below:

Aida Regel Poulsen (EFHOH secretary) and Marcel Bobeldijk (EFHOH president) representing EFHOH at the General Assembly of the European Disability Forum (EDF) which took place in Vilnius, Lithuania on May 26th and 27th, co-organised and co-hosted by EDF and the Lithuanian Disability Forum. The Assembly brought together over 150 delegates from across Europe in Vilnius, Lithuania. The conclusion of the EDF AGA 2018 was clear: European and national authorities need to do more to meaningfully involve persons with disabilities and the organisations that represent them.

The Assembly opened with a strong call for political participation of persons with disabilities in the European elections. All persons with disabilities should have the right to vote and should be able to vote. Persons with disabilities should stand for election, and be elected, to ensure that their issues are central to the political decision-making process in Europe.

Yannis Vardakastanis, President of the European Disability Forum proclaimed that "We need to vote. We need to keep the European project in our hands. Persons with disabilities and their families must vote. Candidates with disabilities must stand for election."

The General Assembly included a meeting between the European Disability Forum, Lithuanian Disability Forum and the national authorities; a conference on the implementation of the Web Accessibility Directive" and discussions on disability assessment, the European Pillar of Social Rights, the future of EU structural funds and the European Accessibility Act.

EDF members also had the opportunity to discuss with the CRPD Committee rapporteur Stig Langvad on the drafting of the general comment no. 7, and stressed the need for organisations of persons with disabilities to be fully involved and closely consulted in all spaces of public decision making on an equal basis of others.

Time to make sure that the Web Accessibility Directive becomes a reality.

Delegates discussed the web accessibility directive with Marco Marsella, Head of Unit G3 in the Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology of the European Commission, and Shadi Abou-Zahra, Strategy and Technology Specialist Web Accessibility Initiative at the World Wide Web Consortium.

The meeting was preceded by a statement from the Commissioner Mariya Gabriel, EU Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society, which highlighted the importance of this directive on creating inclusive digital technologies.

Marco Marsella insisted on the importance of involving all stakeholders in the transposition of the Directive to national law. He assured Delegates that the European Commission will closely review the national laws and challenge them if they are not according to the spirit and letter of the Directive.

Shadi Abou-Zahra underlined that not only the websites need to be accessible – the tools that are used to create them have to be accessible as well.

Alejandro Moledo concluded that “organisations of persons with disabilities have to act now to ensure that the Directive is correctly transposed. We have to contact our governments and demand to be fully involved”

Case studies from Denmark, Slovenia, Spain and Lithuania highlighted that involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities is necessary to make the process of transposition easier, better and more cost-efficient for national governments. They also explained their advocacy actions so far to ensure that the Directive was transposed in the most ambitious way possible, including the widest scope, and no loopholes.

Delegates appreciated the recommendations for transposition in the EDF toolkit for the Web Directive.

“If we need to, we will protest on the streets of the EU Capitals for Inclusive Structural Funds” declares EDF president

We are deeply concerned with the current proposal for Cohesion Policy 2021-2027. We call for the budget to be increased and to ensure that the needs of persons with disabilities are always taken into account in all projects that are funded by the EU.

Yannis Vardakastanis, President of the European Disability Forum declared that: “The budget of the European Union must not produce anymore exclusion. The European disability movement will take to the streets to guarantee this, if we have to!”

The General Assembly approved a resolution on the future of the Cohesion Policy 2021-2027.

Disability Assessment should never be a tool to cut disability benefits.

Worrying trends on disability assessment across Europe were displayed during presentations of case studies from Lithuania, Portugal and Croatia. Lack of proper support,

lack of individual assessment and focus on a medical model of disability, among others, lead to discrimination, increased risk of poverty, and health issues due to stress and anxiety.

“It is clear that the European disability movement has to be more involved in the process of disability assessment” said Yannis Vardakastanis. Rodolfo Cattani, Executive Committee member added that “Disability Assessment is a priority for EDF. We have to ensure that changes are made in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the full protection of disability benefits.”

Disability assessment should be as objective as possible, ensuring the respect and dignity of persons with disabilities.

It is urgent to adopt a strong, meaningful European Accessibility Act

The European Disability Forum adopted an emergency resolution on the European Accessibility Act. We demand the Act to:

- Support the accessibility provisions of other Union acts, such as the Public Procurement Directive or the EU Funds Regulations,
- include a compulsory clause on the accessibility of the built environment,
- cover emergency services fully,
- cover all microenterprises,
- to cover transport services broadly,
- not to limit the scope for self-service terminals,
- ensure that audiovisual media services and the access to the latter can benefit from common accessibility requirements

The resolution also includes the demand to adopt a horizontal principle on promotion of equality between men and women, accessibility for persons with disabilities and non-discrimination in the Structural and Investment Funds Common Provisions Regulation 2021-2027.

The General Assembly concluded with an intervention of Kamil Goungor the new chair of the European Disability Forum’s Youth Committee. In it he stressed that young persons with disabilities face double discrimination.

He stated “It is difficult for a person with a disability to be employed. But it is twice as difficult if you are young and disabled”

EDF has committed to greatly increase the visibility and the impact of youth within its work.

Quiet please... Lights, Camera, Action...

We are shooting a film for deaf and hard of hearing people...

The recent article by Lidia Best about her cinema experience rightfully and interestingly points out that all hard of hearing persons are not equal when it comes to going to the cinema. That has to do with the origin of movies (obviously US films do not need to be subtitled for a British "hearing" audience) and legislation (provided it is enforced).

In France, there is a 2005 law on accessibility which is still largely disregarded although it was repeated in 2015. Film production remains important (nowadays around 40% of French feature films are captioned for deaf people, which amounts to 144 films in 2017) and although foreign films are generally dubbed, it is often possible to see them in their subtitled original version – depending on where you live.

To communicate on the issue of accessibility and to create awareness about what is needed to bring back hard of hearing people in cinemas, we have launched the "Best Subtitled Movie Award" – the 2018 prize-winner has not been announced yet.

We have also produced a short film to promote it. Based on real, first-hand experience, the film starts with deaf people and foreigners in a cinema complaining that they cannot understand a single word of the dialogues, while other spectators ask them to shut up, even stating that French subtitling (or captioning) is useless because the movie is already in French. In the second part of the film, Paul Vecchiali, a major French film director since the early 60's, explains why he considers subtitling to be of the utmost importance.

This film is presently subtitled in French for deaf and hard of hearing people, according to French standards (I am afraid they are different from what the practice is anywhere else!) and in English (because this is a general requirement to submit it to international festivals). It has

however been designed right from the beginning to make localisation easy: replacing the English subtitles with subtitles in any other language, in compliance with any coding convention, really is straightforward.

And last but not least, it is freely available to any individual or organization who would like to show it, whether to limited audiences (such as members of associations) or to the general public (for instance as an introduction to subtitled showings in cinemas). It has already been shown a number of times here in Cannes and in other French cities.

If you are interested, please have a look at our film at <http://vfst.ardds.org> and then decide by yourself whether you want to seize this opportunity to promote subtitling for hard of hearing persons or not.

Written by: ARDDS Caravelle

The Association of Rehabilitation and Defense of the Deaf-Dee (ARDDS), founded in September 1969, is a national non-profit association.

Thanks to the number of its members, the ARDDS is the largest French association of the population with acquired deafness.

Because of its seniority, the ARDDS is one of the three founding members of BUCODES SURDIFRANCE and participated in the creation of UNISDA.

Notes:

- Our film was in competition at the Festival International Entr'2 marches, Cannes, 12-18 May 2018; it unfortunately did not receive any prize.
- It has also been awarded two stars at the British International Amateur Film Festival (BIAFF 2018).



Presentation of Morten Buan - new member of the EFHOH board

I am President of the Hard of Hearing association in Norway.

I look forward to take part in the hard of hearing work in EFHOH. It is important to work together to achieve our goals for the hard of hearing people in Europe.

Good follow-up in this area is a key to good public health. This applies in all phases of life. Children who get good sound will be safe and competent both linguistically and socially. Youth acquires education and work. Adults keep and develop at work. Older people ensure good quality of life and can live safely and longer in their own homes. Conversely, hard of hearing people are not detected and followed up, poor physical and mental health, and social and economic externality. Lack of facilitation and universal design discriminates against the hard of hearing people and society loses people who could have contributed. No matter when hearing-related disorders occur in life, it is therefore good socioeconomics and public health in targeted prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. The social contribution and impact of our aims to make everyday life easier for the country's hard of hearing people through volunteer work, political influence. Our volunteer work extends widely, from hearing assistants / peers through preventive efforts in kindergarten and schools, to information meetings and visualization on the stand. Impact work is run both locally and centrally. Together we challenge the elected and administrative authorities all levels, to improve rights and offers for the hard of hearing people.

Hire an EFHOH **speaker!**

Invite us to talk. We can travel to your event to present and share our work and lobbying experiences.

We may present about IFHOH Human Rights Toolkit and Prague Declaration, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, including our subtitling lobbying work.

EFHOH representatives will never charge for their presentations, however we may request for travel and accommodation to be covered by the inviting party.

Please contact us at office@efhoh.org



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With 60 years' experience and more than 5,700 specialist centres in 20 countries, we're the world's leading dedicated hearing aid specialist.

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From our comprehensive hearing assessment to your programme of Free Lifetime Aftercare, we are committed to help you get the very best from your hearing.

Ana Peláez Narváez is the first woman with a disability elected for the U.N. Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women

EDF Vice-President is the first woman with disabilities to be elected for the U.N. Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women in its 37 years of existence.

EDF are very happy to announce the election of Ana Peláez Narváez as a member of the U.N. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. She is the first woman with disabilities ever to be elected as a member of the U.N. Committee on Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which has existed for 37 years. We welcome her election a very positive step which brings "nothing about us without us" closer to reality.

What is the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women?

The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women is the body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It consists of 23 independent experts on women's rights across the world.

Who is Ana?

Ana Peláez Narváez is a very strong advocate for the estimated 600 million women with disabilities worldwide. She is currently Vice-President of the European Disability Forum and Chairperson of its Women's Committee; Executive Vice-President of CERMI (Spanish National Council for Persons with Disability) Women Foundation; Executive Councillor for International Relations and External Development of the Spanish National Organisation of the Blind. She was a board member of the European Women's Lobby from 2010 to 2014.

Ana Peláez served for 7 years in the U.N. Committee for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and it was its focal point for gender issues. She participated in the official Spanish delegation that took part in the final drafting phase of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

She has championed women's rights for more than 20 years, advising governments, civil society and other organisations.

Woman with disabilities – especially vulnerable to discrimination and violence

There more than 600 million women with disabilities that are especially vulnerable to discrimination and violence. Despite facing intersectional discrimination, women with disabilities are not sufficiently represented in bodies that focus on equality and gender issues.

Ana Pelaez explains her efforts in making women with disabilities heard:

"I believe there is a need to mainstream women and girls with disabilities systematically in the work of CEDAW. We are 20% of the total population of women in the world, but we are among the poorest and we are constantly subjected to aggravated forms of discrimination.

I also want to focus on strengthening the work of the CEDAW Committee in relation to the multiple discrimination many invisible women face, and this means making progress on drawing up guidelines for States Parties to address intersectional discrimination and ensure we leave no one behind. I hope to play an active role in the process to foster co-operation among UN treaty bodies so that they can learn from each other and adopt a consistent approach, moving forward in the same direction when addressing the same issues.

Finally, I believe we need to do more to reflect the dimensions of human diversity in the CEDAW Committee and, in particular, include people from invisible and ignored population groups, such as women with disabilities.

Congratulations Ana!

EDF

EMERGENCY CALL TO THE COUNCIL

Accessible emergency communication for persons with disabilities: a requirement to save lives

The Council's proposal to exclude Public Safety Answering Points (centres answering emergency calls) from the upcoming European Accessibility Act will keep millions of persons with disabilities at risk. The above organisations call on the Council of the EU to accept mandatory and common accessibility requirements for services handling emergency calls. We have the right to call for help!

The European Commission published its proposal for the European Accessibility Act (EAA) at the end of 2015. Once adopted, the Act will set accessibility requirements for several products and services, including emergency services.

Currently, emergency services remain largely inaccessible for many people with disabilities. Several countries have developed ad hoc solutions, such as specific mobile applications that users need to download or to register in beforehand. Nonetheless, many persons with disabilities cannot yet rely on an accessible way to contact emergency services that works across the EU, unlike their nondisabled peers, who can dial 112 with a regular voice call everywhere and around-the-clock. The Accessibility Act can finally address and fix this discriminatory situation that endangers millions of lives.

Both the European Commission proposal and especially the European Parliament report ensure end-to-end accessibility of telephony and emergency services by applying the same accessibility requirements. These requirements are voice communication, text, including RealTime Text and video communication, alone or in combination as Total Conversation services. By making these services available and interoperable across Europe, persons that cannot communicate orally, as well as deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind persons, including those who use sign language, will be able to communicate with anybody, including with emergency services, on an equal basis with others.

These accessible means of communication are required for all economic operators involved. Indeed, both the Commission and the Parliament argue that smartphone manufacturers must ensure that their devices support Real-Time Text and Total Conversation services and that electronic communication network operators must carry them through their networks.

Consequently, to make emergency services accessible, somebody will need to respond using Real-Time Text or Total Conversation services. Thus, the so-called Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs), the centres that answer emergency calls, must be able to appropriately receive, answer and handle such accessible communications, as



they do with voice calls. This is technically feasible and there are even industry standards available.

Unfortunately, the Council decided to exclude all requirements for PSAPs in its position regarding the Accessibility Act. We are therefore urging Member States to reconsider their position. It makes no sense to require smartphone manufacturers and network operators to support these accessible ways of communication in emergency services, if PSAPs are not required to be equipped to handle and respond to them. Excluding them would simply break this vital communication chain.

We advocate for a strong Accessibility Act and for Member States to ensure that all emergency services are accessible, as stipulated by amendments 187, 292 and 300 of the European Parliament report on the Act. However, if this is not possible, we would instead support a solution similar to the one put forward under the Maltese presidency of the EU: a proposal to establish a requirement for Member States to designate one or several PSAPs to receive, answer and handle these communications in an accessible manner. This solution would enable each Member State to choose their preferred PSAP or PSAPs to handle these accessible communications, based on national circumstances, such as the size of the country, its population, average number of accessible calls, political system, and so on.

We therefore suggest the following requirements:

“Specific accessibility requirements related to services answering and handling emergency calls, including to the single European emergency number 112: Ensuring that emergency communication using voice, text, including real time text and video (Total Conversation) are appropriately received, answered and handled, by one or several PSAPs that have been previously designated to be responsible for, and capable of responding using the same commu-

nication means." As State Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), the EU and all its Member States must implement its provisions, including Article 9 which requires States Parties to ensure accessibility of information and communications, including with regards to emergency services. As a matter of fact, the inaccessibility of emergency services in the EU was highlighted by the UN CRPD Committee in its 2015 concluding observations to the EU. The Committee specifically asked the EU to ensure that the emergency number 112 is fully accessible to all persons with disabilities across the EU. This requirement can only be met by ensuring end-to-end accessibility of emergency services in the European Accessibility Act that is available to all and interoperable everywhere as regular voice calls. If Member States fail to deliver, the lives of those that cannot communicate orally, and of more than 52 million deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind European citizens as well as the people that surround them will continue to be put at risk. Countless other persons will also be affected as everyone can find themselves in a situation where they are unable to call emergency services using oral communication, e.g. being unable to speak or hear after an accident or to speak because it would put their safety at risk, such as during a burglary. In short, all Europeans will immensely benefit from enhanced accessible ways to contact emergency services.

We therefore call on the EU institutions, and especially the Council, to adopt our proposed amendment in the European Accessibility Act to ensure end-to-end accessibility of emergency services. This will literally save lives.

This call is endorsed by the following organisations; • *European Emergency Number Association* • *European Disability Forum* • *European Union of the Deaf* • *European Deafblind Union* • *European Federation of Hard of Hearing People* • *European Association of Cochlear Implant users* • *European Federation of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children* • *European Deafblind Network*

CLARITY PROJECT SUPPORTS DISABILITY SERVICES

The CLARITY project is a H2020 support and coordination action that brought together experts and knowledge on Open Government services. One of which is disability services.

As part of the project, they have created:

- a Blueprint making recommendations to local governments regarding the next steps and priorities towards promoting Open Government.
- a marketplace with more than 300+ government apps across Europe; the marketplace is still open and they

can still upload their local applications if they wish to showcase them.

- a case studies page curated by experts, willing to consult civil servants on best practices and how to deploy such applications in their home towns that I believe your members would find useful.

For more information please refer to Clarity's website

SPAIN MUST ENSURE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, UN HUMAN RIGHTS EXPERTS SAY

Spain's segregation and exclusion of students with disabilities from mainstream education, on grounds of their impairments, amounts to grave or systematic violations of those students' right to education under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, UN human rights experts said in a report issued on the 29th of May in Geneva.

The experts found that Spain has contributed to a discriminatory system that in effect uses legal provisions in place to maintain two educational systems and divert students with disabilities outside mainstream education. Additionally, they found that the lack of safeguards in place for independent monitoring mechanisms means that once a student leaves the mainstream education system, he or she will remain out.

Among other recommendations, the Committee called on Spain to establish a national action plan elaborated in consultation with representative organizations of persons with disabilities.

10 YEAR AFTER THE EQUAL TREATMENT DIRECTIVE WAS PROPOSED, NGOS CALL ON THE EU COUNCIL TO FINALLY ADOPT IT

A group of equality and non-discrimination NGOs, including EDF, called on the EU Council to end a 10-year freeze on a directive that would ban discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation in all areas of social life.

The Equal Treatment Directive was proposed on the 2 July 2008 by the European Commission and voted favourably by the EU Parliament in 2019. Yet, for the past 10 years, the EU Member States have blocked progress on the proposal. In a joint statement on the 10th anniversary of the proposal, the European Disability Forum and other NGOs note that, despite the adoption of more progressive equality laws in several Member States, significant gaps remain.

We urge the European Commission and EU Member States to resume progress in this Directive and come up with roadmap to close the legislative gaps. Please click here to read the full article

Enter the competition: The European Sustainability Award
In 2018 the European Commission launched for the first time ever a European Sustainability Award to reward the efforts and creativity of European people, businesses and organisations. The ambition of this award is clear: championing inspiring cases of initiatives that are turning the global Sustainable Development Goals into concrete solutions and opportunities.

For this year's edition, the theme of the award is "Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality". Find out how to enter the competition here. The deadline for applications is 14 September 2018.

For any questions on the award, please contact the Secretariat-General: sg-stakeholderplatform-sdg@ec.europa.eu.

NEW EUROPASS DECISION ENTERED INTO FORCE

The Europass framework known for documenting skills, qualifications and professional experience promises to be more inclusive of persons with disabilities! The EU "Europass" Decision 2018/646 of 28 April 2018, revising the common framework for the provision of better services for skills and qualification, is now into force.

People with disabilities are mentioned in the preamble of the decision (paras. 24 and 28) as well as in article 4(2) regarding accessibility of the Europass online platform and web-based tools, and article 6(1)(c) and 6(2)(e) on the Commission's duties to "keep up to date with and incorporate, where relevant, the latest technological developments that can improve the accessibility of Europass for older persons and persons with disabilities" and to "ensure that effective and adequate promotion, guidance and information activities are carried out at Union level in order to reach relevant users and stakeholders, including persons with disabilities."

MOBIABILITY: A EUROPEAN STANDARD ON SUPPORT MEASURES IN THE EHEA FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Murcia (Spain) is coordinating the project MobiAbility: A European standard on support measures in the EHEA for international students with disabilities.

It is an international project whose main objective is to propose a standard of measures to support for Erasmus+ university students with disabilities.

We are requesting your participation in a survey to evaluate the services and measures that European universities are already using.

You can obtain more information and access the survey at the following link: https://encuestas.um.es/encuestas/support_disab.cc

The survey will be open until July 31 of 2018.

If you need more information or have any questions, please, contact the coordinator team at mobiability@um.es or visit our web www.um.es/mobiability

PAFOS AIRPORT WINS ACCESSIBLE AIRPORT AWARD 2018

Pafos International airport, in Cyprus was the winner of the Accessible Airport Award 2018, awarded yesterday by the Airports Council International Europe (ACI Europe) and the European Disability Forum.

The award was given during ACI Europe's gala dinner by Nadia Hadad, our Executive Committee Member and by Ms. Elisabeth Kotthaus, Head of Unit Social Affairs, Passengers Rights & Equal Opportunities, DG Mobility & Transport, European Commission. Representing Pafos Airport was Eleni Kaloyirou, CEO of Hermes Airports who manage the Larnaka and Pafos International Airport. For us, one of the most important factors was Pafos' active involvement of persons with disabilities, when developing accessibility processes. This active involvement is essential when creating accessible processes for all. This active involvement by Hermes airport as resulted in two consecutive awards, as last year the Larnaka Airport won the Accessible Airport Award.

Copenhagen Airport also received a special mention on its staff expertise in providing assistance for persons with reduced mobility.

EUROPEAN NON-DISCRIMINATION AND EQUALITY NGO NETWORKS WELCOME AN AMBITIOUS RIGHTS AND VALUES PROGRAMME 2021-2027

We joined a group of non-discrimination and equality NGOs on a call for EU leaders to help civil society across the EU in their work to defend the core values of non-discrimination and equality in the EU.

More than ever people living in the EU need to regain trust in the EU project of peace and security, respect for fundamental rights and human dignity, non-discrimination and equality, democracy and freedom of expression, the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary.

POLITICAL AGREEMENT ON THE NEW EU TELECOMMUNICATION RULES – BETTER PROVISIONS FOR END-USERS WITH DISABILITIES

Not as publicly as the Accessibility Act, EDF secretariat, in collaboration with the EDF ICT expert group, has also been advocating for better provisions for end-users with disabilities in the revision of the EU electronic communications rules. On the 6 June, the Parliament and the Council reached a political agreement on the European Electronic Communications Code (EECC). This Directive merges and revises different legislation under the so-called Telecoms Package from 2009, in which persons with disabilities were ensured equivalent access and choice to electronic communications.

Even though the final text will not be available after the summer, and needs to be formally adopted by Council and Parliament, EDF has had access to the main provisions for end-users with disabilities in the EECC. These could be summarized as follows:

1. Accessibility is now part of the universal services obligations with regards to affordability and availability measures. Both the mainstream equipment and the specific equipment for persons with disabilities (meaning assistive technologies), as well as the specific services to enhance equivalent access (meaning relay and total conversation services) will be considered as a universal service. Thus, Member States will need to ensure their availability and affordability.
2. Accessible 112 number for emergencies and 116000 for missing children. Measures around these European single numbers should maximise interoperability, avoid any pre-registration for the accessible communication, and to inform everybody about the availability of the accessible services when travelling to other EU country.
3. Contracts with telephone/internet operators must be accessible to persons with disabilities.
4. Consultation with organisations of persons with disabilities, including an accessible consultation mechanism for all stakeholders, were agreed as well.

For more information, please contact Alejandro.moledo@edf-feph.org



June the 23rd 2018

Dear friends



With our letters we wish to keep up the contact with you on a regular basis. All connections depend upon communication. This is, however, a challenge for both sides, for me writing these lines and you who read them. For me the challenge is that there are many of you, that I do not know personally. I therefore don't know what problems, difficulties you might have. You who read my face the same problem, because you do not know my life and my background. Different cultures, educations, social status, nationalities, languages, abilities, disabilities and many other factors also make understanding difficult. For all human beings communication is a real challenge, because we always run the risk of misunderstanding each other.

It is therefore a miracle when I, knowing so little about you, may understand and appreciate your understanding of life.

Understanding each other is facilitated in the areas of common interest linking us t each other, a common goal, a desire to reach out to those who live in the world of silence.

Communication, including speech and behaviour, is a signal system conveying meaning. Every culture, family and individual creates its own signal system. The hard of hearing world has its own communication models/channels as well. This is not a problem as long as they are open to hearing the world as well. This is the only way that can bring forth a language of mutual understanding.

When sending a message, when communicating we also share a bit of ourselves; this is what I call **Real Communication**. It means that I share with you some of my personality.

Sharing these thoughts, soul to soul, it is my heartfelt desire to pave the way for our joint conference in September, which we kindly invite you to attend.

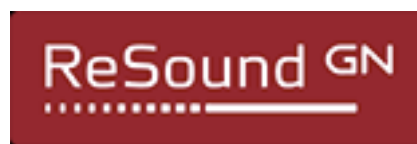
Finally, I would like to share with you an recent event from our hearing impaired community. On May the 26th-27th we went with nearly forty people, visiting the Black Church in Brasov and the famous Bran and Peles castle. We had an enlightening, wonderful experience, enjoying seeing beautiful landscapes and getting closer acquainted with each other. Through the pictures I share with you, you too will be a part of our experience.



Yours in Christ,

Csaba Korodi

EFHOH would like to acknowledge our sponsors generosity in helping us continue our efforts' in European advocacy



Support our sponsors! They support us!



EFHOH MEETINGS 2018/2019

2018	2018	2018	2018
31 Aug- 2 September	Iceland	NHS seminar (Nordic HOH organisations)	Aïda and Marcel
14 September	Milan	6th International Symposium on Accessibility and live Subtitling	Marcel
25-28 September	Marseilles	TIN-ACT (Tinnitus project) meeting no 2.	Marcel
26- 28 September	Milan	EVOTION experts meeting	Lidia
27 September	Dusseldorf	M-enabling Summit by G3 ICT	Lidia
5-6 October	Fredericia /DK	EFHOH board meeting	All board members
17 October	Hannover	Audiologist of the year 2018	Aïda and Marcel
17-19 October	Hannover	Heat-It AGM and 63rd International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians	Aïda and Marcel
24 October	Brussels	Platform meeting	Aïda and Marcel
8-9 November	Geneva	European Broadcasting Union meeting of access services experts.	Lidia
17 and 18 November	Vienna	EDF board meeting + EU conference	Marcel
3-4 December	Brussels	European Days of Disabled People	Aïda and Marcel
2019	2019	2019	2019
January		EFHOH board meeting	All board members
6 March	Brussels	EP Lunch Debate	All board members
5-7 April	Zagreb	EFHOH AGM 2019	All board members
1-2 June		EDF AGA 2019	Aïda and Marcel
17-19 June	Stockholm	Media for All conference	Marcel and/or Aïda

Version 12-06-2018

EFHOH - European Federation of Hard of Hearing People

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People consists of National Associations of/for Hard of Hearing and Late-Deafened People, Parents' Organisations and Professional Organisations.

EFHOH comprises the European members of the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) and was established in 1993. It has its own board and secretariat. The federation has non-profitable and benevolent aims and it is a non-political and non-sectarian organisation. EFHOH is a general member of the European Disability Forum (EDF). We also work in good co-operation with IFHOH and our official language is English.

The Board members of the EFHOH carry out their work on an honorary basis.