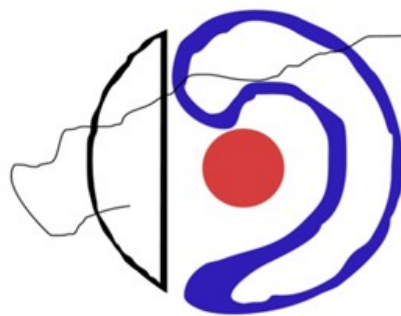


# IMPACT REPORT

European Federation of Hard of Hearing People



2014

**80 million of hard of hearing  
people in Europe**

**51 million within the European  
Union**



## INTRODUCTION

### Our mission

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People exists to represent hard of hearing people at the 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 impact of our activities

This report gives an overview of what we have achieved during 2014.

Some examples are very concrete, others are more in the field of creating awareness and spreading knowledge.

February 2015, EFHOH

**Marcel Bobeldijk , President**



The Internationally adopted and standardized symbol for accessibility to hard of hearing people. The "T" indicates there is a hearing loop in the room or surroundings; the hearing aid should be switched to the "T"-position.

**Cover: Illustration for the conference poster "Together for better hearing"**

**Courtesy of BUCODES, France. Created by Nathalie Coussé**

# HEAL 2014 - Cernobbio, Italy

Lidia Best, Vice President, represented EFHOH as a speaker at this conference. It meant an excellent opportunity to promote EFHOH and network with delegates representing public health, researchers, educators, audiologists.

EFHOH thanks our sponsor Amplifon for helping us to attend the conference.

Lidia presented what impact a hearing loss, either sudden or gradual, has on individual and what possible support should be considered.

Among the themes of the conference were dementia, late uptake of hearing aids. This is a big concern even in cochlear implantation as many people could have better outcomes if they decided to have implants earlier instead of waiting too long.



Lidia Best together with Nicolai Bisgaard from GN Resound and Mark Laureyns, AEA.

## AEA GENERAL MEETING — CONFERENCE



### **AEA General meeting and conference**

The European organization of hearing aid professionals, AEA, invited President Marcel Bobeldijk to speak at their General Assembly on 12 May in Brussels. Important to put forward the user perspective in this organization.

## PLANNING IN PROGRESS AT THE EP



Meeting at the European Parliament planning a follow-up to the successful 2013 Hearing Awareness Days. The next similar event in Brussels is expected to take place during 2015.

Left to right: Mark Laureyns, AEA; Lidia Best, EFHOH; Adám Koša, MEP; Søren Hougaard, EHIMA; Marcel Bobeldijk, EFHOH; Biborka Adám, assistant to Adám Koša.



# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE on LATE DEAFENED, NETHERLANDS, MARCH 27—30



In March the Dutch organization Stichting Plotsdoven hosted a conference in Egmond aan Zee in the Netherlands. The conference had participants from several European countries and USA.

Impact: To present the Late deafened Committee now existing within EFHOH. Explaining about how EFHOH works with important topics like subtitling. Lidia Best and Marcel Bobeldijk attended the conference.

## HUNGARIAN MEDIA REGULATOR WORK-SHOP, BUDAPEST

In September EFHOH was invited to speak at a conference on subtitling: “Hungarian Media Regulator workshop on subtitling”. The main participants who represented the users were EFHOH General member SINOSZ, and MEP Adam Kosa, President of SINOSZ and MEP, and EFHOH representative Vice-President Lidia Best.

Press, broadcasters, state regulator were others. Lidia Best, made a presentation where she talked about the UN CRPD and the EU angle on subtitling. She also provided support for the advocacy work and distributed the EFHOH Impact Report 2013 among the participants.



Lidia Best in the panel (far left) with Adám Koša besides her.



In May 2012 a number of deaf and hard of hearing organisations founded the **European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness**. The organisations were: European Union of Deaf, EUD; European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, EFHOH; European Cochlea Implant Users, Euro-CIU; European Deafblind Network, EDbN.

The Platform aims to unite the forces of the deaf and hard of hearing movement, increasing our collective influence on the decision makers within the EU bodies. An important part in the EU network is the European Disability Forum, EDF.

EFHOH, as most of the Platform organisations, is a full member of EDF.

In the beginning of 2014 the Platform formally accepted three new members: The European Deaf Young People, EUDY; European Deafblind Union, EDBU, and International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People, IFHOHYP.

### Statement on Information

In March the Platform issued an important document called Statement of Information. The document called for fully accessible information focusing on media, website, public transport and public and political events.

The Platform met four times in 2014. Since this year the Platform also has a website: [www.epdhdb.eu](http://www.epdhdb.eu).



## IN-SIGN PROJECT, BRUSSELS →

In April Marcel Bobeldijk together with Arnoud van Wijk and Reinhilde Van Gool, attended a presentation of the Insign project hosted by MEPs Adám Koša and Werner Kuhn in the European Parliament.

In-sign is a communication pilot project to enable communication between deaf and hard of hearing persons and representatives/institutions within the EU. The In-sign uses a technology called Total Conversation, a communication concept that enables you to communicate with speech, video (signing) and Real-Time text. The Insign project is lead by EUD, European Union of Deaf, with five partners from different European countries.



# EDF European Disability Forum



The European Disability Forum is a strong and increasingly influential part in the European Union network.

There are three members from the deaf and hard of hearing movement in the board, all of them from organisations belonging to the Platform: Ricardo Lopez, European Deafblind Network, EDbN; Yannis Yallourus, European Union of Deaf, EUD; Marcel Bobeldijk, EFHOH and finally Knut Magne Ellingsen from the Norwegian Disability Council, former Vice-President of EFHOH.

EDF has some expert groups working in different fields. EFHOH is represented in some of these groups, one of the most important is the ICT, Information and Consumer Technology. There are also some committees in which EFHOH is represented: The Womens Committee and the Youth Committee; both met once during the year.

## Focus during 2014

The work of EDF during 2014 focussed on two issues: The elections for the European Parliament, and the UN Convention of Rights for People with Disabilities, CRPD.

Other important activities included:

- EDF Work-plan for 2015— 2017 adopted by the Annual General Assembly in Zagreb
- EDF adopted a Gender Equality plan against Gender-based discrimination

## The UN Convention of the Rights of People with Disabilities - CRPD

The EU has ratified the Convention and was obliged to issue their first report to the UN CRPD Committee. It was ready in June. The EDF prepared an alternative/shadow report. EFHOH made comments to the draft version of the EDF report, the final version is due for release in May 2015.

## Important events

- European conference on the implementation of the UN CRPD in the Structural Funds of EU
- European Conference on Monitoring the implementation of the UN CRPD. This conference was held in conjunction with the EDF AGA, Annual General Assembly in Zagreb in May.
- A panel discussion on web-accessibility in November
- EDF board met three times in Athens, Zagreb and Brussels.

## EU Parliament elections

For the election to the EU Parliament EDF provided the members with support to be used in the national campaigns.



Part of the election campaign with EDF's new corporate identity



## European Parliament confirms the re-establishment of the Disability Intergroup.

The Disability Intergroup in the European Parliament was re-established after the election, through a decision in December. Around 90 MEPs have applied to join the group, it's bureau will be elected in the beginning of 2015. Among the members of this group are Adám Koša, Hungary, and Helga Stevens, Belgium; both belonging to the signing deaf community.



# EDPD, European Day of People with Disabilities,

Every year in December the European Commission hosts a conference together with EDF, covering some important aspect of conditions for people with disabilities. In 2014 the theme was "Employment and Accessibility" Marcel Bobeldijk and Lidia Best represented EFHOH at this conference.



Lidia making a comment at the EDPD, and a video of her is shown with speech-to-text besides on the same screen.

## ECOS 2014 in Helsinki, Finland



In Helsinki in August EFHOH attended the ECOS 2014, a conference of speech-to-text reporters. Topics included STT in foreign language, newest research as text on top and speech recognition and ergonomics in STT.

President Marcel Bobeldijk and board member Jaana Linna represented EFHOH and participated in some of the work shops; example working assignments, using tablets and mobile phones; working conditions of STT reporters and, last but not least:

A presentation by Birgit Nofftz on the speech-to-text scene in Europe; the result of a survey conducted in European countries.

Later in the autumn the report was sent to all EFHOH members.



Jaana and Marcel at the conference.

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

### Phonak

EFHOH had the chance to visit the Swiss company Phonak, a major manufacturer of hearing aids and assistive listening systems. Such contacts are a valuable way of exchanging information, and for EFHOH to give a user perspective of hearing loss, hearing aids and technical solutions. Marcel Bobeldijk represented EFHOH at this meeting.

### "Design for All" approach in standardization

In April work began under EU Mandate M/473 to address accessibility following a Design for All approach for mainstream products and services. Guido Gybels FRSA, is one of the experts working with the project; the result of a nomination by EFHOH. For almost 10 years Guido was in charge of the technology directorate at the EFHOH member Royal National Institute for Deaf People, RNID. Nowadays known as Action on Hearing Loss, AoHL.

### Together for better hearing

Marcel Bobeldijk visited the French organisation BUCODES who held a conference on the theme Together for better hearing; in French "Ensemble pour mieux entendre"



# WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

EFHOH has a website with a modern design. Vice-President Lidia Best has been responsible for the site.

We are present in social media, we have an EFHOH Facebook group and on Twitter.

The EFHOH Facebook group is steadily gaining attention, attracting well over **500** members.

You can also follow us on Twitter, [@efhoh](#), [@marbob32](#) or [@best\\_lidia](#)

## NEWSLETTER



In our Newsletter you find fresh reports from different events; invitations to some meetings and conferences organised by us or our partners.

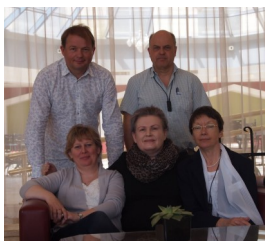
The Newsletter is usually published in five issues a year. The Editor works as a volunteer like the board of EFHOH. During 2014 responsibility for the Newsletter was taken by Marcel Bobeldijk together with the Editor Niels-Henrik M. Hansen.

## GENERAL MEETING and CONFERENCE

The Annual General Meeting, AGM 2014 was held in Jerusalem in April, hosted by the Israeli organisation BEKOL.

The traditional conference following the AGM gave interesting insights in the life of hard of hearing people in Israel.

These conferences are open to all participants interested in hearing loss; research in a wide field connected to the living conditions of hard of hearing people.



## OFFICE and CONTACT

The board elected in Jerusalem, April 2014.

EFHOH is a European federation, and it's board of five people work solely on a voluntary basis.

Starting in December we will get support from the UK organisation Action on Hearing Loss through an internship.

By the end of 2014 EFHOH had **29 General members, 4 Associate members and 8 Sponsor members and 1 individual member**. The General members are all national federations/association for hard of hearing people.

### The Board of EFHOH

President Marcel Bobeldijk, NL  
Vice President Lidia Best, UK  
Treasurer Ritva-Liisa Schaeding, Germany  
General Secretary Jan Lamby, Sweden  
Board member Jaana Linna, Finland

Enquiries: [office@efhoh.org](mailto:office@efhoh.org)

Website: [www.efhoh.org](http://www.efhoh.org)

