

# EFHOH

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Edited by Marcel Bo-  
beldijk, president of  
EFHOH and Niels-Henrik  
M. Hansen.

Deadline for the next  
newsletter is February  
15.th /2015.

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# NEWSLETTER

EFHOH

DECEMBER 2014



## EFHOH PRESIDENT LETTER

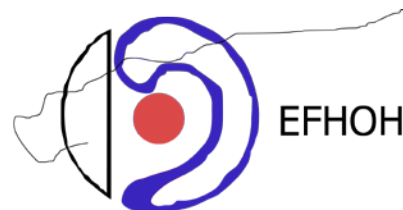
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IFHOHYP STUDY SESSIONS:  
20 YEARS IN THE MAKING...  
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NEW EFHOH INTERN  
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European Federation of Hard of Hearing People



Marcel says farewell to Karina Chupina, the former IFHOHYP president.

## EFHOH President letter

*Dear EFHOH friends,*

In this edition of the EFHOH newsletter we will inform, you as our member and EFHOH newsletter readers, about the news and what is happening at European level.

### **EFHOH news**

The EFHOH board is very happy to inform you that since 1 December we have an intern Ed Spragg, you can read his introduction in the newsletter. Ed will be working every Tuesday for EFHOH and the other day for Action on Hearing Loss based in London. The activities Ed will be focusing on is the policy work and support the EFHOH board. Ed welcome in our EFHOH family and lot of success in all your work! In this EFHOH can you read an article with more background information of Ed.

### **IFHOH news**

EFHOH board congratulate IFHOH, who receives a major funding for the IFHOH United Nations Education programme. This is a big support for the IFHOH's production of UN CRPD training materials, delivery of human rights training courses, and attendance at the meeting of the UN Committee of the CRPD. Look for more information in the IFHOH journal coming out this winter.

### **IFHOHYP news**

On Sunday 23 November I had the possibility to say THANK YOU for all great work to Karina Chupina the former IFHOHYP President. I have also had an opportunity to welcome Sidsel Munkebo Hansen and the other four new members of the total new IFHOHYP board. The EFHOH board looks



Picture of Ed (far left) with Lidia.

forward to a warm co-operation between IFHOHYP and EFHOH at European level. A great example of this co-operation is that Sidsel Munkebo Hansen as new president signed the co-operation agreement of the European Platform on Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness on her first day in the office.

#### EDF news

A few weeks ago at the EDF board meeting in Brussels, EDF president Yannis Vardakastanis, highlighted that 2015 will be a very crucial year. "The disability movement will be soon in front of important political issues for which it has worked hard during the past decade, like the European Accessibility Act, the non-discrimination directive, the report of the European Union to the UN Committee of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the review of Europe 2020 and the European Disability Strategy", Yannis Vardakastanis underlining the responsibility of the new European Union Parliament and the new Commission towards their citizens with disabilities.

2015 will be a very key political year indeed, it is a year when new actors will come in the disability scene and we need to try once again to be successful in making the rights of persons with disabilities a long lasting political priority. For the new European Commission the European Accessibility Act is one of the top priorities and the Commission will deliver a reviewed Disability Strategy by the end of 2015. A very important topic will be the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) by the European Union that will present next year (maybe before the summer) its first report to the UN Committee explaining the work it has done on this.

In this regard, EDF will submit to the UN CRPD Committee its alternative report to the report that the European Union has prepared covering areas and actions that left out of it. EFHOH Board is actively participating in the process of the EDF alternative report and we will represent EFHOH and their members at different events related this topic.

#### Follow us

So as you know you can follow EFHOH via facebook and Twitter. The addresses are:

EFHOH	@efhoh
Marcel Bobeldijk	@marbob32
Lidia Best	@best_lidia

If you have an article for one of the newsletters in 2015 please sent it to us. We will make also in 2015 some newsletters for all our members and EFHOH newsletter readers and also for the volunteers in your national and local organisation.

Dear EFHOH members & friends, on behalf of the EFHOH board, I wish you all, together with your family and friends, a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year 2015! I hope to meet you all in Essen/Germany at the EFHOH Annual General Meeting 2015.

Warm Regards,

Marcel Bobeldijk  
President of EFHOH.

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

### European Federation of Hard of Hearing People Nominating Committee

21 October, 2014

Dear General members of EFHOH,

The new board of EFHOH will be elected in the EFHOH Annual General Meeting (AGM), April 10th, 2014 in Essen, Germany.

The nomination committee needs formal proposals from the member organizations for the positions of the board:

#### **a. candidates to the board:**

**President**

**Secretary**

**Treasurer**

The treasurer Ritva-Liisa Schädling (Germany) and the Secretary Jan Lamby (Sweden) are not available for re-election.

All possible candidates must be nominated by a general member organization of EFHOH. A current EFHOH board member can be re-elected, but he/she has to officially communicate with his/her own general member organization about her availability of re-election.

#### **From the EFHOH Statutes /Article 8.1 – 8.3/**

1. *The board of the association shall be composed of a chairman; a vice-chairman; a treasurer; a secretary; a general board member*
2. *a. The officers must be of age and competent to perform legal acts.  
b. The majority of the officers must themselves be hard of hearing and all the officers must be members of one of the General Members of this association.*
3. *The board members are elected for a term of two years by a majority of votes in the general membership meeting. There is no limit on the number of times that a board member may be re-elected.*

EFHOH Head Office  
c/o Action on Hearing Loss  
No. 40482609 by Kamer van Koophandel  
Utrecht / Netherlands

19-23 Featherstone Street  
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EFHOH Board  
President: Marcel Bobeljik

Vice-President: Lidia Best  
General-Secretary: Jan Lamby  
Treasurer: Ritva-Liisa Schädling  
Board member: Jaana Linna

EFHOH Nominating committee  
Chair: Patrick Hennings

Member: Harald Tamegger  
Member: Andrea Jambor  
Email: [pohsanktart@gmail.com](mailto:pohsanktart@gmail.com)

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

### European Federation of Hard of Hearing People Nominating Committee

#### The present Board comprises of:

President: Marcel Bobeldijk (Netherlands)  
 Vice-President: Lidia Best (United Kingdom)  
 General-Secretary: Jan Lamby (Sweden)  
 Treasurer: Ritva-Liisa Schädling (Germany)  
 Board Member: Jaana Linna (Finland)

#### b. candidates to be the Chair of the Nomination committee.

The Chair of the Nomination committee can be re-elected, but he/she has to officially communicate with his/her own general member organization about the availability of re-election.

#### From the Statutes of EFHOH /Article 10.10/

*a. The aim of the nomination committee is to ensure that the election procedure takes place correctly. The members of the nomination committee must all be of different nationalities.*

*c. the composition of the nomination committee*

- *The nomination committee consists of at least three members. The general membership meeting appoints the chairman, who in turn appoints the other members of the nomination committee.*
- *Members of the nomination committee cannot be candidates for the election.*

#### The present Nomination Committee comprises of:

(Chair: Patrick Hennings (Belgium))  
 /resigned through a decision of the board 11 October, 2014/  
 New ACTING CHAIR: Harald Tamegger (Austria)  
 Member: Andrea Jambor (Hungary)

Please send information of candidates at the latest by February 15th, 2015.  
 The nomination should be sent to the address of Harald Tamegger:  
**[tamegger@oesb-dachverband.at](mailto:tamegger@oesb-dachverband.at)**

With kind regards

Your EFHOH Nomination Committee  
 Harald Tamegger, Andrea Jambor

EFHOH Head Office  
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 No. 40482609 by Kamer van Koophandel  
 Utrecht / Netherlands

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EFHOH Board  
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 Board member: Jaana Linna

EFHOH Nominating committee  
 Chair: Patrick Hennings

Member: Harald Tamegger  
 Member: Andrea Jambor  
 Email: [pohsanktart@gmail.com](mailto:pohsanktart@gmail.com)



December 2014

## Call for motions

### To the General Members of EFHOH

At the General members meeting of EFHOH the members have the possibility to make proposals for new activities or for adopting resolutions. Such proposals shall, according to the statutes, be submitted to the secretary at least three months before the date of the general members meeting.

Consequently, motions to the Annual General Meeting 2015 which takes place in Essen, Germany on April 10<sup>th</sup>, must be sent to the General Secretary of EFHOH before **January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015**.

The motions should be sent to the following address:

EFHOH  
General Secretary Jan Lamby

E-mail: [secretary@efhoh.org](mailto:secretary@efhoh.org)

Paper mail:

EFHOH  
c/o Jan Lamby  
Hildebrandsvägen 39  
SE-168 56 BROMMA  
Sweden



## From the IFHOH President

It has been a busy last eight months since a new board was elected at IFHOH Biennial Meeting held April 7, 2014 in Jerusalem, Israel. Newly elected to the board was Louise Carroll of New Zealand as Member at Large. She has additional human rights responsibilities.

The board has held six meetings to date, all by Skype except for one in-person meeting held in Vietnam from October 24-25, 2014, thanks to the hospitality of our General-Secretary Hanh Duong Phuong. She also organized a one-day seminar at which IFHOH members gave well-received presentations and a Memorandum of Agreement with signed by IFHOH with the Asia Pacific Federation of the Hard of Hearing and Deafened. This was a historic occasion marking the first such agreement between IFHOH and the Asian-Pacific region hard of hearing/deafened network.

A highlight of the last few months is the successful awarding of a grant for workshops and activities in relation to the Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities by the Oticon Foundation. A release about the grant is on IFHOH's website: <http://www.ifhoh.org/human-rights/>

We are also pleased that a proposal that we developed on Event Speech-to-Text Access was approved by the World Federation of the Deaf. This will be the first joint WFD/IFHOH project.

There have been a number of representations and I am convinced of their importance. We need to be present on the worldwide stage and to be articulating the concerns of hard of hearing people. Just to cite two recent ones:

From November 9 to 10, I was be involved in meetings in Beijing, China for the high-level international forum on disability with the theme of "Equal Access, Inclusive Development" held in conjunction with the 2014 APEC Leadership Meeting. Meetings and tours were arranged including with the Minister responsible for disabilities issues for China. From November 24-26, I represented IDA and IFHOH at a International Conference on The Role of Information and Communication Technologies for Persons with Disabilities in New Delhi, India. I participated on an opening plenary panel on the first day of the conference organized primarily by UNESCO. I addressed the needs for hearing aids, assistive listening systems and captioning/subtitling as part of my interventions during the conference. In February I look forward to returning to New Delhi to present at the 12-14 Feb (2015) Conference on Community Ear and Hearing Care in New Delhi, India.

Meanwhile, I want to wish members and friends of EFHOH all the best this holiday season and look forward to a year of continuing improvements in our access and human rights.

With best regards  
Ruth Warick





### Hear-It GA

I had the possibility to represent IFHOH at the General Assembly of hear-it. The objective of this organisation is to collect information from all around the world: Research reports on all topics related to hearing; Statistics about all possible outcome from national or international surveys; statistical data from authorities or other institutions. Medical or other research, from hospitals, universities and different organisations. All this is presented on their website, [www.hear-it.org](http://www.hear-it.org). The website has recently been updated, and has a good design. Useful if you are looking for news from this field, either to publish in your own media, or for further use in advocacy works. You are allowed to use the content on the website, as long as the source is mentioned.

The branch organisations are the paying members, IFHOH does not pay any fee. All presentations on the website are non-commercial. There are no logos or advertisements. My role as IFHOH representative was to make sure that hear-It and the website should remain in that way. Because there were rumours beforehand things were going to change.

The GA went rather quickly since there were very few formal points, a little different way of running a meeting than I am used to. All documents were included in a Power-Point presentation by the Secretary Kim Ruberg. The large part of this was an annual report. Telling about what was achieved last year; their re-launched website etc. They also had run a user survey, to get a picture of the visitors to the website, and to what extent they use the information.

### EUHA Exhibition and Conference

First, the exhibition grounds in Hannover turned out to be a logistic disaster in my eyes. Very difficult to find your way,

I often ended up walking in the vehicle lanes where large lorries went by to deliver goods.

The conference: After the GA of hear-it, I tried to listen to some of the lectures, but did not find it so interesting. As most of the lectures were very technical and aimed at the professionals.

Tip: If you are interested you can download an app at the EUHA website, [www.euha.org](http://www.euha.org). The app contains the program together with abstracts of all lectures. Later, a DVD/CD with all presentations will be available for purchase at the website.

The exhibition was an overwhelming experience, with all the major companies having large stands, up to 120 sq metres. Example the Phonak stand which served as a kind of meeting point. Apparently a lot of people were there just talking to each other, and not being really interested in talking to the staff of Phonak and get information. I got some info on a new version of the so called ComPilot (I use one myself). This version uses wireless connection to the hearing aid, if you wear a Phonak. Another example is the





A glimpse of Kim's PP-presentation at the GA

Re-Sound Linx, which can be used with Apple products iPhone, iPad etc. All these devices/streamers have the same important limitation: They are only compatible with hearing aids of the same brand. Phonak to Phonak etc.

Looking to hearing aid models, it seems there is a never ending flood of new models.

However, it was clear the major development and progress are made in the range suitable for light and moderate hearing loss. Smaller, more colourful shells etc. Good for young, smart people but certainly elderly people will have problems handling these tiny objects.

This is nothing new and it seems this development is unstoppable.

Beside the exhibition I met with two hopeful guys from Finland: They represented a newly founded company called Jentafon. The company has just launched the LPS-6, the newest version of a loop set. Like the earlier versions, it was developed in co-operation with Nokia. It has in my eyes an attractive design. It does not have all the functions as some other streamers in the market, being a loop set for

mobile phones and listening to audio files in your computer. But it is much cheaper, estimated price €200.

The conference's main social activity was something they called "Congress Get together".

It meant dining in an enormous hall in the "Löwenbräu house: Built to resemble the large beer halls and gardens you can find in Munich and other parts of Germany. As you can understand from my picture, it also posed an extreme acoustical challenge. The overall sound level, making conversation impossible for anyone having hearing loss, was also increased by a typical German "umpa"- orchestra. My luck was to be seated, by pure coincidence, with a countryman; and using my personal FM-system I managed to have at least a halting conversation with him.

Jan Lamby  
Secretary of EFHOH



By: Bowen Tang (IFHOHYP Board Member)



## IFHOHYP Study Sessions: 20 Years in the Making...

In 1994, the 1st IFHOHYP Study Session was held in Strasbourg – the Centre of Europe, in which a group of young hard of hearing people came together to start a conversation about empowerment and leadership. This conversation kept its momentum all the way to today in 2014 where a 10th Study Session was held from 17th to 22nd November at the very same place twenty years ago. This is nothing short of remarkable, but a testament to the dedication and passion of young hard of hearing people worldwide determined to make a difference in their communities. We are proud to announce that this study session was another spectacular success, with 35 participants from 13 countries coming together to build one strong and cohesive community with the common goal to raise global awareness on the issues deaf and hard of hearing young people face in the society.

The theme of this study session was “Tuning Up Your Organization, Fight For Your Rights”, which aims to empower

young deaf and hard of hearing leaders with competences needed for organisational development in order to enable their sustainable participation and disability rights work on local, national and international levels. This study session is also a milestone in which International Sign Language interpreters were provided for participants who would benefit from them. Deaf issues were explored in conjunction with hard of hearing issues, and while there were initially some challenges in communication between some of the participants, they were overcome in the end with unity.

The empowerment of the deaf and hard of hearing became visible in the video project, when four videos were created addressing deaf and hard of hearing issues in their realities: prejudice (“Not Hard of Understanding”), communication (“Show Us Your Lips”, “Three Simple Rules”), and acceptance (“Let’s Imagine This”). The participants discussed their issues and learned tools to educate the world about their rights. We are privileged to have Chris Schuepp, our



expert, in guiding us to develop these videos. He also gave valuable tips on how to analyse a target group and spread information to them in an efficient manner.

Another critical learning outcome for the participants is a deeper insight into organizational development and management, beginning with the strategic planning. Through an exercise in which participants worked in groups to build the tallest free-standing spaghetti tower with a marshmallow on top, they learned the significance of having a strategic plan in place before attempting. One particular comment which resonates with everyone is the analogy made to the importance of a strong foundation within an organization in order for it to develop. We also looked at the current issues in recruiting and retaining volunteers in the organization and how communication techniques can be used to motivate others to join the cause. Participants developed a one-minute motivational speech which they can use in their organizations, following the principles

given in how we should motivate others. These communication strategies were further explored in the sessions coaching and mentoring, teamwork and group dynamics.

On the day following the Study Session, an AGM was held with 15 member organizations represented. The new Board is looking forward to developing a strategic plan for the next five years, and we always welcome input from our members to help make IFHOHYP sustainable and thrive for years to come. In closing, we would like to take a moment to thank Karina Chupina for her 10-year presidency, which has made IFHOHYP the organization it is today. Karina will be sorely missed but she will always be a part of us. If you would like to contact us, please do not hesitate to email: [info@ifhohyp.org](mailto:info@ifhohyp.org).



## **Media Release 14 November 2014**

### **INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION FOR HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE RECEIVES MAJOR FUNDING FOR UNITED NATIONS EDUCATION PROGRAMME**

The International Federation for Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) is thrilled to announce that the Oticon Foundation Denmark (Oticon Foundation) is funding its human rights work for the next two years. By granting US\$121,567 to support IFHOH's production of CRPD training materials, delivery of human rights training courses, and attendance at the meetings of the UN Committee of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Oticon Foundation is recognising the capability of the CRPD to lead change globally.

IFHOH President Ruth Warick states that the funding is a global first for IFHOH and is a significant breakthrough enabling the development of materials for the hard of hearing community to utilize the CRPD as a tool for improving its human rights, accessibility and needed services. Resource materials will focus specifically on examples for the hard of hearing community and the workshops will provide national training for IFHOH member organisations enabling them to utilize the CRPD as a tool for change.

One area for global change is the uptake of hearing aid usage which is presently way below what is needed. According to the World Health Organisation, hearing aid uptake by those who need hearing support, is 13% in the western world and 3% in developing countries. "From these alarming statistics it is evident there is an inordinate level of unmet need for hearing rehabilitation globally," Dr Warick advised.

In recognition of the significant need for information being available globally on how the CRPD upholds the rights of hard of hearing persons, IFHOH established a Human Rights Officer position in 2012 filled by Louise Carroll from New Zealand. In the following year, a Human Rights Toolkit was developed, focused on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

According to Mrs. Carroll, the Toolkit is a resource with particular focus on its application to the issues of concern to the hard of hearing community, working to dynamically change worldviews of people who are hard of hearing and their right to hearing rehabilitation.

Through funding from the Oticon Foundation, IFHOH will be able to expand its programme to develop a train-the-trainers manual on the CRPD, and workshops for trainers will be offered for participants in Asia, Africa and Europe as well as in conjunction with the IFHOH 2016 Congress in the United States.

The International Federation for Hard of Hearing People (IFHOH) provides a platform (across 50 member organisations in 33 countries) from which to liaise with international organisations such as the United Nations and national governments on matters of concern to hard of hearing people.

For more information please contact:

Louise Carroll: [humanrights@ifhoh.org](mailto:humanrights@ifhoh.org); Phone: +64 210766990

Ruth Warick: [president@ifhoh.org](mailto:president@ifhoh.org)



## New EFHOH INTERN

Hello, bonjour, guten tag, hallo, god dag to all of the members of EFHOH! I would like to introduce myself to you as I have the pleasure of being the very first intern for the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People. My name is Ed Spragg. I studied for a BA in Politics and Sociology, and then for a Masters in Social and Political Thought at the University of Sussex, and I currently live in the London Borough of Kingston with my parents, my brother, and our two poorly behaved cats.

My interest in the rights of the significant number of Europeans who have a hearing loss disability stems from a family history of hearing loss and tinnitus, although I have not yet personally experienced either condition. On my mother's side of the family three out of four of my aunts and uncles either use assistive technologies or suffer from tinnitus, and all of my grandparents experienced hearing loss in their old age. As such I have long been attuned to the acute challenges that face the many millions of individuals

who experience hearing loss and tinnitus, and the barriers that are presented to these individuals in day-to-day life. The internship at EFHOH presents a wonderful opportunity to gain a better insight into how these barriers affect people's lives, but more importantly to gain an understanding of how these barriers can be brought down across Europe.

Alongside my role with EFHOH I am also an intern at Action on Hearing Loss here in the UK, and beyond the world of policy and political campaigns I am passionate about sport, particularly rugby, as I have dual nationality between England and New Zealand. I support my local team, Harlequins. I am extremely excited to have the opportunity to meet and work with many of you, and I hope that I can make a valuable contribution to the crucial work of EFHOH over the coming months.

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## Hire a 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](mailto:office@efhoh.org)



## Youth Forum of European Disability Forum

EFHOH represented in the Youth Committee European Disability Forum (EDF) is an independent NGO and the umbrella organisation of persons with disabilities in Europe – they are the front runners for disability rights in Europe.

The three EDF committees are supposed to play an important role in promoting the policy work of EDF, be its external communication and also to deal with specific procedural issues. They are all advisory bodies having a consultative mandate. One of the three committees are the Youth Committee. It is established for 4 years with a midterm review after 2 years and composed of 6 members and a meeting once a year. Sidsel Munkebo Hansen, president of IFHOHYP, was nominated for the Youth Committee by EFHOH and was elected in spring 2013. The Youth Committee will mainstream the youth perspective in EDF work and monitor and contribute to drawing up EDF papers that should incorporate a youth perspective.

### **“One of the most important committees”**

The Youth Committee had the first ever meeting the 1st of October 2014 in the EDF office in Brussels. The 5 members,

all in their 20's, were from all over Europe and representing very different perspectives and disabilities – there was a great variety from autism, blindness, HOH, wheelchair- and crutch user. It was for most of the young members the first experiences with EDF and advocacy on a European level – but all was very excited about getting started.

The meeting was welcomed by Javier Güemes, the former deputy director: “I think, the Youth Committee for EDF is one of the most important committees. It is the way in which the organisation tries to find and reach out the ideas and the priorities of the young people in the disability movement.”

After a roundtable with introductions, the members had a discussion about a working document on social inclusion and about the new Youth Committee Action Plan 2015-2017. Especially topics as education and social and cultural life was discussed in this connection.

by Sidsel Munkebo Hansen



## ATTENDING EDF WOMEN COMMITTEE MADRID, JULY 2014

This was my first meeting which I attended as EFHOH representative.

The most important discussions related to violence against women and access to justice.

I have spoken of examples when access to justice is denied if you have no possibility to contact help agencies except for telephone access. I have also spoken about lack of access to justice system itself including courts. For many EU countries to do not have protection of hard of hearing people including deafened people. I provided example when in Slovakia, there was no speech to text provided to deafened woman who was a defendant in a case against her. Because of lack of access she had no possibility to defend herself effectively. The denial of access to justice does exist in countries where there are no hearing loops installed or speech to text provided.

Additionally, the Committee worked on Article 6 of UNCRPD related to women with disabilities and tackled issues which were not discussed previously such as:

1. Intersectional discrimination
2. Violence against women with disabilities
3. Sexual and reproductive rights, in particular forced sterilization and coercive abortion

The next meeting will take place in the first quarter of 2015.

Lidia Best  
EFHOH vice President

## EDF PANEL DISCUSSION ON WEB ACCESSIBILITY WITH MARCEL BOBELDIJK

On 19 November Marcel Bobeldijk participated for EFHOH at an panel discussion in the European Parliament titled "Web accessibility as driver for local and regional digital inclusion". This event was an opportunity to gather different experiences across Europe concerning the potential of enhancing web accessibility for local and regional governments. In this line, there were some best practices coming from cities such as Vienna ([www.wien.gv.at](http://www.wien.gv.at)), or regions such as the French department of Pas-de-Calais ([www.pasdecalsais.fr](http://www.pasdecalsais.fr)).

The event was hosted by the new European Parliament rapporteur of the proposal for a Directive on Accessibility of Public Sector Bodies' Websites, Ms Dita Charanzová, and among the participants there were ICT industry representatives, web developers, the World Wide Web Consortium, organisations promoting e-accessibility and representing persons with disabilities.

Given the recent changes in the European Parliament and the Commission, It was a good opportunity to raise awareness of the importance of adopting the proposed EU legislation on web accessibility and push the Council to boost the negotiations among the Member States. The speakers discussed different approaches to trigger web accessibility, especially by local and regional authorities, as well as the barriers that this administrations find when pursuing this goal.



## conference site

### *Hotel Franz*

Steeler Straße 261  
45138 Essen

## conference languages

### *English and German*

simultaneous translation

speech-to-text interpreter  
(English and German)

## technics

### *FM-system*



### contact details:

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For detailed and continuously updated  
information please contact the congress-  
website:

<http://www.schwerhoerigen-netz.de/EFHOH>

### contact persons:

Mrs. Renate Welter

Mrs. Sandra Markoff

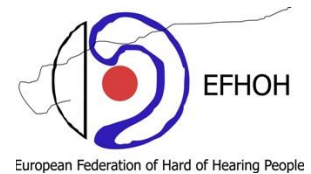


## EFHOH Annual General Meeting and Conference 2015

Essen, Germany

10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> April 2015

**“The Convention on the Rights  
of Persons with Disabilities  
and its implementation  
for hard of hearing people  
in the European Member States”**



## EFHOH-Conference 2015

From the 10th to 12th of April 2015 the European Federation of Hard of Hearing people (EFHOH) will host its international conference in Germany under the motto: “The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its implementation for hard of hearing people in the European Member States”

The Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund e.V., the association for hard of hearing people in Germany, will organize the conference in the growing metropolis Essen and we would be happy to welcome you, dear members, affected or interested people, as a participant of the conference.

The patron of the event is Mrs. Verena Bentele, The Federal Government Commissioner for Matters relating to disabled Persons.

Anyone willing to learn about the work of EFHOH is already welcome to the member assembly on Friday.

On Saturday there will be a lecture for each topic of the conference with a discussion afterwards, how the requirements of hard of hearing people in these areas can be implemented across Europe.

The goal will be to prepare a new declaration that will be handed out to representatives of politics of Europe. There will also be an opportunity for networking and socializing at our gala evening on Saturday, and a cultural glimpse at the city of Essen during a guided tour with a stop at the Zeche Zollverein, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The conference will be held in English and German, simultaneous translation will be provided.

We also offer English and German speech-to-text-interpreters during the general meeting and the conference.

The international event will be accompanied by an exhibition offering many news around the theme: “hearing impairment and aids for affected people”

We are looking forward to meet you in Essen!



## program excerpt

**Friday, Apr. 10th 2015**  
*General Meeting*

**Saturday, Apr. 11th 2015**  
*series of lectures*

- ° Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its meaning to people with hearing impairment
- ° Participation of patients in the public health system
- ° Accessibility – Key positions towards inclusion
- ° Vocational training of Speech to Text Interpreters
- ° En route to an inclusive job market

### *thematic workshops*

*drawing up the Declaration of Essen,  
signing and handover*

**Sunday, Apr. 12th 2015**

*Guided tour through Essen with a stop  
at Zeche Zollverein*

# Ory wants to learn to play the guitar



11 th. episode:

Ory and His **New** Hearing **Machine**

Text: Aisa Cleyet-Marel, France  
Drawing: Ellen Tierie, Netherlands

# Ory wants to learn to play the guitar



Ory's family loves music.

All day the children listen to their MP4s or their iPhones, but even so, very often when he comes home the house is full of loud music.

Ory doesn't appreciate it. It is more noise than music.

Music. What does that still mean to him? Things are so different with his hearing machine: sounds are metallic and he doesn't recognize the instruments. Is that a piano or a guitar, a violin or a harp? Two years ago he had decided to try to work it out with a music therapist. The therapist taught him to be relaxed and open-minded, but also to listen with his whole body, to enjoy music by vibration. Ory learned to express emotions, difficulties and joy.

Just before the summer of 2014 Ory listened to a short concert played by two guitarists. He is astonished. He likes it. One of the musicians is playing with his eyes closed. Ory saw that he was wearing very small hearing aids. The musician is not deaf but HOH!

The HOH musician is also a guitar teacher. Ory asks him to give him some lessons. Together they buy a second hand guitar. Ory plays the guitar strings. It is not as good as he had hoped. He works hard at home and then it begins to

sound better. He learns to read music with black notes, white notes and pauses. At the end of each line, there must be a pause, but the teacher tells him that each time Ory stops playing there's not silence. Ory can't hear it. He tries again and again, but the silence is never completely there.

Ory blocks the guitar against his body, closes his eyes and tries to feel the music, to discover the vibrations. Little by little, Ory finds the difference between music and pauses. A friend asks him: "Is it difficult to play the guitar?" "The most difficult thing is to play the pauses", Ory says, "but that is even true in our communication: HOH people never know how to take part in a conversation, to find the right moment and to locate a "silence", a "pause" in the conversation."

by Sidsel Munkebo Hansen



## HOH **Young** People: A very **successful** Study Session and a **new** IFHOHYP board

The 23th of November 2014, IFHOHYP held their annual general meeting in Strasbourg, France. It was the following weekend of a very successful study session for young hard of hearing and deaf people from all over the world.

The 10th Study Session of IFHOHYP: "Tune Up Your Organizations, Fight For Your Rights" was a spectacular success. What started with 35 participants from 13 countries became one strong and cohesive community with the common goal to raise global awareness on the issues deaf and hard of hearing young people face in the society. Here goes out a special thanks to the Study Session committee for putting all of this together, as well as support from the Council of Europe. A detailed report will be published later in the year.

Furthermore IFHOHYP had its annual general meeting with 15 member organizations represented. Through this AGM a completely new Board was elected. It will be exciting to witness their inspirational work in the coming year,

but we should take a moment to thank Karina Chupina for her 10-year presidency, which has made IFHOHYP the organization it is today.

The new board consist of the following members:

President: Sidsel Munkebo Hansen (Denmark)

Vice-president: Alper Coskun (Turkey)

Secretary: Ece Saygi (Turkey)

Treasurer: Daria Panicheva (Russia)

Board member: Bowen Tang (Canada)

(Left to Right: Bowen, Ece, Sidsel, Alper, Daria)

## 'Public Safety Answering Points in Europe 2014' document is out!

Press Release: european emergency number association

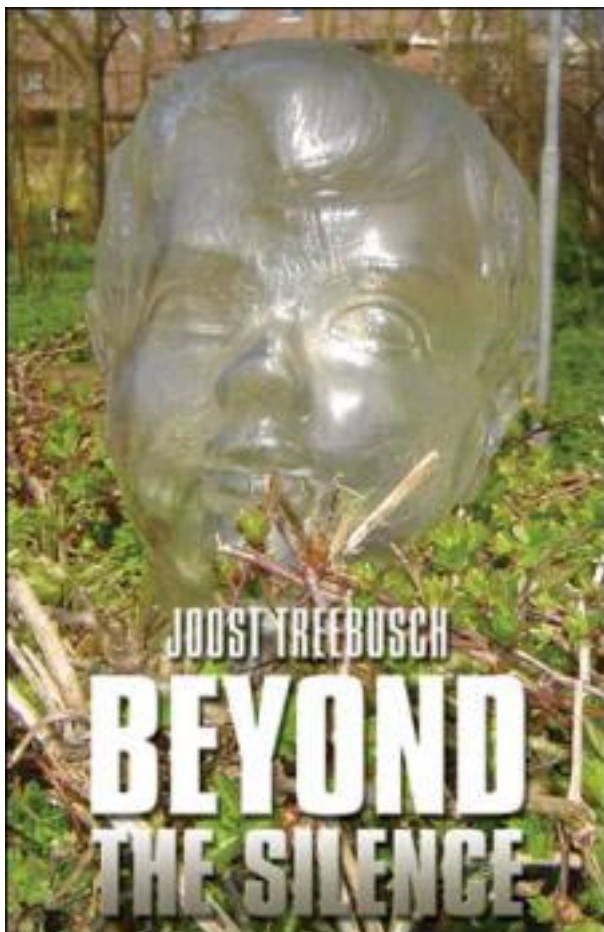
EENA is delighted to announce that the 'Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in Europe' document, 2014 edition, is now available.

The 'PSAPs in Europe' document offers an elaborate description of national structures that relate to the functioning of PSAPs. It aims at illustrating the complexity of each national structure, and to provide a clear idea of how the related framework in each respective country works. Are you interested in emergency call handling systems?

Then this publication is for you! How do emergency services work in a country? What technology do they use?

What are their plans for the future? These are only some of the many questions answered by this publication. In addition to the 28 EU countries and Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Iceland, Kosovo, Moldova, Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Norway, Serbia, and Turkey this year's publication provides information on PSAPs organisation in Switzerland and Georgia. As every year, all information has been updated for the countries that were included in the 2013 edition.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our members, without whom this publication would not be possible. In case of any inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact Jerome Paris at [jp@eena.org](mailto:jp@eena.org).



## America Star Books Presents: "Beyond the Silence" by Joost Treebusch

America Star Books is proud to present *Beyond the Silence* by Joost Treebusch from The Netherlands.

A brief synopsis of the book: My autobiography is like a diary; it describes my battle against tinnitus, against the noise in my head, the very idea of being seriously ill which made me think I was crazy. This is my fight against my misunderstanding of my surroundings, my family and myself, and about the deep valley where I had to go as well as my long journey to a decent life. Tinnitus has its own place in this world and one can still deal with it. I once again became a man, although there were struggles and restrictions. I realized I could have a social life again. This book serves as an inspiration and a form of support to all those who are suffering from the condition.

America Star Books is a traditional publishing company whose primary goal is to encourage and promote the works of new, previously undiscovered writers. Like mainstream publishers, America Star Books pays its authors royalties and makes its books available through all bookstores. America Star Books offers a distinctly personal, supportive alternative to vanity presses and less accessible publishers.

## EDF WELCOMES THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT DISABILITY INTERGROUP

EDF welcomes the decision of the Conference of Presidents to re-establish the Disability intergroup for another legislature. Alive since 1979, the Disability Intergroup is one of the oldest and largest intergroups in the European Parliament with consistent cross-party support of around 100 Members. It is the only body which focuses on disability and allows for a regular dialogue with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations.

Since its creation, EDF and its members have worked closely with the Disability Intergroup MEPs to advocate for a Europe free from discrimination, where 80 million citizens with disabilities can enjoy equal rights and opportunities and can bring a meaningful contribution to a better society.

“The Disability Intergroup plays an important role in pushing the European Parliament but also the other EU institutions into designing laws and policies inclusive for persons with disabilities. Without the Disability Intergroup, we wouldn’t have important legislative initiatives to improve the lives of persons with disabilities. On behalf of the whole European Disability movement, I want to express our deep appreciation and gratitude to the Members of the European Parliament who have campaigned for the re-establishment of the intergroup and in particular those who have succeeded in convincing their political groups to make the disability intergroup a priority”, underlines EDF President, Yannis Vardakastanis.

EDF looks forward to working with the new Disability Intergroup as there are still big challenges ahead.

### WHY IS THE DISABILITY INTERGROUP NECESSARY?

The Disability intergroup is necessary because persons with disabilities continue to suffer from severe discriminations in all aspects of life and do not enjoy the same opportunities as other EU citizens. For instance, their unemployment rate is more than twice higher than that of persons without disabilities.

The Disability intergroup is necessary because the EU, as well as most Member States, is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the first and only international treaty the EU has ever ratified in the field of human rights) and therefore the European Parliament too. The Parliament is bound to implement the Convention. The work of the Disability intergroup is a crucial lever to stimulate and enable the European Parliament to respect and implement the UN Convention.



The Disability intergroup is necessary because as a forum for discussion with civil society and in particular organisations of persons with disabilities, contributes to implementing a key article of the UN Convention: no decision on disability without persons with disabilities themselves (article 4.3).

EDF provides the secretariat of the intergroup.

## PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON EUROPE 2020 EDF ASKS FOR JOBS & INCLUSION FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

EDF welcomed and used the opportunity to contribute to the revision of the Europe 2020 strategy given by the European Commission's public consultation.

The objectives of the Strategy are ambitious; unfortunately several studies and reports confirm that, due to the economic crisis and the austerity measures, the Strategy targets are far from being achieved. In terms of unemployment and poverty, the situation across the EU is worrying. Persons with disabilities are at higher risk of poverty and social exclusion, they are excluded from the labour market and access to education is still a challenge in most countries especially when it comes to tertiary education.

It is obvious that the EU cannot fulfill Europe 2020 without taking on board European citizens with disabilities and therefore specific measures should be developed.

## EDF CONTRIBUTES TO A PROJECT TO REMOVE BARRIERS TO THE MOBILITY OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

EDF signed a partnership agreement with the organisation 'Erasmus Student Network' with the purpose to contribute to an ESN-led project called 'MapAbility'. The project, in the continuation of the ExchangeAbility project, aims at mapping and strengthening the accessibility of Higher Education Institutions in Europe to students with special needs.

EDF Youth Committee contributed to the project, which was completed in September with the launch of the MapAbility Map. In the framework of the project, EDF also gave a training to ESN volunteers.

## EDF JOINED 'KEEP ME POSTED EU CAMPAIGN'

EDF has been invited by the printing and paper industry to join a campaign for more consumer choice in their means of communication with private companies and public authorities.

Modelled after the British "Keep me posted" campaign, EDF joined AGE, ANEC, BEUC and other civil society stakeholders to support the citizen's right to choose how they receive important information such as tax forms, election documents and bills and statements from service providers without any disadvantage. It is not an anti-digital campaign but a pro-choice campaign to promote inclusion of vulnerable consumers at European level.

EDF attended the second steering group meeting on 10 October and will follow the campaign to raise awareness of the role of persons with disabilities as consumers.

For more information or suggestions please contact EDF's Transport and Mobility Officer: [marie.denninghaus@edf-feph.org](mailto:marie.denninghaus@edf-feph.org).

## EU EQUAL TREATMENT LAW: WE'VE BEEN WAITING TOO LONG!

Brussels, 6 November 2014 – As high-level EU Member States' representatives meet today to discuss how to make equality a reality for all, equality and anti-discrimination organisations call on them to show a real commitment to equality by finally adopting an EU law on equal treatment.

In 2008, the European Commission proposed a directive on equal treatment, which would ensure lesbian, gay and bisexual people, persons with disabilities, religious minorities, youth and older people are protected from discrimination in several fields of life such as goods and services,

education, housing and health across the EU. So far, EU law only protects these groups against discrimination in employment and occupation, but not in other areas.

Six years later, the proposed Directive is still stuck in negotiations at the Member State level, due to strong resistance from a few countries and a general lack of political will.

We urge all EU governments to show leadership on equality and adopt a strong anti-discrimination Directive with a broad scope of application. By stalling its adoption, EU Member States are sending the message that they don't care about respecting human rights and ensuring protection against discrimination for their citizens.

## EDF CALLS ON THE EU TO MEET THE NEW CHALLENGES OF THE NEXT PERIOD FOR CITIZENS WITH DISABILITIES

This weekend, EDF Board meeting gathered together representatives from organisations of persons with disabilities around Europe. The meeting opened by EDF President, Yannis Vardakastanis, followed by the Head of Unit on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the European Commission, Maria Luisa Cabral. EDF has adopted measures in order to prepare the disability movement to fully participate in the new political period opened in the European Union after the European elections and the renewed European Commission.

In his opening speech, EDF President highlighted that this is a very crucial period. "The disability movement will be soon in front of important political issues for which it has worked hard during the past decade, like the European Accessibility Act, the non-discrimination directive, the report of the European Union to the UN Committee of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the review of Europe 2020 and the European Disability Strategy", said Yannis Vardakastanis underlining the responsibility of the new European Parliament and the new Commission towards their 80 million citizens with disabilities. "2015 will be a very key political year, it is a year when new actors will come in the disability scene and we need to try once again to be successful in making the rights of persons with disabilities a long lasting political priority", he concluded.

From her side, the new Head of Unit on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the Commission, talked about the importance of the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) by the EU that will present next year its first report to the UN Committee explaining the work it has done on this. Maria Luisa Cabral also said that the European Accessibility Act will be a top priority for the new Commission, while she also mentioned that the Commission will deliver a reviewed Disability Strategy by the end of 2015.

Furthermore, during the meeting EDF adopted its 2015 political agenda emphasizing the need to continue working on the capacity of the movement and to fully implement the UN CRPD in all areas of EU policy making. In this regard, EDF will submit to the UN CRPD Committee its alternative report to the report that the EU has prepared covering areas and actions that are left out of it.

## EMPLOYMENT & ACCESSIBILITY THE FOCUS OF THIS YEAR'S EUROPEAN DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Having a job is the best guarantee for human dignity, self-esteem, financial independence and prosperity. Accessibility is a key to ensuring true participation in society and helps removing barriers that persons with disabilities still face in their daily life. Employment and accessibility consisted the main focus of this year's conference for the European Day of Persons with Disabilities, organised by the European Commission and the European Disability Forum (EDF). Entitled 'Building together a barrier-free Europe, the conference took place on 2-3 December 2014 bringing together hundreds of persons with disabilities, their representative organisations, EU policy makers, service providers, think tanks, trade unions and employers.

EDF President, Yannis Vardakastanis, and the Head of Unit for the rights of persons with disabilities of the European Commission, Maria Luisa Cabral, opened the conference.

EDF President underlined the challenges of the upcoming period explaining why 2015 will be an important political year: 'The EU report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) will be submitted to the UN Committee, EDF will also submit its own alternative report, Europe 2020 and the Disability Strategy will be reviewed. It's also a year with new actors, since we are in the beginning of the new mandate of the European Parliament and the Commission, while we also have a new Head of Unit for the rights of persons with disabilities and the move of the Unit from DG Justice to DG Employment. For all these reasons, 2015 will be a key political year and we all need to work in a collective way to achieve what we fought for in the last years', said Yannis Vardakastanis. However, EDF President regretted the lack of high level political participation from the side of the Commission hoping that next year there will be stronger political commitment.

### ACCESS CITY AWARD

On the second day of the conference, the winning city of the Access City Award for 2015 was announced and it was Borås (Sweden). The second prize of the Access City Award went to Helsinki (Finland) and the third to Ljubljana (Slovenia).

## ARE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES THE INVISIBLE WORKERS?

According to the latest EU data, there is still a 26% difference in rates of employment for persons with and without disabilities across the EU. This is 30 points lower than the Europe 2020 target of 75% employment for persons with disabilities. Despite the implementation of different national and regional policies aimed at increasing the participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market, overall the participation rate of persons with disabilities is significantly lower than for persons without disabilities, which reinforces social inequalities.

Within the framework of its involvement in the DISCIT project, on 10 December 2014, EDF organised a discussion with Eurostat and the main EU policy-makers to exchange information and data on this important topic and gather innovative ideas on the field.

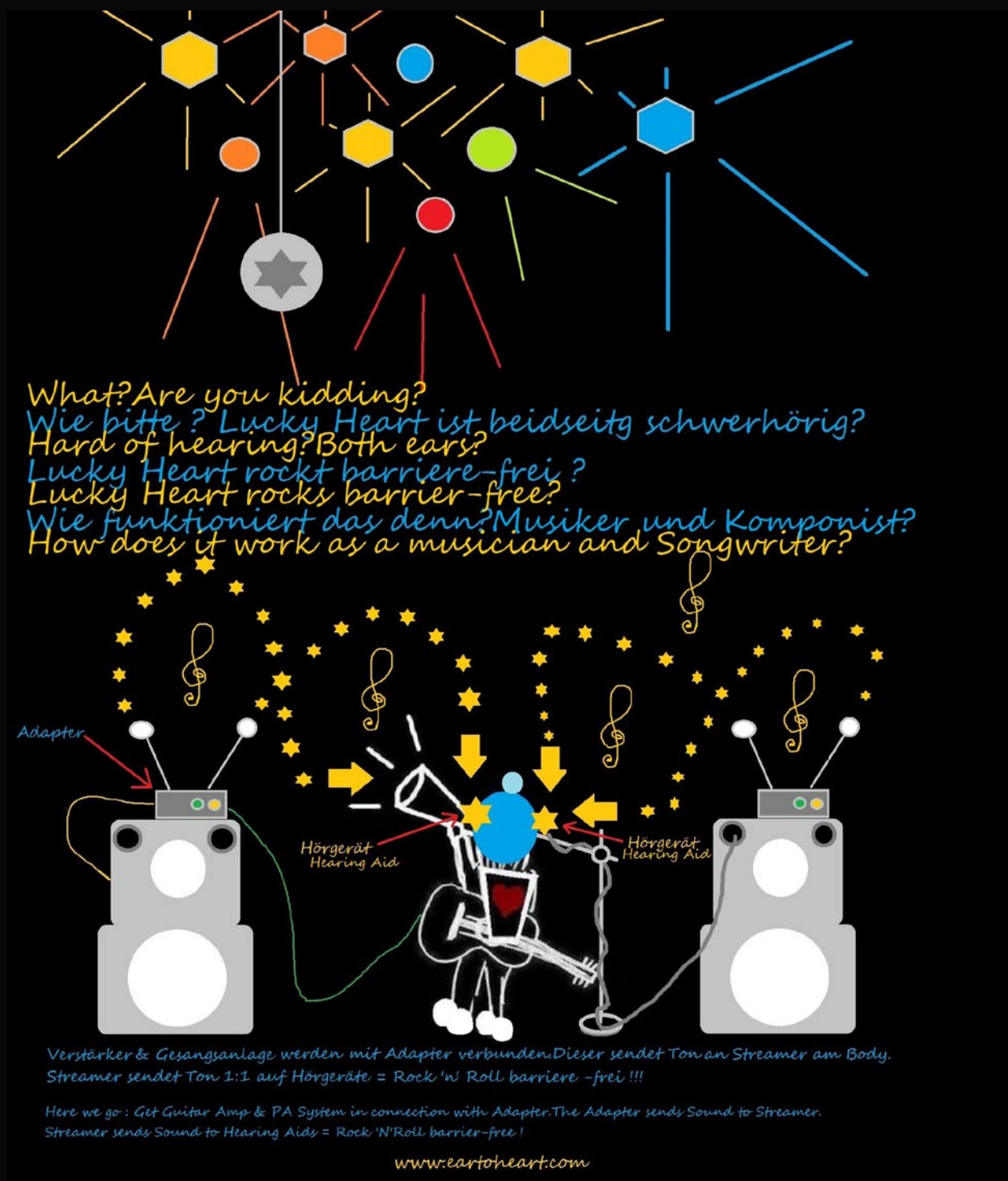
Entitled 'Persons with disabilities at work: the invisible workers?', the meeting took place at the European Parliament hosted by MEP Jutta Steinruck, S&D Coordinator of the Employment Committee.

Opening the discussion, EDF Vice President, Gunta Anca, underlined the importance of the right to work for persons with disabilities: "Access to employment is a fundamental right and the condition for persons with disabilities to be able to live independently and make the quality of their lives better. Unfortunately, the employment rate of persons with disabilities is still low and the EU itself as well as each of its member states should work to reassure the active participation of persons with disabilities in society."

From her side, MEP Jutta Steinruck, said that removing barriers for persons with disabilities and making Europe accessible for everyone is a social duty. She also underlined that disability rights should not be considered as a small part of social policies but should be mainstreamed in all EU policies.

Chairing the round table debate, the Head of Unit on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the European Commission, Maria-Luisa Cabral, clarified that an effective way to promote the active participation of persons with disabilities in society is to make sure they have a job; in this way they will be independent and they will be able to contribute to society like anyone else.

Bjørn Hvinden, coordinator of DISCIT project, said that: "Available statistics now have weaknesses that undermine their use for knowing what works and what doesn't work in disability policy. The statistics should be made more comparable. We need to know more about why there are so strong differences between European countries in the proportion of people reporting they have a disability. Moreover, we need to use more effectively national time-series data to examine the effects of new policy measures."



## 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.