

EFHOH

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

Deadline for the next
newsletter is December
15.th /2014.

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NEWSLETTER

EFHOH

OCTOBER 2014

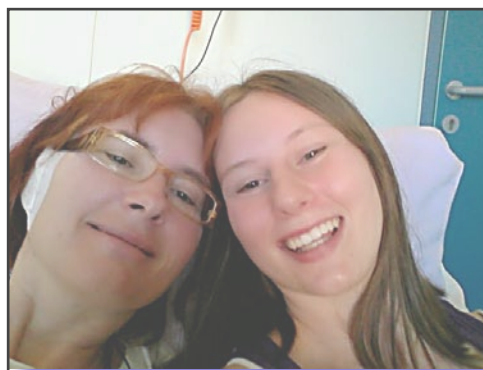
EFHOH PRESIDENT LETTER

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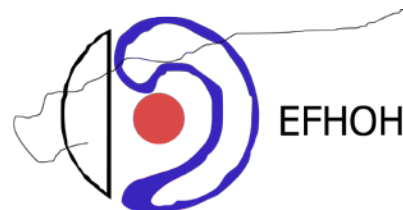
EFHOH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE 2015 IN ESSEN

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A REAL-LIFE EXPERIMENT: LIV- ING WITH A HARD OF HEARING MOTHER

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European Federation of Hard of Hearing People



EFHOH President *letter*

Dear EFHOH Friends,

I hope that you all had a very nice, interesting and sunny summertime. Maybe that you visited a cinema for watch a movie with subtitling or an accessible museum or maybe that you stayed in an accessible hotel for hard of hearing people.

ECOS 2014,

Jaana and I participated in August at the second European Conference of Speech to Text Interpreters ECOS14 in the capital of Finland Helsinki. It was a very nice and interesting conference and it is great to see that there are now in 11 European countries with Speech to Text Reporters/ Interpreters contact persons. More about ECOS 2014 in this newsletter.

EFHOH AGM 2015,

Some weeks ago you received the first information about the next EFHOH AGM 2015 in Essen/Germany. More information can you find at our website:

<http://www.efhoh.org/#!news/c1j1n>

Also the EFHOH nomination committee will contact you soon with a call for candidates for the EFHOH board elections for the position of President, General Secretary and Treasurer and also for candidates for the chair of the nomination committee 2016. More you can read in the letter of the EFHOH nomination committee.

Hungarian Media Regulation workshop on Subtitling,

a workshop on subtitling that was organized by the Hungarian Media Regulation. Lidia presented at this workshop the UN CRPD and the EU angle on the accessibility of media. This workshop was set up to raise awareness of the broadcasters in Hungary of their obligations. From 2015 they will have to provide 100% subtitling. We are very pleased with the efforts and advocacy of Sinosz to make this event happen.

Bucodes-Surdi France,

In September I had great opportunity to represent EFHOH at the Bucodes-Surdi France "Together for a better Hearing Day". It was a possibility to inform the members of Bucodes-Surdi France about the role of EFHOH in Europe.

We discussed also the role of our member organisations at national, regional and local level. Many people were very interested in our new Impact Report 2013.

EFHOH board meeting:

At the beginning of October we will have our EFHOH board meeting in Essen/Germany at the same hotel of the next EFHOH Annual General Meeting. Together with our member organisation in Germany DSB we will be working on the last details of the next EFHOH AGM. On Saturday we will hold our regular EFHOH board meeting. One of the important topics for this Board Meeting is the new concept EFHOH strategy 2015-2017 which we will present at the EFHOH AGM 2015 in Essen.

Call for the next EFHOH newsletter:

It would be great if you are able to write an article for one of the EFHOH newsletters. We try to make 4 or 5 EFHOH newsletters each year for you and all your members. We

make the EFHOH newsletter also for the board members and the volunteers in your national and local organisation. You can send your article to our newsletter editor Niels-Henrik Hansen. His email address is nh@niels-henrik.dk

Warm Regards,

Marcel Bobeldijk
President of EFHOH.





European Federation of Hard of Hearing People



EFHOH AGM and Conference on April 10-12, 2015 in Essen

Hereby we would like to invite you to our international EFHOH conference, which will take place next year after a long time on April 10-12, 2015 in Germany. 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 as members, affected, or interested people.

The theme of the conference will be:
"The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its implementation for hard of hearing people in the European Member States"

The patron of the event is Mrs. Verena Bentele, The Federal Government Commissioner for Matters relating to Disabled Persons, and Mr. Reinhard Pass, Lord Mayor of Essen, will open the event.

On Friday there will be our Annual General Meeting of the EFHOH and the following main topics have been set for the conference on Saturday:

1. The health care system and the German patient involvement;
2. Communication and assistance;
3. Accessibility;
4. Development of an inclusive labor market.

There will be a lecture for each topic and afterwards we want to discuss together 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 European politics.

There will also be an opportunity for networking and socializing at our gala evening and dinner, and a cultural glimpse at the city of Essen during a guided tour with a stop at the Zollverein, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The conference languages are English and German, and simultaneous translation is provided throughout the conference. We also offer English and German speech-to-text interpreters.

You can find the program details and booking packages of the conference in the registration form and the program. Current information can be found at: <http://www.schwerhoerigen-netz.de/EFHOH>

Our project assistant at the Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund, Mrs. Sandra Markoff, will be happy to answer questions about the organization of the event at EFHOH-2015@schwerhoerigen-netz.de, by fax at +4930/ 47541116 or by phone at +4930/47541114.

We look forward to welcome you to Essen

Marcel Bobeldijk
President EFHOH

Renate Welter
Vice President of DSB

Programme for EFHOH Annual General Meeting and Conference 2015 in Essen

"CRPD and inclusion – Exchange of experience with the implementation in the several European self-help associations"

(Preliminary Program - as-is state 03.09.2014)

Friday, Apr. 10th GENERAL MEETING

12:00 – 13:00	Lunch
12:30 – 13:30	Registration
13:30 – 14:00	Welcome by the Mayor of the City, Reinhard Paß
14:00 – 18:00	EFHOH Annual General Meeting 2015
19:00	Dinner

Saturday, Apr. 11th CONFERENCE

08:30 – 09:30	Registration
09:30 – 10:00	Welcoming speeches: Verena Bentele (Federal Government Commissioner for Matters relating to Disabled persons) Marcel Bobeldijk (President EFHOH) Dr. Harald Seidler (President DSB)
10:00 – 10:30	Keynote: Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its meaning to people with hearing impairment (Prof. Dr. Ulrich Hase)
10:30 – 11:00	Participation of patients in the public health system (Dr. Martin Danner)
11:00 – 11:30	Coffee break
11:30 – 12:00	Accessibility – Key positions towards inclusion (Dr. Hannes Seidler)

12:00 – 12:30	Vocational training of Speech to Text Interpreters (Renate Welter)
12:30 – 13:00	En route to an inclusive job market (Silvester Popescu-Willigmann)
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 14:30	Statements of members of the European Parliament
14:30 – 16:00	Experience with implementation in the several EFHOH associations: Workshop 1: Health system (Lidia Smolarek-Best, Dr. Harald Seidler) Workshop 2: Accessibility (Jaana Linna, Dr. Hannes Seidler) Workshop 3: Job market (Jan Lamby, Silvester Popescu-Willigmann)

16:00 – 16:30	Coffee break
16:30 – 17:30	Presentation of the Declaration of Essen (Marcel Bobeldijk) Discussion and Signing of the Declaration
17:30 – 18:00	Closing remarks on the conference
19:00	Gala dinner

Sunday, April 12th LEISURE & Lunch

09:30 – 12:00	Guided tour through Essen with a stop at Zeche Zollverein (UNESCO World Heritage Site)
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:30	Departure, Transfer to Düsseldorf airport (after registering)



**EFHOH Annual General Meeting and
Conference 2015 in Essen, Germany,
April 10th - 12th 2015**

Contact Organiser:
Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund e.V., Tel. +49 30 47541114
renate.welter@schwerhoerigen-netz.de
Mail: EFHOH-2015@schwerhoerigen-netz.de

YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION

Last Name:

First Name:

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr /Prof:

Name of Association:

Participate as:

DELEGATE

☐

OBSERVER

☐

ADDRESS:

Street:

City:

Country:

Post Code/ZIP:

Telephone:

Fax:

Email :

ACCOMODATION

Arrival date (check-in from 14:00):

Departure date (check-out until 12:00):

Total number of nights:

Room extras (optional):

Standard Single Room request., please mark X here

Standard Double Room request, please mark X here

Accommodation for two nights is included as a part of the Booking Pack A, one night respective as a part of the Booking Pack B and C. Additional nights in singleroom available at the rate €70, doubleroom €95 per room per night. Deadline for reservations: January 25th 2015. All requests after this term can be confirmed just on the availability of the hotel.

TRANSFER

Transportation can be assured with a hotel car (free of charge):

TRANSFER Nr. 1: April 9th, 18:00: Düsseldorf airport – Hotel Franz

TRANSFER Nr. 2: April 10th, 11:00: Düsseldorf airport – Hotel Franz

TRANSFER Nr. 3: April 12th, 14:30, Hotel Franz – Düsseldorf airport

When the transfer is needed please mark an X here:

Transfer-Nr.:

Transportation can be also assured with a taxi and the price is approximately 70,- € Euros from the airport and 5,-€ from the Essen Central Station

Please refer to the sheet enclosed for further information to the public transport system (Annex 1)

BOOKING PACKS	
Variant A	
conference fees 430,00 €	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attendance on the EFHOH Annual General Meeting on 10th April 2015 * Attendance on the Conference: 10.-12. April 2015 with conference material * Two-night hotel stay (Hotel "Franz" or Hotel "Weber") * Catering during the whole Conference (with refreshments throughout the conference) * Galaevent with Galadinner saturday evening * Guided tour through Essen (with Zeche-Zollverein) and Lunch 	
Please mark an X here	<input type="checkbox"/>
Variant B	
conference fees 285,00 €	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attendance on the Conference: 11.-12. April 2015 with conference material * One-night hotel stay (Hotel "Franz" or Hotel "Weber") * Catering during the Conference on saturday (with refreshments throughout the conference) * Galaevent with Galadinner saturday evening * Guided tour through Essen (with Zeche-Zollverein) with Lunch 	
Please mark an X here	<input type="checkbox"/>
Variant C	
conference fees 250,00 €	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attendance on the Conference: 11. April 2015 with conference material * One-night hotel stay (Hotel "Franz" or Hotel "Weber") * Catering saturday during the whole Conference (with refreshments throughout the conference) * Galaevent with Galadinner saturday evening 	
Please mark an X here	<input type="checkbox"/>
Variant D	
conference fees 170,00 €	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attendance on the Conference: 11. April 2015 with conference material * Catering saturday during the whole Conference (with refreshments throughout the conference) * Galaevent with Galadinner saturday evening 	
Please mark an X here	<input type="checkbox"/>
Variant E	
conference fees 150,00 €	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attendance on the Conference: 11. April 2015 with conference material * Catering saturday during the whole Conference (with refreshments throughout the conference) 	
Please mark an X here	<input type="checkbox"/>
SIGN- ON AND PAYMENT OPTIONS	
This registration form should be submitted to: Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund e.V. Sophie-Charlotten-Str. 23 a, 14059 Berlin, GERMANY Mail: EFHOH-2015@schwerhoerigen-netz.de FAX: +49 30 47541116	All payments should be made to: Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund e.V. GLS Gemeinschaftsbank IBAN: DE95430609671147793900 BIC: GENODEM1GLS, subject: EFHOH 2015 Pkg A-E?
Closing date for registration: 31th January 2015	Last date of payments: 15th of February 2015
CANCELLATION POLICY	
Cancellation received by 25.01.2015: no charges	
Cancellation received by 15.03.2015: 50% of the total booking value will be charged	
Cancellation received after 15.03.2015: 100% of the total booking value will be charged	
Date	Signature
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

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The world's leading dedicated hearing aid specialist

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

All our hearing care is tailored to each person's hearing and lifestyle needs and is delivered by professionally qualified hearing aid audiologists.

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.

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



Report from ECOS 2014

The President of EFHOH, Marcel Bobeldijk, and board member Jaana Linna attended the European Conference of speech-to-text interpreters that took place on 22.-24. August 2014. This conference was first organized in the Netherlands in 2012. This year it was organized by Kuuloliitto (the Finnish Federation of Hard of Hearing), Suomen Kirjoitustulkki ry (the Finnish Association of Speech to text Interpreters), Humak University of Applied Sciences and DIAK Diaconia University of Applied Sciences. The conference was well attended with 88 participants from 11 European countries.

The program of this conference included presentations and different workshop for speech to text interpreters. Topics as STT in foreign language teaching, newest research as text on top and speech recognition and ergonomics in STT.

Jaana and Marcel participated in the following workshops:

- Info session about diverse working assignments, using tablets and mobile phones professionally, interpreting for the deaf – blind, pair interpreting;
- Working conditions of speech-to-text interpreters
- Respeaking, speech-to-text interpreters' training in Finland
- Print interpreters' strategies in text production by Ulf Nordberg from Stockholm University – This topic generated a lot of discussion, mostly about whether or not STT interpreters should condense the topic they are interpreting.
- Remote speech-to-text interpreting
- Speech-to-text interpreting scene in Europe, presentation given by Birgit Nofftz, she presented what kind of information she had gathered by doing a survey on the availability of STT services in different countries in Europe.

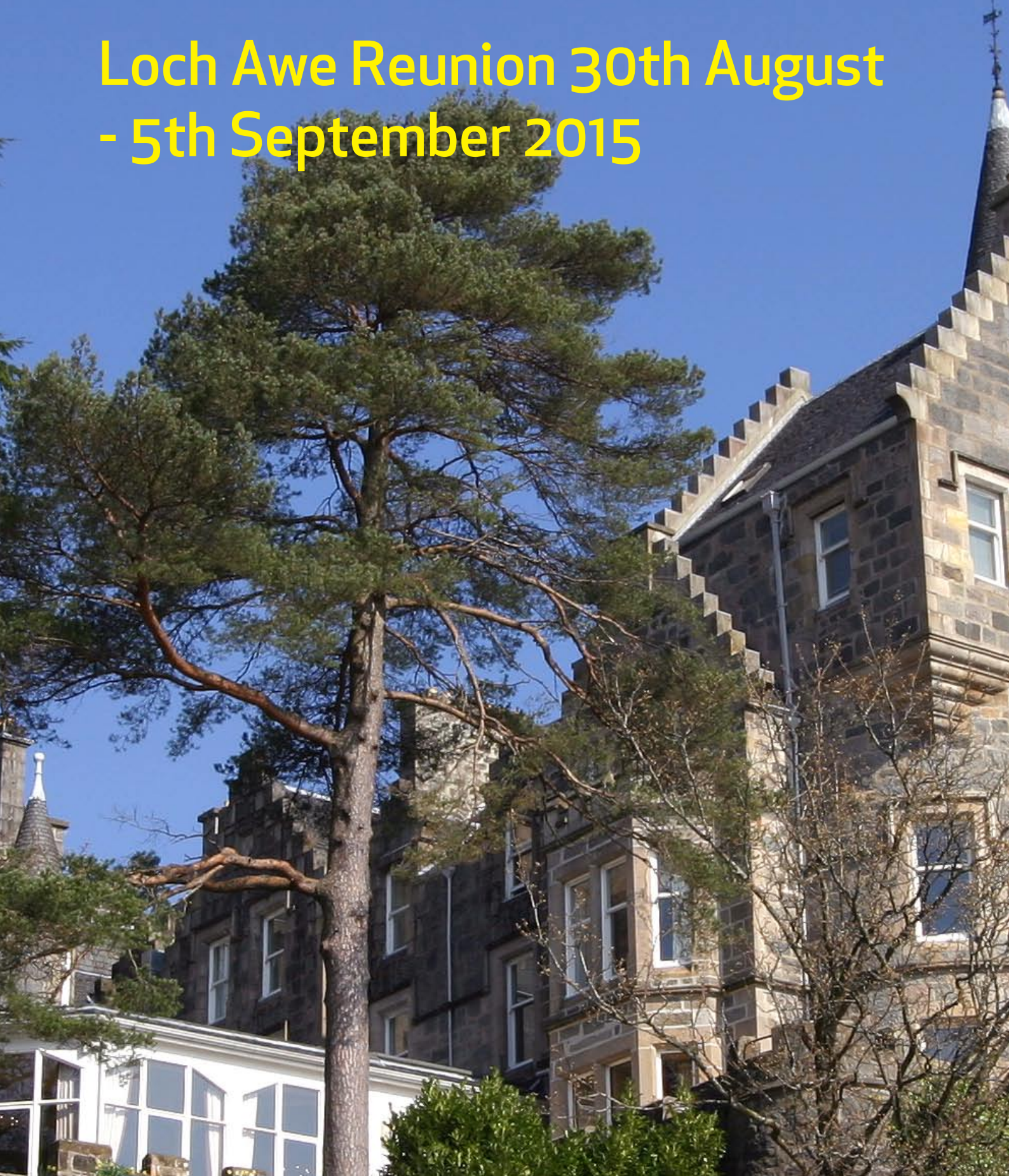
- The relationship between the prosody of speech and the written target text in Finnish print interpreting data

Text on top technology was also presented in the Conference. It is a very user-friendly method of providing stt interpreting. More information: www.text-on-top.com
The participants also had the chance to try out different velotype keyboards that were displayed on the conference site. More information about velotype can be found at www.velotype.com

The conference was interesting and informative. The next conference will take place in 2016 in Berlin, Germany. Since this event is relatively new, it will be interesting to see how it evolves in future. Will there be a bigger and more active participation of the users of STT? More interaction between the users and the STT interpreters? Or shall the conference be a forum for professionals to exchange the latest ideas and knowledge? Perhaps it could be possible to combine both and organize a workshop for the users of STT and the STT interpreters as a part of the conference.

INVITATION

**Loch Awe Reunion 30th August
- 5th September 2015**





We have great pleasure in announcing a reunion for past international ralliers, especially participants who attended the rally in 1984 at Loch Awe.

This holiday will primarily be for guests who want to visit Scotland and to relax at Loch Awe hotel which has improved over the years. The holiday company is now known as Lochs and Glens Holidays which has daily coach tours. Unfortunately, due to its popularity, the hotel is already fully booked for next May, June and July.

The cost of the holiday is £375.00 per person for 6 nights including breakfast and evening meals as well as coach tours, plus coach travel to Loch Awe village from Glasgow. Guests are expected to make their own way to Glasgow, by air to Glasgow airport or by train from London and other places.

You may wish to drive your own car and there is car parking available at the hotel.

There will be coach trips to various places such as Oban, Isles of Mull & Iona, Fort William and, at my request, the holiday company has agreed to arrange for a trip to Edinburgh, a 3 hour journey there and the same back to the hotel.

If you are interested, please request an application form and I will send it shortly by email.

Elaine Heath - Loch Awe reunion co-ordinator email address: elaine.heath23@gmail.com

Ory is now a hardworking member of the HOH organization. He has a lot of new friends and he organizes meetings and helps the president. Every evening he opens his inbox and reads his emails which come from all over the world. Of course, sometimes it's boring but very often he learns a lot about new technology and new laws. It is so nice to talk to other HOHs without difficulty, because everything is written. He has got French, Dutch, German, American and Japanese friends.

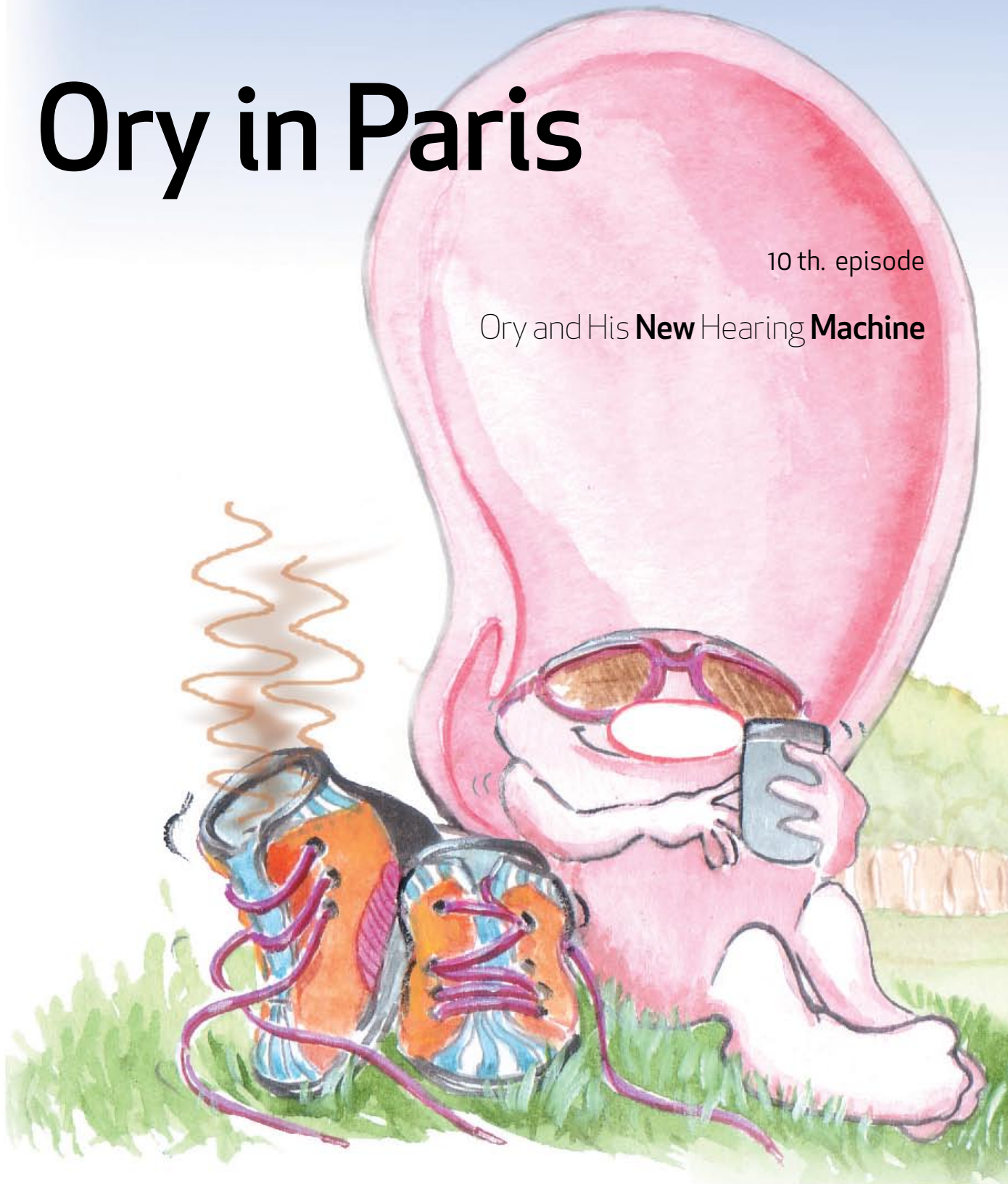
One evening, Ory reads on the Internet that the French HOH are having a congress in Paris at the end of September. Two days in Paris to meet French hard of hearing people, to eat French food, to drink French wine, to visit the city would be really interesting.

The president agrees with the plan, so Ory flies to Paris on Air France. The weather is good with a lot of sun. A member of the HOH organization meets him at the airport.

Ory in Paris

10 th. episode

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



Ory discovers the French capital; very heavy traffic, a lot of noise, lovely buildings, but he doesn't know their names. At the congress centre, the French HOH greet Ory. He is surprised because they talk with their hands. Is this French Sign Language? A member of the organization explains that that is normal; in France and Italy people talk with their hands; even people with normal hearing.

Most delegates speak French, Ory likes that language, but he can't understand everything. Luckily he can read the text in English on the screen.

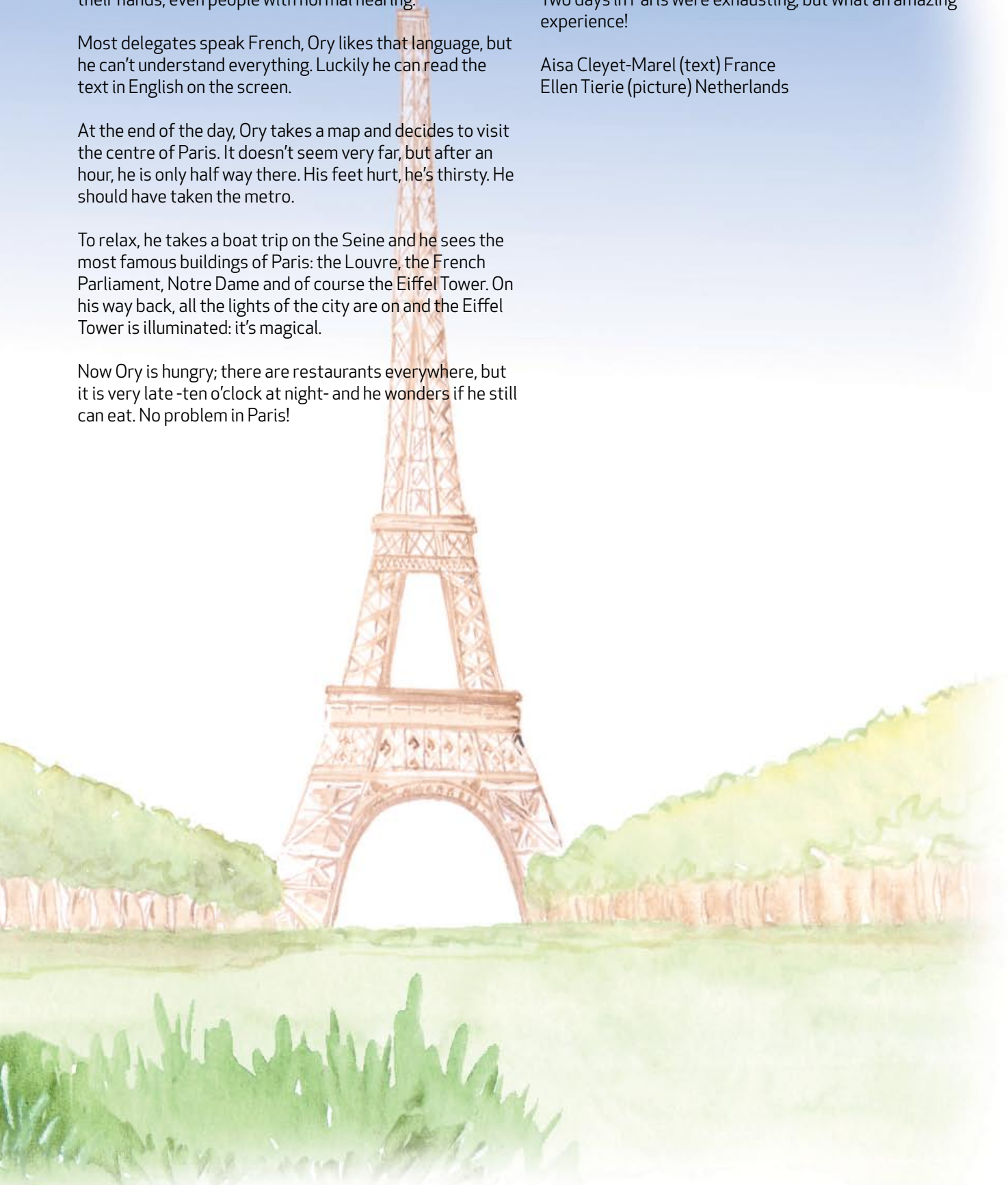
At the end of the day, Ory takes a map and decides to visit the centre of Paris. It doesn't seem very far, but after an hour, he is only half way there. His feet hurt, he's thirsty. He should have taken the metro.

To relax, he takes a boat trip on the Seine and he sees the most famous buildings of Paris: the Louvre, the French Parliament, Notre Dame and of course the Eiffel Tower. On his way back, all the lights of the city are on and the Eiffel Tower is illuminated: it's magical.

Now Ory is hungry; there are restaurants everywhere, but it is very late -ten o'clock at night- and he wonders if he still can eat. No problem in Paris!

In bed, Ory thinks that it would be nice to organize an international congress in Paris. He could invite all his HOH friends from all over the world, because it would be extraordinary to meet each other in a so beautiful city. Ory will tell his friends to take comfortable shoes and not forget to buy a map and tickets for the French metro. Two days in Paris were exhausting, but what an amazing experience!

Aisa Cleyet-Marel (text) France
Ellen Tierie (picture) Netherlands





A REAL-LIFE EXPERIMENT: **LIVING** WITH A HARD OF HEARING **MOTHER**

When I am walking down the street I usually do not perceive sounds that I am surrounded by on daily basis. The traffic. The laughter. The birds singing. I found them normal and self-evident. However, my mother does not hear any of them. I cannot imagine going to the school and hear completely nothing. No sound. Just silence. Perhaps I would hear some metal sounds that my mum describes she hears when she is wearing her hearing aid. But otherwise nothing ...

When I was younger I used to love to play with my mother's hearing aids. They seemed magical to me. She just put them in her ears and all of the sudden she heard. I thought that she hears things exactly the same as I do. I remember the feeling when I put the hearing aids in my ears and I heard everything extremely loud. My normal speech sounded as if I had been screaming. It was the funniest thing ever. At that point I did not realise what does it mean to be hard of hearing and I was never ashamed that my

mum has difficulties with hearing, but I think she used to be.

It was not until a year or two ago that my mother started to become actively involved in the various associations of deaf and hard of hearing. Before that, we had been isolated from the world of deafness. We had never seriously discussed my mum's problem, no one had ever explained to me and my sisters that hard of hearing is a real problem. I never thought it is a big deal and I thought it was funny. For example, I asked my mum what was her favourite colour and she answered: "I do not know where your blue t-shirt is."

Now, everything has changed. As a family we have to talk about the difficulties that hard of hearing people are dealing with and I finally have the feeling that my mum has embraced her hearing impairment. I am not going to lie; it is hard to live with someone who has hearing problem. You cannot just scream something but you have to walk



to the person and talk to them in a way that he or she will understand you. You have to repeat things many times, depending on the environment you are surrounded by and the situation. It is hard to speak on the telephone, because they will not understand some words, no matter how many times do you repeat or how clear your pronunciation is. Honestly, sometimes you are just tired of repeating and you do not feel like using pantomime to explain something and from my experiences this is what hard of hearing hurt the most – lack of energy or will to explain something to them.

My mum decided for cochlear implant a year ago and finally got it last month. She explained to my sisters and me what does it mean and what is the process of recovery after the procedure. I do not believe that any of us took her seriously until she had to go to the hospital for the surgery. That was the crucial moment, when we realise that this is actually happening.

They are going to insert some small metal panel into her head and that absolutely does not sound pleasant. Anyhow, the operation went great and mum was delighted that she does not have dizziness anymore neither the tinnitus. Life suddenly became very easy. She was happy, we were happy,

everybody were happy. She was more relaxed, she heard better, because she did not have strong tinnitus anymore, and as a mum less annoying. Unfortunately, there were some complications after the procedure and her dizziness and tinnitus returned. She had to undergo a surgery again and now, hopefully her dizziness will be gone for good.

The most important lesson I learned from living with a hard of hearing mother is being patient. Even though you feel like screaming inside, because the person just does not understand you, take a deep breath and repeat it slowly again and again and again. Or write it on a piece of paper and show it to them. You have to be creative. My personal favourite form of explanation, when words fail is acting. I act out the situation and 90% of the time my mum understands me, but most importantly we always laugh about my innovative technique to show her what I mean.

Zala Tomašič

WHAT ARE YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH THE OFFICES OF THE EU INSTITUTIONS IN YOUR COUNTRY?

EDF is preparing its alternative report on the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in the EU. We would be very grateful if you could help us with your experiences on the implementation of CRPD by the EU institutions and bodies.

In particular, would you or your members have any information on the following questions?

1. Are the EU local offices in your country accessible?
2. Are you invited to meetings or events organized by the European Commission or European Parliament in the local offices or by other EU institutions or bodies? If so, are accommodations and support provided during these meetings or events? Please specify if possible name of event and date.
3. Do you know of people who have applied for jobs with the EU institutions? If so, what were the obstacles faced in accessing the recruitment procedures?
4. If you or your members have visited or been in contact with the EU institutions, what are the obstacles you faced in accessing these institutions?
5. What obstacles have you faced in accessing EU documents and/or in participating in EU consultations?

Please send your answers to: ansofie.leenknecht@edf-feph.org the soonest possible!

TWO YEARS OF EDF CHAIRING THE INTERNATIONAL DISABILITY ALLIANCE

EDF is a proud founding member of the International Disability Alliance (IDA) and EDF President, Yannis Vardakastanis, has been the first elected chair of its governing body over a mandate of the last two years. During this period, EDF together with the rest 11 regional and global organisations proudly followed the whole development of IDA, as a collective success, from an informal alliance to a real organisation, which is now able to influence the political action at international level.

IDA became a legal entity in June 2013 as a historic decision that further strengthened the organisation, its members and the protection of the human rights of persons with disabilities worldwide. IDA is a democratic organisation, whose chair is selected through elections for a mandate of 2 years. Starting as an alliance of 5 global organisations of persons with disabilities in 1999, IDA has now become a strong organisation that has expanded its membership to 12 both global and regional organisations.



EDF President, Yannis Vardakastanis, was the Chair of IDA for the last two years, while EDF was represented also by its Executive members, Pat Clarke and Pekka Tuominen. The new chair of IDA for the next 2 years will be Maryanne Diamond from the World Blind Union.

EDF will continue providing administrative support to IDA and being an active member of it remaining confident that IDA will continue bringing the rights of persons with disabilities worldwide in the forefront

4TH RAILWAY PACKAGE: POLITICAL AGREEMENT REACHED IN COUNCIL ON TECHNICAL PILLAR

On its meeting on 5 June 2014, the Transport Council has reached an agreement on the technical pillar of the 4th Railway Package which includes the Interoperability Directive.

After it was voted in the European Parliament on 26 February where many useful amendments were introduced to the Commission proposal, those developments were unfortunately reversed by the Council. According to the latest available, the references to accessibility for persons with disabilities were taken out again and the Article on an Infrastructure Register on accessibility was deleted completely. However, the reference to the UN CRPD in Recital 24 was retained.

For further questions don't hesitate to contact marie.denninghaus@edf-feph.org

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT ELECTS ITS LEADERS & PREPARES TO ELECT EPP'S JUNCKER AS EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S PRESIDENT

The European elections saw the center-right EPP, despite heavy losses (50 MEPs less), stay in the first place as the largest Group in the European Parliament, with a narrow lead over the center-left Socialists & Democrats Group. Communist and radical left parties increased relatively, as well as Eurosceptic and extreme right parties. The outcome is a more polarised European Parliament, where neither the right-wing nor the left-wing can reach the absolute majority, contrary to the previous legislature. As a result, the two largest groups are poised to cooperate to have a majority - this will have an impact on almost all dossiers. They started doing so by agreeing, together with the Liberal Group, on the distribution of the top jobs in the European Parliament. The European Parliament Presidency will again be divided between EPP and S&D. During the European Parliament constitute session in Strasbourg, MEPs re-elected socialist Martin Schulz as President for 2.5 years; they also elected 11 new Vice-Presidents.

Meanwhile, political Groups elected their own Leaders: Manfred Weber (Germany) for the EPP; Gianni Pittella (Italy) for the S&D; Guy Verhofstadt (Belgium) for ALDE; Syed Kamall (UK) for the ECR (European Conservatives and Reformists) Group, Gabriele Zimmer (Germany) for the GUE (communist) Group; which became the third largest Group; Philippe Lamberts (Belgium) and Rebecca Harms (Germany) for the Greens; and Nigel Farage for the EFD (Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy). Extreme-right parties, led by FN's le Pen (France) and PVV's Wilders (Netherlands) failed to create a far-right Group.

6 MEPs with disabilities were elected, from opposite sides on the political spectrum: two in GUE - Echinique Robba (Spain) and Konstantina Kuneva (Greece) - , two in EPP - Marek Plura (Poland) and Adam Kósa (Hungary) - , two in the ECR - Helga Stevens (Belgium) and Brian Crowley (Ireland).

Contact: etienne.cuche@edf-feph.org

EUROPEAN COUNCIL SETS ITS PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT 5 YEARS

Before the President of the European Commission has set its priorities, the European Council has also set its key priorities for the EU in the next five years:

1) A union of jobs, growth and competitiveness by fully exploiting the potential of the single market in all its dimensions: by completing the internal market in products

and service including the digital single market; by addressing overdue investment needs in transport, energy and telecom infrastructure as well as in energy efficiency, innovation and research, skills, education and innovation; by making full use of EU structural funds and by reinforcing the global attractiveness of the Union as a place of production and investment and complete negotiations on international trade agreements, including TTIP, by 2015; by reinforcing the Economic and monetary union governance;

2) A Union that empowers and protects all citizens by developing skills, unlocking talents and life chances for all, and, by ensuring safety nets to accompany change and reverse inequalities through efficient social protection systems 3) towards an energy union with a forward looking climate policy 4) a union of freedom, security and justice to better manage migration, but also improve judicial cooperation, 5) the union as a strong global actor

EDF will see how Mr Juncker will include these priorities in his awaited speech to the European Parliament in the morning of Tuesday 15 July in which he will sketch out his programme before his likely election.

Contact: carlotta.besozzi@edf-feph.org

EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESENTS STUDIES ON ACCESSIBLE TOURISM

On 6 June 2014, DG Enterprise organised together with the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT) a major conference with the title "Mind the Accessibility Gap" in order to present two new studies.

The studies about the economic impact and the travel behavior of travelers with special access needs in Europe confirmed the perception that accessible tourism is beneficial and supplied statistics and numbers to underline the claim. They will be thus a useful tool to advocate for more accessible tourism solutions both vis-à-vis the industry as well as the authorities.

During the conference, several good practice examples were presented and DG Enterprise awarded the "Accessible Tourism Awards" to some outstanding destinations.

Should you have any further questions do not hesitate to contact marie.denninghaus@edf-feph.org



The **HEARING LOSS ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA** has been selected by the [International Federation of Hard of Hearing People](#) (IFHOH) to host the next Congress in 2016. The Congress will be held in Washington, D.C. at the [Washington Hilton](#), June 23–26, 2016.

HLAA and IFHOH welcome people with hearing loss from around the world to share in outstanding educational workshops, a trade show with state-of-the-art hearing technology, and fun social events for all ages. Frank R. Lin, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Otolaryngology-Head & Neck Surgery, Geriatric Medicine, Mental Health, and Epidemiology at Johns Hopkins, will moderate and present during the Research Symposium on Friday, June 24, 2016. Dr. Lin's research focuses on how hearing loss impacts the health and functioning of older adults and the role of different treatment modalities (hearing aids, cochlear implantation) in mitigating these effects. In particular, he explores how hearing loss may be mechanistically associated with cognition, dementia, functional decline, and social isolation.

All workshops, sessions, and Exhibit Hall will be held at the Washington Hilton, located in the neighborhood of DC known as Dupont Circle. Enjoy walking to some of the top restaurants, shopping and nightlife. The Washington Hilton is the perfect home base for sight-seeing, located only four blocks from the Dupont Circle Metro, so plan to stay a few extra days!

The Hearing Loss Association of America (HLAA), founded in 1979, opens the world of communication to people with hearing loss through information, education, advocacy and support. In addition to its annual Convention, HLAA publishes *Hearing Loss Magazine*, produces the Walk4Hearing, and advocates for the rights of people with hearing loss. HLAA has an extensive network of chapters and state organizations.

HLAA's contact about the Congress is Nancy Macklin, Director of Events and Marketing, 301.657.2248, Extension 106, nmacklin@hearingloss.org. Further information will be available following Convention 2015. For more information about HLAA visit www.hearingloss.org.

The IFHOH BGM will be held on Wednesday, June 22, just preceding the Congress. Further information will be provided about the BGM by IFHOH in the months preceding it. For more information about IFHOH visit www.ifhoh.org.

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.