

Edited by Marcel
Bobeldijk, president of
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M. Hansen.

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

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NEWSLETTER

EFHOH

SEPTEMBER 2015



ASSISTIVE LISTENING DEVICES AT SCHOOL – THE HODA-PROJECT

Page 4



EFHOH AGM AND CONFER- ENCE 2016 IN PARIS, FRANCE

Page 9



NEW EFHOH INTERN

Page 8



European Federation of Hard of Hearing People



EFHOH President letter

UN CRPD 14th meeting

EFHOH was represented by Marcel Bobeldijk and Lidia Best in Geneva at the final dialogue between the European Union and the UN CRPD Committee concerning how the European Union implements the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

EDF (European Disability Forum) had also organised a side event where the EDF and some of its members presented situations regarding the different disability groups in the EU. In our short presentation we focused on Article 9 of CRPD, 'Accessibility' as part of the EFHOH list of issues. In this EFHOH newsletter, you can read more about this historical event. And maybe you have seen the nice photo on Facebook and perhaps even read our tweets.

Hearing Awareness Workshop

Friday 25th September we will organise together with the Greek Organisation of Deaf People, a Hearing Awareness Workshop in Athens/Greece. Our aim is to inform Hard of Hearing People from Athens/Greece about different topics related to HoH. After this workshop we will have our EFHOH board meeting. Also Alper Coskun, the IFHOHYP vice president, will give a presentation at this Hearing Awareness Workshop in Athens.

Some news from the EFHOH Board

Jaana Linna, our board member has informed us that she will not be a candidate for re-election of the position of EFHOH board member. At the AGM 2016 in Paris, we will say goodbye and thanks to Jaana. The EFHOH nomination committee will inform you later this autumn.

Lidia Best at the UN CRPD meeting





Marcel and Lida in Geneva for the UN meeting

This summer we also have, for a short period of three months, an intern and his name is Jeevan Vipinachandran. Jeevan works one day a week for us and is based in London at the office of Action on Hearing Loss. In this EFHOH newsletter you can read an article from Jeevan.

Humantechnik GmbH from Germany is our new EFHOH and IFHOH sponsor. Welcome Humantechnik and thanks for your great support!

European Standard of Services Offered by Hearing Aid Professionals (EN15927)

Over the summer you should have received a survey from our secretary. It would be great if you could complete this survey as soon as possible if you have not yet done so. Of course, you can always contact us if you have any questions related to this survey or to this topic.

IFHOH European CRPD workshop

During the week of 19-23 October in Copenhagen is the IFHOH Human Rights Train the Trainers Training. Due to the high level of interest, we have now organised this training into two sessions. In the next EFHOH newsletter you can read about the outcome of this training.

WHO Make Listening Safe Initiative

Students at the University of Washington's Speech and Hearing Science Department under the guidance of Dr. Kelly Tremblay and in collaboration with the WHO PDH, have developed a brief video on recreational noise included hearing loss. You can see this video at YouTube: <https://youtu.be/xV-PNR Ffg8> or at Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/137082626>

Lidia Best (for EFHOH) and Richard Darbéra (for IFHOH) will participate in the stakeholders' consultation on Safe

Listening Devices on the first of October. More about this event in our next EFHOH newsletter.

EFHOH AGM 2016

Very soon we will inform you in more details about the EFHOH Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2016 in Paris, France. You can make a short note in your planner that the EFHOH AGM will be held Friday afternoon on 1st of April and the conference is Saturday 2nd of April.

Follow us

We invite you to follow EFHOH via Facebook and Twitter. Our Twitter addresses are:

EFHOH	@efhoh
Marcel Bobeldijk	@marbob32
Lidia Best	@best_lidia
EDF	@MyEDF

It would be great if you shared the EFHOH impact report 2014 with all your volunteers and your contacts. Please contact us if you would like to have the paper version of the EFHOH Impact Report 2014.

Call for the EFHOH Newsletter

If you have an article for one of the next EFHOH newsletters that we will publish in 2015, please send it to us. The deadline for the articles for the next EFHOH newsletter is 31 October 2015. You can also send your article to our EFHOH newsletter editor Niels-Hendrik. His email address is nhmh@learning.aau.dk

Warm Regards,
Marcel Bobeldijk
EFHOH President.



A typical Swedish class room

Assistive Listening Devices (ALD) at school – The **HODA**-project

The physical and social context of the classroom as well as teaching methods in addition to handling, functioning and quality of assistive listening devices are the issues comprehensively examined in the HODA-study: evaluation of class room acoustics, observation of an entire lesson, evaluation of communication devices (such as microphones and induction loop systems) in terms of functioning, quality and management during class as well as interviewing pupils (85 girls and boys, aged 10-16) with hearing loss in inclusive education and their teachers. The study was carried out in 2013 in the Stockholm County Council area, Sweden. The HODA-project was initiated and carried through by the Swedish National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools in close cooperation with the Karolinska University Hospital, Hearing Habilitation Children and Youth. In the following, some of the results are presented.

The acoustic settings were unacceptable in most cases

The joint evaluation of noise and reverberation (measured in the empty classroom) did not meet the official criteria of acceptable or good acoustics in four out of five classrooms. In addition, evaluation of noise generated in the classroom by furniture, doors, windows, nearby indoor or outdoor environment (such as corridors or roads with heavy traffic) indicated that almost half of the pupils with hearing loss as well as their classmates and teachers spend their days in classrooms that are equipped and situated in a way that is not acceptable from an acoustic point of view. When asked if they were disturbed by various sounds during class, more than half of the pupils mentioned noise from classmates and/or corridors, outside activities, other classrooms, ventilation and other sounds.

Moreover, during the classes observed, noise generated by pupils was registered by the observers, in particular during small group activities but also to a large extent during dialogues and discussions in class and even when only one person was talking or when the pupils were supposed to

be working silently by themselves. The vast majority of teachers, on the other hand, evaluated the acoustic quality of the classroom as good and most of them also thought that the school had made reasonable accommodations to meet the needs of pupils with hearing loss. The conclusion is that action to improve the acoustic quality of classrooms in Sweden has to be taken by relevant authorities immediately. Noticeably, bad acoustics impede learning not only for pupils with hearing loss.

The quality of the ALDs was unacceptable in most cases

Evaluating 59 assistive listening devices – of which 36 had microphones not only for the teacher but also for the classmates – we found that two out of five worked satisfactorily all through the observed lesson. I.e. more than half of the devices were deficient in one way or another when assessed via the observers' receivers during class. When asked about most wanted improvements of their ALD, the pupils prioritized "better sound quality" and "faster service". The conclusion is that a plan of action to improve the quality and to carry through systematic and recurrent controls of the devices is due.

There is a lot to be done to improve knowledge and attitudes

Pupils stated that it is important to them that teachers use their microphone, but observations and interviews revealed that teachers' and classmates' use of microphones frequently reflect a lack of awareness of the pupil's needs. Indeed, more than four out of five teachers indicated that they need more knowledge and training in teaching pupils with hearing loss.

To sum up

The HODA-study has provided knowledge about the everyday life at school for pupils with hearing loss. For these pupils to get access to education and to participate and be involved in tasks engaging the entire class and other class activities many issues have to be dealt with. Now.

Links to the complete reports (in Swedish):

<http://www.spsm.se/sv/jag-vill/Kopa-laromedel/produkt/?OrderNumber=00564>

<http://www.spsm.se/sv/jag-vill/Kopa-laromedel/produkt/?OrderNumber=00566>

<http://www.spsm.se/sv/jag-vill/Kopa-laromedel/produkt/?OrderNumber=00568>

Article written by Lotta Coniavitis Gellerstedt.



The authors of the report - Lotta Coniavitis Gellerstedt (above) and Sif Bjarnson (below)



The Meaning of **Accessible** and **Inclusive** Education for Hard of Hearing Persons

A hard of hearing child is in a classroom of peers without hearing aids, without any support services, without even permission to borrow the school books to study at home.

You might think that I am describing a situation in a country of the global south ... perhaps in an African nation or a rural area in an Asian country. You most likely would not think I am talking about my first five years in school in a developed country and that I went through all of my schooling without support services and accommodations.

It was some time ago and, now if I were a child in school, I am confident I would have hearing aids, an FM system, speech lessons, individual attention from resource room teachers and tutoring assistance if needed. We have come far in so few years. What a wonderful testament to the ability of society to change. It should give us hope for those countries and places which still have inadequate technical and human support for the education of their children and youth. Sadly, we know that is the case in some parts of the world.

We also need to tell others how to get it right. What exactly do we need, how is access and inclusion different and how is it the same from what signing deaf students and hearing students require?

These answers are found in the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People's Education Policy paper adopted at its 2014 BGM in Israel. The policy paper provides guidance to governments and social institutions on the requirements to ensure for an inclusive and accessible education for hard of hearing persons. Accessibility means access and inclusivity takes it a step further to ensure that hard of hearing persons are full participants in the education process.

The paper has been submitted to United Nations agencies, shared with the International Disability Alliance and was provided to the United Nations' Committee on the Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as part of its April 2015 education general day of discussion.

There are nine recommendations starting with the environment recommending optimum acoustics to maximize speech intelligibility in the classroom. This also requires reducing background noise and sound reverberations. Furthermore, the environment should include visual signals for fire alarms, doorbells, and telephones.

Beyond an optimum environment, students require hearing aids, cochlear implants and assistive listening devices such as induction loops or FM/Infrared systems to maximize auditory sound. It is a principle of IFHOH that no child who requires a hearing aid should go without one. This important principle of hearing aid availability is reinforced in EFHOH's Essen declaration signed in April 2015.

The provision of speech-to-text is another important support service for many hard of hearing persons particularly at upper levels of schooling where the learning becomes the exchange of ideas and exploration of concepts. Videos and audio-visual materials require captions to be accessible to hard of hearing learners.

The policy paper discusses the importance of auditory language development and supports. As well, it supports alternative communication methods for some children, such as the use of gestures, drawings, images, pictographs, and electronic communication aids, etc. Also acknowledged is that the learning of sign language is an option being pursued by some countries in an approach that promotes both auditory and signing skills so that children can grow up to be bilingual.

Support services, parent support, teacher training and social interaction form the basis of other recommendations in the report. Under social interaction, the concept of inclusion means that hard of hearing students have opportunities for social interactions with peers and benefit from exposure to role models. Thus, their inclusion is recognized and fostered.

The full document is on the IFHOH website at www.ifhoh.org. I invite you to share it with your education policymakers and decision-makers or adapt and develop your own statement for your particular circumstance. Carry on with the important work of ensuring that accessibility and inclusivity applies to hard of hearing learners, whether young or older.

Ruth Warick
IFHOH President
president@ifhoh.org

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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 an EFHOH **speaker!**

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

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

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

Please contact us at office@efhoh.org



Presentation - **New EFHOH intern!**

Hello, ciao, bonjour, guten tag and god dag to all members of EFHOH!

My name is Jeevan Vipinachandran and I am the new summer intern for EFHOH. I live in the London Borough of Redbridge with my mother and sister. I studied a BA PPE (Philosophy, Politics & Economics) at the University of Essex, before completing a Masters in Comparative Politics: Conflict Studies at the London School of Economics. Interning for EFHOH has proven to be an interesting and enjoyable experience, giving me good exposure to aspects of research which I had not previously had, such as questionnaire and survey design.

As a person who is hard of hearing myself, I understand a lot of the barriers in communications and other aspects that are posed by the onset of hearing loss conditions. I have partial hearing in my left ear and none in my right, the

cause is unknown. While interning at EFHOH I have not only helped to develop new skills in outreach and analysis, but I have gained greater exposure to the world of hard of hearing communications. I can now look forward with confidence to applying my skills in campaigns in different policy areas in future.

In addition to my work at EFHOH, I also intern at Action on Hearing Loss in London. Outside policy and campaigns I am passionate about football, and support Newcastle United Football Club. This has so far proven to be a productive and educational internship so far and I am looking forward to working with EFHOH on many hearing loss related issues.

Richard and Aisa - the organisers of the AGM in Paris 2016.



Paris 2016: EFHOH's next **Annual General Meeting**

EFHOH's next Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held in Paris from Friday April 1st to Sunday April 3rd. It will be hosted by Bucodes SurdiFrance, which federates most of the French associations of hard of hearing people. Created some 40 years ago, Bucodes SurdiFrance now consists of forty associations spread out all over the French territory. However, compared to many of its EFHOH counterparts, it is a small association since it only gathers some 2500 members.

To host the AGM, we have booked a facility, the Résidence Internationale de Paris (RIP) at Porte de Bagnolet, in the eastern part of Paris.

The RIP has rooms at very reasonable prices, space for meals (breakfasts, lunches, dinners) and meeting rooms, the largest room can accommodate up to 220 people. These rooms have a good acoustic treatment (very little reverberation). Because the RIP building is also the head office of HandiSport, the sports federation of the disabled, the building is accessible to all types of disabilities. Nine months before the event, where are we?

We initially mobilized to find money. We now have an agreement of our partner, the Foundation "Agir pour l'Audition", to finance some major expenses (meals, accessibility, translation...)

Friday, April 1st will be devoted to EFHOH activities (board meeting, general meeting). On Saturday we will organize a major all day long conference with speakers selected by EFHOH and with French specialists in their fields of expertise.

On Sunday, we would organize a cultural and fun day with visits to museums and to typical Paris neighbourhoods, accompanied by bilingual speakers who will speak into a microphone connected to individual HF systems.

A detailed program will be published in the next issue of the EFHOH newsletter.



Young and hearing loss – how could one get on?

Sigurd Drejer is 16 years old and will turn 17 next year.

Sigurd lives in Denmark and I interviewed him about growing up and getting on with a hearing loss.

"I was 9 months old, when my parents found out about my hearing loss. I didn't react to many sounds, which made my parents worried."

What did your parents do about it?

"They went to the doctor, and I went through a lot of tests. They found out that I had a hearing loss, since I was born. I had my first hearing aids (HA) when I was 11 months old, But I don't really remember what it was like. It is a long time ago".

Can you state 2-3 things that are good about having HAs?

1. That I can take them off at the night and sleep well without disturbing sounds.
2. When I was younger, I could customize my HAs in a really cool and fun way. I have tons of earplugs from when I was

a little kid, and they are in a billion different colors. There was also a great variety of stickers that you could put on your HAs.

3. I have been a member of different clubs for people/children with hearing loss, and met other children at my age.

That really helped me understanding myself, and it was a great opportunity for my parents too, because they met other parents. Unfortunately, I'm only hanging out with a few friends with HAs, but my parents often spend time with the other kids' parents!

And 2-3 things about HAs that you would rather not have to deal with?

1. In general, just to wear them. Not be able to join fun games with water immediately, because I have to take them off first, etc.
2. Having to go to the ear doctor often, because the ear-plug increases earwax in my ear canal, and I can't remove it myself.

3. Sudden howl noises from my HA, when the earplug is too small. It really is awkward in silent places with a lot of people.

Now you have a Cochlear Implant (CI) on one ear?

Why did you have to have a CI?

Yes. My parents pondered it when I was little, but it was not that known for children to get CI at that time in Denmark. So I had it about 3 years ago.

How was it to have to hear through your CI? Is there a difference in the sound from HA to CI?

It is different from the HA, because I register some different sounds, which the HA didn't. The CI is registering high pitch sounds, and I couldn't hear many of those sounds when I had a HA on my right ear.

Do you consider getting a CI on the other ear as well?

If yes: why?? If no: why??

No, because I like the difference between the CI and HA. The HA can register some sounds that the CI can't. Besides, it wouldn't make a big hearing difference if I got CI on my left ear.

Do you know other children/young people with hearing loss?

I know many other children/young people (and adults) with hearing loss. As I said earlier, I have been a member of some hearing loss clubs for children and young people with hearing loss. It has been a long time since I was on a trip with a club, but I got a lot of friends from the clubs, and I'm still hanging out with a few of them.

Is it important to have friends with hearing loss when you have a hearing loss yourself?

Why?/Why not?

Well it depends on your situation. Do you have a big hearing loss? Don't you feel good when you're together with people without a hearing loss? For me, I have a big hearing loss, but I had always been with other children with a hearing loss, so I can't tell which is better. I haven't hung out with friends with a hearing loss for a while now.

What kind of Assistive Listening Device (ALD) have you had? What has worked best for you?

Right now I'm using Comfort Audio, which is a device that both students and the teacher are using, so I can hear both parts. It is really a great device, but it's also hard. The pupils have to remember to pick up the microphone every time they talk.

You will soon finish comprehensive school and start at a new school August 2015.

Your new school is a boarding school. You will live in with 120 other pupils at this school.

What do you think is important for the others to know about you, when you start?



In reality, it isn't important for them to know anything, it's important for me that they don't see me as the guy with a hearing loss, but as the guy named Sigurd.

What is important for you to know about the others?

Nothing much. They just have to be themselves.

Do you have any advice for other children and young people with hearing loss?

If you never really have been with other kids/young people, you really should! It can help if you never have conserved with others with hearing loss. Join clubs, etc.

Is there anything I should have asked that you would like to add?

My advice is that sometimes it is important to know your limits. You can't do anything, you have a hearing loss and you have to accept it. You can try to raise your limits, but don't push yourself too much. If people ask about your hearing loss, don't be shy! Tell them about it. They are just curious, maybe they have never met another person with a hearing loss.

*Written by Aida Regel Poulsen
EFHOH board*



By Sidsel Munkebo Hansen, President of IFHOHYP

Sidsel Munkebo, President of IFHOHYP at a meeting.



Youth speaking: **Highlights** from IFHOHYP

What have we been up to at IFHOHYP in 2015? I will give you some highlights!

Where have we been representing the interest of young hard of hearing people so far?

The clear mission of IFHOHYP is to represent the views and interests of hard of hearing young people at different international levels. IFHOHYP has been doing this by attending events, meetings, trainings and communicating with various institutions in the past six months. Among others IFHOHYP was represented at the Eighth session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities held in June in New York, USA. Board Member, Bowen Tang, has written an article about his trip at the UN Headquarters, which can be found in the latest newsletter of IFHOHYP. Another exciting representation of IFHOHYP and the youth happened in Ireland. Ireland is a wonderful country, not simply because of its beautiful nature, the friendly people, but also because of the association "Hearing Loss Ireland", who invited IFHOHYP to speak at their AGM in order to inspire members to motivate and engage young hard of hearing members in their organization. These Irish ambitions should be a model for HoH organizations all over the world – and in IFHOHYP we will not only encourage but also love

to inspire and help those who wish to include more young hard of hearing people in their organizations.

Historical "Meetings of Committees" and the 2015-2020 Strategy of IFHOHYP

On August 1st the first-ever "Meeting of Committees" in the history of IFHOHYP took place. Young volunteers from all IFHOHYP committees met together with the Board in Brussels, Belgium, to discuss and develop action plans of the committees. Some of the committees in IFHOHYP still have available seats – in other words: If you know a young hard of hearing person, who would like to be a part of the international volunteering work together with other young hard of hearing from all over the world, do not hesitate to contact us – we welcome every young person, who wish to be a part of the IFHOHYP family.

2015 is also the year where IFHOHYP review the old strategic plan and select new goals for organization; therefore we are in the process of developing a 2015-2020 Strategy. For this purpose a committee has been established consisting of engaged and qualified volunteers from different members of IFHOHYP. The committee ensured the involvement of all member organizations, by collecting their views and opinions through a questionnaire sent out.

It has been a priority for the new IFHOHYP board to strengthening the relationship with the European Federation of Hard of Hearing (EFHOH)

Strengthening the relationship with EFHOH and IFHOH

It has been a priority for the new IFHOHYP board to strengthening the relationship with the European Federation of Hard of Hearing (EFHOH) and therefore we were happy to be invited to take part in the EFHOH Board Meeting in Hamburg, Germany at the beginning of the year. It was a great opportunity to have a mutual exchange of information, inspiration, experiences and knowledge. In April this year IFHOHYP was also represented at the EFHOH Annual General Meeting and the following conference organized by the German Association of Hard of Hearing in Essen, Germany. Besides giving a presentation about IFHOHYP and our work, different perspectives on young people during the discussions were raised. Not least I, as president of IFHOHYP, signed the important Essen Declaration "Access to hearing aids is access to opportunity". In Essen IFHOHYP also had the chance to participate in meetings with the International Federation of Hard of Hearing (IFHOH), with whom IFHOHYP has a Memorandum of Understanding to ensure an open and mutually supportive working relationship between the two organizations.

What more to come in 2015 – and 2016?

There are still exciting activities going on for the rest of 2015. In September IFHOHYP will be a part of an awareness-raising-seminar for D/deaf and hard of hearing people in Athens, Greece organized together with EFHOH. Not long after this, Secretary of IFHOHYP, Ece Saygi, attend a UN CRPD Trainers Workshop in Copenhagen, Denmark. During winter 2015 another "Meetings of committees" will take place, which once again will gather together volunteering young hard of hearing of IFHOHYP.

Finally - I must not forget our Annual General Meeting (AGM), which will take place the 29th of November with our Dutch member organization SH-Jong as host. A two-day international programme, Challenge Life Weekend, will also take place 2 days before the AGM. We are grateful to SH-Jong and are looking very much forward to the gathering of all the IFHOHYP members in the Netherlands.

Looking even further ahead in 2016 the next Summer Camp of IFHOHYP will take place in partnership with Castberggaard in Denmark – make sure all young hard of hearing you know, will save their holiday plans, so they will not miss out on this big chance to have a lot of fun and invaluable life-experiences.



News from the IFHOH president

I am happy to report on a few important milestones for IFHOH, all of which are testimony to the increasing work of the organization at the international level.

The tenth IFHOH Congress will be hosted by Hearing Loss Association of America from June 23 to 26, 2016 in Washington, D.C. The IFHOH BGM will be held on June 22nd so please ensure that you book your flights to arrive in time for it. The Call for Papers is up on the HLAA website of at <http://bit.ly/CallforPapers-EducationTracks>. Our thanks to Nancy Macklin, Director of Marketing and Events for HLAA, for co-ordinating the event. Please note that the deadline for submissions for the Call is December 4, 2015.

We are thrilled to be offering workshops on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Europe in October and in New Zealand in January. Due to heavy demand we are now holding two workshops over the week of October 19 to October 23, 2015 in Copenhagen. Our thanks to Louise Carroll for her hard work and to Marcel Bobeldijk, EFHOH President and IFHOH Board member, will be coordinating local arrangements.

Please mark March 3, 2016 for World Hearing Day. IFHOH will be joining with other organizations and the World Health Organization to mark this special day. We are pleased that Richard Darbér, Président du Bucodes SurdiFrance and Treasurer for EFHOH, will represent IFHOH at the WHO-ITU Joint Stakeholders' Consultation on Safe Listening Devices on 1 October 2015 at the WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. ITU refers to the International Telecommunications Union.

Arnoud van Wijk of the Netherlands represented IFHOH at the UNICEF Consultative meeting on Assistive Products for Children with Disabilities in Copenhagen from July 6 to July 7 this summer. He is extensively involved with issues concerning ICT (Information and Communications Technology) equal access for persons with disabilities. The goal of the forum was provide insights to UNICEF as to what it should do to improve the availability of assistive products

and technologies for children with disabilities. Arnoud ensured that the views of hard of hearing persons were represented in the meeting attended by 75 persons.

IFHOH has been working within the International Disability Alliance to ensure that the UN's post-2015 development agenda is inclusive of persons with disabilities. The document for the agenda will be unveiled in New York on the September 25th weekend and this time, the disability community is included in the text. Furthermore, indicators are being developed to measure progress and we are being listed within them. For more information go to <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?navid=13&pid=1618>.

Please note that Education is the focus of one of the goals for the post-2015 development agenda. It calls for "... inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of life-long learning opportunities for all focuses on eliminating gender disparities in education and ensuring equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities. In addition, the proposal calls for building and upgrading education facilities that are child, disability and gender sensitive and also provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all."

Finally, I want to close with thanks to IFHOH board members for their hard work during the past few months; we have met each month, even during the summer! Much volunteer work is being done by board members and I salute each one for their hard work.

With best regards,
Ruth Warick
IFHOH President



THE CONCERNS OF THE DISABILITY MOVEMENT TAKE CENTRE STAGE

Last week, EDF and its members were in Geneva and took part in the examination of the EU by the UN Expert Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

On 27-28 August, the UN Committee held a Constructive Dialogue with the EU delegation on the EU's work on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), the first international human rights treaty ever ratified by the EU. On Thursday 3 September the UN Committee will adopt its recommendations for the EU and set the EU agenda for the next years for the human rights of 80 million persons with disabilities in Europe.

EDF was present with many of its European members in Geneva. The EDF delegation consisted of Autism Europe, Inclusion Europe, European Network of (Ex-)Users and Survivors of Psychiatry, Mental Health Europe, European Network on Independent Living, CBM/IDDC, European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus and the European Union of the Deaf.

PRESENTING THE VIEWS OF 80 MILLION PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

EDF and members held a side event on 27 August before the start of the EU Constructive Dialogue. EDF and its members presented the priorities on the implementation of the CRPD in Europe and answered to the many questions of the UN Committee members.

The constructive dialogue started on Thursday 27 August in the afternoon and continued on Friday morning on 28 August. The EU delegation consisted of Michel Servoz, Director-General of the Commission's DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, and his colleagues of the UN CRPD focal point of the European Commission, the Disability Unit of DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. 20 representatives out of the 28 Member States of the EU were also present as observers.

WHAT DID THE UN ASK THE EU?

Many UN Committee members questioned the EU delegation on its composition and on the absence of representatives of the other EU institutions, in particular DG Justice, the European Parliament and the Council of the EU. During



the dialogue, the Committee posed deep questions on EDF and members' priority issues such as the revision and transformation of the European Disability Strategy into a comprehensive strategy to implement the CRPD across all EU institutions and Member states, the need for a structured dialogue with DPOs in EU decision making, and the need for a CRPD compliant focal point and EU monitoring framework, and the absence of an EU inter-institutional coordination mechanism to implement the CRPD. The Committee also had many questions and comments on the use of the EU funds, the absence of comprehensive equal treatment legislation and the European Accessibility Act. EDF members brought in the perspective of persons with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities, hard of hearing and deaf persons and expertise on health, international cooperation, and independent living, amongst others.

The EU Monitoring Framework had also the opportunity for a private briefing with the UN CRPD Committee ahead of the dialogue and presented their views on the EU review during the constructive dialogue.

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES

Earlier last week, on Tuesday 25 August, EDF organised another side event on women and girls with disabilities. Rosa Estaras, member of the European Parliament and EDF Vice President, Gunta Anca, spoke on the discrimination and challenges that women and girls with disabilities face today in Europe. EDF's top three priorities on women and girls with disabilities were all discussed during the constructive dialogue: ratification by the EU of the Council of Europe's Istanbul Convention on violence against women, and the inclusion of the perspectives of women and girls with disabilities in the Commission's post 2015 strategy on gender equality and the recently published road map 'New start to address the challenges of work-life balance faced by working families'.

EDF Director, Catherine Naughton, also spoke at IDDC side event on 26 August on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the EU's work on humanitarian aid and international cooperation.

UN NOW PREPARES ITS RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE EU

Now we are waiting to see the final report and the recommendations of the UN CRPD Committee. This report will be discussed and adopted on Thursday 3 September. It will contain recommendations for the EU on how to improve its work on the UN CRPD and will form the basis for EDF, its members and the EU institutions' work for the coming years on the rights of persons with disabilities.

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Contact EDF: Lila Sylviti | EDF Communication officer | lila.sylviti@edf-feph.org



AND



PRESENTS

Invitation to "Challenge Life" Weekend & IFHOHYP AGM 2015



Amsterdam, Netherlands November 27th to 29th 2015

SH-Jong/Hoormij, the Dutch organization for Hard of Hearing young people, welcomes all members of International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People (IFHOHYP) and all other hard of hearing young people to their annual "Challenge Life" Weekend and the IFHOHYP Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Amsterdam, Netherlands from November 27th to 29th, 2015.

Accommodation and food will be covered by SH-Jong/Hoormij and IFHOHYP. The activities will be fully accessible through the availabilities of palantyping and sign-language interpretation.

Participants at the AGM

Each member organization of IFHOHYP is able to send **1 delegate and 1 observer**. Other interested organizations or individuals can participate at the AGM as an observer; however, since space is limited, this will be on a first-come, first-serve basis upon receiving a submitted application before the indicated deadline.

To help with the organizational costs, participants will be asked to pay a fee of **50 euros**, which will cover accommodation, meals and activities during the AGM. Participants will also be expected to cover their travel costs. Ideally, member organizations should cover those costs for their representatives at the AGM. If you or your organization are unable to participate at the AGM for any reasons, please contact us at info@ifhohyp.org to discuss the details.

Please note that only delegates from organizations whom have paid membership fees before the upcoming AGM possess the right to vote. For questions relating to membership fees, please contact Daria Panicheva, IFHOHYP Treasurer (treasurer@ifhohyp.org).



Preliminary Programme and Arrivals/Departures

On **November 27th** IFHOHYP will present the 2016-2020 Strategy Plan as well as the proposed motions for the AGM. This will provide ample time for attendees to discuss the content and provide feedback, particularly how their member organizations can help to implement the strategic plan following the AGM.

On **November 28th** there will be activities and workshops, presented in English, hosted by SH-Jong/Hoormij with the theme: *Challenge Life! It's all about empowerment: how to seize opportunities, deal with the challenges in life and get the best out of life.* Experts and professionals with hearing loss will share how they have come to their successes. You will also work on your own challenges by learning from other people and working together to accomplish your goals.

On **November 29th** the AGM will take place throughout the day, followed by closing activities organized by SH-Jong/Hoormij.

Arrival: Thursday, Nov 26th afternoon (14:00 at the earliest)

Departure: Sunday, Nov 29th evening (after 16:00) or,
Monday, 30th morning (10:00 at the latest)

Please inform us if you are only able to participate in parts of the programme (i.e. attend only the AGM).


Location: Accommodation & How to Get There

The Netherlands are famous for their football players (e.g., Johan Crujff, Marco van Basten and Arjen Robben), their crazy national holiday 'Koningsdag' (Kings Day), their dikes and windmills. Amsterdam is the capital of The Netherlands, and known for its beautiful channels, great museums (like the Rijksmuseum with the famous painting 'The Night Watch' of Rembrandt van Rijn) and their coffee shops.

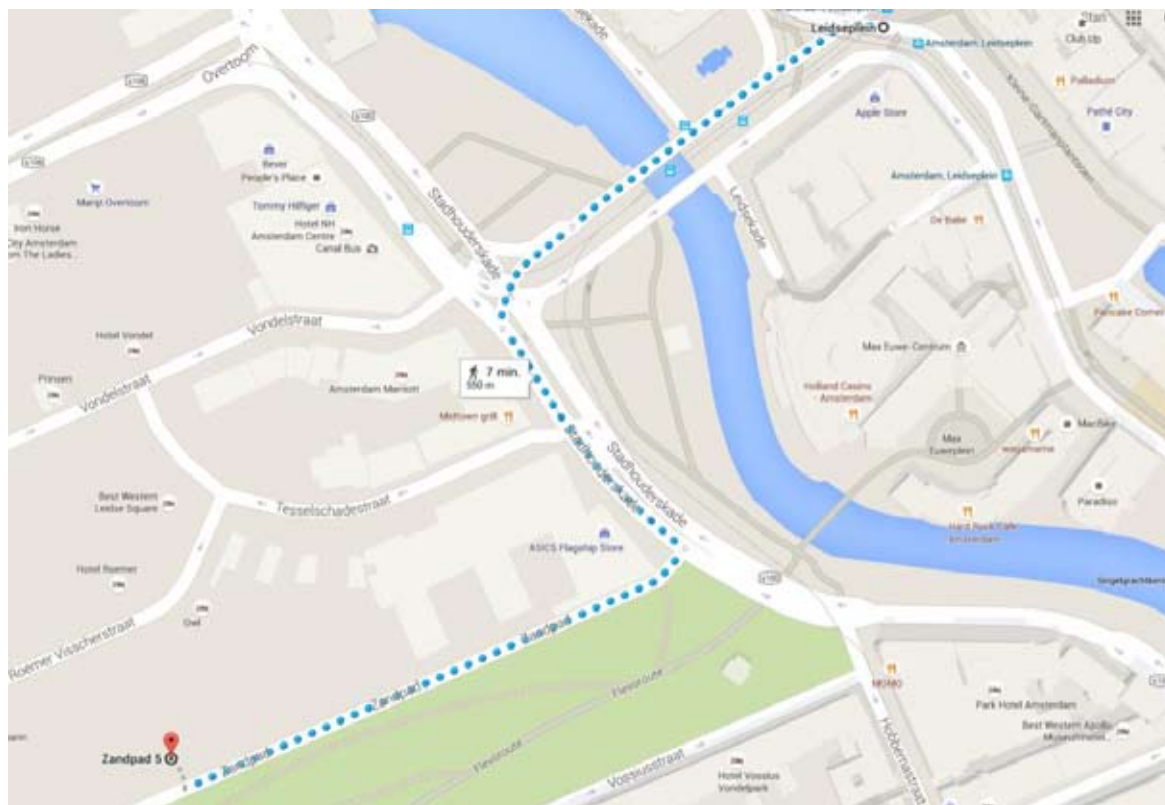
The "Challenge Life" weekend and IFHOHYP AGM will take place in the historical center of Amsterdam, near 'Vondelpark': a beautiful public garden! We will stay in StayOkay Vondelpark, Zandpad 5, 1054 GA Amsterdam.

Website: <http://www.stayokay.com/nl/hostel/amsterdam-vondelpark>.

How to get there:

1. If you land at airport Schiphol, first purchase a disposable OV-chip card (you can buy this at the airport on a device, look for this sign: ).
2. Take bus 197 to Leidseplein. The frequency of the bus is every 15 minutes.
3. Step out at Leidseplein (final destination of the bus), then walk straight ahead. After a while you'll see a bridge. Go over the bridge and then to the left. Walk 100 meters straight, and then go to your right. After 200 meters walking straight ahead you arrive at the accommodation.

Below is a map of the route. If you cannot find it, just ask the locals where you can find the 'Vondelpark': everyone knows that place and almost everyone speak English! ☺



Route description from bus stop Leidseplein to accommodation StayOkay Vondelpark (at Zandpad 5).

Application

To express your interests in participating at the "Challenge Life" weekend and IFHOHYP AGM 2015, please submit the attached application form by **September 27th, 2015**. If you require assistance with visa application, contact us **immediately** to ensure documents are given to you in a timely manner.

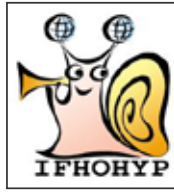
Detailed information regarding programme, accommodation and AGM documents will be sent to all participants one month before the AGM. If you have any comments and/or questions, please do not hesitate to let us know at info@ifhohyp.org. We look forward to seeing you in the Netherlands!

Best Regards,

SH-Jong/Hoormij "Challenge Life" Team & IFHOHYP Board



AND



PRESENTS

"Challenge Life" Weekend & IFHOHYP AGM 2015 Registration Form

**Netherlands
November 27th to 29th 2015**

This form should be addressed to: boardmember@ifhohyp.org

Deadline: Friday, September 27th 2015

First Name:

Last Name:

Email Address:

Mobile Number:

Country:

Name of Your Organization:

Representing Your Organization as (highlight one): Delegate Observer

Will you attend the whole programme (highlight one)? Yes No

If not, please explain: _____

Please estimate your arrival time:

Please specify your departure time: Nov 29th evening (after 16:00) or 30th morning (before 10:00)

Do you require sign language interpreting? If yes, specify which.

Do you have any special dietary requirements? If yes, specify.

If you require VISA, please provide us the following information:

1. Birth Date
2. Home Address
3. Passport Number including issuing and expiring dates
4. The person/institution that the visa letter is for, including address, if known
5. Time needed to process visa

Is there any information you would like us to know (e.g., accessibility needs)?

Thank you for completing the registration. If you have any questions, email us at boardmember@ifhohyp.org.

EFHOH MEETINGS 2015 & 2016

2015	2015	2015	2015
25-27 September	Athens/Greece	Hearing Awareness workshop + board meeting	All board members
1 October	Geneva/CH	WHO meeting	Lidia for EFHOH and Richard of IFHOH
14-16 October	Nürnberg/Germany	EUHA International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians	One of the board members
20 October	Copenhagen Denmark	Hear It AGM	Aïda
19 -20 October	Copenhagen	Human Rights Train the Trainers training	Marcel
22-23 October	Copenhagen Denmark	Human Rights Train the Trainers training	Marcel and Aïda, Richard
11 November	Brussels	30 Years EUD	Marcel, Lidia and Richard
30-31 November	Brussels	EDF board meeting	Marcel
7 and 8 December	Brussels	European Day of Disabled People	Aïd and Marcel
9 December	Brussels	European Platform	Marcel and Richard
2016	2016	2016	2016
24-27 January	Auckland/New Zealand	IFHOH board meeting	Marcel
1-3 April	Paris / France	EFHOH AGM	All EFHOH board members
14-16 April	Varese/Italy	EURO-CIU	One of the board members
22 June	Washington DC/USA	IFHOH BGM	Marcel
23-26 June	Washington DC /USA	IFHOH World Congress	Marcel
October	Dublin	EFHOH board meeting	All board members
December	Brussels	European Day of Disabled People	One or two of the board
2017	2017	2017	2017
20-22 April	Finland	EURO-CIU AGM	

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.