

European Federation of Hard of Hearing People

EFHOH NEWSLETTER

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Dear EFHOH Members & Friends,

Spring in Lockdown

After a short period of cold, snow, and ice it is suddenly spring, and we can finally enjoy the first sunshine of the new season. At the same time, however, we are in a COVID-19 lockdown in my country, the Netherlands.

There is also a night-time curfew that has been implemented. Some of us (due to job-profession or age) have received the vaccination and some of us are waiting for it. We and EFHOH update our website constantly with the latest information about COVID-19. The budding spring gives us beautiful pictures and new inspiration. Stay safe and in a good health. Enjoy the spring!

World Hearing Day 2021

The first ever WHO *World Report on Hearing* is now available on the EFHOH website:

<https://www.efhoh.org/who-world-hearing-report/>

or

www.who.int/publications/i/item/world-report-on-hearing

Some pertinent facts from the report are:

- One in five people worldwide live with hearing loss and by 2050, one in four people are projected to have problems with their hearing.
- Most people with hearing loss do not have access to interventions: in low-income countries, the gap in need and use of hearing aids is 91% and in developing countries, it is 74.5%; these are astounding figures.
- Hearing across the life course is possible through public health action in the key areas of prevention, early identification, and appropriate care.
- Early identification is the key to successful outcomes whatever the age; hearing screenings are necessary for all people whether new-born or older persons.

On the EFHOH Facebook and YouTube channel, you can find videos of the different and interesting presentations of the EP Lunch Debate.

Future EFHOH Activities

As the EFHOH board, we are busy with the organization of the online EFHOH AGM 2021. You can find more information on this in the EFHOH Newsletter and on our website.



I hope that you also had a nice and interesting World Hearing Day 2021. We as the EFHOH board are very happy and proud that so many people from all over Europe and outside of Europe participated in the online Lunch Debate at the European Parliament. We also see this as a great result of the warm cooperation with AEA, EHIMA, and Euro-CIU. The theme this year was *Hearing Care for All*. All people regardless of age must have the opportunity to receive the hearing aids or CI that they want. Five important words in this are - objective information, screening, fitting, rehabilitation, and reimbursement of the costs.

We were also very active in other topics such as Cochlear implants with the IFHOH CI webinar and with our role in the organization of CIICA (Cochlear Implants International Community of Action). This is a new and innovative community of CI users, family advocacy groups, individuals sharing the vision of increasing access to CI and lifelong support for all those who benefit from CI. For more information, visit the website of CIICA www.ciicanet.org

At the EFHOH AGM on 19 May, we will discuss with our members about the future strategy of EFHOH and the EFHOH activity plan for the period of May 2021 to Spring 2022. It is good to know that we will inform you in April 2021 about the date for the next EFHOH AGM but it will be simultaneously with the IFHOH World Congress in Budapest.

Special news as Aida and Marcel in the last weeks have also busy with the creation of different training materials for the new speech to text interpreters in the LTA Project (Live Text Access). For more information, visit the website www.ltaproject.eu

Additionally, Marcel also participated in the training/workshops of the TIN-ACT Project. As you know, TIN ACT is a European consortium that researches Tinnitus. For more information, visit www.tinact.eu. Good to know that this project comes to a finish with a conference at the beginning of the summer. The conference will be organized by the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. With the conclusion of this project, we will miss all the knowledge and inspiration of our great friend Volker Albert whose contribution was invaluable.

Time to Say Goodbye

Dear friends, this is my last EFHOH President Letter for the EFHOH newsletter. It was great and a lot of work to make for all these years. Thanks for all your articles, feedback, and support in the making of so many EFHOH newsletters. My thanks to the members of the EFHOH Newsletter Team with warm hugs to the editors - Niels-Hendrik, Ece, and Alper and the great support of Bryan and Aida. With their support, it was always a great party to make the EFHOH newsletter.

Have a nice and warm spring, stay safe, and I hope to see all of you online at the EFHOH AGM 2021.

Yours,

Marcel Bobeldijk



Dear Friends,

This year's World Hearing Day of the 3rd of March is incredibly special. By the time you receive this publication, we will have seen the release of the seminal World Report on Hearing by

the World Health Organization, a reporting requirement in response to the World Health Assembly Resolution 70.13, which was adopted in 2017.

There will have been numerous events on World Hearing Day and during the week itself. Congratulations to you who organized an event or participated in social media. I think it will be the most impressive display for awareness raising and advocacy statements related to hearing loss – ever.

IFHOH has been actively encouraging participating among members in World Hearing Day and in engaging with the World Report on Hearing. We are issuing social media statements to get the word out. Personally, I will have the opportunity to participate in three events in my country, one

of which is a national webinar, and the other two being more local events which will form part of the collective international efforts to raise awareness.

I do not need to tell readers of this publication of the importance of raising awareness about our often invisible and unacknowledged hearing loss, not only during World Hearing Day but constantly. Under the motto of World Hearing Day, which is "Hearing Care for All: Screen. Rehabilitate. Communicate", I would like to highlight the following:

Screen: There is a lack of screening of hearing loss at all ages. Few jurisdictions offer an effective screening program covering persons of all ages.

Rehabilitate: There remains a lack of affordability, provision and uptake of hearing aids, cochlear implants, assistive listening devices, and support services. The provision of speech-to-text interpreting services is woefully inadequate around the world.

Communicate: Hearing loss is all too often unacknowledged and unaddressed. We need to reduce the stigma against hearing loss that exists in many countries and create greater awareness that every person can help us with communication challenges. It can be as simple of facing us, speaking clearly and using a clear face mask.

I look forward to the legacy that will be left after this year's World Hearing Day and to our continued advocacy using the World Report on Hearing as a tool for change. We have a great launching pad this year to improve hearing awareness and access. Share your experience and thoughts on the IFHOH Facebook page of www.facebook.com/groups/IFHOH and Twitter: www.twitter.com/IFHOH

With warmest regards,
Ruth Warick
IFHOH President
president@ifhoh.org



IFHOHYP's Annual General Meeting for the year of 2020 took place on the 30st to 31st of January 2021 online

Bowen Tang, President of IFHOHYP from Canada, was re-elected for another two-years term. Leonie von Berlin, former Board Member from Germany, was elected to Vice President position, also for two years. To fill the position of Board Member Moses Serwadda, former Vice Board Member from Uganda, was promoted. Pavel Novikov was elected to Vice Board Membership.



IFHOHYP presented its new strategic plan for the next five years which build on four cornerstones: Capacity building, Policy Visibility, Digital Presence and Financial Stability.

IFHOHYP confirmed the existence of five committees: Accessibility, Fundraising, Member Information & Communication (MIC), Nomination, and Policy.

IFHOHYP – elections

IFHOHYP is an international organization of young deaf people whose members are under the age of 35. And certainly, following the webinars of these younger generations can be interesting, educational, and also fun.

In January, the IFHOHYP elections of the officials of the board took place. Before the elections there was an interesting presentation of the candidates with a so-called hot chair. This really turned out to be hot due to some questions of participants from all over the world.

As president of the organization, Bowen Tang was re-elected, and the vice president position was taken by Leonie von Berlin.

Because volunteering in international organizations is very demanding and sometimes impossible to reconcile all obligations, they have organized themselves in a manner of different departments covering various areas. In this way, the work is definitely easier and offers an opportunity for more young people to find their own path. And there are many opportunities for youth to join the IFHOHYP in some committees.

Therefore, they established 7 committees and they are looking for new members in almost all of them. Before the election, each of the committees introduced itself and provided basic information on the field of work they cover.



The committees are: Accessibility, Fundraising, Member Information and Communication (MIC), Policy, Strategic Planning, Study Session, and Nomination Committee. More information about the organizations is available on IFHOHYP website.

Moreover, during the active weekend they organized some interesting presentations about hearing loss in young ages. There was also a presentation from dr. Ruth Warick about IFHOH.

Personally, I enjoyed seeing young people trying to participate, even if it was with a help of translators. It was also nice seeing how involved

participants were through the "icebreaker" game, which just made the day more enjoyable.

Furthermore, it is very exciting and curious to know how they will organize a summer camp 2021, and in my opinion becoming a member of IFHOHYP is a great opportunity for young people all around the Europe.

So, you can follow IFHOHYP on their web site <https://ifhohyp.org/>

Darja Pajk

Positive changing in Slovenia

In Slovenia, the Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing are presented under one name, which often leads to a misunderstanding of the need for adjustments for people with hearing loss. Thus, adaptation problems often occur, as it can be understood that the only necessary adaptation is sign language. Sign language, however, is not used or understood by many people. As a result of more than 20 years of efforts and recently even stronger evidence for the need of subtitling in this COVID time finally opened an opportunity to subtitle all online events organized within the ZDGNS.

The process of preparing and organizing a subtitling center was not easy. A few years ago, we started subtitling at a conference in Slovenia – firstly, with a simple method of speed typing. But those who can type quickly are not easy to find, since we can speak fast resulting in a rapid decline in the quality of subtitles.



Nevertheless, the fastest solution is speed typing, which is still the easiest for languages that are not up to date with computer customizations.

Thus, persons capable of fast writing were sought in the Association. And in one moment many people decided to follow online events, because they were able to understand and follow the speakers.

Otherwise, this well-known technique abroad is just gaining ground in Slovenia and simultaneously encourages for seeking even better solutions in the future. This is one of our most important goals in the future for our Association. In any case, by subtitling our events, we raise awareness in the environment about the need for subtitles. Additionally, it represents, a better life for the deaf, as they can become more actively involved in webinars. At the same time, it also educates the hard of hearing in Slovenia about their possibilities.

So we can also look at COVID time as a challenge in arranging accessibility for the hard of hearing who need subtitling. We are happy when we get asked how to include subtitles, as well as when individual's express satisfaction with the subtitled online events they can now follow.

A good subtitling technique is the use of a velotype and involvement in an LTA training project and the organization of a subtitling center with employed contractors, which is often an obstacle in the early stages when visibility is still low and financial difficulties arise. But we are glad that we have succeeded in the first step and that we have made people aware of the available options, and that they can ask and demand accessibility.

Teja Pahor Moder and Darja Pajk

Transposition of the European Accessibility Act

In the EU-member states the work on transposing the European Accessibility Act, EAA, should now be on its way. As the directive points out that disability organizations shall be consulted, EFHOH-members can be active and try to influence the outcome on national level.

On the European level EFHOH takes part in an expert group organized by EDF, which will try to gather good examples from different countries and give advice and support for member organizations working with the EAA.

EDF has produced a useful toolkit - https://www.edf-feph.org/content/uploads/2020/12/final_edf_transposition_toolkit_accessibility_act.pdf

For hard of hearing people it is of special importance that the EAA says that TV-sets and services shall be accessible and in an easy way give information about and access to subtitling and other accessibility services. Another important issue is that the emergency number 112 shall be accessible by total conversation – voice, text and video.

The Commission will issue a standardization request for a harmonized standard that will demonstrate compliance with the legislation. By June we will know what products and services (or elements of services) are included in the standardization request. EDF and members will be invited to send comments.

The next meetings of the EAA-working group will be on 1 July and 26 October 2021. EDF will arrange a public webinar on the EAA on Global Accessibility Awareness Day 20 May 2021.

Alf Lindberg, EFHOH board member

CIICA

In the end of 2019, the first ideas for the establishment of a global community of cochlear implant users and their families came up. Accessibility to implants and later a lifelong monitoring of persons with implants is very different at the European level, and of course, the differences are even greater at the global level. Therefore, EFHOH, as an organization defending the rights of people with hearing loss for equal quality of life, EFHOH were delighted to become Founding Members of CIICA, and I am also pleased to be a member of the Steering Group. The vision of newly formed advocacy group is closing the global gap and cochlear implant provision as well as providing lifelong support for all who benefit from CI.



The fact is that adults with progressive hearing loss often experience permanent hearing loss, consequently leading to the decision for implantation, which in most cases improves the quality of listening and of course life.

Therefore, at EFHOH, we have joined the global work and support of the newly formed group, which advocates and emphasizes rehabilitation and lifelong care, as well as the need for adaptation and understanding of disability. It is necessary to pay attention to the understanding of implants, as they allow a lot, but we are still talking about permanent failure and other necessary adjustments. Moreover, we know, that we are stronger together and that it is easier if more people work in raising awareness. You can also find CIICA and more information on their website <https://ciicanet.org/>.

Darja Pajk

Virtual Lunch Debate European Parliament. **«Hearing care for all»**

Experiences from Norway during COVID-19

The situation during the pandemic has been extra challenging for hard of hearing people. If you are dependent on reading on lips, it is completely impossible if the person you are talking to uses a face mask. In HLF, the Hard of Hearing organisation in Norway, much of the activity stopped when it was no longer possible to meet each other. Courses and meeting activities became difficult and we had to find new ways to help each other and give advice and guidance.

This was the topic at the lunch debate the 3rd of March presented by EFHOH Vice president Morten Buan.

In HLF, 600 hard of hearing volunteers/peers helping directly one-to-one. They are personal experience and trained by HLF. All HLFs peers were given: Clear face masks with windows for lip reading, antibacterial hand disinfection and wet wipes.

The peers in HLF are recognized by the national and local authorities and they are financial support from the Norwegian national budget. Under the pandemic they have got an extra Covid 19 financial support to buy face masks with windows for lip reading, antibacterial hand disinfection and wet wipes.



Cochlear Online Seminar in January 2021

Cochlear invited at the beginning of 2021 users' associations to participate in an online seminar. Before I registered, I checked up if the seminar was accessible via STT/subtitles, and it turned out, it was not. This was one week prior to the seminar and I was first informed that this was too late and not possible.

I was then suggested that I could record the seminar and watch it afterwards and 'just' rewind when there was something I did not hear. But this is not do-able. It would really take long to follow a seminar this way and there are just sounds and words, that are too difficult to hear. Furthermore, it would not allow me to ask questions or comment during the following debate. However, Cochlear did work on it and shortly before the seminar, I was

informed, it would be accessible via STT, and I registered right away.

Hopefully, in the future need of accessibility is foreseen in these events, since more and more professionals within audiology have hearing loss and in general users are more and more involved and both manufacturers and users benefit from users' experiences. It could easily be ticked in a box along with the registration.

On the day of the seminar, the STT worked very well, and it was in both English and German, which was very fine. I chose the English which also supported the language spoken at the seminar.



The messages I take home from this seminar are:

There is research going on in different countries, but it is not comparable, because they each use different models. We need a common system to be able to compare.

It appeared that in CI-candidates and those who receive CI, only 6% happen to have dementia. It was very positive to hear the medical professionals actually address the need to diagnose the difference between dementia and cognitive decline.

Thirdly, there has been findings that when patients do not benefit enough from CI, it could be that these patients have auditory neuropathy. This is an important information, because to have this diagnosed opens up for treatment of this very difficult diagnosis. This is a very important information for another reason too, because we have had so many disagreements between medical/technical/educational audiologists, when educational audiologists have been criticised for using too much sign language and not enough auditory verbal training.

But it was also mentioned how cost benefit it is to offer audiological treatment and here CI to people who need it, and that it is needed to not just work evidence based but also user experience based.

Cochlear shared a Course Reading material on Health Economics and Cochlear Implants with the participants, which is nice study material after the seminar. If you are interested in this report, I suggest you contact Cochlear and have the link sent to you.

This seminar was carried out via Go to Webinar, questions and comments were shared via the chat and the panel would pick up different questions. The event as made accessible via a link providing STT – this could be watch on a separate screen and worked very well.

Thank you, Cochlear, for making this Seminar accessible.
It would be nice to join your events in the future.

Aida Regel Poulsen
EFHOH secretary

Swedish public broadcasting using ASR

The Swedish national public broadcaster, SVT, began last December to subtitle all its local news broadcasts, 21 parallel news broadcasts, using automatic speech recognition, ASR.

Subtitling of the local news has for long been one of the most important demands from the members of the Swedish Association of Hard of Hearing People, HRF. The public broadcaster have rejected this, claiming that the company do not have the money nor the

personnel to do this, since 21 parallel broadcasts each 15 minutes long would need 42 skilled live subtitlers, since they can only work ten minutes at a time.

About two years ago the president of HRF Mattias Lundekvam met with the CEO of SVT and proposed that SVT would start using ASR for the local news. The idea was being met in a positive way, and soon there was a working group established where HRF was invited to take part.



In the end of 2019, the first experimental test was released on SVT's web platform SVT Play, and in December 2020 all local news began to have subtitles using ASR. Due to the technical solution the subtitles are available only on the web platform, a few minutes after the original broadcast.

This is a major breakthrough, showing that if we have the knowledge we can make a difference, says Mattias Lundekvam, president of HRF. Of course the ASR-subtitles are not as good as if there had been skilled professionals doing the job, but they are good enough and getting better the more the system adapts to the Swedish language.

International Cochlear Implant Day

On the International CI day, 25th February 2021, NEURO ABILITIES zoomed in on Cochlear Implants – User Experience, a Driver for Innovation. The NeuroAbilities research program is made possible by a grant from the Patrick J. McGovern Foundation

On the occasion of International Cochlear Implant Day, which celebrates the life-changing impact of cochlear implants for deaf and hard of hearing persons around the world, an exchange took part between cochlear implant users, neurotechnologists and advocates sharing their experience and perspectives on how innovation should further address users' needs.



This was a one hour event with prominent panelists such as

- Sue Archbold, Ph.D., Hon LLD
- Patrick D'Haese, Ph.D., Corporate Director of Awareness and Public Affairs, MED-EL
- Robert Mandara, VP, European Association of Cochlear Implant Users (Euro-CIU)
- Dennis Selznick, CPACC, Business Development Manager, T-Mobile Accessibility
- Christian Vogler, Ph.D., Director of Technology Access Program, Gallaudet University

The event was moderated by Lidia Best, Vice Chair, ITU Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF) and conducted by Christopher M. Lee, PhD,

Managing Director, International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP), Chief Learning Officer, G3ict

Through this one hour we were taken through a journey of how the development of CI has been over the years; that World Wide only 1 in 20 who could benefit from CI have it; what is in the crystal ball for the future; and what do users face within connectivity, synchronicity not just within own CI and HA but also with family members and friends. But we also need to develop on hearing tests according to different elements in sound and not just rely on an audiogram and a discrimination test.

Sue Archbold highlighted the user challenges that managing technology isn't intuitive, but progress is being made. Still, when asking CI-users what made them make the decision to have CI, this happens when talking to other CI-users and learn from their experiences. Sue Archbold also emphasized the need of rehabilitation and long-life aftercare.

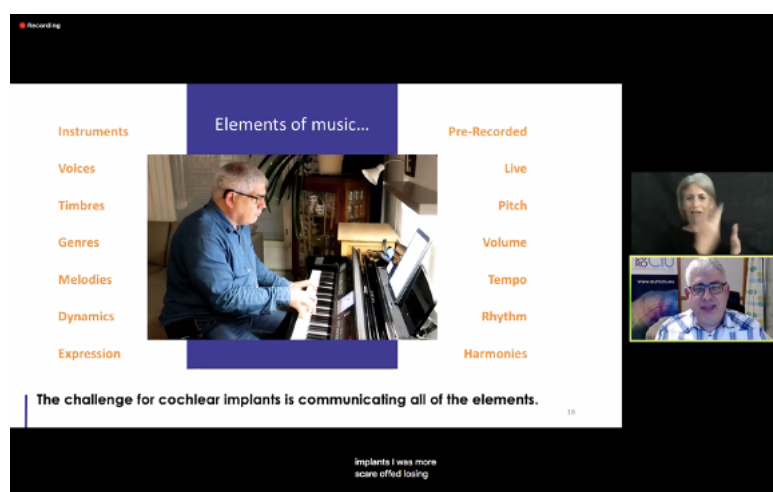
Robert Mandara showed different elements in music as well as in hearing, that need testing too to meet our needs in audiological treatments.

There was so much more valuable information in this webinar, that I am pleased to say that it was recorded and can be watched from this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEsPXjwy6PI>

The webinar was ASL interpreted and subtitled in English, which is also in the recording.

On the International CI day, 25th February 2021, the website was being launched, which was also highlighted at the webinar. Please have a look at this website and share: www.ciicanet.org



For a better health and quality of life: The German Hard of Hearing Association calls for better access to cochlear implants for people with severe to profound hearing loss.

The German Hard of Hearing Association (DSB) called for better awareness of cochlear implants and more targeted education of health professionals to support people with severe hearing loss in referral pathways to cochlear implant treatment. During the Parliamentary Evening with policy makers and members of parliament in attendance, the focus of discussion was better care for people with severe hearing loss, and discussion about the urgent need for policies and strategies to help many more people to hear again.



In Germany a total of 14 million people, around 19%, live with hearing loss. Many with severe to profound hearing loss receive little to no benefit from hearing aids and may be suitable for evaluation for cochlear implants. However, less than 5% of those who may benefit receive cochlear implant treatment. Untreated hearing loss has measurable personal, health and economic consequences: It impacts quality of life, may cause secondary diseases and results in unemployment or underemployment rates.

The discussions about the need to increase awareness and improve care pathways for those who may benefit from cochlear implants coincided with today's release of the WHO's first World Report on Hearing. The report calls on policy makers to raise the priority of hearing care and to invest in cost-effective interventions such as hearing aids and cochlear implants for children and adults.

On World Hearing Day (March 3), members of the German Bundestag and state parliaments as well as representatives of various ministries engaged in the Parliamentary Evening organized by the DSB to learn about the care needed for people with severe to profound hearing loss. Although cochlear implants open enormous opportunities for many hearing-impaired people, there is a lack of structure to guarantee those affected can access information, comprehensive advice and diagnosis. This was the unanimous opinion of the speakers present. "When hearing aids no longer provide sufficient help for hearing impaired people and other therapy services are not available, this is accompanied by considerable health and social risks for those affected," explained Dr. Matthias Müller, President of the DSB. At the same time, inadequate hearing care leads to high costs - it is therefore also of economic and social relevance. "The provision of high-quality cochlear implants allows hearing-impaired people to participate and enjoy a better quality of life. Unfortunately, the care path is far too often associated with almost insurmountable obstacles."

Speakers make it clear that while cochlear implant provision is available in many places, those affected tend to have many questions and can struggle to make an informed decision.

The realities of life for those affected were highlighted during the event with Ursula Soffner, Vice President of the DSB and herself a cochlear implant recipient, providing additional information about her path to better hearing. "I only learned that the option of a cochlear implant was available to me after years of searching in vain," said Soffner, "Whether it was my re-entry into professional life, my volunteer work in the DSB or even my membership in a choir - the CI has fundamentally improved my life and opened up things for me that seemed impossible for a long time."

There are too many hurdles on the way to better hearing for people with severe to profound hearing loss: Those affected need timely access to information, counseling, diagnosis and treatment. They should not have to wait years.

When hearing aids are no longer sufficient, the search for a better hearing therapy proves too difficult for those affected, said Dr. Harald Seidler, head physician at the specialist ear, nose and throat clinic MEDICLIN Bosenberg in St. Wendel. "People with severe hearing impairment are too rarely referred to a CI clinic," said Seidler, who himself hears with a hearing aid and a cochlear implant. In addition, he said, the number of those who are profoundly deaf, yet do not have a cochlear implant, is increasing. To reverse this trend, all the professions involved in providing care - from ENT physicians in private practice and hearing care specialists to doctors and therapists in the clinics - must work hand in hand.

An assessment also shared by Prof. Dr. Timo Stöver, Director of the Department of ENT Medicine at the University Hospital Frankfurt am Main: "Particularly in the case of severely hearing-impaired people, it is important that ENT physicians and funding agencies critically review the effectiveness of a hearing aid fitting in accordance with applicable regulation. The new guideline on cochlear implant fitting provides clear guidance on when a cochlear implant should be considered. In these cases, affected patients need early access to further information and support services."



Establishing consistent standards of care across the board needs the support of policymakers.

Many guests attending virtually took the opportunity to ask questions. Organisers considered this first event a success: "We are pleased that our informative program was met with such lively interest," explained Dr. Matthias Müller, "We hope that this will help to establish the high standards of care that we already have at numerous centers in Germany on a nationwide basis." Driving this forward is not only the task of the professional groups involved, the CI clinics, and the patient associations: "Active support is also needed from political stakeholders and payers," said Müller.

You can check full article with the references and more information [on this link](#).

New book on subtitles for deaf and Hard of Hearing community

It is with great pleasure that I introduce my new book Captioning and Subtitling for d/Deaf and Hard of Hearing Audiences (SDH) to the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, an organisation that I have, through years of research, made reference to on a regular basis.

The book is a comprehensive guide to the theory and practice of captioning and SDH, a discipline that has evolved quickly in recent years. It is intended to act as a companion for subtitlers and captioners who may have doubts about how to translate features which are particularly important for this audience, such as music, sound effects and paralanguage. It provides examples from real practice and discusses the thinking processes of a subtitler and captioner.



I was first introduced to SDH in 2006, while completing an MA in Audiovisual Translation at Roehampton University (London). The module, taught by Chas Donaldson, set me on a journey which eventually materialised in a PhD in Translation from University College London, in 2014, focused on subtitling for deaf children (supervised by Prof. Jorge Díaz Cintas and Prof. Ros Herman).

As a hearing person, I do not feel I can rely on intuition or first-hand personal experience when making subtitling and captioning choices. This is why, in the book and in my practice, I focus on understanding the requirements of the diverse audience that d/Deaf and hard of hearing people are. I always look for opportunities of engagement with my audience, so as to make informed choices and deliver work to the highest standard.

While conducting my PhD research, I felt the need to combine the academic work with actual practice. I have a translation background but am also a professional puppeteer, trained at the Puppet Theatre Barge, a theatre venue in London, in 2007. I had the perfect set up to render the venue where I worked accessible to d/Deaf and hard of hearing audiences. I launched a captioning service in 2016 and since then I have captioned at least one performance per season. This is a very rewarding experience that taught me that it is indeed possible for individuals to implement a positive change, although I firmly believe that legislation is the main step towards changing policies and practices.

The book, published by UCL Press, is available in open access as a free download: <https://www.uclpress.co.uk/products/128370>

[I administer the Facebook group Captioning and subtitling for d/Deaf and hard of hearing people, which can be joined by anyone interested in the subject.](#)

Soledad Zarate

https://twitter.com/Soledad_SDH

History of the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation and Access to Information Through TV

The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC) is the successor of the Cyprus Broadcasting Service (CBS), which was founded in 1953 by the then British Colonial Administration of Cyprus. The Cypriot Television has been operating experimentally since 1957.

Following the independence of Cyprus and the establishment of the Republic of Cyprus in 1960, the Cyprus Broadcasting Service was renamed Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation and since then has been operating as a semi-governmental organization.

In 1974, CyBC suffered a heavy blow to its facilities due to the Turkish invasion and the continued occupation of about 38% of the territory of Cyprus (loss of the central relay station in the Pentadaktylos mountain range, loss of other substations etc). 1974, however, was also the beginning of the rapid development of CyBC both in radio as well as television.

In 1982, the black & white TV productions became coloured and since 2011 the analogue transmission signal has become digital.

CyBC today operates:

- a) Four radio channels (First, Second, Third and Classic).
- b) Three television channels (CyBC1, CyBC2, CyBC HD) as well as a satellite channel (CyBC Sat).

The CyBC is an active member of international Broadcasting Organizations such as EBU, CIRCOM, COPEAM. It has a rich archive and also operates a museum of audiovisual technology, housed in a contemporary building on the premises of the corporation.

The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CyBC) is a legal entity governed by the Public Law and established in accordance with the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation Law, Chapter 300A. The CyBC is governed by a Board of Directors, consisting nine members, who are appointed by the Council of Ministers for three-year term of service. The Senior Executive of the CyBC is the Director General, to whom in accordance with the Radio Broadcasting Act, 'the Corporation delegates all of the responsibilities that are required to enable him to carry out his work efficiently'



In January of 2019 the President of the Republic, appointed Mr. Andreas Frangos as Chairman of the Board of the National, public TV and Radio, the Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation (CYBC), an office where currently holds.

The Director General is Mr. Gregoris Maliotis who is currently serving as Acting Director General of CyBC since December 2019.

Access to Information Through Television – Hard of Hearing Audience/Deaf People with Hearing Loss/Deafness

Following his appointment, Mr. Frangos showed an acknowledged interest in the issue of human right access to information from people with hearing loss and deafness.

Up to this point in time, the only communication method used as access to information through the television channels for this category was the sign language and this was evident only in the afternoon news program, at 18:00. For the last years, the afternoon news is the only program that was and still is available by the Public broadcaster and all private television stations in Cyprus. However subtitling was never evident until the year 2020.

The only media broadcasting corporation that made the first step towards subtitling is the Cyprus public broadcaster (CyBC), starting with the daily broadcasting of the afternoon news at 18:00 where subtitling co-exists with the sign language.

However, the need for more subtitling and access to information became more a necessity for the deaf/hard of hearing audience. The first encouraging signs started to have results towards the end of September 2020 where the practice continued a month later with a television series being subtitled and until today is still broadcasted with full subtitles in CyBC2.

From there on, same language subtitles are a fact in Cyprus only offered by our Public broadcaster.

Examples of subtitled series include among others, comedy series, historic documentaries, political interviews. Furthermore, for the people communicating with sign language, an important addition was implemented. This concerns the daily news at 20:00 which is presented in sign language and is the same as the one presented for the hearing community. It is a major accomplishment providing the most updated news to an additional category of the community.

The subtitled documentaries are not “live-transcribed” yet, but many efforts are constantly made towards this direction by the Board and Management of CyBC.

It is worth to mention that the Cyprus Government made a step towards inclusion of hard of hearing/deaf citizens in the Covid -19 pandemic still in effect. The announcements of the Ministry of Health with regards to the health measures that citizens must adhere to are subtitled. Towards this direction is also the Ministry of Justice (including Police and the Cyprus Fire Service), Ministry of Interior and others with the use of subtitling in their announcements/ messages addressed to the citizens through television.

It is important to note the valuable contribution of the staff involved in the process of subtitling in such a small period of time; among them Mr. Gregoris Maliotis, Dr, Yioula Kyriacou, Mr. Christos Kaniklides, Mrs. Maria Avraam.

Undeniably, this would not be accomplished without the support from the Board of Directors. Special thanks for his interest and commitment to its Chairman, Mr. Andreas Frangos.

Kalia Nicolaou

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Center for Research and Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CED)

What could we create from our pretty hands?

Greetings to everyone!

This Tet season at our beloved CED we have “a small start-up project” – we sell “handmade lucky money envelopes”. Those lucky money envelopes that you have seen were made totally by our pretty hands as we aim to raise fund for the organization and buying Tet gifts for students at CED. After many days studying in the drawing classes, now we have chances to show our drawing talent, earning money from our own products. Being able to do what we like and this is welcomed by others would be a joy, a great motivation for us to believe in our abilities that “We can do it.”



CED students were also created to participate in the community activities. Last January 17, 2021, CED students and members of HCMC Hard of Hearing Club join the Marathon “OI RUN: Run with People with Disabilities”. This is a city-level event, organized annually by HCMC Peace and Development Foundation in order to support people with disabilities participating in social activities and community integration. At the race, students joined the 5km marathon with a spirit of excitement and perseverance to reach the finish line. After completing the race, CED students were given the certificates and also joined the lucky draw activity with interesting gifts. CED students were also honoured to perform the sign language song “Living as Flowers”, spreading the love of life and the message of overcoming difficulties to others.



In the academic mission, Ms Phuong Hanh Duong, Director of CED, is invited to be as advisor for the research “The need for psychological consulting of children with disabilities from 12 to 17 years old in Ho Chi Minh city.” by the Institute of Southern Women.

CED is a place for internship for students of some universities. CED supported 5 students of Educational Psychology – Department of Education, University of Social Sciences and Humanities, coming to visit and doing internship on Special Education at the center. The students got practical knowledge from teaching and working with hard of hearing children. This supported them in course reporting as the Department of Education wishes their students to have practical experience at organizations such as CED.

This February, CED closes one month to welcome Lunar New Year and covid as well. Hope everything is good for us and for all of you – Hard of Hearing People.

Stay safe and healthy.

IVSS Churchear Letter



I never thought that it would hit me or that it could sidetrack me. However, a month ago I delivered a positive Covid-19 test, sending me straight into quarantine for a fortnight. The test was delivered the day before I was scheduled for my second vaccine round, and then I couldn't get that vaccine. I've been working since medio December at the hospital's emergency department, mainly with patient suffering from Covid. So you may ask whether I got infected from a positive patient or from a colleague (Some colleagues had already been side-tracked due to Covid positivity), or I may have got it when I've been to the shops.

Working at the Covid section was difficult for me: With our full “armour” with face masks, visors, head dressings – and of course protective gowns ... it was very difficult for me to hear, and above all to understand. Most colleagues there are unknown to me, meaning that I'm unfamiliar with their way of speaking. And those face masks make lip reading impossible. The visor frame is pressing the head dressing so tight, that I heard even less. Especially from foreign doctors I could hardly understand a single thing. After every day at work I was completely exhausted. I asked my superior to be transferred to another “normal” section, describing my situation. She showed understanding therefore. It could, however, not be executed that rapidly, and unfortunately there was at the beginning no one who was willing to change with me. If it should prove not possible I considered letting my ear doctor put me on a sick leave. Then I delivered that positive test.



The Public Health Service gave me a four pages long letter containing strict rules of behaviour. Thus I was forbidden to leave my house; I had to check my temperature twice every day; I had to inform the Public Health Service in case of any symptoms (fever, breathing problems, sore throat, coughs, runny nose, body aches ...). As far as possible I should have my meals separately from others living within the same household. I had to disinfect, disinfect, disinfect ...

Well, I have no others living in my household, so it wasn't so hard for me to comply with the rules. I was, actually, coughing only, and this is rather a side effect of a chronically running nose. I simply felt exhausted, exhausted, exhausted. Through the first couple of days I slept a lot, having probably a need to catch up; I even took an afternoon nap. After a fortnight I was quite excited before the next test. Positive! Well, still not leaving the house, keeping on checking the temperature, still looking out for symptoms, complying with the rules ... I was, however, no under

supervision from the Public Health Service any more, but from my general practitioner (having to inform her immediately in case of any symptoms). After another ten days I finally delivered a negative test, and I was “released”. In the meantime we had got a lot of snow and freezing cold temperatures. So I went out into the wonderful weather, enjoying the sun and the cold. A few days later I was out walking with my mother by minus 12 centigrade. She didn’t dare to go out alone. Oh, it was wonderful! – and doing

my own shopping at last. During the imposed holiday I had been dependent on others to have my shopping wishes fulfilled.



Since I was fine all the time I used the “free” time to get a lot of relaxation. When at work I needed and still need to recover. I therefore put various other things (like IVSS Churchear ...) aside for my days off. I used my quarantine days to catch up with a lot of things that had ended in the backwater, of course without pushing me. I couldn’t let it be stressful.

Since last week I’m back to work, not, however, at the emergency department, but in surgery, at „my own“ ward, where I know my colleagues and their way of talking; even with a face mask can I understand them. And they know my hearing impairment. Should there still be any hearing-understanding problems they briefly pull down the mask for me to see the mouth.

I am grateful that I was fine all through this time. I know that there are people for whom it was and still is much worse: They fought/fight for their lives; many survive/survived this disease, others did/do not. And I know that many people have had me in their thoughts, and above all in their prayers. Thank you!

Then a cheerful one: A few months ago a colleague told me: “Hard of hearing as you are you should really be omitted from wearing a face mask. It makes it impossible for you to lip read ...” I replied: “You are right, but I do have certain difficulties lip reading myself ...” A doctor hearing our conversation burst out laughing without being able to control herself. I’ve been working together with this my colleague for the last 30 years, even at my old ward, which was closed some ten years ago, meaning we know each other rather well.

Take care of yourself and stay safe!

Your Katharina Nitschke

Farewell EFHOH & Friends

After more than five years of volunteering for EFHOH and acting as the webmaster for the EFHOH website, I have decided that it is time for me to move on. I would like to thank Marcel Bobeldijk for bringing me aboard. It has been an honor to represent EFHOH at events and to witness the efforts of EFHOH in advocating for the rights of hard of hearing people. It has also been a pleasure to meet many of our members across Europe doing the same at the national level. I would like to thank all of you for being a remarkable set of people whom I have greatly enjoyed working with. Thanks to each of you and best wishes to all.

Bryan Bong

EDF Board Meeting

On Monday 8th we had EDF their Board Meeting online. The main outcomes of this meeting include:

- We have a new Board member: [Christian Blind Mission - CBM Italy](#)
 - We adopted 2 resolutions on [#COVID19](#)
 - We discussed the new [#EUDisabilityRights](#) Strategy
 - Some Human rights topics were discussed
 - Our Social Policy and Inclusion Committee defined the input it will give to the CRPD Committee's consultation
 - The Board learned about EDF's advocacy success on the use of EU funds
 - EU Presidencies updated
 - We highlighted our 2020 achievements
 - Our Youth Committee and Women's Committee reported on their work and achievements
- <https://www.edf-feph.org/outcomes-of-the-european.../>

Communication for Children with Hearing Impairment to optimize Language Development

Comm4CHILD is a European consortium implementing an innovative approach for optimising the communicative skills and social inclusion of children with hearing impairment. Comm4CHILD addresses the large inter-individual heterogeneity in brain plasticity, cognitive resources, and linguistic abilities, and takes full advantage of this heterogeneity to support efficient communicative skills in children with hearing impairment.



The consortium involves 9 full Beneficiaries and 10 Partner Organisations from 7 European countries: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom. A group of 15 early-stage researchers will be trained in research and intervention in a cross-sectoral way. They will become the “paediatric hearing care entrepreneurs” of the future, thanks to the collaborations between academic, industrial, clinical, and community-based partners.

The output of this unique consortium is expected to have an impact across all aspects of hearing impairment children's everyday life. Specifically, Comm4CHILD will provide a significantly improved understanding of communicative and social skills that will underpin the development of innovative future treatment and rehabilitation measures that these children need and deserve.

Meet the Comm4CHILD members and follow their projects on the website! <http://comm4child.ulb.be>

LTA Newsletter 2021: First video lectures on YouTube – Survey about Output Tools

Download a PDF file of the newsletter: [here](#).

Are you a professional real-time subtitler? Then you could help us by answering this **short questionnaire about Output Tools**:

<https://forms.gle/AHn84arN7KcXWPLi7>

Video lectures on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCW4Tp6hLEG8dty1KJTNMP0Q>

Please leave us your feedback there. We will also be happy to answer your questions.

Apply for the E-accessibility Scholarship

The European Disability Forum (EDF) and Oracle have launched the fifth edition of its scholarship for students with disabilities studying in the field of Computer Science, Computer Engineering, User Experience, or related fields enrolled at a EU university for the academic year 2020-2021.

Deadline for applications: 31st March 2021.

ORACLE



Read the [conditions and application process for the scholarship](#)

Calendar of country review by the CRPD Committee

The UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD Committee) published a tentative calendar of the upcoming review of the countries that ratified the Convention. [You can find download the full list here.](#)

Currently, the European countries foreseen for review are:

- March 2021: **Estonia** (Concluding observations)
- August 2021: **France** (Concluding observations)
- March/April 2022: **Italy** (List of Issues prior to reporting); **Norway** (List of Issues prior to reporting); **United Kingdom** (List of Issues prior to reporting)
- September 2022: **European Union** (List of Issues prior to reporting); **Portugal** (List of Issues Prior to Reporting)

You can contact Marine (marine.uldry@edf-feph.org) for more information.

Help approve Built Environment Accessibility Standard documents!

As you know, the [first European Standard on Accessibility and Usability of the Built Environment \(EN17210\) was approved](#) by national standardisation bodies and [made available](#) from January this year. You might also remember that the Standard comes with 2 Technical Reports (TRs):

- TR1: Accessibility and usability of the built environment - Technical performance criteria and specifications. This document gives examples of specific solutions for making different aspects of the built environment accessible. It shows examples but does not reject that other solutions for the same accessibility goal can be applied.

- TR2: Accessibility and usability of the built environment - Conformity assessment. This is a template that can be used to assess whether, for example, a building entrance is accessible according to the EN17210.

These TRs still need to be approved by NSBs, and they have **until 22 April** to do that. As the accessibility of the built environment is very important for persons with disabilities, we ask that as EDF members, you contact your [national standardisation body](#) and urge them to “Accept the document as a Technical Report”. Please note, **many countries might make decisions a lot sooner than the deadline. So, it’s important to contact your NSB as soon as you can.**

For more information, see this [brief update on the Standard](#). For questions, you can also write to [Mher](#) (EDF accessibility officer).

The European Parliament calls for a more ambitious implementation of the Employment Equality Directive in light of the UN CRPD

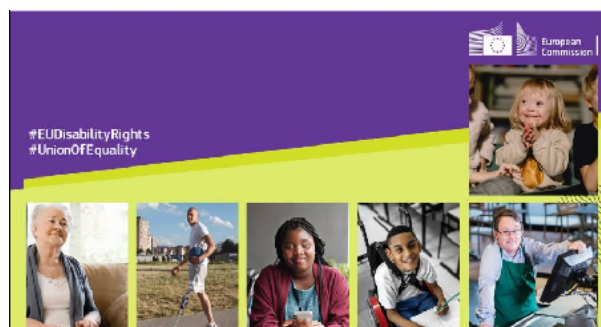
[During this week’s Plenary](#), MEP Katrin Langensiepen presented a [report taking stock of the implementation of Directive 2000/78/EC on equal treatment in employment in light of the UN CRPD](#). Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli participated in the debate about the report aiming at promoting equal opportunities within the labour market for persons with disabilities. The report was greatly supported by most political groups, and was adopted by 578 MEPs in favour, 65 against, and 51 abstentions.

[In a tweet](#) leading up to the Plenary debate, MEP Langensiepen, who is also a co-chair of the Disability Intergroup, stated, “We demand an end to exclusionary practices, alternatives to sheltered workshops, and strong diversity quotas.” Emphasising this further during her presentation, she asserted the essentiality to now include and protect persons with disabilities in the labour market, citing years of inaction to do so, despite of being bound by the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#).

Read the entire [article on the Employment and Equality Directive](#)

The new European Disability Rights Strategy is launched

Wednesday 10 March was a landmark day for the European disability movement. The European Commission published the Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030. This document outlines proposals and areas of work aiming at improving the living conditions of 100 million persons with disabilities through the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).



Find out more about [the European disability Rights Strategy and our reaction](#).

Workshop on European Standard on Accessibility of the Built Environment

On 22 March (10h-12h CET), there will be a workshop on the recently adopted [first](#)

[European Standard on accessibility and usability of the built environment](#), organised by UNE and Fundación ONCE, where EDF will present. You can find a bit more information in this [Agenda of the event, including the registration link](#). For questions about the workshop and registration, please contact: [Fernando MACHICADO](#), Secretary of CEN/CENELEC JTC 11 (M/420), Building and Accessibility Programme Manager.

FCEI International Conference set for 8-11 June 2022

The rescheduled FCEI International conference date is now set for 8-11 June 2022 in Bad Ischl, Austria. Online registration will begin in October 2021. For more information, please click this [link](#).

EFHOH at the next MEETINGS in 2021 & 2022

***Related COVID-19 are most of the meetings online.
Updated on March 2021.***

	2021	2021	2021	2021
2 March	Online	LTA project meeting	Aïda and/or Marcel	
3 March	Online	EP Lunch debate presentation WHO World Report	Morten and the other board	
8 March	Online	EDF board meeting	Marcel.	
10 March	Online	EFHOH board meeting	All board members	
16 March	Online	The Nordic Association of Hard of Hearing Meeting	Aïda and Marcel	
17 March	Online	EDF Workshop European Disability Rights	Alf + Marcel	
25 March	Online	WHO-IDDC Seminar on Accessibility of Telehealth Services	Darja	
Begin April	Online	ITU SG16 meeting	Alf	
6 April	Online	LTA project meeting	Aïda and/or Marcel	
April	Online	Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness	Aïda and Marcel	
12 April	Online	IFHOH board meeting	Marcel	
21 April	Online	EFHOH board meeting	All board members	
4 May	Online	LTA project meeting	Aïda and/or Marcel	
12 May	Online	EFHOH board meeting	All board members	

19 May	Online	EFHOH AGM 2021	All board members
1 June	Online	LTA project meeting	Aïda and/or Marcel
7 June	Online	IFHOH board meeting	EFHOH president
10 June	Online	EDF NGO meeting	Darja
28-30 June	Groningen	TIN ACT end conference	Marcel
2 July	Online	Unlimited!3 University of Antwerpen	Marcel
9 July	Online	LTA project meeting	Aïda and Marcel
9 August	Online	IFHOH board meeting	EFHOH president
15-17 September	Hannover Germany	EUHA congress and expo	One of the board
4 October	Online	IFHOH board meeting	EFHOH president
7 October	Online	EDF ENGO meeting	Darja
6 December	Online	IFHOH board meeting	EFHOH president
2022	2022	2022	2022
Spring	Budapest	EFHOH board meeting	EFHOH board
Spring	Budapest	EFHOH AGM	All board members
Spring	Budapest	IFHOH world congress 2022	All board members