



European Federation of Hard of Hearing People

# **ANNUAL REPORT**

# **2021**

## The mission of EFHOH

**The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People exists to represent hard of hearing people at European level in dialogue with the European Union, the members of the European Parliament, and other European authorities.**

**Our aim is a Europe where hard of hearing people can live without barriers and can participate on all levels in society. EFHOH will realize this vision through our actions, contacts and campaigns, involving the EFHOH members and our partners.**

### OVERVIEW of EFHOH ACTIVITIES DURING 2021

During the year 2021 EFHOH were able to move our positions substantially forward. We were represented at several conferences, to some of them invited as speakers.

Despite the ongoing pandemic, EFHOH and the partner organizations held annual event of EU Parliament Lunch Debate online on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, on the World Hearing Day. The event attracted around six hundred participants.

The Board members have been active, writing articles for external organisations and providing active feedback during different meetings and workshops. Norwegian association volunteers have also participated in a few events and shared their reports with us.

**See Annex II for the list of meetings in the year 2021.**

On the governance level the year 2021 saw changes at the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People with change of the presidency. The new President Lidia Best and Secretary Jennie Westh have been elected mid- year during the AGM held online on 19 May 2021. The new board continued with monthly meetings online.

We have also appointed Roar Raaken as our administration/ office support, the appointment was possible thanks to generous support from HLF, Norwegian Association of Hard of Hearing People, who "loaned" Roar time to EFHOH.

EFHOH board has been proactive in approaching decision makers to raise awareness of the issues that affect hard of hearing people.

In July, we have written to Commissioner for Health Stella Kyriakides, with request to include people who are hard of hearing in their need to access information and access to healthcare, as part of EU wide policy on Health, see Rehabilitation section for more details.

In October we published Joint Statement on Inclusive Education <https://efhoh.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Joint-Statement-Roundtable-on-Inclusive-Education.pdf>. We also worked with Hearing Health Forum and their partners, planning campaign around hearing health and mental health issues.

We have supported EDF and Estonian Member with the statement following the European Court of Justice judgment on discrimination of hard of hearing employee in Estonia [https://www.edf-feph.org/court-of-justice-of-the-european-union-stands-against-disability-based-discrimination-at-work-in-estonia/?fbclid=IwAR3VXuYiMI\\_7kzIEozVwISgwdMPoiA8zwt60wI5ogGI86OkPBKsVmqnHCmU](https://www.edf-feph.org/court-of-justice-of-the-european-union-stands-against-disability-based-discrimination-at-work-in-estonia/?fbclid=IwAR3VXuYiMI_7kzIEozVwISgwdMPoiA8zwt60wI5ogGI86OkPBKsVmqnHCmU).

We have ended the year 2021 with EFHOH joining the European Commission High Level Unit – The Disability Platform, bringing hard of hearing people issues to the heart of the EU Commission and Member States. Our President is participating in the work of the Platform. For more information, please check the link <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupId=3820&fromMembers=true&memberType=4&memberId=97587>

## CAPACITY BUILDING

The Board has recognized that EFHOH strength is in strong membership and has started new capacity building and membership empowerment program.

The Board has started preparations for setting up Experts Advisory Groups with development of strategy and Terms of Reference.

New online meetings called "Members Hour" allow for interactions between that Board and members, in 2021 we held 2 members only meetings.

To strengthen our outreach and to build the capacity around accessibility, EFHOH collaborates with G3ict by joining DARE Academy Advisory Board, where our President participate in the meetings. We are pleased to see first hard of hearing recipients from EFHOH membership receiving scholarship to complete study and examination from International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP) to be Certified Professional in Accessibility Core Competencies (CPACC).

The Board is also working with the International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People ( IFHOHYP), exploring ways to work together towards increased capacity and involving young advocates in work of EFHOH. As part of strengthening ties and capacity building, Lidia Best participated in the International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People ( IFHOHYP) Study Session by providing training on UNCRPD and Lobbying.

## WEBINARS

- EFHOH/AEA/EHIMA Virtual Lunch Debate 3<sup>rd</sup> March
- EFHOH Members Hour. 9<sup>th</sup> September
- EFHOH/ HLF CI-Webinar 20<sup>th</sup> October
- EFHOH Members Hour. 26<sup>th</sup> of November

## REHABILITATION

**Access to healthcare.** In July, the President has written a letter was to the Commissioner for Health Stella Kyriakides and Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli. The letter highlighted our concerns related to access to hearing health and general lack of accessibility planning to include effective communication with hard of hearing people in healthcare settings. The Commissioner Kyriakides responded positively and will take our recommendations in her policy work.( see Annex III to see the copy)

**State of Hearing Aids Reimbursement.** The Board has started the survey stage of the second edition of the review of hearing aids reimbursement in Europe. We work with AEA on this topic.

**Over the Counter Hearing Aids.** The President signed a joint comment with the ITU and AEA to US FDA expressing safety concerns based on WHO-ITU recommendation of safety of Personal Sound Amplifiers. EFHOH has been directly involved in the development of those recommendations, current FDA proposals significantly exceed the recommended safety levels. You can view the comment of FDA website

<https://www.regulations.gov/comment/FDA-2021-N-0555-0451>

**Webinar on CI and Rehabilitation** Our Norwegian Member, HLF, has organised the first EFHOH webinar , with topic of Cochlear Implants in Adults. The webinar has taken place on 29 September, we will continue with developing further webinars.

**HLAA** (Hearing Loss Associations of America) organised Externally Led Patient-Focused Drug Development Meeting for People and Families Living with Sensorineural Hearing Loss. EFHOH was invited to present European perspectives with Darja Pajk participating. . Voice of the Patient Report: Living with Sensorineural Hearing Loss in available <https://www.hearingloss.org/wp-content/uploads/hlaa-vop-report.pdf> an here <https://www.hearingloss.org/hlaa-pfdd/>

## ACCESSIBILITY

**AVMSD.** Transposition of AVMSD remains a concern for EFHOH and particularly adapting Article 7 into national laws. This year, the Board was approached by our Czech Republic Members requesting written support. The Board has written a letter with recommendations on transposition of AVMSD and collaborated further with the EDF team working in this area. We continue monitoring the situation.

Lidia Best was invited to participate and contribute to the Panel Session on Accessibility of Audiovisual Media Services. The panel took place during the Conference on Availability of European Audiovisual and Media Content and Competitiveness of the Audiovisual industry, organised by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia under the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The session had speech to text in Slovenian and English language.

**EAA** is another area of focus, Lidia Best and Alf Lindberg participate in workgroup meetings related to the Directive, the workgroup is run by the EDF.

**Access to Health.** Accessibility of healthcare services, particularly during COVID-19 pandemic is an ongoing concern, EFHOH has been raising those concerns with EDF and directly with the Commission. See copy of the letter in Annex III.

**Disability Card.** The Disability Card is another area where EFHOH has been involved, in 2021 we surveyed those members who participated in the pilot on Disability Card. We will continue to consult EFHOH membership on how the Disability Card should include hard of hearing citizens.

## PROJECTS

EFHOH has been partner to two projects which have concluded in 2021.

**LTA** – At the end of the project LTA published certified curriculum for real-time intralingual respeakers and velotypists, enabling European subtitlers to receive training and certification. For more information, please check their website <https://ltaproject.eu>.

**TIN-ACT**- The aim of this project was to understand the basic neural mechanisms of tinnitus, and to find ways to measure and treat tinnitus. More information can be found in their website [www.tinact.eu](http://www.tinact.eu)

We are currently involved in two new projects in advisory capacity:

**COM4Child** – Comm4CHILD is a consortium implementing an innovative approach for optimising the communicative skills and social inclusion of children with hearing impairment. Aida Regel -Poulsen participate on behalf of EFHOH See their website at <https://comm4child.ulb.be/>

**SOUNDS** – SOUNDS (Service-Oriented, Ubiquitous, Network-Driven Sound) is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions European Training Network with 15 PhD-students. One of the four research areas aims at using network-enabled cooperation between devices to provide enhanced hearing assistance. Alf Lindberg and Aida Regel -Poulsen participate on behalf of EFHOH. Website: <https://www.sounds-etn.eu>

## ORGANISATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

### **G3ict/ DARE – Digital Accessibility Rights Education Council**

EFHOH, has partnered with the Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs and it's DARE Academy to advance hard of hearing community knowledge and capacity in the digital accessibility. EFHOH has long standing collaboration with G3ict as Lidia Best is a member of the delegation to ITU representing EFHOH. For more information about the program, please visit [https://g3ict.org/dare\\_academy/about-the-dare-academy](https://g3ict.org/dare_academy/about-the-dare-academy)

### **EDF**

EFHOH has full membership as a European Non-Governmental organization (NGO) in the European Disability Forum – EDF with the right to representation in the Annual General Assembly.

Our Board members participate in EDF expert workgroups and provide regular feedback related to hard of hearing people specific accessibility needs. We have also provided detailed feedback on Alternative Report to UNCRPD which EDF has been working on.

EFHOH is also actively participating in the preparations towards the European Disability Summit .

As usual EFHOH was represented at the annual policy conference to mark the European Day of People with Disabilities (EDPD). The conference was hosted by the European Commission (EC) in close co-operation with the European Disability Forum (EDF). This year the Conference was once again held online.

EDF Youth Committee: EFHOH is represented by Victor Rehn.  
More about EDF at [www.edf-feph.org](http://www.edf-feph.org).

**World Hearing Forum( WHF)** – EFHOH is a member of the WHF. The World Hearing Forum (2018-2025) is filling a critical gap by bringing a collective vision to advocacy and collaboration in this field. Through networking and by sharing knowledge, skills and experiences from the field, the World Hearing Forum is galvanizing action towards a world in which no person experiences hearing loss due to preventable causes and those with hearing loss can achieve their full potential through early identification and appropriate management of their condition.

More information can be found here <https://www.who.int/activities/promoting-world-hearing-forum>

EFHOH participate in the Make Listening Safe Workgroup and our President, Lidia Best is a member of the Core Team within WHF.

### **ITU**

EFHOH is represented by our President, Lidia Best at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Lidia is also working at ITU in her individual capacity as a vice chairman of the ITU Joint Coordinating Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF).

During year 2021, most of the work has been around developing guidance on remote participation and accessible telehealth lead by WHO.

### **EBU**

EFHOH continues good contacts with the European Broadcasting Union and provided feedback on the EBU HbbTV report.

### **CIICA**

EFHOH is a founding member of CI International Community of Action (CIICA): Darja Pajk, participates in the meetings of the Steering Group. Darja was invited to present at the CIICA webinars emphasis on the importance of cooperation between the professionals and the users of CI. The Steering Group had several meetings in 2021 where webinars, CIICA LIVE events, were planned that were very well attended from countries across the globe.

EFHOH's cooperation with the CIICA is important, as it is a consortium of advocates and professionals from forty-seven countries, enabling access to resources and to share lobbying experiences. EFHOH contributes with the users the experience, so we can make an important contribution to a quality of life for people with hearing loss. And that is also the goal of CIICA - to connect people and encourage them to be active themselves for lifelong services for those with CI.

### **Hear-It**

Hear-It held their General Assembly online on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The topic discussed were continued outreach during pandemic and increased language translations of the website. For more information, please check their website <https://www.hear-it.org/>

### **AEA/ EHIMA/ EFHOH Partnership**

In the year 2021, we have continued our partnership with both AEA and EHIMA. We have organised joint EU Lunch Debate and meet regularly. EHIMA is providing us with policy updates enable partners to stay up to date. Together with AEA and EHIMA, we have organised World Hearing Day Lunch Debate on 3<sup>rd</sup> March.

We continue with cooperation on diverse topics, which are relevant to improve access to hearing healthcare for hard of hearing ng people in EU.

### **Hearing Health Forum**

Working together with Hearing Health on new campaign on wellbeing, mental health, and hearing loss, see the website for more information <https://www.hearinghealth.eu/>

### **European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness**

The Platform has met online during the year 2021. Members exchanged news of their work and research.

### **IFHOH.**

EFHOH has close co-operation with the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People, IFHOH. The president of EFHOH is a permanent member of the IFHOH board.

More information about IFHOH at the website: [www.ifhoh.org](http://www.ifhoh.org)

### **IFHOHYP.**

The International Federation of the Hard of Hearing Young People held their AGM online on 30-31 January. We have supported IFHOHYP Study Session with training on UNCRPD and Lobbying and continue exploring the best ways our organizations can join forces in bringing hard of hearing people specific needs at EU level.

More information about IFHOHYP at the website [www.ifhohyp.org](http://www.ifhohyp.org)

## **FUNDRAISING**

Roar Raaken and Lidia Best have been working closely on preparing EU grants applications. Regular communications with Treasurer, Darja Pajk also take place.

1. Applied for funding from Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme (CERV) which is an operational grant supporting European Associations of Persons with Disabilities run every 4 years. Should EFHOH be selected, we will be able to deliver empowerment and capacity building of existing and prospective members
2. Joined preparations with partner consortium related to Horizon 2020 program, the consortium is dedicated to improving hearing healthcare.

The outcomes of those actions are not yet known at the time of writing the report.

## FINANCIAL REPORT

EFHOH Treasurer, Darja Pajk provides support and advice to the board. Darja also works closely with the President and auditor, Petra Feinkohl. Please find the short financial report below.

This EFHOH report gives an overview of the financial situation of the year 2021.

EFHOH has made a positive financial result.

The balances of our bank accounts in ABN AMRO Bank in Netherlands and cash account were:

	EFHOH + LTA	EFHOH	Project LTA
Current account 40.21.25.576	7.031,08 €		
Savings account 40.21.30.642	40.171,85 €		
<b>Assets in the year 2021</b>	<b>47.202,93 €</b>	<b>29.974,86 €</b>	<b>17,228,07 €</b>

**See detailed information in the Financial Report document**

## EFHOH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

EFHOH AGM was held online on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2021 with 17 General Members participating.

### Elections

The results of the elections are as followed:

The President: Lidia Best, United Kingdom

The General Secretary: Jennie Westh, Denmark

The Treasurer: Darja Pajk, Slovenia

The election of the Nomination Committee 2021 was carried out with Berit Brodby appointed a Chair on Nominating Committee

Petra Feinkohl, from Germany was again appointed to the office of Auditor.

**See AGM 2021 Minutes Report document for detailed record.**

## MEMBERS, THE BOARD AND OFFICE

### Members

EFHOH consists of 25 general members, 3 associate members, and 4 supporting members; we also have 3 individual members. In addition to the members, EFHOH has contact persons from countries where a hard of hearing organization has not yet been fully established.

In year 2021, EFHOH has welcomed 2 new General Members from Poland and Portugal, PFOS and OUVIR as well as Associate Member- Kultura bez Barrier also from Poland

### The Board

The following persons were members of the board in the year 2021:

President: Marcel Bobeldijk, the Netherlands (2019- 2021)

President: Lidia Best, UK (2021- 2023)

Vice-president: Morten Buoan, Norway 2020- 2022)

General Secretary: Aida Regel Poulsen, Denmark (2019-2021)

General Secretary: Jennie Westh (2021- 2023))

Treasurer: Darja Pajk (2021- 2023))

Member: Alf Lindberg ( 2020-2022) Sweden

**Board Meetings**

15<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2021  
 13 October 2021  
 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021  
 29<sup>th</sup> June 2021  
 9<sup>th</sup> June 2021  
 11 May 2021  
 21 April 2021  
 11 March 2021  
 10 Feb. 2021  
 10 Jan. 2021

**Office**

The Board has appointed Roar Raaken as an Office Manager, with the long-term goal of establishing fully functional office. The appointment was possible thanks to cooperation with Norwegian Hard of Hearing Association (HLF). Following Roar's appointment, regular meetings, often fortnightly are taking place around day-to-day management.

**EFHOH MEDIA AND INFORMATION****Newsletter**

Three issues of the Newsletter were published in 2021 with the support of the Editors Ece Saygi and Alper Coscun. The Newsletter remains the best source for reports and information of events and advocacy work.

**Website**

EFHOH has welcomed new webmaster Yannis Yallouros, who has taken over after Brian Borg stepped down from the role.

**Facebook:**

EFHOH has a Facebook group where we keep our members and friends of EFHOH updated on our activities. We plan to increase the outreach by setting up an official Facebook page, which will increase our social media presence.

**Twitter**

EFHOH also has a Twitter account which we keep maintained. You can follow us @EFHOH

**FINAL WORDS**

Finally, the board members want to thank everyone; individual persons, member organizations, co-operating organizations and, finally, the sponsors who in different ways have given support to EFHOH in the work to make a create a barrier-free Europe for all hard of hearing citizens during 2021.

Together, we are stronger!

**EFHOH Board****January 2022***Lidia Best**Morten Buonan**Darja Pajk**Alf Lindberg**Jennie Westh*



## ANNEXES

## Annex I

**GENERAL MEMBERS (25)  
2021**

as per 31 December

**General Members**

Austria	Österreichischer Schwerhörigenbund
Belgium	Vereniging voor Hardhorenden "Onder Ons"
Belgium	Hörgeschädigte Ostbelgiens VoG
Croatia	Hrvatski savez gluhih i nagluhih – HSGN
Czech Republic	Svaz neslyšících a Nedslyšavých v CR
Czech Republic	Ceskomoravská unie neslyšících z.s.
Denmark	Høreforeningen
Estonia	Eesti Vaegkuuljate Liit
Finland	Kuuloliitto r.y.
Finland Svenska	Hörsselförbundet rf.
France	Bureau de Coordination des Ass. de Devenus Sourds et Malentendants- BUCODES
Germany	Deutscher Schwerhörigen Bund e.V. – DSB
Greece	Hellenic Federation of the Deaf – HFD
Hungary	Siketek es Nagyothallok Országos Szövetsége – SINOSZ
Iceland	Heyrnarhjálp
Netherlands	Stichting Hoormij
Netherlands	Stichting Plotsdoven
Norway	Hørselhemmedes Landsforbund
Poland	Polska Fundacja Osob Slaboslyszacych – PFOS
Portugal	Associação Portuguesa de Portadores de Próteses e Implantes Auditivos -OUVIR
Slovenia	Zveza društev gluhih in naglušnih Slovenije
Sweden	Hörselskadades Riksförbund – HRF
Switzerland	Pro audito schweiz
Switzerland	FoRom Ecoute
United Kingdom	National Association of Deafened People – NADP

**Associate Members (3)**

Georgia	Aures Foundation ფონდი აურეს
Germany	IVSS-Churchear
Poland	Kultura bez barier

**Sponsoring Members (4)**

Amplifon	Italy
Bernafon AG	Switzerland
Cochlear	Australia
GN Resound.	Denmark

**INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS (3)**

Freda Keenan -	Ireland
Emma McAuley -	Ireland
Kalia Nicolao -	Cyprus

## ANNEX II


**TABLE OF ALL MEETINGS**

During the year EFHOH representatives attended several online meetings. A full table of all these and other meetings is found below showing the range of our advocacy work on high European level.

2021	2021	2021	2021
30 -31 January	Online	IFHOHYP AGM	Darja
2 March	Online	LTA project meeting	Aida /Marcel
3 March	Online	EP Lunch debate presentation WHO World Report	All board
8 March	Online	EDF board meeting	Marcel.
16 March	Online	The Nordic Association of Hard of Hearing Meeting	Aida / Marcel
17 March	Online	EDF Workshop on EU Disability Rights	Alf/ Marcel
25 March	Online	WHO-IDDC Seminar on Accessibility of Telehealth Services	Darja
April	Online	ITU SG16 meeting	Alf
6 April	Online	LTA project meeting	Marcel/Aida
April	Online	Platform on Deafness, HoH and Deafblindness	Marcel/Aida
12 April	Online	IFHOH board meeting	Marcel
4 May	Online	LTA project meeting	Aida and/or Marcel
19 May	Online	EFHOH AGM 2021	All board
19 May	Online	World Hearing Forum members update meeting	Darja
25 May	Online	HLAA Hearing Loss PFDD meeting	Darja
1 June	Online	LTA project meeting	Marcel/Aida
1 June	Online	EU Disability Strategy 2021-2030 Public Hearing	One of the EFHOH board members
8 June	Online	Roundtable discussion on Inclusive Education	Lidia
10 June	Online	EDF NGO meeting	Darja
14 June	Online	IFHOH board meeting	Lidia
22 June	Online	Triangle Meeting	Lidia
28-29 June	Online	ITU meetings on e-Health standardisation	Lidia
9 August	Online	IFHOH board meeting	Lidia
16 September	Online	EU Disability card conference	Darja
21 September	Online	WHO- Safe listening in entertainment venues	Lidia
22 September	Online	Cochlear and Malala Fund conference	Lidia
29 September	Online	Hear-It AGM	Lidia
29 September	Online	CIICA LIVE CI funding: Challenges and Priorities	Darja
4 October	Online	IFHOH board meeting	Lidia
7 October	Online	EDF ENGO meeting	Darja
13 October	Online	Accessibility of Audiovisual Media Services	Lidia
20 October	Online	EFHOH CI Webinar	All
20 October	Online	FIRST CIICA CONVERSATION: The impact of the pandemic on CI services	Darja
20 October	Online	Accessible emergency services, panel during European week of Healthy Aging	Alf
29 November	Online	CIICA LIVE I: Adult Rehabilitation	Darja
2-3 December	Online	EU Day of PwD	Darja / Alf
6 December	Online	IFHOH board meeting	Lidia
7 December	Online	DARE Advisory Council meeting	Lidia
7 December	Online	Make Listening Safe ITU meeting	Lidia
10 December	Aalborg, DK	SOUNDS advisory board	Aida, Alf
14-15 December	Online	WHO World Hearing Forum Core Team meetings	Lidia

## ANNEX III

### Copy of the letter sent to Commissioner for Health, Stella Kyriakides

To: EU Commissioner for Health  
Stella Kyriakides

Copy: Commissioner for Equality  
Helena Dalli

Oslo, 1 July 2021

#### RE: Access to Healthcare and Rehabilitation for Hard of Hearing People

**European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) ask the European Commission to remind the EU Member States of their obligation towards equal access to health for hard of hearing and deafened citizens. EU member states must comply with UNCRPD Article 25, to give the right of persons with disabilities to attain highest standard of healthcare without discrimination, including hard of hearing and deafened people.**

In the light of ongoing global pandemic, we wish to remind that responses to this outbreak must be inclusive to all members of the public, persons with disabilities and include people who are hard of hearing in their need to access information and access to healthcare, which is a fundamental right of every citizen.

In the ongoing pandemic, like other persons with disabilities, hard of hearing people have experienced systemic failures in ability to access healthcare services on equitable level with their peers. Those failures have increased hard of hearing people difficulties to gain basic access to communication both in face-to-face meetings, made difficult by masks wearing and remote telehealth with difficulties to understand conversations over the telephone or inaccessible videocalls.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) with their [report](#)<sup>1</sup> on disability and health is pointing out that many medical professionals have limited understanding of disability, and what it takes to include people with disabilities in their treatment, including persons who are hard of hearing.

In Europe, The WHO estimates in its [World Report on Hearing](#) that in the WHO region of Europe 196 million people have some degree of hearing loss and that 57.3 million or 6.2% have a disabling hearing loss. The disabling hearing loss significantly affects their daily life leading to social isolation and loss of employment and education opportunities as reported in [Bridget Shields Report](#). Hard of hearing people require rehabilitation and accessibility measures, hearing aids and assistive technologies to achieve their full potential and independent life.

Hard of hearing people are a diverse and growing group, primarily relying on access to sound with hearing assistive technologies and captioning for effective communication. Despite increasing number of people being affected by hearing loss, there is still an exceptionally low awareness of hearing loss among healthcare professionals.

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**Call for better integration of hearing loss awareness in healthcare systems and the rehabilitation services .**

**.The European member states should:**

- Ensure hard of hearing patients have access to hearing care and rehabilitation services to allow them continue full and independent lives.
- Develop tools for inclusive healthcare services based on good practice and recommendations in cooperations with organisations and experts representing hard of hearing and deafened people.
- Include the organisations of hard of hearing people in different areas of planning healthcare services with aim to improve effective communication between patient and healthcare provider leading to better quality of the treatment.
- Highlight the importance of effective communication between the medical professionals and the patients with hearing loss in specific. Include disability awareness in the curriculum for medical professionals so they are able to understand disability in general and hard of hearing people in specific, and what measures need to be taken to include people with disabilities in their treatment.
- Provide hard of hearing patients with clear and accessible information about different rehabilitation services allowing for informed decision making. Provide access to assistive listening devices and text-based information during healthcare appointments when required.
- When recommending use of telehealth, provide alternative and accessible means of consultation, such as use of text messaging, secure web portals, video conferencing with live text and emails to ensure access to healthcare and services.

Your support in improving inclusive healthcare for hard of hearing and deafened citizens is appreciated. Please do not hesitate us if you would like further information or wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

**Lidia Best, CPACC**

**President – EFHOH**

**About EFHOH:** The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People represents interest of fifty-seven millions of hard of hearing people in Europe. Our aim is a Europe where hard of hearing people can live without barriers and participate at all levels of society. Our members are national organisations for hard of hearing and deafened people.

## Annex IV

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### EFHOH facts and history

EFHOH is a benevolent federation of the European national organizations of hard of hearing people. The organization was registered in the Register of Commerce of Utrecht, the Netherlands, on the 17 September 1993.

Its mission is to empower hard of hearing community in Europe, promote accessible communication, accessibility and access to hearing care for European citizens.

### Contact information

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