



ANNUAL REPORT

2022

***Europe without barriers for Hard of
Hearing People***

Executive Summary

Dear Members

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. We realize this vision through actions and campaigns, involving members, our partners and supporters.

During the year 2022 the EFHOH Board and its volunteers focused on increased visibility, partnerships and strategies towards a more structured organization model. The Board members have been active, writing articles for external organizations and providing active feedback during different meetings and workshops.

On the governance level the year 2022 saw a change of personnel: Jenny Westh resigned her post as General Secretary and Claire Sabler Landesmann agreed to step in as interim General secretary until the voting cycle in the Spring of 2023, during the next AGM. We have established volunteers team supporting us on social media and with webinars.

Despite the continuing threat of the pandemic and the invasion and war in Ukraine, EFHOH board members participated in face to face and online meetings, conferences and workshops throughout the year all with the motivation to support European Persons with Hearing loss and further awareness on all levels of governance and society. **See Annex II for the list of meetings in the year 2022.**

Our 2022 highlights are:

- Signing off the agreement for EFHOH project EHOHC. Operational grant supporting European Associations of Persons with Disabilities.
- Welcomed 2 new General Members HOYR and SUITA
- EU Parliament Lunch Debate online on 3rd March.
- Position Statement - Over the Counter Hearing Aids (OTC-HA)
- Report and webinar on Hearing Aids Reimbursement in Europe
- Statement against the horrific act of invasion of Ukraine and activated a drive to support Hard of Hearing Ukrainians with hearing aids batteries
- Our nominated candidates winning the elections to European Disability Forum Board and Youth/ Women committees.
- Membership the EUROPEAN DISABILITY PLATFORM – European Commission. Providing direct input in the workplan, employment , disability card and accessibility flagship initiatives
- Study Session with International Federation of Hard of Hearing People and Council of Europe in Budapest
- IFHOH Congress and EFHOH Members Meeting in Budapest
- Strong representation at the European Day of Persons with Disabilities event in Brussels

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 developed and held two online meetings to introduce Experts Advisory Groups with development of strategy and Terms of Reference. The advisors are volunteering their time to support EFHOH work. We welcomed 2 new membership organizations: SUITA (Poland) and HOYR (Faro Island).

We have supported IFHOHYP Study Session with training on Advocacy and continue exploring the best ways our organizations can join forces in bringing hard of hearing people voices to EU level, such as inviting Youth representatives to attend European Day of Persons with Disabilities. Also on the EU level collaboration, we are pleased to increase our representation at EDF with representatives to its board and Committees.

WEBINARS

EFHOH held 2 webinars during 2022.

Lunch Debate on 3rd March in collaboration with EURO CIU, EHIMA and AEA. Lidia Best presented on behalf of EFHOH. The topic of the lunch debate was on Safe Listening. This was also this years WHO initiative on World Hearing day.

Webinar to launch the Hearing Aids Reimbursement on 6th December with speakers from World Health Organization–Europe Office, AEA and our members sharing the impact of national reimbursements variations on the users. The report can be found here <https://efhoh.org/hearing-reimbursement-report/>

REHABILITATION

Lidia Best and Darja Pajk presented in the HEALs Conference in Cernobbio, Italy. The EFHOH team worked with organisers to ensure the users experience session to be accessible to participants through remote captioning.

EFHOH President contributed to ENT & Audiology News | Opinion piece on OTC
- <https://www.entandaudiologynews.com/features/audiology-features/post/otc-hearing-aids-where-are-we-now>

We have published a position Statement on the emergence of Over the Counter Hearing Aids.
<https://www.efhoh.org/over-the-counter-hearing-aids-efhoh-statement/>

Contributed to CIICA feedback on rehabilitation of CI users

Collaborated with UCL and their partners on importance of research work involving users from the beginning, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aXnTlyyimik>

Supported Hearing Health Forum new campaign on wellbeing, mental health, and hearing loss on Twitter.

ACCESSIBILITY

EFHOH has been active in the continuing work regarding the review of the Web Accessibility Directive, WAD.

As a member of AccessibleEU sub- group of the EU Disability Platform, we provide direct input in the developing policies together with all stakeholders.

We participated in the development of the ITU- WHO Consultation on accessible health, Supporting development of Global Standard for Accessibility of Telehealth Services

<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240050464es>

PROJECTS

EFHOH representatives are currently involved in the following projects:

ARISE .The ARISE project is a European Commission funded research project co-led by the Assisting Living and Learning Institute at Maynooth University and the European Disability Forum. The aim of the project is to develop a framework which countries can use to develop assistive technology policies that are both inclusive, and resilient to change. Lidia Best represents EFHOH in the Advisory Board.

G3ict/ DARE SCHOLARSHIP from Digital Accessibility Rights Education Council. The DARE Academy Scholarship Fund is G3ict's pilot program dedicated to opening new potentials for persons with disabilities who are interested in and passionate about advocating for digital accessibility and to get certified as professionals in the field. Lidia Best is a member of the Advisory Board.

SOUNDS (Service-Oriented, Ubiquitous, Network-Driven Sound) is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions European Training Network. One aim is to exploit network-enabled cooperation between devices, which can be used for enhanced hearing assistance. Alf Lindberg is on the advisory board

COM4Child arranged a workshop in May 2022 for the 15 PhD students who presented their work. Aida Regel Poulsen, representing EFHOH, delivered a lecture around audiological treatment and language development for children with hearing loss. She had a special focus on the use of hearing technology equipment.

ORGANISATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

EFHOH representatives has been very active throughout the year in a number of organizations.:

European Disability Platform EDP), European Disability Forum (EDF), WHO, World Hearing Forum (WHF), International Telecommunication Union (ITU) ,CIICA, European Broadcasting Union (EBU) ,Hear-It, AEA/ EHIMA/ EFHOH, European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness, IFHOH, IFHOHYP.

EUROPEAN DISABILITY PLATFORM – European Commission

The Platform meets 3 times a year for all day meetings in addition to shorter sub-groups meetings. Lidia Best and Roar Raaken participate in the sub-group on Employment and Accessibility EU providing direct comments and inputs.

Members of the Platform are also working on the yearly workplans and joined events planning.

<https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupId=3820&fromMembers=true&memberType=4&memberId=97587>

European Disability Forum

Members of the Board contribute and participate in many activities organised by the staff at EDF, mainly providing input into policy work.

We are pleased our nominees have been selected to serve at the Board (Marcel Bobeldijk) , Women Committee (Karina Chupina) and Youth Committee (Jonathan Elebjörk Wahlström)

WHO and World Hearing Forum(WHF) – WHO is a specialized UN Agency in charge of Health. President, Lidia Best is a member of the Core Working Group, contributing to the work of the WHF. We have started closer cooperation with Europe Office and representative of WHO-Europe participated in the launch event for EFHOH Hearing Aids Reimbursement in Europe.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

ITU is a specialized UN Agency in charge of Standardisation and Telecommunication.

Lidia Best represents us at the ITU and shares the input related to hard of hearing people needs at relevant working groups and intergroups. We were invited to present at WSIS and Accessible Europe events.

AEA/ EHIMA/ EFHOH The organisations continued collaborative work in 2022, notably with AEA supporting research on HA Reimbursement and co-organising EU Lunch Debate on the occasion of the World Hearing Day.

European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness

The Platform has reunited for the first time since pandemic with face to face meeting during European Day of Persons with Disabilities in Brussels .Currently, members of the Platform are reviewing the next steps.

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.

EFHOH President contributed to new ear and hearing advocacy guidance

https://www.ifhoh.org/files/ugd/4e728a_447a3b6632ed498cb13e951a3ee8a5ff.pdf?index=true More information about IFHOH at the website: www.ifhoh.org

EFHOH is represented in the International Hearing Access Committee, IHAC, which during 2022 has given input in the process of developing the new Bluetooth Auracast and how it can be introduced in parallel with the ongoing use of induction loops. Board member Alf Lindberg represents EFHOH.

IFHOHYP.

EFHOH has continued close cooperation with IFHOHYP by working together on ERASMUS project application, collaboration on content for social media and supporting IFHOHYP-Council of Europe Study Session. In 2022, we supported Advocacy Session in Budapest. More information about IFHOHYP at the website www.ifhohyp.org

CIICA

EFHOH continued participating in CIICA with Darja Pajk attending monthly meetings held in the CIICA steering group regarding agreements on the operation and organization of various discussion groups. At the end of the year, CIICA began to transform itself into an organization. . <https://ciicanet.org/>

We were active in providing feedback to "**Living guidelines CI project**" . The project aims to create living practice guidelines that can be adapted and adopted in the country, to optimise the care for adults eligible for CI. The work was organized online through a platform.

More <https://adulthearing.com/living-guidelines/>

FUNDRAISING

EFHOH welcomed a new Gold Sponsor MEDEL , joining our existing sponsors: Amplifon, and Cochlear. We welcome our Sponsors commitment to supporting EFHOH work.

Funding for EFHOH project from Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Program (CERV) which is 4 year operational grant supporting European Associations of Persons with Disabilities has been now signed off.

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 2022. EFHOH has made a positive financial result. The balances of our bank accounts in ABN AMRO Bank in Netherlands and cash account were:

Current account	16.370,30 €
40.21.25.576	
Savings account	
40.21.30.642	40.180,16 €
Assets in the year 2022	56.550,46 €

23 General Members, 1 Associate Member, 3 Gold Sponsors, 3 Individual Members – total 30, have paid membership fees and sponsorship fees in the year 2022. 2 Associate Members did not pay their obligations in the year 2021 and 2022. NOTE; New members do not pay membership fee in the first 12 months of their membership. **See detailed information in the Financial Report document for more information**

EFHOH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)

The quorum was established with 17 GM and IFHOHYP, IFHOH attending the AGM with total of 37 votes. In addition to 17 delegates, 13 observers attended..

Elections:

Morten Buan (Norway), was re-elected as vice-president and Alf Lindberg (Sweden) was re-elected as board member for 2023-2025.

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 detailed information in the AGM Minutes document

MEMBERS MEETING

The second EFHOH Members Meeting was held in Budapest as part of the IFHOH Conference and AGM. EFHOH board finds those meetings present an opportunity for a closer, consistent interaction and enables EFHOH to form a strong support for all its members. EFHOH activities were presented; draft publication of the Hearing Aid reimbursement, statement on OTC-HA, Ukraine response, the EU Disability Platform, and representation in the European Disability Forum. Delegates unanimously supported the OTC- HA position statement issued by the Board.

Members were invited to present their own organizations and current topics they focus on nationally. The meeting discussions have contributed to further the Board action plan and strategy in coming years.

See detailed information in the Members Meeting Minutes document

MEMBERS, THE BOARD AND OFFICE

Members

EFHOH consists of 26 general members, 3 associate 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 2022, EFHOH has welcomed HOYR (Faroe Island) and SUITA (Poland) as General Members.

The Board

The following persons were members of the board in the year 2022:

President: Lidia Best, UK (2021- 2023)

Vice-president: Morten Buoan, Norway 2020- 2024)

General Secretary: Jennie Westh Denmark (2021- 2022)

General Interim Secretary: Claire Sabler Landesmann, Austria (2022-2023)

Treasurer: Darja Pajk Slovenia (2021- 2023)

Member: Alf Lindberg (2020-2024) Sweden

Board Meetings

6 Jan.2022

4 Feb.2022

17 March.2022

7 April 2022

16.May 2022

8. June 2022

1.Sept. 2022

Nov. 5-6.2022 (Oslo)

Office

Since 2021, EFHOH has established a remote office cooperation with the Norwegian Hard of Hearing Organization HLF. Roar Raaken is seconded to EFHOH as Office Manager.

During year 2022 Office Manager facilitated reports, webinars, surveys, statements, and communications.

Roar works with the President on EFHOH project EHOHC, which we have signed with the European Commission..

EFHOH MEDIA AND INFORMATION

Our media outreach and online content relies on support of our talented volunteers.

We express thanks to Kave and Jonathan, our Swedish volunteers, for help with smooth running the webinars and welcome them as our technical support, Our volunteer, content creator Maria Skoczynska have been invaluable in helping us with our outreach, through posters and comics.

Newsletter

Three issues of the Newsletter were published in 2022 with the support of Claire Landesmann, Ricardo Muranda, Portugal.

The Newsletter remains the best source for reports and information of events and advocacy work.

Website

During 2022 the updates on our website have been carried out with support of volunteer Kim Stensnes from Norway and Yannis Yarolous from Greece. As Yannis is stepping down, we are looking to appoint new webmaster in 2023.

Facebook:

EFHOH has a Facebook group where we keep our members and friends of EFHOH updated on our activities. We have now new Facebook Page allowing us to reach out to general public and hard of hearing community.

Twitter

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

FINAL WORDS

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

January 2022,

EFHOH Board

Lidia Best

Morten Buoan

Darja Pajk

Alf Lindberg

Claire Sabler Landesmann

Annex I

GENERAL MEMBERS (26) as of 31 December 2022

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 Nedslyšících v CR
Czech Republic	Ceskomoravská unie neslyšících z.s.
Denmark	Høreforeningen
Estonia	Eesti Vaegkuuljate Liit
Faro Island	HOYR
Finland	Kuuloliitto r.y.
Finland Svenska	Hörsel förbundet 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
Poland	SUITA
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
United Kingdom	National Association of Deafened People – NADP

Associate Members (3)

Georgia	Aures Foundation
Germany	IVSS-Churchear
Poland	Kultura bez barier

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS (3)

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

ANNEX II

External Meetings

January	online	COMPAC Consortium	Alf and Lidia
	online	Disability Inclusion in Health Sector	Lidia and Morten
	online	Triangle meeting	Lidia
	online	WHO pre-WHD meeting	Daria
	online	UNGA Webinar Study and Work abroad	Lidia
February	online	EDF web directive follow up-meeting	Alf
	online	EDF ENGO Meeting	Lidia
	online	EU Disability Platform Meeting	Lidia
	online	CIICA Webinar	Lidia, Darja
March	online	EDF Accessibility meeting	Lidia
	online	WHO Lunch Debate	EFHOH Board
	online	EU Commision	Lidia, Roar
	online	COFACE	Claire
	online	WHD Lunch debate	All Board
April	online	Accessibility Webinar	Claire
	online	Accessibilittech event from ONCE	Lidia
May	online	Meeting with WHO Disability and Rehabilitation	Lidia
	online	ITU WSIS event	Lidia
	online	EFHOH AGM	All Board
	online	IHAC meeting	Alf
June	Brussels	Accessibility Event IAAP and EDF	Lidia
	online	EDF ENGO meeting	Lidia
	Online	EDF on European Accessibility Act	Alf
	Cernobbio	HEALs International Conference	Lidia, Darja
	Athens	EDF AGA	Lidia, Marcel
	online	EU Disability Platform Meeting	Lidia, Roar
August	Budapest	IFHOHYP Study Session	Lidia
	Budapest	Working Meeting	Lidia, Claire, Darja
September	Online	EDF-ANEC on Accessibility Built Environment	Alf
	Budapest	IFHOH AGM, members meeting	Lidia, Daria, Alf, Claire
	Budapest	IHAC meeting	Alf, Lidia
October	Hannover	EUHA and Hear it AGM	Lidia
	Online	ARISE Project kick off	Lidia
	Online	EU Commission meeting	Lidia
	Online	ITU Accessibility 26/16 meeting and JCA-AHF	Lidia
25th October		EU Commission meeting	Lidia, Roar
November	Online	EDF training on funding	Lidia

ANNEX III

Date: March 3rd 2022

The War in Ukraine: Statement by the Board of the European Association of Hard of Hearing People

Today, we celebrate the World Hearing Day, the day dedicated to awareness rising of hearing loss and available solutions. This is also the day when we stand together as a community , so no one is alone dealing with hearing loss and we are part of the wider community.

We, as Board members of EFHOH, and as individuals, stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. We continue to stay in contact with the official organisations serving the Hard of Hearing and Deaf Persons of Ukraine.

You can help our European friends by providing the following:

1. Hearing Aids, Hearing Aid batteries, assistive listening technologies
2. Smartphones with internet and video capabilities
3. Money

Lidia, EFHOH President is willing to coordinate the action of support. If you are able to help, please email her directly at president@efhoh.org or contact Claire Landesman on office@efhoh.org

Together we pray that the war will end soon.

Lidia Best (UK/PL)

Claire Landesman (Austria)

Darja Pajk (Slovenia)

Morten Buan (Norway)

Alf Lindberg (Sweden)

Annex IV

EFHOH facts and history

EFHOH is a non- governmental association. consisting 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, influence European policies and to promote inclusion through accessible communication, digital accessibility and access to quality of hearing care for European citizens.

Contact information

E-mails office@efhoh.org officeadmin@efhoh.org

Website www.efhoh.org