



**ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2023**

# OUR VISION, MISSION and OBJECTIVES

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 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.

## **OUR VISION:**

Europe where people with hearing loss can live without barriers and have opportunities to participate at all levels in society.

## **OUR MISSION:**

Promoting awareness, understanding and collaborative practical actions that remove the barriers for hard of hearing people to reach their full potential with access to affordable, universal hearing care and rehabilitation, including hearing aids and cochlear implants. This is optimized by an accessible society with public services, hearing loops, subtitling, captioning and assistive devices.

## **OUR OBJECTIVES:**

To protect, promote and raise awareness on the rights of persons with hearing loss in Europe.

## **Summary of the Report**

This report provides an overview of the main achievements and activities of EFHOH in 2023, as well as the challenges and opportunities for the future. The report is divided into four sections:

- **Advocacy:** how EFHOH represented the interests and rights of hard of hearing people in Europe and beyond, through policy work, campaigns and events.
- **Capacity building:** how EFHOH supported its members and volunteers to develop their skills, knowledge and competences, through training, mentoring and sharing of good practices.
- **Networking and partnerships:** how EFHOH fostered collaboration and exchange with other stakeholders, such as European institutions, NGOs, professionals and researchers.
- **Communication:** how EFHOH communicated its vision, mission and values to a wider audience, through social media, newsletters, publications and media relations.

The report also includes a financial statement, which shows the income and expenditure of EFHOH in 2023, as well as the sources of funding and the allocation of resources.

We hope that this report will give you a clear and comprehensive picture of what EFHOH has achieved in 2023 and what are its plans and ambitions for the future.

We are proud of our work and grateful to all our members, partners, donors and friends who have supported us along the way. Together, we can make a difference for the hard of hearing community in Europe and beyond.

## Milestones

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People celebrated significant achievements in 2023.

The organization celebrated its 30 years of advocacy in Europe and embarked on branding exercise which culminated in launch of new Logo in December 2023.

Increased representation at the major conferences and projects, including the European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities and the European Accessibility Summit.

EU Operational Grant .This grant comes from the European Commission's Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV) Program. We would like to thank the European Commission for providing the organization with the funding which will enable EFHOH to plan for a sustainable future for years to come.

## EFHOH YEAR IN ACTION

Throughout 2023, the EFHOH Board and its volunteers worked on raising awareness, building relationships and enhancing communication with our members and friends, both internally and externally.

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 2023.**

The European Disability Forum (EDF), our European disability umbrella organization, has been a great partner in all our work, informing us and collaborating with our board and staying in touch via email and in person. In particular, the board would like to share special thanks to EDF staff for their guidance and ongoing support throughout the process of obtaining the CERV grant.

The EFHOH Board 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.

## ADVOCACY

In 2023, EFHOH Board continued with increasing our advocacy outreach.

EFHOH President delivered an address on the need of Hearing Access for hard of hearing people during the 7<sup>th</sup> Parliament of Persons with Disabilities in May, in Brussels highlighting lack of inclusion of hard of hearing people in policy planning.

We have engaged with Zero Project in Vienna and presented at the panel on deaf representation, in addition we held bilateral talks with other organizations. We have also taken part in the conference of the International Federation of Aging. Both represent the latest areas of our outreach.

EFHOH continues collaboration with AEA and EHIMA on World Hearing Day Lunch Debate, bringing annual advocacy event to the EU parliament and EU Institutions. We also collaborate on consultations at the EU level.

Lastly, EFHOH President is now a member of the Steering Committee of the World Hearing Forum, part of the World Health Organization.

**EUROPEAN DISABILITY PLATFORM** The Platform meets 3 times a year for all day meetings in addition to shorter sub-groups meetings. EFHOH representatives, Lidia Best and Alf Lindberg, are active in the sub-group on Employment, Accessibility EU and Disability Card, providing direct comments and input. Members of the Platform and the Minutes of the meetings can be found in the link <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/expert-groups-register/screen/expert-groups/consult?lang=en&groupId=3820&fromMembers=true&memberType=4&memberId=97587>

**EDF REPRESENTATION.** EFHOH has active representation at the EDF with Jonathan Elebjörk Wahlström (EDF Youth Committee), Karina Chupina (EDF Women Committee) and Marcel Bobeldijk (EDF Board member)

## CAPACITY BUILDING

The board recognizes that EFHOH's success depends on having strong members and has started preparations for a new program to strengthen and support membership. Our member associations are vital for our work, and we appreciate their assistance and collaboration throughout the year.

The Board made plans to increase our visibility by refreshing the EFHOH digital presence, updating the website and enhancing communication both internally and externally.

EFHOH held its Annual General Meeting in April in Poznan, in partnership with our General Member, SUITA. The day before, a scientific conference and workshop focused on topics of "Language, Identity and Hard of Hearing" was held at Adam Mickiewicz University. The conference attracted many international participants from many countries, allowing for networking and mutual learning among participants.

Continuing with our collaboration with the International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People (IFHOHYP) and our efforts to develop hard of hearing youth leadership, the board assigned Youth in Action specific funding in EFHOH. The funds are designed to help raise hard of hearing people's voices, by supporting youth advocates' participation at AI Summit and the European Day of Persons with Disabilities.

As part of joint efforts in supporting Youth leadership, we delivered a session of leadership in LangSkill Project in July 2023 in Lublin, Poland. The project involves young people who are deaf or hard of hearing from Poland, Czechia and Italy.

Finally, during the European Day of Persons with Disabilities in Brussels, we have organized large and diverse representation thanks to EFHOH participation in CERV program.

## NETWORKING and PARTNERSHIPS

EFHOH continues to cultivate and enhance our partnerships with wide range of collaborators: European Disability Platform (EDP), European Disability Forum (EDF), WHO, World Hearing Forum (WHF), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), CIICA, European Broadcasting Union (EBU), AEA/ EHIMA/ EFHOH, European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness, Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs (G3ict) IFHOH, IFHOHYP.

WHO and World Hearing Forum- As a member of the Steering Group at the World Hearing Forum, President Lidia Best also acts as a co-chair of the Make Listening Safe Workstream after being recently appointed.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU) - we continue collaborating with ITU by giving input on the needs of hard of hearing people at relevant working groups and intergroups. In 2023, Lidia Best and Paulina Lewandowska (IFHOHYP) representative attended the High-Level conference of ITU Accessible Europe in Madrid.

AEA/ EHIMA/ EFHOH -The organizations worked together in co-organizing EU Lunch Debate for the World Hearing Day.

EFHOH co-operates closely with the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People, IFHOH. The EFHOH president is a permanent member of the IFHOH board. Alf Lindberg participates in the International Hearing Access Committee (IHAC), which is one of the IFHOH Committees.

Working with CIICA, we were active in providing feedback to "Living guidelines CI". The project aims to create living practice guidelines that can be adapted and adopted in the country, to optimize the care for adults eligible for CI. The work was organized online through a platform. More information <https://adultheating.com/living-guidelines/>

## COMMUNICATION

Our media and online content rely on our talented volunteers. In April we have appointed new webmaster, Jonathan Elebjörk Wahlström from Sweden. With Jonathan help we began digital transformation for our internal and external operations. The Board has obtained Microsoft non-profit package, allowing us to streamline our communications and administration. Jonathan has organised training for board members and integrated our mailing structure.

EFHOH regularly shares important content on social media. We have 830 followers on X (the new name of Twitter), our Facebook Page that lets us communicate with the public and hard of hearing community has 955 followers, and Facebook Group has 880 members.

The Digital Newsletter is how we share news and updates on events and advocacy work. Ricardo Muranda, a volunteer from Portugal, has stepped down as the editor. We express our thanks for Ricardo's contribution to the Newsletter.

We express our thanks to Yannis Yarolous ,Kim Steanes and Ricardo Miranda for their past work.

## WEBINARS

We organized 2 webinars.

LIVE TEXT ACCESS- the next steps in February.

EU Parliament Lunch Debate in March.

## PROJECTS

EFHOH representatives were involved in the following projects:

**HEALTH: Study** on access to healthcare for persons with disabilities. [HEALTH: increasing access to healthcare for persons with disabilities - European Disability Forum \(edf-feph.org\)](https://edf-feph.org) Representatives: Claire Landesman and Lidia Best

**ARISE.** 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. Representative: Lidia Best

**SOUNDS** (Service-Oriented, Ubiquitous, Network-Driven Sound) is a Marie Sklodowska-Curie Actions European Training Network. One aim is to exploit network-enabled cooperation between devices, which can be used for enhanced hearing help. Representative: Alf Lindberg [SOUNDS \(sounds-etn.eu\)](https://sounds-etn.eu)

**COM4Child** Concluding in 2023. [Comm4CHILD – Communication for Children with Hearing Impairment to optimise Language Development \(ulb.be\)](https://ulb.be) Representative: Aida Regel-Poulsen

## FINANCIAL REPORT

This report gives an overview of the financial situation of the year 2023. We are pleased to share that EFHOH has had a positive financial result.

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

Current account	
40.21.25.576	118.628,10 €
Savings account	
40.21.30.642	40.553,34 €

**Assets in the year 2023**

**159.181,44 € (EU grant 104.762,70 €)**

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

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

## **EFHOH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)**

EFHOH held its Annual General Meeting 2023 in April in Poznan, Poland in partnership with our General Member, SUITA.

The quorum was met with 16 General Members in addition to IFHOHYP, IFHOH attending the AGM with total of 29 votes.

### **ELECTIONS:**

The following candidates have been elected to serve on the EFHOH Board for the term of two years in the period of 2023 – 2025.

President – Lidia Best (UK)

General Secretary – Claire Landesman (Austria)

Treasurer – Darja Pajk (Slovenia)

The election for the Nomination Committee was carried out and Asa Olsen appointed a Chair on Nominating Committee.

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

*See detailed information in the AGM Minutes document*

## **MEMBERS, THE BOARD AND OFFICE**

### **Members**

EFHOH has 28 General members, 2 associate members, and 3 individual members. EFHOH also has contact persons in countries where we do not have members yet.

### **The Board**

The following persons were members of the board in the year 2023:

President: Lidia Best, UK (2023- 2025)

Vice-president: Morten Buan, Norway (2020- 2024)

General Secretary: Claire Sabler Landesmann, Austria (2023-2025)

Treasurer: Darja Pajk, (2023- 2025)

Board Member: Alf Lindberg, Sweden (2020-2024)

### **Board Meetings**

The board of EFHOH held 6 meetings in the year 2023, 4 of them online and 2 face-to-face.

20 January 2023

17 February 2023

21 April 2023 Poznan, Poland

31 May 2023

08 October 2023

02 December 2023 Brussels, Belgium

### **Office**

Following Mr. Roar Raaken departure from the Office Manager position, the board decided to return to a virtual office based in the Netherlands, registered with NVVS for the time being.

## **Last words**

EFHOH has finished the year 2023 in a positive and financially strong position to continue an ambitious plan for the year 2024.

The award of operational grant at the end of the year 2023, has provided EFHOH with strong base to continue developing EFHOH long term plans and establishment of the functional office. Our goal is to strengthen our members and amplifying voices of hard of hearing people

***UNITED in ADVOCACY for hard of hearing people in Europe***

### **EFHOH Board**

*Lidia Best*

*Morten Buonan*

*Darja Pajk*

*Alf Lindberg*

*Claire Landesmann*



## ANNEX I

### EFHOH Members as of December 2023

	<b>General Members (28)</b>	<b>Country</b>
1	Österreichischer Schwerhörigenbund	Austria
2	Vereniging voor Hardhorenden "Onder Ons"	Belgium
3	Hörgeschädigte Ostbelgiens VoG	Belgium
4	Hrvatski Savez Gluhih I Nagluhah - HSGN	Croatia
5	Svaz neslycicah a Nedoslychavych v CR	Czech Republic
6	Ceskomoravska unie neslycicah z.s.	Czech Republic
7	Høreforeningen	Denmark
8	Eesti Vaegkuuljate Liit	Estonia
9	HOYR	Faroe Islands
10	Kuuloliitto r.y.	Finland
11	Svenska Hörselförbundet rf.	Finland
12	Bureau de Coordination des Ass. de Devenus Sourds et Malentendants	France
13	Aures	Georgia
14	Deutscher Schwerhörigen Bund e.V.	Germany

15	HBB e.V. / Hörgeschädigte Bremen und Bremerhaven e.V	Germany
16	HFD - Hellenic Federation of the Deaf	Greece
17	Siketek es Nagyothallok Orszagos Szövetsege	Hungary
18	Heyrnarhjálp	Iceland
19	Stichting Hoormij	Netherlands
20	Stichting Plotsdoven	Netherlands
21	Hørselhemmedes Landsforbund	Norway
22	PFOS	Poland
23	SUITA	Poland
24	OUVIR	Portugal
25	Zveza Drustev Gluhih in Naglusnih Slovenije	Slovenia
26	Hörselskadades Riksförbund	Sweden
27	Pro Audito Schweiz	Switzerland
28	National Association of Deafened People	United Kingdom
	<b>Association Members (2)</b>	<b>Country</b>
1	IVVS	Germany
2	Kultura Bez Bariers	Poland

	<b>Individual Association Member (3)</b>	
1	Kalia Nicolaou	Cyprus
3	Freeda Keenan	Ireland
4	Emma McAuley	Ireland

## ANNEX II

Our 2023 events highlights are:

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>
February	Zero Conference in Vienna, Austria
March 1	World Hearing Day lunch virtual debate
March	Swedish Presidency Conference with EDF
March	Gallaudet University Lecture
April 13	Online training EDF
April 19-22	Conference and AGM in Poland
April 26	WHO EU framework Health Accessibility
May 15	Online participation on consulting on Hearing loss and health with WHO Europe
May	7 <sup>th</sup> EU Parliament of Persons with Disabilities
May	AEA Symposium
May	EU Accessibility Summit
June 26-27	Disability Platform
June 30	IFA Global Conference online
July	ITU AI for Good Conference
July	LangSkill Project session in Lublin, Poland
November	World Hearing Forum
November 29	“Active Aging” Conference, Brussels
November 30 - December 1	European day of Persons with Disabilities
December	ITU Accessible Europe