

2012

2012 IMPACT REPORT



EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The support by the EUD Board and President have been of invaluable help to create an accurate and up-to-date account of the EUD activities in 2012:

President	Berglind Stefánsdóttir
Vice-President	Yannis Yallouros
Board Member	Dr Gergely Tapolczai
Board Member	Dr Humberto Insolera
Board Member	Asger Bergmann

The EUD interns Netta Keski-Levijoki and Christophe De Clerck, along with all members of staff contributed to this the current report with photos, texts, and signed input.

Our member associations are at the heart of our work and we thank them for assisting us throughout the year.

Furthermore, the European Disability Forum (EDF), has been a supportive and proactive partner in all our work, informing us and collaborating with our Board and staff.

In its daily work EUD has been in contact with a number of MEPs and other EU policymakers and hopes to continue this co-operation in the coming years.

FOREWORD BY EUD PRESIDENT

I am proud to welcome you to the second annual Impact Report featuring the EUD highlights of the past year. Most notably, the EUD team released its latest edition of the book on sign language legislation in the European Union. Thanks goes to EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley and EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch for compiling and updating this very important publication. I am also grateful to the EUD staff for organising a very successful book launch at the European Parliament, with representatives from the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the European Disability Forum.

Another highlight of the year was the EUD General Assembly, workshop and seminar in Copenhagen, Denmark. The seminar on Active Ageing and participation of elder Deaf people was a big success, with a large audience from over 30 different countries.

For the first time a member NAD, namely the Cypriot Deaf Association, organised a seminar prior to one of our Board meetings. This unique opportunity of meeting the local Deaf Community was a very positive experience for the whole Board and myself, and we want to continue setting up similar seminars with our members coinciding with our Board meetings. This will give more Deaf people and member associations the chance to get to know our work in detail and in direct contact.

Personally, I was very impressed and moved by the 300-year celebrations of Abbée de L'Épée in Paris, which I had the privilege to attend in November. The events that were organised by the French Deaf Association were a huge success. It has given me strength to see that sign language is a language that cannot be easily extinct and that is part of our rich cultural heritage, not only here in Europe.

For the first time EUD Board and staff participated fully in the European Parliament of Disabled Persons. The large event with over 450 contributors from all EU Member States and beyond was a great opportunity for EUD to ensure the voices of Deaf sign language users were heard. There were many interventions from Deaf participants and I, as the EUD representative, pointed out the difficulties Deaf people face when moving from one country to another, highlighting the need for standardised sign language interpreter training and provision.

I was also pleased to be a part of the historic first meeting of four Deaf European Parliamentarians at the Flemish Parliament in Brussels. The gathering was hopefully the first of many and serves as an inspiration to other Deaf people who want to become involved in politics.

This year has increased EUD's already high profile and given Deaf people a platform of exchange and making EUD's work even more transparent. I look forward to my last six months of being the President and wish the EUD team and the new Board and President that will be elected in May 2013 best of luck in the coming year.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'B. Stefánsdóttir'.

EUD President, Berglind Stefánsdóttir

EUD INTRODUCTION

EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF

Based in Brussels, Belgium EUD is a not-for-profit European non-governmental organisation (NGO) comprising National Associations of the Deaf (NADs). It is the only supranational organisation representing Deaf sign language users at European level and is one of the few NGOs representing associations in all 27 EU Member States, including Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland. EU acceding, candidate, and potential member countries, such as Croatia or Turkey can choose to become affiliated members with the option to become full members as soon as they officially enter the EU.

Aiming to establish and maintain EU level dialogue with the European Union institutions and officials in consultation and co-operation with its member NADs, EUD also has participatory status with the Council of Europe (CoE). Furthermore, EUD is a full member of the European Disability Forum (EDF), the umbrella organisation of Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs) in Europe, and has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) to tackle issues of global importance.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the core mission of EUD to promote, advance, and protect the rights of and opportunities for Deaf people (including sign language users) in the European Union to ensure they can become full citizens in their own right.

To achieve equality in both public and private life for Deaf people EUD has laid out three main long-term objectives:

- 1 Recognition of the right to use an indigenous sign language;
- 2 Empowerment through communication and information; and
- 3 Equality in education and employment.

These key values are also mirrored in the daily work of the Brussels headquarters. The office provides a fully accessible signing environment with international staff from many different countries across the EU. The majority of staff are Deaf sign language users and all hearing staff must know at least one national sign language as well as International Sign. Gender equality is also taken into account in all employment policies and when organising events and speakers.

SIGN LANGUAGES AS A HUMAN RIGHT

Inherent to EUD's work is the belief that the right to sign language is a basic Human Right. Sign language users, similarly to national minorities, are in need of specific targeted and coherent protection regarding their language and all Human Rights. The national sign languages are the mother tongues of Deaf sign language users across the EU and the world.



The right to sign language in itself is a Human Right but access to sign language is also essential for the fulfilment of other basic Human Rights

The right to sign language in itself is a Human Right but access to sign language is also essential for the fulfilment of other basic

Human Rights, such as the right to equal education, information, or a fair trial. Without early access to sign language programmes and an educational system that fosters the acquisition of the national sign language(s) (and the national written language(s)) Deaf children will not be able to enjoy their basic Human Rights as children or later in their adult life.

EUD therefore advocates the right to sign language as an essential prerequisite to ensure full and equal citizenship for all Deaf people.

EUD hosted its annual New Year's Reception at the European Parliament in co-operation with MEP Dr Ádám Kósa and celebrated with 40 invited guests. Among the guests were Members of the European Parliament, EUD partners, and representatives from

Member Associations, as well as the local Deaf Community. EUD President Berglind Stefánsdóttir opened the event thanking stakeholders for their co-operation in the past year, while looking forward to an even more productive and visible EUD in 2012.

NEW YEAR'S RECEPTION

MEP Gesine Meissner (ALDE)



Every year, EUD organises a workshop and a seminar for its members and other interested parties from the wider Deaf Community, professionals, and political stakeholders. The events are prior to the General Assembly (GA) and usually follow the theme of the designated European Year.

Workshop

This year's workshop was led by Annika Pabsch, EUD Policy Officer. The topic was the UNCRPD implementation at national level and the parallel reporting process. Concretely, the EUD team collaborated with its member NADs to improve and re-launch the 2011 survey on the status of the implementation of the UNCRPD. Further details on the 2012 survey can be found in later in this report.

Seminar

The seminar's topic was: 'Deaf Elderly Citizens – an Asset not a Burden' and was co-organised by EUD and the Danish Deaf Association (DDL) in Copenhagen, Denmark. The seminar followed the European Year of 'Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity' and attracted more than 130 participants from over 30 different countries. Focus points were the changing demographics and methods of co-operation between generations, the EUD survey results regarding 'active ageing', and real-life examples of how to keep older Deaf

people active. Among those presenting and attending were political stakeholders as well as professionals working with the elderly Deaf.

General Assembly (GA)

The Annual General Assembly was held on the premises of the Copenhagen Deaf Club and attended by an overwhelming majority of Full and Affiliated Members, as well as selected observers, such as the European Union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY).

COPENHAGEN 2012



Janne Boye Niemelä,
President,
Danish Deaf Association

EUD INITIATIVES

LAUNCH OF EUD BOOK

On the occasion of the European Day of Languages, which takes place each year on 26 September, EUD launched its second comprehensive publication on sign language legislation in the European Union. The book constitutes a broad update of the 2010 edition and was compiled by EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley and Annika Pabsch, EUD Policy Officer. The launch – organised in co-operation with MEP Ádám Kósa – took

place at the European Parliament with over 70 participants. Guest speakers included representatives from the European Disability Forum (EDF), the European Commission, and the EUD Board. This unique publication covers all legislation mentioning sign language in the EU Member States, as well as at supranational level, and highlights the need for appropriate legal protection of the national sign languages to ensure full and equal participation. The book is aimed at policy makers, NGOs, and researchers alike and serves as an important tool in empowering Deaf citizens.



Mr Johan ten Geuzendam,
Head of Unit, Rights of Persons with
Disabilities, DG Justice,
European Commission

HISTORICAL FIRST MEETING: DEAF EUROPEAN POLITICIANS

For the first time in history all Deaf European Parliamentarians gathered in Brussels for a joint press conference and cocktail reception. MEP Dr Ádám Kósa, Mag^a Helene Jarmer, and Dr Gergely Tapolczai were invited to the Flemish Parliament by Flemish MP Helga Stevens and EUD to meet the President of the Flemish Parliament and exchange their views and experiences. Helga Stevens pointed out that all politicians, although from different countries and political parties, are first and

foremost Deaf, fighting for the same equal rights for all Deaf sign language users. There are many other Deaf parliamentarians around the world and this initial meeting serves as a stepping-stone for future co-operation, possibly with the help of a task force within the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU). Deaf politicians are crucial for the Deaf Community to ensure their needs are taken under consideration and they act as a role model for all Deaf sign language users around the world.



Mag^a Helene Jarmer,
Austrian Parliament

Helga Stevens,
Flemish Parliament
and Belgian Senate

Dr Ádám Kósa,
European Parliament

Dr Gergely Tapolczai,
Hungarian Parliament

The three Working Groups that were installed in 2011 continued to gather diverse Deaf experts from all around Europe in 2012. The groups meet once to twice a year to discuss and analyse current issues and policies relevant to the Deaf Community. They provide a professional forum of exchange and a Board Member chairs each of the three Working Groups: Accessibility, ICT, and Deaf Lawyers. The members of the groups also provide good practices from their home countries, as well as giving negative examples, and formulating possible recommendations at both EU and Member State level. The expert groups serve as a focal point to support the EUD staff in highly specialised matters. After the initial meetings in 2011 the Working Groups now focussed on how to work together more closely and co-operate among each other.

Accessibility

EUD Board Member Asger Bergmann from Denmark chairs the Accessibility Working Group. For one weekend the expert members discussed the proposed European Accessibility Act, and concentrated on culture and cultural rights. Representatives shared ideas on enhancing this aspect of life that has a direct impact of the quality of life for all Deaf citizens. One of the highlights included Eric Lawrin presenting on Accessibility of Culture in France whereby museums employ Deaf tour guides to discuss exhibitions in sign language specifically for Deaf audiences.

ICT

Yannis Yallouros, EUD Vice-President, is the chair of the ICT Working Group. Due to time restrictions the members met twice this year via webcam. For several hours the ICT experts discussed accessible 112 emergency services, VRS/VRI services, and in particular technical specifications and interoperability between Member States. The Deaf expert Christopher Jones, Co-Convener of the Joint Coordination Activity on Accessibility and Human Factors (JCA-AHF) at the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), was present for part of the meeting to give input on how to ensure EUD involvement in the next standards regarding accessibility of TV. The EUD Vice-President, as the EDF representative regarding Mandate 376, also reported on the accessibility in the public procurement sector.

Deaf Lawyers

Deaf Lawyer himself and Member of the Hungarian Parliament, Dr Gergely Tapolczai, chaired the Deaf Lawyer Working Group. The EUD Board Member, together with Deaf Lawyers from all around Europe gathered to discuss legal provisions regarding sign language and human rights. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was in focus, as well as other human rights instruments, and its possible applications in the Deaf Community. The lawyers also examined ways to bring forward Deaf cases under EU legislation and the UNCRPD Committee. The group also analysed the EUD statutes to ensure a smooth EUD Board and President election procedure in 2013.

WORKING GROUPS



Marije Davidson,
United Kingdom

Eeva Tupi,
Finland

Jeff McWhinney,
United Kingdom

Roland Hermann,
Switzerland

Johan Verstraete,
Belgium

Mikko Palo,
Finland



EUD INITIATIVES

UNCRPD

The UNCRPD is one of the main instruments for the Deaf Community globally and EUD to ensure legally binding provisions are put in place and are actively observed including financial instruments. The UNCRPD is furthermore of critical importance at EU level and EUD are ensuring the implementation process including legal adaptations fully include Deaf sign language users.



Mark Wheatley,
EUD Executive Director

Committee Sessions Geneva

One way to stay up to date with the latest developments regarding the implementation of the UNCRPD is the regular attendance of the UNCRPD Committee sessions in Geneva. This year's sessions in April and September were attended by EUD Board Member Humberto Insolera, EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley, and EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch. The sessions were of importance to give EUD the chance to practically learn about the procedures and ways the Committee works with governments, DPOs (Disabled People's Organisations), and how it includes sign language in the process. The sessions were also a good opportunity to strengthen the co-operation with IDA, the International Disability Alliance, and WFD, the World Federation of the Deaf, as well as Committee Members. In addition, EUD staff attended IDA side events and workshops to further develop its knowledge in disability-related human rights.



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UNCRPD Summer School Galway

EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch participated in the 4th International Disability Summer School at NUI Galway that was jointly organised by the Centre for Disability Law & Policy and the Harvard Project on Disability. The theme this year was: 'The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – How to Use it'. The six-day training course was opened by the President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins and aimed at equipping attendants with the insights and skills necessary to translate the principles of the UNCRPD into tangible reforms for persons with disabilities. Lecturers included several members of the UNCRPD Committee, persons involved in the drafting of the UNCRPD, as well as Human and Disability Rights lawyers from across the world.

Training Day

Following the intensive UNCRPD summer school in Galway EUD organised a fully accessible training day conducted in sign language. Moderated by Annika Pabsch, EUD Policy Officer, the UNCRPD training day brought together EUD staff, selected International Sign interpreters, and representatives from EUD partner organisations, such as efsli, the European Forum of Sign language interpreters, and EUDY, the European Union of the Deaf Youth. Participants were introduced to general

UNCRPD concepts and its relevance to the Deaf Community, as well as the historical background, and the reporting process, including DPO involvement. The training day was the first of its kind and due to positive feedback will be followed by further sessions in the coming year. In the spirit of the European Year of Citizens 2013 there will be targeted training units for member associations and Deaf individuals.

Annika Pabsch,
EUD Policy Officer



Survey

In 2011 EUD produced a survey regarding the implementation of the UNCRPD in the EUD member countries. After intensive discussions and a workshop with EUD member NADs, a second survey was launched in 2012. There were three separate sub-surveys targeted at three different levels and groups: One sub-survey was particularly created for the NADs to assess and analyse their (political) involvement in the implementation of the UNCRPD, including lobbying and the parallel reporting process. A second sub-survey was

specifically for Deaf individuals in the EUD member countries. The third sub-survey focussed on European-level organisations and Deaf individuals who have lived and worked in another EU Member State to investigate the situation regarding Freedom of Movement and the accessibility of EU institutions in view of the EU (parallel) report due in 2013. The survey yielded over 500 individual responses from over 25 different EU and EU candidate countries, identifying key areas of concern and interest for EUD's work programme 2013.

Netta Keski-Levijoki, EUD Intern



In 2012 EUD Media and Communication Officer, Lars Knudsen, presented the new EUD Communication Strategy, which is available on the EUD website in both written English and International Sign. EUD is highly committed to giving its members and other interested

parties, such as political stakeholders and the wider Deaf Community, fully accessible information through a number of channels. Most notably, this includes the EUD website, the Facebook fan page, and the EUD Twitter account.

WEBSITE

The EUD website is the primary communication tool for the Deaf Community, aiming at providing fully accessible information in both English and International Sign. It is a one-stop place for anyone wishing to access information on or co-operate with EUD and its members.



Statistics

In 2012 the EUD website received over 8,000 unique hits per week. We uploaded over 160 videos in International Sign, with information in written English either directly in the video as subtitles or as a text directly below the embedded video. The website yielded a diverse range of viewers from all around the world.



Dr Gergely Tapolczai,
EUD Board Member



Dr Humberto Insolera,
EUD Board Member

Meet your MEP

The new and exciting 'Meet your MEP' video programme was launched at the beginning of 2012 to bring MEP's opinions closer to the Deaf Community by interviewing them in International Sign with the assistance of sign language interpreters. The host of the initiative, Lars Knudsen, EUD Communication

and Media Officer interviews an MEP each month. Throughout the year a large range of MEPs from various political parties and countries discussed and answered questions about sign language and the Deaf Community in relation to EU and national politics.

MEP Rosa Estaràs Ferragut (EPP) on the Disability Intergroup, UNCRPD and the EU Structural Fund



MEP Sirpa Pietikäinen (EPP) on sign language legislation in the European Union



MEP Cecilia Wikström (ALDE) on equal access to legal affairs in the EU and her work with the Disability Intergroup



NEWSLETTER

The EUD newsletter was first launched in March 2012 and is fully accessible in International Sign and written English. The purpose of the newsletter is a monthly review of important EUD news and activities. Its primary aim is to provide external communication to inform

EUD partners, political stakeholders, the media, and other interested partners about our on-going work. Although usually sent out every month, on special occasions – such as the EUD GA in Copenhagen – a special issue is published.



Asger Bergmann,
EUD Board Member

Statistics

The newsletter is available via email and currently has over 300 subscribers from 20 different countries.

Executive Director's Corner

Every newsletter contains the 'Executive Director's Corner' featuring EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley via video. Its aim is to explain the general work of EUD directly from the EUD headquarters in Brussels. The

video messages are intended to bridge the gap between the European-level political organisation and grassroots Deaf people in the EU Member States, giving direct and accessible insight into EUD's current and on-going efforts.



Executive Director's Corner,
EUD Newsletter - September 2012.

Although the EUD website and the newsletter are valuable and beneficial tools in connecting with Deaf people in Europe and around the world, EUD uses social media to disseminate content in real

time. EUD has grown to one of the most visible organisations at European level, surpassing many other equally sized associations in geographic and quantitative reach.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Facebook

The EUD Facebook fan page has grown considerably over the last twelve months and has now over 10,000 fans, growing steadily every day. The page is targeted at the general public and gives EUD the opportunity to connect with its fans and share timely information and photos, as well as videos. The page serves as an interactive platform for individuals and members, reaching to fans in all EU Member States and beyond. EUD uses the page to not only promote its events and vacancies but also to connect to its fans by uploading photos of events that EUD staff and Board members attend.



Twitter

For the latest developments and information about EUD you can turn to our Twitter account, which is updated as soon as something happens. Our Twitter account is focussed on live coverage (texts and photos) of meetings, conferences, and events. or big events such as the General Assembly EUD sets up its own hashtags, such as #EUDGA2012, which are used widely by our followers.



EUD PARTNER INITIATIVES

To support EUD member NADs and EUD co-operation partners in topics and issues relevant to the EUD work programme, EUD

staff and Board regularly participate in events organised by external entities.

REACH 112

Following the Written Declaration campaign regarding accessible 112 emergency services in 2011, EUD attended the final conference of the REACH112 project that involved several EU countries. EUD was represented by Vice-President Yannis Yallouros and EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch. The project was exemplary, featuring different systems

in various countries, all aiming at making emergency services accessible to everyone,

including Deaf sign language users.

Following the 'Total Conversation' model the accessible services play a vital role in paving the way for other countries.

The final conference

presented findings and the audience featured many different Deaf associations and individuals, being accessible in more than five different sign languages and a speech-to-text service.



All aiming at making emergency services accessible to everyone, including Deaf sign language users.



Yannis Yallouros,
EUD Vice-President

The Cyprus Deaf Association organised a unique conference featuring all EUD Board Members, EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley, and the EUDY Board. Prior to the quarterly EUD Board meeting, Cypriot Deaf sign language users and other interested parties were able to connect directly with and learn from the EUD team. Each panellist presented on a different aspect of EUD's work and related political issues. For

instance, Humberto Insolera from Italy spoke about the UNCRPD, Gergely Tapolczai shared his experience as a Deaf Parliamentarian in Hungary, and Mark Wheatley explained the update of the EUD book on sign language legislation. After the success of this seminar, EUD will be organising similar events in co-operation with its member NADs in 2013.

SEMINAR EUD AND THE UNCRPD

In 2012, the founder of the first public school for the Deaf in the world, Abbé de L'Épée was born 300 years ago. On this occasion, the National Federation of the Deaf in France (FNSF - Fédération Nationale des Sourds de France) organised numerous events in his honour. The culmination of the year's celebration was a large international conference and banquet in Paris in late November.

EUD President Berglind Stefánsdóttir attended the event along with many other important political and cultural figures from the Deaf Community. She stressed that the long passage of time has not diminished Abbé de L'Épée's achievements in Deaf education and has shown that the sign languages around the world are powerful languages that play a vital role in the Deaf Community.

300 YEAR ANNIVERSARY : ABBÉ DE L'ÉPÉE



Mr Phillipe Boyer, President of the
Fédération Nationale des Sourds de
France (FNSF).

CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

To ensure that EUD covers a large range of issues we partner with various European and international organisations. The expertise of

those organisations assists EUD in its daily work and guarantees that external expert opinions complement EUD policies and practices.

EUROPEAN FORUM OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS (EFSLI)V

EUD has been co-operating with efsli, the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters for many years, collaborating on various issues regarding sign language interpreters at both EU and national level. Renewed co-operation agreements are signed regularly to re-confirm the relationship between the two organisations. In 2012 EUD and efsli produced joint sign language interpreter guidelines for

European-level meetings and events. The document is aimed at interpreters and sign language users alike, as well as conference organisers. It gives practical tips and hints to ensure that meetings can be fully accessible for Deaf participants at European level, in addition to providing an introduction to sign language and the Deaf Community.

EUROPEAN PLATFORM OF DEAFNESS, HARD OF HEARING AND DEAFBLINDNESS

The newly established European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing, and Deafblindness organised comprises five European-level NGOs who meet regularly to exchange views and work on common goals, such as subtitling and statistical data. After initial meetings in 2009, the Platform was formally established at the EDF General Assembly in May 2012, where representatives from all organisations signed the agreement. A major outcome of the Platform was the joint conference that was attended by over 50 delegates from all around Europe. The conference, that was held

at the Representation of Bavaria in Brussels, focussed on the lack of accessible and reliable data on the number of people with specific disabilities and the problems and issues that arise from this. One of the objectives of the conference was to highlight this to key stakeholders who are in a position to change this situation using existing tools. Speakers included representatives from the European institutions, as well as the European NGO community. A panel discussed the need for high-quality statistical data and its link to the proposed European Accessibility Act.



.....
One of the objectives of the conference was to highlight this [lack of statistics] to key stakeholders who are in a position to change this situation using existing tools.



Just as EUD is a membership association representing Deaf people at European level, the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) holds the same role at international and UN level. To avoid duplication of work and to allocate resources in the best possible manner to achieve common global and European objectives, EUD and WFD signed an MoU at

the EUD General Assembly in Copenhagen in May. Both organisations are now again formal co-operation partners and have many long-term aims and objectives in common, such as the promotion of human rights in any area regarding Deaf people, or the recognition of national sign languages.

WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF (WFD)

Collin Allen,
WFD President



EUD has a particular relationship with young Deaf people not only due to the internship programme. EUD and the European Union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY) signed a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the EUDY General Assembly in Sarajevo, Bosnia & Herzegovina. In particular, the MoU establishes EUDY's base at the EUD office in Brussels and

opens the possibility for future European project co-operation. EUDY, as the umbrella organisation for Deaf Youth Associations (YNADs), and EUD aim to provide a good practice model of successful co-operation between National Associations of the Deaf and Youth National Associations of the Deaf at European level.

EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF YOUTH (EUDY)

EUDY Board 2012



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

The European Parliament is the only directly elected organ of the European Union and is therefore of high importance to European NGOs such as EUD. Meetings with MEPs and political groups are therefore essential in

our daily work, advising and complementing the work of policymakers to ensure a Europe that allows each and every Deaf citizen to participate fully and to his or her best of abilities.

MEP CO-OPERATION



11 January	Ádám Kósa	EUD NY Reception	Hungary	EPP
11 January	Gesine Meissner	Interview / EUD NY Reception	Germany	ALDE
11 January	Dieter-Lebrecht Koch	EUD NY Reception	Germany	EPP
11 January	Eva Lichtenberger	EUD NY Reception	Austria	Greens / EFA
11 January	Sirpa Pietikäinen	EUD NY Reception	Finland	EPP
24 January	Morten Løkkegaard	Interview	Denmark	ALDE
25 January	Ádám Kósa	Commission Meeting Multilingualism	Hungary	EPP
07 January	Ádám Kósa	Funding Possibilities EP	Hungary	EPP
07 January	Rose Estaràs Ferragut	Interview	Spain	EPP
07 March	Sirpa Pietikäinen	Interview / SL Legislation	Finland	EPP
19 March	Gianni Pittella	Interview	Italy	S&D
24 April	Cecilla Wikström	Interview	Sweden	ALDE
25 April	Emilie Turunen	Interview	Denmark	Greens/ EFA
25 April	Ádám Kósa	EP Project / EUD Book Launch	Hungary	EPP
19 September	Emer Costello	Interview	Ireland	S&D
26 September	Marina Yannakoudakis	Discussion on the London Paralympic Games	UK	ECR
26 September	Milan Cabrnach	Discussion on the London Paralympic Games	Czech Republic	ECR
26 September	Emer Costello	EUD Book Launch	Ireland	S&D
26 September	Ádám Kósa	EUD Book Launch	Hungary	EPP
26 September	Werner Kuhn	EUD Book Launch	Germany	EPP

DISABILITY INTERGROUP

The Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament is an informal grouping of MEPs from a wide range of political groups and countries. Members support disability issues in their daily work and EUD has been in direct contact with many of them. The European

Disability Forum maintains and organises the Intergroup meetings, which EUD attended throughout the year. In focus were the EU Transport Policy and the Multiannual Financial Framework in a cross-intergroup meeting.



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

All members of the EUD Board and staff along with around 40 Deaf representatives from various different EU countries attended the third European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities. The strong presence of different sign languages was visible with sign language interpreters from many different EU countries. European Parliament President Martin Schulz and European Disability Forum President Yannis Vardakastanis opened the day, stressing the rights of persons with disabilities in all areas

The day was closed with a unanimous vote by the over 450 delegates on the EDF Motion for Resolution regarding the implementation of the UNCRPD in times of crisis.

of life. MEPs and civil society representatives debated the implementation of the UNCRPD in the EU Member States, and at EU level, focussing on the effects of the financial crisis. Special emphasis was put on both the still-blocked European Anti-Discrimination Directive and the proposed European Accessibility Act. The day was closed with a unanimous vote by the over 450 delegates on the EDF Motion for Resolution regarding the implementation of the UNCRPD in times of crisis.

Delegates from the Danish Deaf Association



EUD Board Members



EUD and EFHOH, after an initiative from individuals from the German Deaf Community, have managed to raise awareness with the Greens/EFA Group at the European Parliament, making both their website and their events more accessible to Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens. In co-operation, sign language videos with subtitles were created for introductory videos on the Greens/EFA group. EUD was also able to ensure sign language interpretation

and speech-to-text services for a conference at the European Parliament that was web streamed live. The EUD staff continues to provide feedback to the Greens/EFA group in matters relating to the accessibility of their events and their videos and hopes other political groups at the EP and also at national level will follow their example, especially in view of the 2014 EP elections.

THE GREENS/EUROPEAN FREE ALLIANCE

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The European Commission is the legislative organ of the European Union and has the right of initiative to propose laws for adoption by the European Parliament and the Council of the EU. EUD, among other disability NGOs, is partially funded by the European Commission's

Directorate-General Justice. Throughout the year the Commission, in partnership with many different entities, organised a number of events and conferences that were attended by EUD Board and staff members.

WORK FORUM ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNCRPD

The 2012 Work Forum on the Implementation of the UNCRPD in the EU was attended by EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley and Policy Officer, Annika Pabsch. The Forum is an annual platform of exchange for political stakeholders, DPO representatives, and legal experts, as well as members of the UNCRPD Committee. This year's Forum focussed on the

practical implementation of the Convention and in particular the empowerment of Disabled Peoples' User-Led Organisations (DPULOs) and civil society. EUD as a Deaf-led umbrella organisation supports its members at national and regional level but also aims at achieving full implementation of the UNCRPD for Deaf sign language users at EU and UN level, as well as national and regional level.



International Sign interpreter

EUROPEAN DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The annual Commission-organised event focussed on Articles 29 and 30 of the UNCRPD: Participation in political and public, as well as cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport. In view of the upcoming EU Year of Citizens 2013 and the European Parliament elections 2014 the panellists discussed the active participation and the use of media.

Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea, Director for Equality at the Commission's DG Justice, announced the EC's proposal for a new Directive on the accessibility of public sector bodies' websites and pointed out the positive impact measures for persons with disabilities have also for wider society, especially regarding the Accessible City Award, which was later granted to the city of Berlin.



Delphine le Maire,
Vice-President, EUDY

Steven Mulvaney,
President, Maltese Deaf Association

PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL

The Presidency of the Council is essential to the work of the European Union institutions. It is the driving force in the legislative and political decision-making process. One Member State (MS) presides over the Council

for a period of six months. In the first half of 2012 Denmark held the role of the Presidency, followed by Cyprus in the second half of the year.

EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley attended the Danish Presidency Disability Conference on 5 and 6 March 2012 in Copenhagen. The two-day conference concentrated on accessibility and participation for people with disabilities and was organised by the Danish Ministry of Social Affairs and Integration. Mary, Crown Princess of Denmark, Commission representatives, and Ministers from Denmark opened the

conference. MEP Ádám Kósa congratulated the Danish Presidency for taking up the topic of disability, which had been neglected by the previous Polish Presidency. Furthermore, Johan ten Geuzendam, the Head of Unit for the Integration of People with Disabilities presented the proposed European Accessibility Act and the preceding Public Consultation that EUD answered in consultation with EDF and in a standalone response.

DISABILITY CONFERENCE – DANISH PRESIDENCY

MEP Ádám Kósa

Mary, Crown Princess of Denmark

Aurel Ciobanu-Dordea,
Director for Equality, DG Justice,
European Commission



EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley and EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch attended the sixth annual Equality Summit jointly organised by the Cypriot Presidency and the European Commission. The Summit brought together over 250 political stakeholders, civil society representatives, independent experts, and business leaders to discuss the impact

of equality legislation in view of economic growth. The social obligations of the Member States as well as the business case of equality legislation were debated in high-level panels and workshops. EUD took the opportunity to discuss the pending horizontal Anti-Discrimination Directive and educational measures to combat inequalities at all stages.

EQUALITY SUMMIT – CYPRIOT PRESIDENCY



CYPRUS PRESIDENCY OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

The successful EUD internship programme that was installed in 2011 was continued in 2012. The internship aims at giving young Deaf Europeans the chance to learn about EUD's policy work and its internal structure and use that knowledge in their home countries to support and inspire the local Deaf Community, and in particular younger Deaf people. The interns are able to work on their International Sign skills while experiencing a truly European work environment. At the same time EUD staff can benefit from unique input that the interns bring from their various different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.



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Two interns joined the EUD team for three months each. In the first half of the year the EUD office had the pleasure of hosting Netta Keski-Levijoki from Finland and Christophe De Clerck from Belgium joined us after the summer. While Netta was of tremendous help with the EUD General Assembly in Copenhagen, Christophe was most active in representing EUD at external events in and out of Brussels. Both interns were of great assistance to the whole team, providing videos in International Sign, and writing articles, as well as providing analyses of current political issues.



Netta Keski-Levijoki, Finland



Christophe De Clerck, Belgium

EUD ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Austria - Österreichischer Gehörlosenbund (ÖGLB), **Belgium** - Federatie van Vlaamse Doven Organisaties (FEVLADO), **Fédération Francophone des Sourds de Belgique** (FFSB), **Bulgaria** - Съюз на глухите в България (СГБ / UDB), **Cyprus** - Ομοσπονδία Κωφών Κύπρου, **Czech Republic** - Svaz neslyšících a nedoslýchavých v ČR (UDHH), **Denmark** - Danske Døves Landsforbund (DDL), **Estonia** - Eesti Kurtide Liit (EAD), **Finland** - Kuurojen Liitto (FAD), **France** - Fédération Nationale des Sourds de France (FNSF), **Germany** - Deutscher Gehörlosen-Bund (DGB), **Greece** - Ομοσπονδία Κωφών Ελλάδος (HFD), **Hungary** - Siketek és Nagyothallók Országos Szövetsége (SINOSZ), **Iceland** - Félag heyrnarlausra, **Ireland** - Irish Deaf Society (IDS), **Italy** - Ente Nazionale Sordi (ENS), **Latvia** - Latvijas Nedzirdīgo savienība (LAD), **Lithuania** - Lietuvos kurčiųjų draugija, **Luxembourg** - Vereinigung der Gehörlosen und Schwerhörigen Luxemburg (VGSL), **Malta** - Għaqda Persuni Neqsin mis-Smigh, **Netherlands** - Dovenschap, **Norway** - Norges Døveforbund (NDF), **Poland** - Polski Związek Głuchych (PZG), **Portugal** - Federação Portuguesa das Associações de Surdos (FPAS), **Romania** - Asociația Națională a Surzilor din România (ANSR), **Slovakia** - Asociácia nepočujúcich Slovenska (ANEPS), **Slovenia** - Zveza društev gluhih in naglušnih Slovenije, **Spain** - Confederación Estatal de Personas Sordas (CNSE), **Sweden** - Sveriges Dövas Riksförbund (SDR), **Switzerland** - Schweizerischen Gehörlosenbund, **Fédération Suisse des Sourds**, **Federazione Svizzera dei Sordi** (SGB-FSS), **United Kingdom** - British Deaf Association (BDA)

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Intern
Netta Keski-Levijoki
(March – June)
Turku, Finland



Intern
Christophe De Clerck
(September – December)
Brussels, Belgium

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The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

For more information see:

<http://ec.europa.eu/progress>

The information contained in this report does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.

