



# 2013 IMPACT REPORT



EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EUD would like to thank the European Commission for funding this 2013 Impact Report under the auspices of the PROGRESS programme. Without their substantial financial contributions the publication of this report would not have been possible.

The support by both the previous and the newly elected EUD Boards and Presidents have been of invaluable help to create an accurate and up-to-date account of the EUD activities in 2013:

### **Outgoing Board (2009 - 2013):**

President ..... Berglind Stefánsdóttir

Vice-President .... Yannis Yallouros

Board Member .... Dr Gergely Tapolczai

Board Member .... Dr Humberto Insolera

Board Member .... Asger Bergmann

### **Incoming Board (from May 2013):**

President ..... Dr Markku Jokinen

Vice-President .... Dr Humberto Insolera

Board Member .... Louise Danielsson

Board Member .... Alfredo Gómez Fernández

Board Member .... Dr Gergely Tapolczai

The EUD interns Elsa Brunemalm, Stephanie Johnston, Jana Havlová, and Sigríður Vala Jóhannsdóttir, along with all members of staff contributed to this up-to-date 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 great partner in all our work, informing us and collaborating with our Board and staff, via email and in person in and out of Brussels.

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


## FOREWORD BY EUD PRESIDENT

I was only recently elected EUD President at the General Assembly in Dublin, Ireland. Therefore, I must give my respect to the previous Board Members and President Berglind Stefánsdóttir for their impressive work in the past five years. They and the expanded team have worked tirelessly to make EUD into the visible European-level organisation it is today.

I am proud to be taking over as President at such a crucial time, when the European Parliament will be re-elected and citizenship rights are at the heart of the European agenda. It is EUD's aim to ensure Deaf sign language users can become citizens in their own right by empowering them through accessible information. The EUD Election Campaign plays a vital role in raising awareness for key policymakers and Deaf citizens, ensuring everyone can take part in the full election process.

It is a particularly great honour for EUD to be leading the European Commission's Pilot Project on the accessibility of the EU institutions and I look forward to the first results of the high-level consortium at the beginning of 2014.

I look forward to the next years as EUD President, working together with the other Board Members, EUD staff, and our Member NADs. I hope you will enjoy reading this publication and see it as an inspiration for next year's work.



Dr Markku Jokinen  
EUD President

## EUD INTRODUCTION

### EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF

Based in Brussels, Belgium EUD is a not-for-profit European non-governmental organisation (ENGO) 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 ENGOs representing associations in all 28 EU Member States, including Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland. EU acceding, candidate, and potential member countries, such as Serbia or Turkey can choose to become affiliated members with the option to become full members as soon as they officially enter the EU.

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. EUD also has signed an MoU with both the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efsl) and the European Union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY).

### 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 BOARD ELECTIONS

This year saw EUD members electing a new Board and President at our General Assembly in Dublin. EUD's new President is Dr Markku Jokinen and from Finland. The former World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) President is supported by the Vice-President from Italy: Dr Humberto Insolera. The other Board Members are: Louise "Lolo" Danielsson from Sweden, Alfredo Gómez Fernández from Spain, and Dr Gergely Tapolczai from Hungary.

The President was elected by a majority of 56% of the votes by delegates from 28 different countries. For the first time the full election was broadcast live via web

stream and followed by over 1,000 persons around Europe and the world. This was a step towards making the EUD Board elections more inclusive and transparent, bringing the political process closer to all Deaf citizens.

The new Board members started their official posts after the 2013 GA was formally closed by former President, Berglind Stefánsdóttir, who has stepped down to re-focus on her career as the head of a well-known research institute for the Deaf. At the same time the delegates unanimously awarded the Icelandic honorary membership of EUD.

**Helga Stevens**

Chair of EUD General Assembly



**Rudolf Sailer**

President  
German Deaf Association



**EUD Board from May 2013**

Left to right: Dr Markku Jokinen,  
Dr Humberto Insolera,  
Louise Danielsson,  
Dr Gergely Tapolczai,  
Alfredo Gómez Fernández






## EUD INITIATIVES



EUD regularly plans and carries out campaigns, workshops, and other pan-European events to reach out to the Deaf community but also wider hearing society and key European and national policymakers.

### ELECTION CAMPAIGN

EUD is fully aware of the importance of the upcoming European Parliament elections in restoring faith into the European project. Furthermore, EUD believes that it is crucial to include Deaf sign language users into the election process, ensuring that they also can fully enjoy their Union citizenship rights, as enshrined in the Treaties. To contribute

to the awareness rising, in conjunction with the European Year of Citizens, EUD have created an election manifesto, which aims at achieving a certain level of accessibility of a large number of MEP websites and social media sites. EUD have been working in close co-operation with its member NADs and have asked MEPs to commit to the following:

-  Translate at least one page on the campaign website/social media site into sign language (national or International Sign)
-  Subtitle at least one video that contains spoken content on the campaign website/social media site
-  Hold at least one conference or event that provides sign language interpretation and speech-to-text reporting

-  Organise at least one open citizens' session in the home constituency that allows Deaf persons to participate fully using their preferred method of communication
-  Make use of the Commission's pilot project video sign language interpreting service at least once to communicate with a Deaf citizen.



Alfredo Gómez Fernández  
EUD Board member

MEP Rosa Estaràs Ferragut  
Spain

So far 19 MEPs have signed the manifesto and EUD will continue lobbying policymakers to sign and implement the manifesto before the elections in May 2014.

| Country     | Numbers |
|-------------|---------|
| Austria     | 1       |
| Cyprus      | 1       |
| Finland     | 5       |
| Germany     | 2       |
| Ireland     | 1       |
| Netherlands | 1       |
| Spain       | 7       |

| Political Party | Numbers |
|-----------------|---------|
| EPP             | 5       |
| S&D             | 8       |
| ALDE            | 5       |
| NI              | 1       |



## UNCRPD EVENT

After the EU ratified the UNCRPD, EUD has become aware of the data deficit when it comes to the implementation of Deaf-related issues. For the past year EUD has been working on the evaluation and analysis of the data collected, contributing to harmonised statistics in all EU Member States. The survey was a combination of three separate surveys, directed at three distinct target groups, tackling UNCRPD issues from three different angles, to ensure balanced and comprehensive outcomes. The full report was launched at the European Parliament in November, at an event hosted by MEP Jutta Steinruck. It was well received with more than 50 attendants from in and around Brussels and Europe. EUD President Dr Markku Jokinen, EDF (European Disability Forum) Executive Board Member Yannis Yallouros, and Johan ten Geuzendam,

European Commission Head of Unit on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities welcomed the audience before key speeches were given by:

- **MEP Dr Ádám Kósa**  
President of the Disability Intergroup
- **Caroline Harvey**  
Human Rights Officer  
Secretariat of the UNCRPD Committee
- **Helga Stevens**  
Member of the Flemish Parliament  
and Belgian Federal Parliament

After a successful reception Mark Wheatley, EUD Executive Director presented and launched the UNCRPD Survey, which can now be downloaded from the EUD website.

**Caroline Harvey**  
Human Rights Officer  
Secretariat of the UNCRPD Committee



EUD UNCRPD Survey



## EUD INITIATIVES

### INTERVIEW WITH VICE-PRESIDENT VIVIANE REDING

EUD had the rare opportunity to interview Vice-President of the European Commission Viviane Reding. EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley asked Vice-President Reding questions regarding her personal motivation

to get Deaf sign language users involved at European level and what concrete suggestions she can give to the Luxembourg Deaf community to have their sign language recognised at national level. After the interview the EUD team was able to present Viviane Reding with a copy of the second edition of the EUD book on sign language legislation, following her patronage at the launch of the first publication in 2010.



**Mark Wheatley**  
EUD Executive Director



**Viviane Reding**  
Vice-President  
European Commission

### WORKSHOP

Every year, EUD organises a workshop for its members. This year's workshop was divided into two main parts: the EUD 2014-2020 Strategic Plan and the revised EUD Statutes & Internal Rules, which were both

subject to approval in the GA that followed. The workshop was primarily intended to clarify critical questions in International Sign arising from the previously distributed written English documents to facilitate the GA process and ensure transparent and full participation of all members.



**Asger Bergmann**  
former EUD Board Member



EUD seminars are open to members and other interested parties from the wider Deaf Community, professionals, and political stakeholders. This year's EUD seminar was co-hosted and organised by EUD member IDS, the Irish Deaf Society. The theme 'Deaf citizens in the EU – what are our rights?' was chosen to reflect the European Year of Citizens 2013, which can be seen as a precursor to the European Parliament elections taking place in 2014. The joint seminar was held in Dublin, Ireland and focussed on various levels of citizenship, including political participation at both EU and local level. MEPs Dr Ádám Kósa

and Emer Costello set the scene by introducing European citizenship as enshrined in the Treaties and leading to the recognition of sign languages. Deaf scholar John Bosco Conama gave an academic account of citizenship while Professor Quinn explained the uniqueness of the UNCRPD in many dimensions. EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley rounded the seminar off by giving detailed information and statistics about the recent EUD UNCRPD survey regarding the implementation of the Convention in the EUD Member States.

## SEMINAR

EUD Seminar at Dublin



There are three Working Groups at EUD, focussing on current main issues of importance:

- **Deaf Lawyer**
- **Accessibility**
- **ICT**

Each group is chaired by one Board Member: Dr Gergely Tapolczai, Dr Humberto Insolera, and Alfredo Gómez Fernández respectively. The purposes of the EUD Working Groups are to create a forum to exchange ideas, to formulate recommendations for Member

States and at European level, as well as show good practices and negative examples. The groups met several times in 2013 via webcam. Topics included the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, employment accessibility, standardisation, and legal frameworks of all areas.

EUD would also like to thank former Board Member Asger Bergmann and former Vice-President Yannis Yallouros for their services as chairs for the past three years.

## WORKING GROUPS

EUD Accessibility Working Group



## EUD INITIATIVES

### SEMINAR ROMANIA

EUD held one of its quarterly Board Meetings in Bucharest, Romania. EUD Board and staff were present to liaise with our Member NAD in person. In particular, EUD and the Romanian Deaf Association held a seminar for the local Deaf Community. The EUD Board presented the organisation, sign language legislation in

the EU, and specifically also EUD's political work. Furthermore, EUD was able to also liaise with government representatives within the Romanian Disability unit, ensuring that the Romanian Deaf Association's voice is heard and has support also from a European-level organisation.



EUD Seminar at  
Romanian Deaf Association

### SEMINAR LITHUANIA

EUD's third Board Meeting of 2013 was held in Vilnius, Lithuania, following the Council Presidency. The Lithuanian Deaf Association welcomed the EUD Board and invited them to join their seminar. EUD President Dr Markku Jokinen from Finland opened the session in Vilnius together with the President of the Lithuanian NAD, Roma Kleckovskaja and introduced the EUD Board. The President of EUDY, the European Union of the Deaf Youth, Ronan Dunne also explained its Board structure and work. EUDY stressed the

importance of the co-operation between EUD and EUDY, following the recent Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Mark Wheatley, the EUD Executive Director, gave a brief overview of the situation of Deaf sign language users in Europe and introduced EUD's work and its structure, as well as its history. In particular, the Executive Director gave insights to statistics regarding the ratio of sign language interpreters to sign language users in different EU countries.



Roma Kleckovskaja  
President  
Lithuanian Deaf Association

The UNCRPD is and has been one of the main human rights instruments for EUD and its members to ensure full and equal participation of all Deaf sign language users in public and private life alike. The UNCRPD

is of critical importance to put legally binding provisions in place at all levels. It is EUD's aim to further the implementation process including legal adaptations and financial instruments.

## UNCRPD

### Committee Sessions Geneva

EUD is one of the only European-level NGOs to attend the UNCRPD Committee sessions in Geneva regularly and contribute actively. EUD and WFD representatives attended the 9th UNCRPD session in April. Paraguay, El Salvador, Austria, and Australia were among the countries analysed and EUD and WFD were able to learn from Deaf representatives from examined countries, as well as ensure that accessibility was provided on site. EUD also was in contact with Committee Members, most notably the recently elected Hungarian hard of hearing member Dr László Lovász.



Photo of Committee Sessions Geneva

Left to right:

Noppawan Thamsiriboon, Jenny Nilsson, Eeva Tupi, Annika Pabsch, Dr Joseph Murray

### Member Workshop

It is EUD's responsibility to provide its members with the tools and knowledge to lobby for and assist in the implementation of the UNCRPD. EUD therefore has started to provide accessible training in International Sign according to its members' needs. The first training of its kind was offered in Dublin, Ireland, following our workshops, seminar, and General Assembly. Participants from all around Ireland, as well as staff and Board members of the Irish Deaf Society (IDS) learned about the history of the UNCRPD, its links with the Deaf Community and how to lobby its local politicians to fight for the ratification of the UNCRPD in Ireland. The second seminar was held in Lithuania, following the EUD Board Meeting. The public seminar introduced EUD and its work, as well as presenting the UNCRPD and identifying lobbying strategies for future co-operation with national and European-level political stakeholders. EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch from Germany carried out both seminars, encouraging participants to become actively involved in the implementation of the UNCRPD. EUD hopes to provide further workshops in as many EUD member countries as possible to ensure the work at European level can take effect at the national and regional level.

### Staff Training

In view of continuous staff training and development EUD also offers internal staff training, especially for new staff and also its changing interns. In particular EUD focussed on two topics this year: the UNCRPD, as well as the EU institutions and legal procedures. It is integral for EUD's high quality lobbying and co-operation work to have highly qualified staff that possesses superior background information regarding EUD's main priorities. EUD is proud to offer these trainings in sign language and directly, without an intermediate interpreter. EUD envisions continuing these trainings in the future and will consider offering it to its members and other interested parties upon request.



Annika Pabsch  
EUD Policy Officer

## EUD INITIATIVES

### MEDIA

EUD is highly committed to giving its members and other interested parties, such as political stakeholders and the wider Deaf Community, fully accessible information via a range of channels.

The media outlets being used are:  
Website, Facebook Page, Twitter,  
Instagram and Newsletter

There was a development in the EUD Media and Communication Officer position earlier this year, as Lars Kundsén (Denmark) left his position after two and a half years. David Hay from the UK, who has a vast media experience after working for the BBC for more than two years, has filled the vacant position.

### 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.

#### Statistics

2012: Over 385,000 hits  
2013: Over 450,000 hits  
83,500 hits for international sign videos



Dr Markku Jokinen  
EUD President



Launch of INSIGN Project



Dr Ádám Kósa and his MEP Award



There are many annual European and international days to raise awareness regarding significant topics and issues and also for historical purposes. EUD has produced several clips in International Sign with English subtitles to enable the European Deaf Community to be informed about timely and important areas. Empowerment

through information is one of EUD's main long-term objectives, which EUD has been taking very seriously over the past year, not only focussing on 'Deaf-only' issues, but also topics of wider interest, such as the drop in European roaming charges, the World Toilet Day, or the European Day for Organ Donation.

## INTERNATIONAL DAYS

EUD Newsletter is fully accessible by providing written English and International Sign and releases 10 newsletters a year that summarise key events and news.

## NEWSLETTER

### Statistics

The newsletter is available via email and currently has over 165 subscribers from 20 different countries.

**David Hay**  
EUD Communication & Media Officer



May 2013



June 2013



September 2013



October 2013

## EUD INITIATIVES

### SOCIAL MEDIA

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.

#### Facebook

The official EUD Facebook page is our interactive platform of social media ahead of our Twitter and Instagram. In January 2013, we had 9,000 likes and we have managed to double it to 18,000 by the end of December 2013. Facebook complements our website information, mainly showcasing videos and photos. The page is targeted at the general public and its exposure to show our lobbying work along with various themes and events. We attract an average of 14,000 fans to our Page every day.



#### Twitter

Twitter is the place where tweets can go viral, keeping track of significant movements. Our busiest day was the General Assembly in Dublin, which witnessed the EUD Board elections taking place.



## Instagram

The funky social media tool enables us to show the artistic eye of the political world, as well as giving fans a look into the EUD backstage. It has attracted over 200 followers since its recent launch in September 2013.





## EUD INITIATIVES

### INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The successful EUD internship programme that was installed in 2011 was continued in 2012 and also 2013. The internship aims at giving young Deaf Europeans insights in 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 that is fully accessible. At the same time EUD staff can benefit from unique input that the interns bring from their various different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Elsa Brunemalm from Sweden was this year's first intern. She was of imperative assistance in the organisation of our workshops, seminar, and General Assembly, as well as our media strategy, including filming, social media, and press releases. EUD's ambitious campaign towards the 2014 European Parliament elections required substantive support and resulted in the hiring of two interns for the second half of 2013. Jana Havlová from the Czech Republic was the Policy Intern and

Sigríður Vala Jóhannsdóttir from Iceland supported the Communications & Media Officer. Both provided excellent support and increased EUD's visibility, especially through the EUD media channels.

EUD also welcomes interns outside of the official internship programme, as long as they are able to sustain themselves financially and match EUD's work programme and priorities. This year saw Stephanie Johnston from a prestigious American University join the EUD team. She supported our

Policy Officer in the UNCRPD, sign language legislation and our Media & Communication Officer in social media issues. Marsha Linnartz from Germany joined in the second half of 2013 as the events intern, supporting our reception in honour of the WFD President and the UNCRPD event at the European Parliament. Leyre Subijana Casado from Spain joined the EUD team in November as the Sign Language Interpreting Assistant and will be staying with us until May 2014. She greatly supported the EUD election campaign and internal communication.

*The interns are able to work on their International Sign skills while experiencing a truly European work environment that is fully accessible.*



Intern  
Media & Communication  
**Elsa Brunemalm**  
(March - June)  
Stockholm, Sweden



Intern  
Policy  
**Stephanie Johnston**  
(May - August)  
Boston, USA



Intern  
Media & Communication  
**Sigríður Vala Jóhannsdóttir**  
(September - December)  
Reykjavík, Iceland



Intern  
Policy  
**Jana Havlová**  
(September - December)  
Vysoká nad Labem, Czech Republic



Intern  
Events  
**Marsha Linnartz**  
(September - December)  
Wuppertal, Germany



Intern  
Sign Language Interpreting  
**Leyre Subijana**  
(November - May 2014)  
San Sebastián, Spain



## 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.

EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch attended the 2013 Zero Project conference in Vienna, Austria. This year the International Conference on Employment Rights focussed on Innovative Policies and Innovative Practices for Persons with Disabilities. The Zero Project aims at mapping the implementation of the UNCRPD, advocating a world for persons with disabilities that has zero barriers. The social

indicators developed are an essential tool in understanding the situation of disabled people around the world. The conference featured Helene Jarmer, Deaf politician from Austria, specifically stressing the need to increase media visibility of human rights breaches in relation to Deaf and disabled people.

### ZERO PROJECT CONFERENCE

Mark Wheatley, EUD Executive Director, attended the Deaf Expo and Conference organised by Doviana in Malmö, Sweden. He gave a presentation regarding EUD and human rights in the EU. One of the key aspects of his presentation was about how Swedish Deaf Communities could contribute to the UNCRPD shadow report by co-operating with their national deaf association (SDR) in the field of human rights. Mark Wheatley also

fielded a lot of questions from the audience, which was very keen to learn on the levels of participation.

### DEAF EXPO MALMÖ



The EUD President Markku Jokinen, Board Member Dr Gergely Tapolczai, and Executive Director Mark Wheatley attended the Education Congress organised by the Austrian Deaf Association (ÖGLB) and also took part in the 100-year festivities of the organisation. In his presentation the Executive Director focused on the main findings and conclusions of the EUD UNCRPD survey concerning education that was carried out in 2012 in International Sign. Mark Wheatley also stated

that IMF projected that the ratio of retirees to workers in Europe will double from four workers per retiree to two workers per retiree by the year 2050, which caused a stir as it emphasised the importance of accessible education for deaf children right now.

### EDUCATION CONFERENCE VIENNA



## EXTERNAL CO-OPERATION

EUD has benefitted greatly from co-operating with a number of European and international organisations, NGOs, and platforms.

Co-operation agreements and regular meetings are at the core of EUD's collaborative mode of operation.

### EUROPEAN FORUM OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS (efsl)

EUD and efsli have been co-operating for many years, assisting each other in issues that concern both organisations alike. EUD and efsli signed a renewed co-operation agreement in 2013 to strengthen collaborative agreements and activities between National Deaf and Sign Language Interpreting Associations and to exchange information and consult each other.

**Peter Llewellyn-Jones**  
efsli President



In December EUD representatives attended the European Parliament final conference regarding learning outcomes for graduates

of a three-year sign language interpreting training programme: Fully Trained Sign Language Interpreters = FULL ACCESS. EUD strongly supports the notion of fully trained interpreters in not only empowering Deaf sign language users but also facilitating quality services for Deaf citizens across the EU, and thereby ensuring the right to freedom of movement, as enshrined in the Treaties. The well-attended event hosted by MEPs Dr Ádám Kósa and Werner Kuhn bringing together high-level representatives from the Commission in the area of interpreting and translating, academics, and NGO representatives, such as the EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley.

EUD also congratulates the newly elected efsli Board and President Peter Llewellyn-Jones and wishes them all the best for the coming year.

### EUROPEAN UNION OF THE YOUTH DEAF (EUDY)

EUD and the European Union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY) have had an official Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) since 2012 but have been co-operating informally for many years. Since this year EUD has given EUDY space to host a full-time Executive Officer, supporting the day-to-day business of the youth

organisation. In particular, EUD was also represented at the EUDY General Assembly 2013, which took place in Berlin, Germany. A representative from EUDY also attended the EUD General Assembly in Dublin, Ireland to ensure continued and coherent co-operation, especially in view of both organisations' Board elections. EUD warmly welcomed the new EUDY Board, including a new President from Ireland (Ronan Dunne).



**EUDY Board**

From left to right: Benjamin Busch, Mimmi Granat, Ronan Dunne, Ariane Gerber, Richard Beattie

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

agreement in 2012. The WFD President Colin Allen attended the annual General Assembly in Dublin, Ireland this year and visited the EUD office in Brussels for the first time. EUD was pleased to hold a cocktail reception in his honour, welcoming representatives from European NADs, the European Parliament, and Deaf politicians.

#### WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF (WFD)

Colin Allen  
WFD President



The European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness that was established in 2012 continued its meetings in 2013. All members are at the same time members of EDF, the European Disability Forum:

- European Cochlear Implant Users (EURO-CIU)
- European Deafblind Network (EDbN)
- European Federation of Hard of Hearing (EFHOH)
- European Federation of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children (FEPEDA)
- European Union of the Deaf (EUD)

The Platform saw a positive increase in its members, with both EUDY, the European Union of the Deaf Youth and EDbU, the European Deafblind Union, joining in November. This means that now all European-level organisations in relation to deafness, hard of hearing, and deafblindness are part of the Platform.

The Platform successfully managed to lobby for two candidates to be elected into the EDF Board and Executive Committee respectively: Marcel Bobeldijk (EFHOH President) and Yannis Yallouros (former EUD Vice-President). Ricard Lopez from EDbN was also voted into the EDF Board.

#### EUROPEAN PLATFORM OF DEAFNESS, HARD OF HEARING AND DEAFBLINDNESS



## GREENS/EFA ACCESSIBILITY PROJECT

The Greens/European Free Alliance in the European Parliament have proven to continuously be a frontrunner when it comes to the inclusion of Deaf sign language users and hard of hearing citizens in their policy agenda. After starting their accessibility project last year, EUD and EFHOH attended regular meetings with representatives from the Greens/EFA group to further improve their already high accessibility. Apart from several fully accessible conferences both

on site and via live stream, their website has been completely changed, to feature signed content and subtitles. Additionally, a first Question and Answer Session with Co-chair Rebecca Harms solely for Deaf and Hard of Hearing citizens was organised, with EUD asking critical questions regarding the upcoming European Parliament Elections and the employment/educational communication support situation in view of the economic crisis.



**Oliver Pouliot**  
International Sign Interpreter

**Maya De Wit**  
International Sign Interpreter

## EUROPE DAY

Europe Day is held each year on 9 May to celebrate peace and unity in Europe, marking the anniversary of the historical 'Schuman declaration', widely considered as one of the main documents leading to the so-called founding treaties of the EU. Each year around the day the European institutions open its doors to its citizens. Previously, Deaf citizens had been excluded from this unique opportunity but this year EUD was involved in ensuring that Deaf sign language users

were also able to attend guided tours of the Council building in Brussels. The event proved a large success for the organisers, yielding more than 60 registrations. After EUD had already successfully been lobbying for the sign language accessibility of the Parliamentarium in 2012 this is a second major improvement concerning institutional access. EUD will continue working towards further equal access in 2014, especially in view of the European Parliament elections.



European Council  
Brussels



The European Commission is the main legislative organ of the European Union with 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. EUD regularly attends high-level events and conferences, in particular in relation to the UNCRPD and disability issues in general.

EUD Board Member and Member of the Hungarian Parliament Dr Gergely Tapolczai attended the annual Work Forum on the Implementation of the UNCRPD in the EU, along with EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch, and Policy Intern Jana Havlová. This year's Work Forum had a special focus on the

shared and exclusive competences of the EU with regard to the UNCRPD. Presentations from a large range of experts, including UNCRPD Committee Members, Commission representatives, national disability organisations, and independent experts, as well as renowned academics.

#### WORK FORUM ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNCRPD



Dr Gergely Tapolczai  
EUD Board Member

EUD consistently attends the annual conference organised by the European Commission and the European Disability Forum (EDF) on the occasion of the European Day of Persons with Disabilities (EDPD). This year's event had a strong focus on regional

tourism and accessible tourism beyond disability issues. EUD was pleased to see that this year's presenters managed to focus on access to information also for Deaf sign language users and congratulates Gothenburg to receive the Access City Award 2013.

#### EUROPEAN DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



## PILOT PROJECT

EUD – for the first time – is a leader in a large-scale European Commission project aiming at fostering the accessibility of the European institutions, in particular in view of the upcoming 2014 European Parliament elections. The project consortium consists of six partners:

The Pilot Project for improving the communication between deaf and hard of hearing persons and the EU institutions is a big step for the Deaf Community in Europe and aims at having a spill over effect to the governments of the EU Member States.



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## 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), **Lativa** – Latvijas Nedzirdīgo savienība (LAD), **Lithuania** – Lietuvos kurčiųjų draugija, **Luxembourg** – Vereinigung der Gehörlosen und Schwerhörigen Luxemburg (VGSL), **Malta** – Għaqda Persuni Neqsini 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)

### NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF THE DEAF

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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.

