



ACT. REACT. IMPACT.

2014

2014 IMPACT REPORT

14



EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EUD would like to thank the European Commission for funding this 2014 Impact Report under a JUST 2013 Action Grant. Without their substantial financial contributions the publication of this report would not have been possible.

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 2014:

Board 2014:

President Dr Markku Jokinen
Vice-President Dr Humberto Insolera
Board Member Louise "Lolo" Danielsson
Board Member Alfredo Gómez Fernández
Board Member Dr Gergely Tapolczai

The EUD interns Claudia Gawlas and Tina Vrbanić, 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 and co-operating with us throughout the year.

The European Disability Forum (EDF), our European disability umbrella organisation, 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 aspires to continue this fruitful co-operation in the coming years.

FOREWORD BY EUD PRESIDENT

2014 has been a very exciting and important year with the election of a new European Parliament. Our campaign with the election manifesto prior to voting resulted in 92 Members of European Parliament (MEPs) committing to more accessible information and communication with deaf sign language users in the EU. The work with the manifesto will carry on by ensuring the realisation behind the commitments in the manifesto while we continued to expand the list of signatures to ensure increased political participation in Europe in future elections for deaf people.

We especially want to congratulate Dr Ádám Kósa and Helga Stevens. Ádám for his re-election into the European Parliament for a second term and Helga for her positions as the second deaf MEP and the first deaf woman to be elected into the European Parliament. We are very pleased with this increased visibility, awareness and political participation of deaf citizens and we aspire to see this positive development continue.

With a new European Parliament and European Commission in place, we are looking forward to good cooperation in the

years to come. The important work continues and we hope for support during the coming 5-year term from all re-elected, newly elected MEPs and recently appointed Commissioners, which we hope will result in the adoption of the European Accessibility Act.

In early 2014, EUD was proud to present the release of the book: UNCRPD Implementation in Europe – A Deaf Perspective, focusing on Article 29, Participation in Political and Public Life. As the book emphasises the right to participation, both as a voter and as a political candidate, we hope this will inspire deaf persons to become more active in both political and public life. It is also important to recognise that there were five deaf candidates running for election to the European Parliament. We hope that this will continue with more deaf political candidates in future election, both at national and European level.

This past year, EUD has also been the leader of a large-scale European Commission project, working with accessibility to the EU institutions. The project, called Insign, has developed a communication tool for deaf and hard of hearing people to call representatives in the Parliament or the Commission for example. We would like to thank the European Commission DG Justice for its funding in making this project possible. We are proud to have been a part of this project and hopes the product will remain a tool for

the EU institutions and all Member States in the future to increase the participation of deaf and hard of hearing people in public life.

Great achievements have also occurred in several of our member associations. In Denmark, a great milestone was finally reached with the official recognition of Danish Sign Language. In both Spain and Slovakia, a national Sign Language Day has been introduced. It is important to highlight these achievements, as it shows that hard work and dedication pays off in the end and to use these for further motivation.

There have also been some changes in the EUD staff this past year. We said goodbye to Policy Officer Annika Pabsch and we wish her good luck with her future challenges. Two new staff members joined the team: Policy Officer, Petra Söderqvist from Sweden and Administrative Assistant, Heather Daley from Belgium/USA.

2015 has been appointed 'The European Year for Development' and we hope for further cooperation, achievements and developments during the next year. This aspiration extends to all our partners and member associations, in particular to Croatia, who this year became a full member of EUD. 2015 will also be a memorable year for EUD as it is our 30-year anniversary and we look forward to celebrating this with all our members.



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 of 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.

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. EUD also has signed MoUs with both the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efsli) 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 its 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 with national minorities, are in need of specific targeted and coherent protection regarding their language and all Human Rights. 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, such as the right to

equal education, information or to 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) 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 regularly plans and carries out campaigns, workshops and other pan-European events to reach out to the deaf community, in addition

to the wider hearing society and key European and national policymakers.

In view of the European Parliament elections in May 2014, the EUD team concentrated its efforts on preparing and starting a manifesto campaign. The campaign that started in 2013, resumed in 2014 and gathered over 90 MEP signatures from a variety of countries.

EUD believes that it is crucial to include deaf sign language users in the election process, ensuring that they can fully enjoy their Union citizenship rights as enshrined in Treaties. To contribute to awareness rising, in conjunction with the European Year of Citizens, EUD 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.

EUD ELECTION MANIFESTO

Nils Torvalds
Member of European Parliament



EUD Election Manifesto



EUD INITIATIVES

MANIFESTO EVENT

An event was organised at the European Parliament to celebrate and honour the achievements of the EUD team in gathering a large number of MEP signatures. MEP Jutta Steinruck hosted the event and Disability Intergroup Chair MEP Dr. Ádám Kósa praised EUD's work, which was introduced by EUD

Board Member Alfredo Gómez Fernández. The large exhibition featuring the signed manifestos stayed at the European Parliament for several days to ensure many MEPs and other political stakeholders, as well as partners, were informed about the campaign.



EUD Manifesto Exhibition
Left to right: MEP Dr. Ádám Kósa,
MEP Jutta Steinruck,
Alfredo Gómez Fernández



EUD Board Member, Louise "Lolo" Danielsson, met with Swedish Members of European Parliament from different political parties and their staff. The purpose of the meetings was to introduce and promote EUD; who we represent, what our goals are with equal rights for deaf, and to introduce the work to increase political participation and the manifesto campaign. During the meetings different topics

were discussed depending on the mutual prioritised questions for EUD and the MEP, for example employment, education, human rights, citizen's rights and justice. The meetings also highlighted that EUD both has a Board Member and Staff Member from Sweden. The meetings were successful and good contact was established with the aim of cooperation in the future and signing of the manifesto.

MEETINGS WITH SWEDISH MEPS

Marita Ulvskog
Member of European Parliament



In co-operation with Ghent University, EUD was involved in organising an international conference focusing on Sign Language, Sustainable Development and Equal Opportunities on 29 and 30 April 2014. The conference focussed on theoretical viewpoints and real-life examples of sustainable development for deaf and sign language communities. European and international speakers, including EUD President Dr Markku Jokinen and EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch, were brought together to discuss sustainable perspectives with regard to education, sign language legislation, deaf identity in addition to human rights and citizenship, among others.

The well-received conference program was as diverse as it was international. On the first day the predominantly Belgian audience saw: Prof. Dr. Anne De Paepe, President of Ghent University; Bob Van den Broeck, Advisor Flemish Ministry of Equal Opportunities Cabinet of Mr. Pascal Smet, Flemish Minister of Education, Youth, Equal Opportunities and Brussels Affairs and the EUD President open the conference. Helga Stevens, Flemish Deaf Association President, opened the second day of fruitful multi and interdisciplinary sustainable discussions.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SIGN LANGUAGE, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Ghent University
Ghent, Belgium



EUD INITIATIVES

INSIGN PROJECT

The Insign Project is a one year pilot project, funded by the European Commission, DG Justice, that aims to empower deaf and hard of hearing (HoH) citizens to communicate with their European political representatives and public administrations.

Using a web-based platform, Insign can provide callers with a number of ways to contact each other. Callers can choose to make calls through a sign language interpreting service and/or captioning service. Based on the concept of Total Conversation, and with the high quality technology developed during the pilot project, deaf and hard of hearing people can enjoy making video or voice and real-time text calls in a language of their choice (both spoken and signed).

Lead by EUD, a consortium of six well-established organisations from four EU Members states are working on this Insign pilot project, ensuring amongst other aspects, academic research, sustainability and an operational free software.

The project consortium consists of six well-established organizations, from four European Member States working in co-operation ensuring amongst other aspects including academic research, sustainability and an operational free software; The European Union of the Deaf (EUD) based in Belgium, dnextep consulting S.L. (Designit) from their office in Spain, Interactivité Vidéo et Systèmes (IVès), rooted in France, Significan't Limited (SignVideo, distributing from the UK, Heriot-Watt University (HWU), also based in the UK, and the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (esfli), based in Belgium.



Insign Second Demonstration,
Charlemagne Building,
Brussels, Belgium

In its historic General Assembly, EUD unanimously welcomed the Croatian Deaf Association (Hrvatski savez gluhih i nagluhih) as its 31st Full Member, after Croatia had acceded to the EU on 1 July 2013.

The EUD members also approved substantial changes in the statutes and internal rules. The aim was to incorporate a more social model of disability in line with the UNCRPD and other human rights instruments, as well as to include the considerable changes in the EUD office and its working structures.

Murray Holmes, former chair of the EUD member BDA, the British Deaf Association,

and former WFD Board Member, chaired the General Assembly throughout the weekend. EUD wishes to thank Murray for his dedication and support during the GA.

The General Assembly received a visit from Yannis Vardakastanis, the longstanding EDF President. Members were informed about recent EDF activities and look forward to further enhancing co-operation with the European Disability Forum, EUD's disability umbrella organisation.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Andrija Halec
President, Croatian Association of
Deaf and Hard of Hearing



Murray Holmes
Chair of EUD General Assembly



Yannis Vardakastanis
EDF President



EUD INITIATIVES

WORKSHOP

Every year EUD organises a workshop for its members prior to the General Assembly. This year's workshops focused on the Insign project, the EUD manifesto and the EUD Internal Rules and Statutes.

The Insign team and partners presented their project and demonstrated the online platform for video interpreting services for deaf users and European Union institution representatives. Deaf delegates had the

opportunity to test the platform while the consortium was able to collect feedback which will feed into the research part of the one-year pilot project.

EUD Board Member Alfredo Gómez Fernández led the workshop and information session on the EUD manifesto. Alfredo explained the significance of the manifesto for the deaf community and its future impacts.

The last part of the workshop sessions was intended to provide delegates with more information on the substantial legal changes of the EUD Statutes and Internal Rules. Led by EUD Board Member Dr Gergely Tapolczai and EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch, it clarified different areas of both texts and achieved the subsequent approval at the General Assembly.



Alfredo Gómez Fernández
EUD Board Member

SEMINAR

EUD seminars are open to members and other interested parties from the wider deaf community, professionals and political stakeholders. In line with the European Parliament's election campaign to raise awareness of EU citizenship rights, the seminar was entitled: Act. React. Impact. The joint seminar organised in co-operation with the Hellenic Federation of the Deaf (HFD), was first opened by a number of representatives from EUD partner organisations, such as WFD, efsli and EUDY. The second introductory session was chaired by HFD President Yannis Yallouros and included representatives from the European Commission in Greece and a ministerial spokesperson.

A large range of different speakers were involved in the densely packed seminar programme. Presentations gave participants insights into topics such as: the European Parliament, the 2014 elections, Dr Ádám Kósa's work, the EUD election campaign and interpreting in the political sphere. The afternoon session focussed on the Athens Declaration, signed jointly by all EUD members in an effort to urge the Hellenic government to take policy and legal measures, including constitutional recognition of Greek Sign Language. This was drafted in consultation with the Hellenic Federation of the Deaf to ensure the full and equal participation of deaf sign language users in Greek society. Furthermore, the EUD President and the EUD Policy Officer launched the EUD publication series on the implementation of the UNCRPD.



EUD Seminar
Athens, Greece

In October EUD organised a reception in honour of the two deaf MEPs who were elected in May: Dr Ádám Kósa and Helga Stevens. Kósa from Hungary was re-elected after he first successfully entered the European Parliament in 2009. Stevens, herself from Belgium (Flanders) and active at regional and national level for many years, has now shifted her focus to the European level.

Executive Director, Mark Wheatley gave the MEPs an EUD pin as a token of appreciation

EUD Reception
EUD Office, Brussels, Belgium

but it was also a gesture to symbolise the tripartite understanding and co-operation efforts for enhance rights of sign language users.

The video coverage of the Reception has had a global reach of more than 16,000 people, so far.



RECEPTION FOR DEAF MEPS

There are three Working Groups at EUD focussing on current main issues of importance, or topics that the General Assembly decides to have been a priority:

- Deaf Lawyer
- Accessibility
- ICT

Each group is chaired by one Board Member: Dr Gergely Tapolczai, Dr Humberto Insolera and Alfredo Gómez Fernández respectively. The purpose of each 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. In 2014 the groups mainly worked via email and individual webcam meetings.

The Deaf lawyer group was a large factor in determining the adoption of the Statutes

Voting in General Assembly
Athens, Greece

& Internal Rules at the GA. Legal input and advice was given to ensure the documents were compliant with current legislation and models of disability.

The Accessibility working group created the latest EUD position paper, detailing the accessibility of elevators. After internal debates and approval by the Board, the paper was also adopted at the General Assembly.

The ICT group did not specifically focus on any topics but was instrumental in providing valuable feedback to the EDF ICT expert group, ensuring that EDF received adequate information in relation to deaf sign language users.



WORKING GROUPS

EUD INITIATIVES

SEMINAR ESTONIA

EUD held one of its quarterly Board Meetings in Tallinn, Estonia. EUD Board and staff were present to liaise with our Member NAD in person. EUD also had the opportunity to meet with the National Disability Council to exchange information and share working practices. Both EUD and the Estonian Deaf Association held a seminar for the local deaf community. EUD Board members and staff introduced EUD's work to the Estonian Deaf community. EUD's interactive presentation explained EUD's structure, its members, as

well as its vision to achieve equality in public and private life for deaf sign language users. All Board Members gave specific examples from their home countries about sign language interpreting services, legislation and education. Board members explained the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and showcased the four deaf politicians active in Europe (Austria, Belgium and Hungary with 2, one is a Member of the Parliament and one as a Member of European Parliament).



EUD Seminar
Tallinn, Estonia

SEMINAR ITALY

In Rome, Italy, the Board and staff met with the Italian Deaf Association and got the opportunity to learn more about deaf history in Italy and its relevance to the world, as the Italian Deaf Association has a very extensive collection and archive of deaf history. EUD also organised a training session on the UNCRPD and the Board held a workshop on

recognition of sign language in different EU countries and best practice associated with having that realised. These sessions attracted over a hundred participants relished the opportunity to gain tips and further motivation in their own advocacy work for the recognition of Italian sign language.



EUD Seminar
Rome, Italy

UNCRPD

EUD has been working with the UNCRPD, the only international instrument focusing on persons with disabilities and significantly, the only one that explicitly mentions sign

language. After the EU's ratification of the Convention in 2010, 2014 was a significant year due to the European Commission issuing its initial report to the UNCRPD Committee.

Member Workshop

As part of EUD's commitment to capacity building of its members and the European deaf community in general, EUD regularly offers training in a number of areas, most notably the UNCRPD. Trainings are offered to both member association staff and Boards, as well as regional representatives or other interested parties.

In 2014 EUD organised two full-day workshops for its member association FFSB, the French-speaking Federation of the Deaf Belgians, to ensure that representatives could fully benefit from this year's UNCRPD Committee sessions, which analysed Belgium, among others.

The Swiss Deaf Federation also benefitted from a full-day workshop, organised around the UNCRPD Committee session. Board members and staff were informed about the reporting process, the situation of sign language legislation in Europe and how they could get involved at national, regional and local level.

A two-day programme was organised by the Danish Deaf Association, as part of an initiative by the Nordic Council of the Deaf. EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch was invited to present, in particular, on the complex issue of reasonable accommodation and its application in the EU legislative framework in view of the UNCRPD implementation. Representatives from the Danish, Finnish, Swedish, Norwegian and Faroe Islands Deaf Associations were present.

The Italian Deaf Association also invited EUD to conduct training on the UNCRPD. This attracted many participants from all over Italy who now have an advanced understanding and context of the convention. This also gave further motivation and inspiration for the Italian Deaf Association in regard to their own work, continuing to work for the recognition of Italian sign language.

Committee Sessions Geneva

EUD regularly attends and actively contributes to the UNCRPD Committee sessions, as one of the only European-level NGOs representing deaf people and sign language. The aim is to not only support and encourage our member associations to follow suit but to also be able to provide up-to-date information and training to the whole European deaf community. EUD works in close co-operation with WFD to ensure that accessibility of each Committee session is guaranteed and maintained. EUD produced an accessible information video, giving examples of our member NADs' involvement in previous sessions and the preparatory processes, including the reporting procedures.



Parallel Report European Union

In preparation for the EU-level parallel report of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, EUD prepared and published its UNCRPD survey in 2013. Not only did the comprehensive survey serve to provide accurate and broad data on a large number of UNCRPD articles, it also provided the basis for further analysis of the draft EDF parallel report. EUD has provided feedback into this report.

The European Disability Forum, the leading disability organisation in Europe, of which EUD is a full member, has been charged with drafting the first parallel or alternative report of the European Union.

UNCRPD Workshop,
French-speaking Federation
of the Deaf Belgians (FFSB),
Brussels, Belgium

EUD MAN 2014

| Name | Date signed |
|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Jorgo Chatzimarkakis | 13 · 11 · 2013 |
| Emer Costello | 13 · 11 · 2013 |
| Jutta Steinruck | 27 · 11 · 2013 |
| Iratxe García Pérez | 27 · 11 · 2013 |
| Izaskun Bilbao Barandica | 28 · 11 · 2013 |
| Rosa Estaràs Ferragut | 28 · 11 · 2013 |
| Mitro Repo | 28 · 11 · 2013 |
| Liisa Jaakonsaari | 28 · 11 · 2013 |
| Salvador Sedó i Alabart | 28 · 11 · 2013 |
| Francisco Sosa Wagner | 28 · 11 · 2013 |
| Luis Yanez Garcia | 28 · 11 · 2013 |
| Antigoni Papadopoulou | 02 · 12 · 2013 |
| Anneli Jäätteenmäki | 03 · 12 · 2013 |
| Heinz K. Becker | 04 · 12 · 2013 |
| Nils Torvalds | 16 · 12 · 2013 |
| Sirpa Pietikäinen | 16 · 12 · 2013 |
| Gerben-Jan Gerbrandy | 17 · 12 · 2013 |
| Sylvie Guillaume | 18 · 12 · 2013 |
| Gabriel Mato Adrover | 18 · 12 · 2013 |
| Iñaki Irazabalbeitia | 09 · 01 · 2014 |
| Catherine Trautmann | 15 · 01 · 2014 |
| Ricardo Cortés Lastra | 20 · 01 · 2014 |
| Emilio Menéndez del Valle | 20 · 01 · 2014 |
| Salvador Garriga Polledo | 21 · 01 · 2014 |
| Olga Sehnalová | 21 · 01 · 2014 |
| Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines | 21 · 01 · 2014 |
| Kathleen Van Brempt | 22 · 01 · 2014 |
| Willy Meyer | 22 · 01 · 2014 |
| María Muñoz de Urquiza | 22 · 01 · 2014 |
| Miguel Angel Martínez | 22 · 01 · 2014 |
| Inés Ayala Sender | 22 · 01 · 2014 |
| Santiago Fisas Ayxela | 23 · 01 · 2014 |
| Sophia in't Veld | 23 · 01 · 2014 |
| Thijs Berman | 28 · 01 · 2014 |
| Jörg Leichtfried | 28 · 01 · 2014 |
| Josef Weidenholzer | 28 · 01 · 2014 |
| Marian Harkin | 29 · 01 · 2014 |
| Richard Howitt | 30 · 01 · 2014 |
| Jean Lambert | 30 · 01 · 2014 |
| Nicole Sinclaire | 30 · 01 · 2014 |
| Biljana Borza | 18 · 02 · 2014 |
| Marc Tarabella | 20 · 02 · 2014 |
| Andrey Kovatchev | 21 · 02 · 2014 |
| Gabrielle Zimmer | 25 · 02 · 2014 |
| Eva Lichtenberger | 25 · 02 · 2014 |
| Vladimir Urutchev | 25 · 02 · 2014 |



Whereas there are almost 1 million Deaf sign language users in the EU Member States, represented at European level by the European Union of the Deaf (EUD), a not-for-profit organisation aiming to achieve equality in public and private life for Deaf people all over Europe;

Whereas there remain significant obstacles for Deaf sign language users to access public information;

Whereas the European political processes remain largely inaccessible for the majority of Deaf sign language users, in particular the election process;

Bearing in mind European Union Citizenship as established in Article 20 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, in particular Article 20(2)b and Article 22 on the right to vote in view of the European Year of Citizens 2013;

Having regard to the Report on mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities and the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and the 2010 Brussels Declaration;

The undersigned political stakeholder declares – with civil society organisations a minimum standard of

- Translate at least one page on his or her campaign website or other medium;
- Subtitle at least one video that contains spoken content on his or her campaign;
- Hold at least one conference or event that provides sign language interpretation;
- Organise at least one open citizens' session in the home constituency that all
- Make use of the Commission's pilot project video sign language interpreting

The undersigned declares his or her long-term commitment to the preferably before the European Parliament elections 2014, and recog

Signature M

Date



MANIFESTO



Manifesto

Recalling the 1998 European Parliament Resolution on resolution on sign languages for the deaf;
 Reminding the European Union of its renewed commitment to the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020;
 Emphasising that the European Union ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2010;
 And taking into account the European Disability Forum 2013, expressing the joint commitment to support the European Union, and in particular noting article 4 on the accessibility of websites;
 The European Parliament as an institution representing all citizens recognises that there is a need to ensure the European Parliament elections 2014 are made more accessible to all citizens.

in his or her capabilities – to achieve in co-operation with the European Union of accessibility for Deaf voters, including the following:

including social media, into sign language (national or International Sign);
 on website or other medium;
 ion and speech-to-text reporting;
 lows Deaf persons to participate fully using their preferred method of communication;
 service at least once to communicate with a Deaf citizen.

above-mentioned objectives, the achievement within a reasonable timeframe,
 nises the continuous responsibility to provide accessible information to all citizens.

Signature EUD representative

Member of the EP



| Date signed | Name |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| 26 · 02 · 2014 | Niccolò Rinaldi |
| 25 · 02 · 2014 | Petri Sarvamaa |
| 25 · 02 · 2014 | Hannu Takkula |
| 26 · 02 · 2014 | Tarja Cronenberg |
| 26 · 02 · 2014 | Sari Essayah |
| 26 · 02 · 2014 | Sampo Terho |
| 04 · 03 · 2014 | Steven Cornelius |
| 04 · 03 · 2014 | Jill Evans |
| 10 · 03 · 2014 | Lara Comi |
| 11 · 03 · 2014 | Erminia Mazzoni |
| 18 · 03 · 2014 | Bart Staes |
| 19 · 03 · 2014 | Alojz Peterle |
| 19 · 03 · 2014 | Barbara Lochbihler |
| 20 · 03 · 2014 | Chrysoula Paliadeli |
| 28 · 01 · 2014 | Marietje Schaake |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Angelika Werthmann |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Gianni Pitella |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Ulrike Lunacek |
| 24 · 03 · 2014 | Martin Häusling |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Zoltàn Bago |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Erik Banki |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Tamas Deutsch |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Kinga Gal |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Ildiko Gall-Pelcz |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Béla Glattfelder |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Andras Gyürk |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Agnes Hankiss |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Livia Jaroka |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Ádám Kósa |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Csaba Öry |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | György Schöpflin |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Laszlo Surjan |
| 26 · 03 · 2014 | Jozsef Szajer |
| 25 · 03 · 2014 | Keith Taylor |
| 01 · 04 · 2014 | Lidia Joanna Geringer de Oedenberg |
| 01 · 04 · 2014 | Véronique de Keyser |
| 02 · 04 · 2014 | Frédéric Daerden |
| 02 · 04 · 2014 | Alejo Vidal-Quadras |
| 01 · 04 · 2014 | Veronica Lope Fontagne |
| 01 · 04 · 2014 | Teresa Jiménez-Becerril Barrio |
| 01 · 04 · 2014 | Andres Perello Rodriguez |
| 18 · 03 · 2014 | Eric Andrieu |
| 31 · 03 · 2014 | Michèle Striffler |
| 03 · 04 · 2014 | Reinhard Bütikofer |
| 23 · 04 · 2014 | Mark Demesmaeker |
| 12 · 05 · 2014 | Christine Revault d'Allonnes Bonnefoy |



EUD.EU

PUBLICATION SERIES

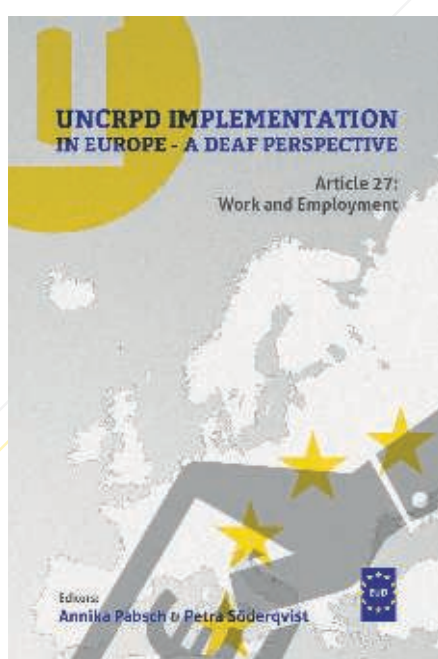
The EU's ratification of the UNCRPD means that there is now an obligation to implement enshrined rights in a timely manner. The legal implications of the Convention have been widely discussed at institutional level. As a result, it has become increasingly evident that this is a new and complex area, where international, European and national orders of law overlap. The

publication aims to contribute to and provide possible interpretations of the implementation of the Convention with regards to deaf citizens, including sign language users and hard of hearing persons. Each contribution in the series will explore a specific UNCRPD article from both an academic and best practice perspective, at all levels, from European to regional.



Participation in Political and Public Life

The first book in the series focuses in particular on Article 29 of the Convention. Public and political participation was explored from various angles, allowing for a broader definition of the article, moving away from the narrow understanding that merely just takes into account the right to vote. The diverse chapters represent a range of disciplines and professionals, for whom backgrounds span from political stakeholders, to academic scholars, and NGO representatives. Further examination is also made as to how the rights enshrined in article 29 are applicable to deaf citizens and how this has been ensured by State Parties.



Work and Employment

The second book is centred on Article 27 of the Convention: Work and employment. The subject of employment is tackled from a number of different viewpoints, including academic scholars, NGO representatives and political as well as institutional stakeholders. On the one hand, employment is analysed in the framework of reasonable accommodation, on the other hand from a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) perspective. The general section also gives an overview of employment statistics, with data from the EUD UNCRPD survey and from EUDY's youth employment survey. Good practice examples at European, national, and regional level are explored and showcased. EUD member associations were actively involved in the process and contributed greatly.

EUD is one of the few European-level organisations that offer a regular remunerated internship programme. It is also the only internship that provides a full signing environment, enabling young sign language users to improve their International Sign skills and their knowledge of European policy. EUD's interns have come from many different EU countries to support and inspire the local deaf community and younger deaf people.

Claudia Gawlas from France/Poland was the first intern of 2014. She stayed with us to support the General Assembly and the Election Manifesto campaign. During her time she met many MEPs and encouraged them to sign the document. She was also able to contribute to the first UNCRPD implementation book, along with former intern Jana Havlová.

The second intern was Tina Vrbanić who joined us from Croatia. She continued the

Election Manifesto campaign and followed up with MEPs on the five aims of the manifesto. Tina also had the chance to enhance her video production skills by assisting the Communication and Media Officer.

Christine Marshall from Canada volunteered as an intern. Her brief was to examine the archives for visual materials since the founding of EUD back in 1985. This task was valuable due to the significant milestone EUD will celebrate next year, that of celebrating its 30th anniversary. Christine discovered some interesting facts regarding EUD's work and all will be revealed next year.



Intern
Leyre Subijana
(November 2013 - May 2014)
San Sebastián, Spain



Intern
Tina Vrbanić
(September - December)
Zagreb, Croatia



Intern
Claudia Gawlas
(March - June)
Mazarin, Poland



Intern
Christine Marshall
(October - December)
Vancouver, Canada

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

The Communication and Media Officer, David Hay was invited by the Maltese Deaf Association, with the support of the Rotary Club Malta La Valette, to conduct a media training workshop for deaf community

members in March 2013. David was able to describe the tasks associated with his role at EUD, as well as train attendees how to develop media resources during the 2 day course.

TRAINING / WORKSHOP MALTA

David Hay
EUD Communication
and Media Officer



EUD INITIATIVES

MEDIA

EUD is determined to produce high quality and fully accessible information to its members and other interested parties, such as political stakeholders and the wider deaf community. Dissemination of information generally takes the form of International Sign with selected feature(s) of: English subtitles; and/or a

voiceover in English; and / or a transcription of video in English text on the same page of the video. The format of dissemination is aimed to be fully accessible for all. It brings to life the disability movement slogan "Nothing about us, without us".

WEBSITE

The EUD website was launched in 2008 and is now 6 years old. Although the website still has the capacity to release press statements in International Sign and English, many

other features have aged significantly. We have found the number of unique hits to the website is lagging behind that of our social media channels.



Statistics

Over 600,000 hits for website

Over 105,000 hits for videos

Marek Plura
Member of European Parliament



UNCRPD Workforum



EUD Reception for two Deaf MEPs

International Days

There are many annual European and international days that we align with in an effort to not only raise awareness regarding significant topics and issues, but also for historical purposes. EUD has produced numerous 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. EUD has taken this very seriously over the past year, not only focussing on 'deaf-only' issues, but also topics of wider interest, such as the Remembrance of the Victims, International Mother Language Day and International Women's Day.

Leyre Subijana
EUD Intern



Deaf MEPs

During the European Elections, we were following 5 potential candidates standing for election. We took advantage of this unique occasion by asking each one introduce themselves to the European deaf community by providing a profile of themselves in International Sign. All 5 candidates shared: their credentials for office, political colours and what policy platforms they were running with leading up to polling time. This clearly

demonstrated their respective ambitions for being a candidate to occupy the position of MEP for the European Parliament.



Ádám Kósa, Hungary



Christine Linnartz, Germany



Helga Stevens, Belgium



Kasia Galasiewicz, Poland



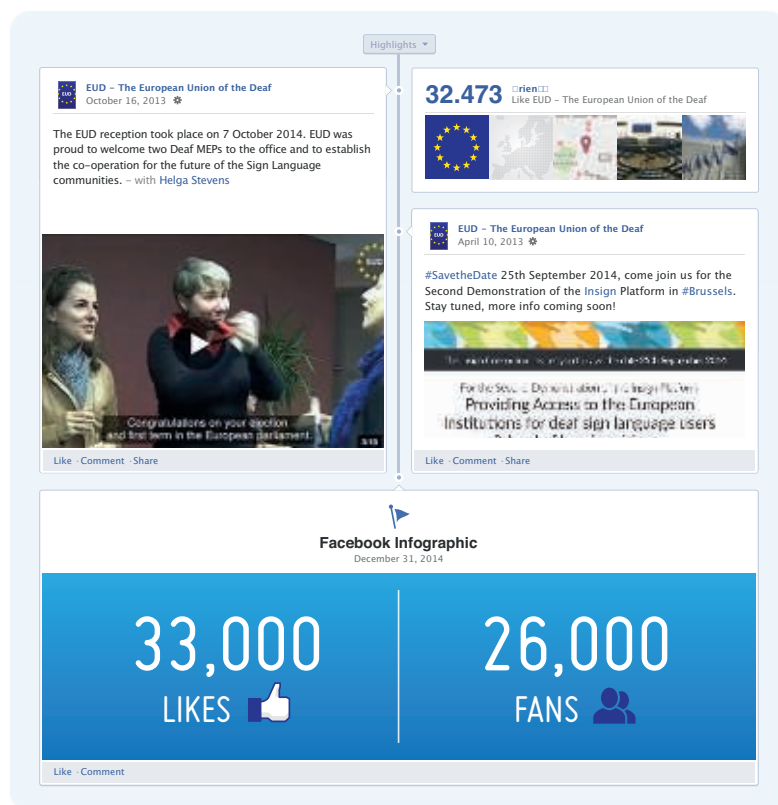
Yannis Yallouros, Greece

EUD INITIATIVES

SOCIAL MEDIA

Although the EUD website 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 attracting many more fans this year, in fact we have nearly doubled our 'likes' from 18,000 to 33,000. The information that is being disseminated on our website is also shared on the Facebook page, along with additional photo albums of past events. The page is targeted at the general public and its exposure illustrates our lobbying work in addition to various events and subjects that EUD addresses. We attract an average of 26,000 fans to our Facebook page every day.

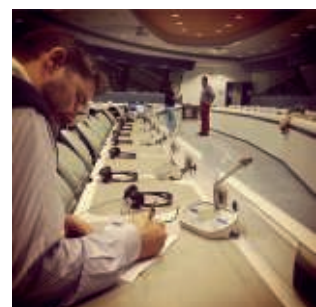


Twitter

Twitter enables the daily activities of EUD Board members and staff to be shared with the multitudes immediately. It also serves as an ideal platform to share information regarding special events, including the EUD Manifesto campaign, the annual General Assembly in Athens and Board meetings when they occur.

Instagram

The introduction of Instagram began back in September 2013. It is a distinctive way to capture political life through an artistic lens. This is a small but growing niche audience for us. Currently we have 380 followers.



EXTERNAL CO-OPERATION

EUD's work would not be possible without external co-operation. EUD not only works together with European-level NGOs but also with organisations of global importance.

EUROPEAN FORUM OF SIGN LANGUAGE INTERPRETERS (efsli)

EUD and efsli have been co-operating for many years, assisting each other in issues that concern both organisations alike.

The Executive Director, Mark Wheatley was a guest in opening the formal proceedings at

the efsli conference that was held in Antwerp in September. In his address, Mark referred to the fine working relationship between EUD and efsli, in particular associated with the Insign project. He also emphasised the importance of this partnership due to the shared mutual desire to continue developing the interpreting profession and quality of its practitioners. Doing so will benefit both the deaf community and interpreters themselves.



Peter Llewellyn Jones
efsli President

EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF YOUTH (EUDY)

EUD and the European Union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY) signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at the General Assembly in Athens. The document gives a positive example to the NADs and youth organisations, showing increased co-operation at all levels. EUD is aware of the importance of deaf youth in Europe and strongly supports EUDY's

efforts in strengthening youth co-operation and cultural understanding. EUDY's Benjamin Busch (Secretary) attended the EUD General Assembly, while EUD President Markku Jokinen presented at the EUDY youth camp and chaired the EUDY General Assembly in Bulgaria.



Markku Jokinen
EUD President,
Chair of the EUDY
General Assembly

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) is EUD's equivalent at an international level, representing deaf associations all around the world. 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. EUD and WFD co-operate

on a regular basis, most notably with regards to member associations' attendance at the UNCRPD Committee sessions in Geneva. EUD was pleased that WFD President Colin Allen was able to attend the EUD General Assembly in Athens and open the joint EUD-HFD seminar.

WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF (WFD)

Left to right:
Markku Jokinen and Colin Allen



The European Deaf Sports Organisation (EDSO) and EUD renewed their co-operation agreement at the May General Assembly to establish a formal framework for their continued collaboration. For the first time, an open-ended MoU was signed, in view of

their common values on the rights of deaf people. The agreement comes at a time when EDSO becomes a fully registered Belgian NGO, a status that will no doubt improve the organisation's lobbying efforts and ultimately benefit deaf sport.

EUROPEAN DEAF SPORTS ORGANISATION (EDSO)

Bjørn Røine
EDSO President



EXTERNAL CO-OPERATION

EUROPEAN DEAFBLIND UNION

This year, EDbU had a special milestone as they celebrated the 15th Anniversary of the EDbU Initial Board Establishment – Presentation Of New Identity As The “Voice

Of Deafblind Persons In Europe” in Visegrád, Hungary on 25 – 31 August. EUD Board Member, Dr. Gergely Tapolczai attended the event.



Left to right:
Dr. Gergely Tapolczai,
Sanja Tarczay, MEP Dr. Ádám Kósa

EUROPEAN PLATFORM OF DEAFNESS, HARD OF HEARING, AND DEAFBLINDNESS

The European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness that was established in 2012 continued its regular meetings in 2014. All members are simultaneously 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)
- European union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY)
- European Deafblind Union (EDbU)

The European Platform this year focused on the topic of accessibility, releasing a joint statement on access to information in particular. The substantive demands cover a range of areas, such as audio-visual media, websites, public transport, as well as public and political events.



European Platform
Brussels, Belgium

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 regularly organises workshops on the UNCRPD and the processes surrounding the most significant international human rights instrument for deaf sign language users. To ensure continued excellent quality of the training, EUD Policy Officer Annika Pabsch attended a high-level conference at the University of Maastricht. It was entitled: Equal Rights and Accessible Environments: The

UNCRPD and EU Disability Law and Policy. The conference focused in particular on recent EU case law in the area of disability and how the UNCRPD has been used at all levels. The concept of reasonable accommodation and the difficult legal situation regarding the implementation of the UNCRPD at EU level were explored.

UNCRPD AND EU DISABILITY LAW AND POLICY

The EUD Vice-President Dr Humberto Insolera has been involved in the campaign for the recognition of Italian Sign Language (LIS) together with the Italian Deaf Association (Ente Nazionale per la protezione e l'assistenza dei Sordi – Onlus, ENS) and others. As a highlight, MEP Dr Ádám Kósa, along with the EUD Vice-President, were invited to the Italian Parliament to move the recognition process forward. Humberto Insolera was able to meet the President of ENS and some members of the European and

Italian parliaments. A presentation in favour of LIS recognition managed to influence the deputy speaker of the Italian Parliament to support the move to legally acknowledge LIS. Although this was a step forward, the bill continues to be stalled at the Parliament level. EUD wishes the Italian NAD all the success for the continuation of the bill and continues to support their initiatives.

CAMPAIGN FOR THE RECOGNITION OF ITALIAN SIGN LANGUAGE

Dr. Humberto Insolera
EUD Vice President



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EUD PARTNER INITIATIVES

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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

ENGOS, 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.

Work Forum on the Implementation of UNCRPD

This year's Work Forum on the Implementation of UNCRPD focused on article 12, equal recognition before the law, and article 13, access to justice. EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley and EUD Policy Officer Petra Söderqvist, attended the Work Forum. The two days were filled with good and bad practice on how to work with and implement the convention. There were also discussions on the importance of training of judges and lawyers on the UNCRPD in order for the convention to have its full effect in practice and to provide reasonable accommodation.

Work Forum on the Implementation of UNCRPD



European Day of Persons with Disabilities

On the occasion of the European Day for People with Disabilities (3 December), it is always exciting for the European Union of the Deaf to participate in this special conference. The conference began on 2 December for two days, hosted by the European Commission.

Access City Award: Every year the Commission together with a jury of experts hands out the Access City Award, which aims to encourage cities with at least 50,000 inhabitants to share their experience and to improve accessibility for the benefit of all. The Award for 2015 went to Borås, Sweden. We hope to see more accessibility being accomplished for the deaf community in European cities.

After the two successful demonstrations earlier during the year, we were asked by the European Commission to do another demonstration during the conference to raise awareness of our pilot project, Insign. This pilot project is looking into ways to support the European Institutions like the European Commission and the European Court of Human Rights to communicate with deaf and hard of hearing European citizens.

The conference also focused on questions such as "jobs for all and an accessible society", which are vital for the deaf community as it is important to be involved in society. We were very pleased to be part of this conference and to give our contribution on behalf of the deaf community



European Day of Persons with Disabilities

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), **Croatia** – Hrvatski savez gluhih i nagluhih, **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)

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF THE DEAF

BOARD



President
Dr Markku Jokinen
Espoo, Finland
Executive Director,
The Finnish Association of the Deaf



Vice President
Dr Humberto Insolera
Rome, Italy
Consultant & Expert,
National Association of the Deaf in Italy



Board
Louise Danielsson
Stockholm, Sweden
Junior Lecturer
Department of Special Education,
Stockholm University



Board
Dr Gergely Tapolczai
Budapest, Hungary
Member of the Hungarian Parliament



Board
Alfredo Gómez Fernández
Málaga, Spain
Executive Director
Andalucian Federation of the Deaf

STAFF



Executive Director
Mark Wheatley
Solihull, United Kingdom



Communication and Media Officer
David Hay
Edinburgh, United Kingdom



Policy Officer
Annika Pabsch
(until September 2014)
Eichstätt, Germany



Policy Officer
Petra Söderqvist
(from October 2014)
Sundsvall, Sweden



Administrative Officer
Heather Daley
Walnut Creek, California, USA



Intern
Leyre Subijana
(November 2013 - May 2014)
San Sebastián, Spain



Intern
Claudia Gawlas
(March - June)
Mazarin, Poland



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Tina Vrbanić
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This programme is implemented by the European Commission. It was established to financially support in the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment, social affairs and equal opportunities area, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Europe 2020 Strategy goals in these fields.

The 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.

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

