

2019

IMPACT REPORT



EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EUD would like to thank the European Commission for funding this 2019 Impact Report under the REC Work Programme. Without their substantial financial contributions, the publication of this report would not have been possible.

The support of the EUD Board and President have been of invaluable help to create an accurate and up-to-date account of the EUD activities in 2019:

Board 2017 - 2021:

President Dr Markku Jokinen
 Vice-President Dr Gergely Tapolczai
 Board Member Louise "Lolo" Danielsson
 Board Member Daniel Bütter
 Board Member Sofia Isari

The EUD interns Roy Maguire and Serafine Duss, 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 outside of Brussels.

In support of its daily work, EUD has been in contact with a large number of Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and other EU policymakers and aspires to continue this fruitful co-operation in the coming years.



Dr Markku Jokinen



Dr Gergely Tapolczai



Louise "Lolo" Danielsson



Sofia Isari



Daniel Bütter

FOREWORD BY EUD PRESIDENT

2019, an incredibly busy year for EUD, has come to an end. As usual, EUD has been highly active and undertaken and organized a wide array of activities. For instance, 2019 has been a special year for the European Union as the European Elections took place, and I genuinely believe EUD did its best ensuring that the information regarding the European Elections was more accessible for deaf voters. Furthermore, EUD, in collaboration with efsli and EUDY, carried out an advocacy campaign on its website and on social media which was extremely successful.

Moreover, for the first time ever, EUD worked together with the European Parliament on the election campaign video, 'Choose your future'.

We are very proud to have been a part of this initiative undertaken by the European Parliament and were truly amazed by their achievement in providing translations for 31 National Sign Languages. We couldn't possibly have asked for more from them!

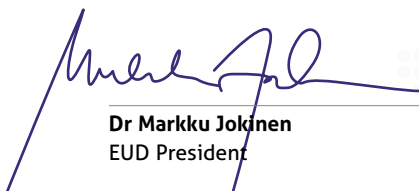
During the European Elections, there were eight deaf candidates, but sadly only one was elected—Dr. Ádám Kósa from Hungary. This means we are down to one deaf MEP from the previous two during the last parliamentary

term. Unfortunately, this means we lost the excellent former MEP, Helga Stevens from Belgium. We will never forget Helga's determination to fight for the rights of deaf people and sign language users. Kudos to her for her past work with EUD.

Putting the European Elections aside, we also attended for the very first time the 12th Session of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) at the United Nations headquarters in New York City.

Furthermore, in 2019, we received a donation of US\$500,000 from Huawei with the purpose of the donation being support 10 national deaf associations with their projects concerning literacy for deaf children. EUD also supported Huawei with their StorySign campaign which published four additional books in 11 different national sign languages.

We are pleased to announce that EUD has successfully been granted three new projects for the next four years. As the scope of EUD's work has expanded, EUD will be certain to add additional staff members starting from 2020.



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 people at European level and is one of the few ENGOs representing associations from all of the 28 EU Member States, in addition to EFTA countries: Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. EU acceding, candidate and potential member countries can choose to become affiliated members with the option to become full members as soon as they officially enter the EU.

EUD aims to establish and maintain EU level dialogue with its relative institutions and

officials, in consultation and co-operation with its member NADs. EUD is a full member of the European Disability Forum (EDF) and is a Regional Co-operating Member of the World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) to tackle issues of global importance, and also has participatory status with the Council of Europe (CoE).

EUD also has signed MoUs with the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (efsl), the European Union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY), the European Deaf Sports Organisation (EDSO), the European Deafblind Union (EDbU) and European Network of Sign Language Teachers (ENSLT). Since 2017, it has Special consultative status with the United Nations.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the core mission of EUD to promote, advance and protect the rights of and opportunities for deaf people 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. Most staff are deaf sign language users and all hearing staff must know or learn 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 the work of EUD 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 and/or regional 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/or an educational systems that foster the acquisition of the national and/or regional 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 that the right to sign language is 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 policy-makers.

On the 18th of May, EUD's 33rd General Assembly (GA) took place in Bucharest, Romania, which gathered delegates from 27 National Associations of the Deaf (NADs). The GA was an opportunity for EUD's board members and staff to provide an overview of EUD's work in 2018. This included a presentation of EUD's policy work, a presentation on its communications and media strategy, as well as the budget overview. Furthermore, EUD's co-operative partners, EDF, EDSO, EUDY, efsli and ENSLT,

had a chance to highlight the importance of collaborating and working closely with EUD. EUD is delighted that the GA was a successful event where the delegates actively participated, leading to many fruitful discussions.

EUD would like to express its appreciation to the Romanian National Association for the Deaf for their time and commitment in contributing to the success of the General Assembly.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY,
BUCHAREST, ROMANIA



EUD INITIATIVES

BOARD MEETINGS

In 2019, the four quarterly board meetings of EUD took place in Prague, Czech Republic; Brussels, Belgium; Vienna, Austria and Sofia, Bulgaria. The board meetings play an important role in the European-wide

co-operation of Deaf communities, as these meetings, along with the General Assembly, are the cornerstones of EUD's democratic structure.

1. Nicosia, Cyprus

On the 8th of March, the first EUD board meeting of 2019 took place in Nicosia, Cyprus. During the four-day-stay, the EUD board had the opportunity to discuss in detail Huawei's donation of 500,000 USD for EUD. Moreover, the EUD board members discussed the agenda for EUD's General Assembly

which later took place in Bucharest, Romania in May that year.

EUD met with the President of the Cypriot Deaf Federation, Andreas Constantinou and other board members and had a chance to discuss future collaboration between the national deaf association in Cyprus and EUD.



Andreas Constantinou,
President, Cyprus Deaf Federation

2. Bucharest, Romania

On the 16th of May, a board meeting took place in Bucharest, Romania. The board members took the opportunity to discuss

the agenda for the General Assembly and to finalise all the preparations leading up to it.



EUD Board Meeting,
Bucharest, Romania

3. Helsinki, Finland

The Finnish Association of the Deaf warmly welcomed the EUD Board and staff on 31st August. This third board meeting of 2019 took place in Finland as it held the EU Presidency at the time.

The Finnish Association of the Deaf organised a meeting together with the Finnish Ministry of Justice in order to gather information regarding the Finnish government's programme for the EU presidency.

The EUD Board meeting discussed important updates from the last few months, such as upcoming projects and several debriefings from each board regarding their representative work. These board meetings play an important role in the European-wide co-operation of Deaf communities and, along with the General Assembly, are the cornerstones of EUD's democratic structure.

Dr. Markku Jokinen,
EUD President



4. Brussels, Belgium

On the 29th of November, we held our last board meeting of 2019, taking the opportunity to discuss the work programme of the past year. Additionally, there were

some discussions on the European Disability Strategy for 2020-2030, in particular on EUD's involvement towards it.

From left to right, **Daniel Büter,**
EUD Board Member and **Louise
Danielsson,** EUD Board Member



EUD INITIATIVES

MEMBER WORKSHOPS

As part of EUD's commitment to building the capacity of its members, the European deaf community in general as well as associated organisations, EUD regularly organises trainings, seminars and workshops

in a number of areas. These events are open to member association staff and boards, regional representatives or other interested parties from the wider deaf community, professionals and political stakeholders.

Seminar, Nicosia, Cyprus

On the 9th of March, this seminar took place in Nicosia, Cyprus during which the EUD board presented the EUD's work. Moreover, the members of the local Cypriot deaf community were given the opportunity to

interact with the EUD board members during the discussion concerning employment and pensions. The event was well received with 100 persons in attendance.

We want to express our sincere appreciation to the Cyprus Deaf Federation for hosting us and for their warm hospitality during our stay in Nicosia.



EUD Seminar,
Nicosia, Cyprus

Workshop, Bucharest, Romania

On the 16th of May, this workshop took place in Bucharest, Romania, during which the delegates gathered to attend EUD's workshop where they were briefed on EUD's work, in preparation for the GA on the 18th of May.

The briefings focused on three key areas, firstly on the 'European Accessibility Act and links to other EU Accessibility Legislation.' Executive Director Mark Wheatley led this session detailing the legislation.

The second topic was on "Revised Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD)" and was led by EUD's Policy Assistant, Frankie Picron. He was given the chance to provide a conclusive report from EUD's perspective.

The final topic introduced was the "European Electronic Communications Code (EECC)" which was explained by EUD's Policy Officer, Martyna Balčiūnaitė. This briefing highlighted the differences between the EAA, AVMSD and EECC, which EUD urges to focus on three areas for this year.

The delegates were engaged in the discussions for all three topics and were well prepared for the subsequent General Assembly.

Seminar, Bucharest, Romania

On the 17th of May, EUD co-organised a seminar with Asociația Națională a Surzilor din România (ANSR, the Romanian National Association for the Deaf) presenting an "Overview of European Organisations".

The welcoming & introduction of the Romanian Government's Representatives took place first:

- President of the Romanian National Association of the Deaf: Mihail Grecu
- Representative from the Romanian EU Presidency: Dr. Diana Loreta Paun
- President of the European Union of the Deaf: Markku Jokinen
- President of the Romanian National Disability Council: Daniela Tontsch
- Board Member of the World Federation of the Deaf: Kaisa Alanne
- Member of the European Disability Forum Executive Committee: Humberto Insolera
- President of the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters: Ivana Bucko
- President of the European Network of Sign Language Teachers: Luigi Lerosé
- President of the European Union of the Deaf Youth: Dennis Hoogeveen
- General Secretary of the European Deaf Sports Organisation: Philip Gerrard

All 26 NADs were given the opportunity to present an overview of their associations. Their presentations were highly interesting and demonstrated how different the NADs can be when it comes to their country, as some associations are well-funded, whilst others struggle to find funding. This represented an incredibly successful and informative seminar for the 103 registered participants. As such, EUD would like to share its gratitude with ANSR's team for their tireless work and co-operation in ensuring a successful event for everyone.



Mladen Veršič,
President, Slovenian Association of
the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



EUD INITIATIVES

Workshop, Helsinki, Finland

On the August 31st, the EUD Board members and staff gave a seminar in the 'Light House' in Helsinki where the Finnish Association of the Deaf was established in order to introduce EUD's work to the Finnish Deaf community. EUD's interactive presentation explained

EUD's structure, its members, as well as its vision for achieving equality in public and private life for deaf sign language users. In doing so, we were able to showcase our work from 2018 and to explain EUD's history in-depth.



The audience was given the opportunity to ask questions, with the questions varying from inquiries about sign language interpretation services, alongside legislation, and education. The board members were able to respond to the questions and engage in the discussions.

Dr. Liisa Kauppinen,
A recipient of United Nations
Human Rights Award

Seminar, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium

On the 2nd of December, Markku Jokinen, President of EUD, traveled to Louvain-la-Neuve to give a lecture at a conference which took place on the premises of the Université Catholique de Louvain (UCLouvain). This event, the "Art of Tandem," was organized by UCLouvain in collaboration with EUD to mark the first graduation of master degree's students in the field of translation and interpretation of sign language.

During this event, President Jokinen presented his professional background and the strategies put in place to preserve the position he currently holds as EUD's

president as well as stressing the importance of representing the deaf community within international institutions. Adequate representation also requires that the resulting relationship dynamic between a deaf person and an interpreter works—hence the importance of collaboration between deaf people and sign language interpreters. During this event, Ms. Hulin and Ms. Gerday unveiled the background of the master's degree in interpretation as well as student testimonials of their academic background in interpretation and translation. The event ended with a question and answer session, followed by a toast to friendship.



EUD believes it is important to fulfill its missions at the European level while not forgetting to make itself available at all levels in order to support local and regional initiatives. EUD hopes to continue its work of bringing the sign language community together across Europe.

Dr. Markku Jokinen,
EUD President

From the 4th to the 7th of July, EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley and EUD Board Member, Sofia Isari participated in the festival of Clin d'Oeil in Reims, France. We had a stall during the exhibition which gathered thousands of deaf attendees. At the stall

festival's visitors had an opportunity to find out more about EUD's work. During the opening ceremony, Sofia Isari gave a presentation on EUD's vision. We were honored to participate at this festival.

FESTIVAL CLIN D'OEIL, REIMS, FRANCE

From left to right, **Mark Wheatley**, EUD Executive Director and **Sofia Isari**, EUD Board Member



Lolo Danielsson continued with her responsibilities in the Gender Equality Group. She followed up with the Valencia Declaration and ensured that it was distributed to all NADs. Additionally, she focused on dealing

with various NADs about the possibility of hosting the 2nd European Deaf Women's Conference. Lolo regularly briefed the board about the progress of the Gender Equality Working Group.

GENDER EQUALITY

Declaration of Valencia signed during the first Deaf Women Forum in 2018.



EUD INITIATIVES

ICT

1st European Congress Europe Deaf Tech in Madrid

On the 15th of June 2019, EUD Board Member, Daniel Büter, who is responsible for the ICT & Accessibility working group at EUD, represented EUD at the first European Congress Europe Deaf Tech in Madrid, which was organised by Comunicados and Techinnapp.

The aim of the event was to discuss the role of new technologies and the importance of innovation and accessibility.

Daniel Büter gave a presentation about EUD's work on ensuring accessibility of ICTs. As part of the presentation, Mr Büter presented Insign project, that was funded by the European Commission for 12 months in 2012 and the role of the UN CRPD while improving accessibility.



Daniel Büter,
EUD Board Member

Regional Forum for Europe on "Accessible Europe: ICT 4 ALL"

Mark Wheatley attended the conference on Accessible Europe: ICT for ALL - ICT Accessibility: The Key to Inclusive Communications at St Julian's, Malta. It was organised by the Regional Forum Organized Jointly by ITU and European

Commission within the Framework of the ITU Regional Initiative for Europe on Accessibility, Affordability, and Skills Development for All to Ensure Digital Inclusion and Sustainable Development.



Dr. Gergely Tapolczai took the opportunity to review the statutes and internal rules regarding deaf lawyers. As the Belgian government announced new legislation concerning the registration of NGOs, all

statutes must conform to the new legislation by 2021. Gergely prepared the proposed amendments for the General Assembly which will be held in 2020.

DEAF LAWYERS

The DESIGNS project (Deaf Employment for Sign Language Users in the EU) has been proposed by the applicant, Interresource Group (Ireland) Limited which has successfully promoted 12 EU projects and has been a partner in 5. DESIGNS builds on the former SIGNALL project which developed practical training resources for employers to heighten their awareness of the Deaf community, sign language and working in interpreted settings.

Furthermore, there is a direct link between early education, attainment of professional and/or educational qualifications, and advancement into the labour market and social inclusion. Apart from financial autonomy, work and paid employment serve to develop a sense of belonging with positive mental health benefits and identification with the wider community at-large (National Disability Authority, 2005). However, Deaf people in Ireland, as well as throughout the world, continue to face barriers and obstacles when it comes to education, employment and access to services such in healthcare, and legal and social welfare settings. In a report on poverty in the Deaf community, Conama and Grehan (2001) stated that Deaf people

experience higher rates of poverty, social exclusion and employment.

Factors such as leaving school without having completed or possessing any examinations or qualifications, alongside inadequate support for Irish Sign Language, has resulted in a worrying picture wherein 80% of the Deaf adults in Ireland have literacy problems compared to 25% of the population as a whole (Irish Deaf Society, 2007). Furthermore, in Ireland, research and data on unemployment is underreported and inaccurate; in particular, "deafness and hearing loss" is often used for reporting data, and sign language users who are Deaf are under-researched. The World Federation of the Deaf also reports that the figures on (un)employment are inaccurate and difficult to quantify (Hauland, H & C. Allen, (2009), Deaf People and Human Rights, WFD).

DESIGNS PROJECT

Design Project conference,
Brussels, Belgium



The Project Meeting in Brussels, Belgium

The DESIGNS consortium is functionally composed of partners with diverse and complementary expertise in order to maximize the expected academic knowledge associated with Education and Training, Employment, Sign Language Interpreting and Deaf Community Advocacy which benefits

from this project. The partners of this project held six consortium meetings starting with the first meeting in Dublin, Ireland, on 12th January 2017, and concluding with the last meeting and only meeting held in 2019, in Brussels, Belgium on 8 April 2019.

Conference in Brussels, Belgium

On the 9th of April, an event on the Employment of Sign Language Users in Europe was held in the European Parliament in Brussels which was hosted by Helga Stevens, MEP. This represented an opportunity to present the last stage of the DESIGNS project, with the overall aim of the project having been to develop Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Continual Professional Development training (CPD).

Mark Wheatley, Executive Director of the European Union of the Deaf (EUD), opened the session by introducing the speakers and mentioning that one of EUD's goals is to ensure that the barriers and obstacles faced by the deaf community while seeking employment and even after having obtained it are removed. EUD closely follows the developments at the EU level and the progress made in terms of improving accessibility for deaf people in employment.

Prof. Jemina Napier, Director of the Centre for Translation & Interpreting Studies in Scotland (CTISS) at Heriot-Watt University (HWU), and Prof Lorraine Neeson, Associate Dean of Research at Trinity College Dublin, presented that, in the setting of a job interview where a deaf person is being interviewed through an interpreter, it is difficult for qualified interpreters to have advanced knowledge of a particular field. Even if the interpreters have targeted knowledge, the little-to-no prior material preparation delivered for selection interviews makes their interpretative work less effective. Regarding the organisational culture, if the interpreter has a lack of understanding of the cultural norms of the company, such as about how to address a manager for example, it can impact the recruiters' perception of the deaf candidate.

Dr. Audrey Cameron, Research Associate CTISS at HWU, and Chris Peters, researcher at the Humboldt University of Berlin, shared their experiences with interviewing deaf students about their studies and the difficulties they encountered during job interviews, such as

an unavailability of interpreters, the stress involved in finding interpreters, or the lack of professionally qualified interpreters, all of which can lead to miscommunications or misrepresentations.

During the interviews, the students highlighted that it is very complicated to obtain employment following their studies due to several factors. For example, while in education, some deaf people are only surrounded by deaf peers which leads to feelings of insecurity when it comes to how they should behave among mostly or exclusively hearing work colleagues later in employment. Additionally, numerous barriers remain due to the tedious and bureaucratic nature of the organisation of work assistance (such as interpreters), which leads to difficulties while seeking support at their new workplace.

Following this lecture, Adina Braha, Government Affairs Manager at Microsoft, presented the measures that Microsoft is taking to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities, and especially deaf people, in the workplace via assistive technologies. She also described Microsoft's recruitment programme which ensures that the focus of their recruitment on the potential of the interviewee and not on their disabilities. Microsoft aims to ensure the accessibility of the workspace to maximise employees' productivity.

Marinella Salami, Executive Director of the European Forum of Sign Language Interpreters (EFSLI), explained the need for the continuous training of sign language interpreters who could work with deaf people while they are seeking employment and or during it.

This was the final public event before the end of this Erasmus+ project funded by the European Commission. EUD, as a partner, plans to disseminate the outcome of the project to ensure a greater participation of deaf sign language users in employment.

EUD is a partner of the new four-year-long H2020 project called Smart and Healthy Ageing Promoting Empowering Systems (SHAPES). It aims to create the first European open ecosystem enabling the large-scale deployment of a broad range of digital solutions for supporting and extending healthy and independent living conditions and lifestyles for older individuals who are facing permanently or temporarily reduced functionality and capabilities.

SHAPES will develop an interoperable platform integrating smart digital solutions to collect and analyse older individuals' health, environmental and lifestyle information, identify their needs, and provide personalised solutions that uphold the individuals' data protection and trust.

SHAPES large-scale piloting campaign engages +2k older individuals at 15 pilot sites in 10 EU Member States, including 6 EIP on AHA Reference Sites, and involves hundreds of key stakeholders (including deaf and deafblind people) in order to bring forth solutions to improve the health, wellbeing,

independence and autonomy of older individuals, while enhancing the long-term sustainability of health and care systems in Europe.

SHAPES's multidisciplinary approach to large-scale piloting is reflected across seven themes that, together, provide a clear understanding of the reality of European health and care systems and enable the validation of cost-efficient, interoperable and reliable innovations capable of effectively supporting the healthy and independent lifestyles of older individuals within and outside the home.

By constructing an ecosystem attractive to European industry and policy-makers, SHAPES develops value-based business models to open and scale-up the market for AHA-focused digital solutions and provides key recommendations for the far-reaching deployment of innovative digital health and care solutions and services supporting and extending the healthy and independent lifestyles of older populations in Europe.

SHAPES PROJECT

SHAPES Consortium meeting,
Maynooth, Ireland



Consortium meeting, Maynooth, Ireland

The kickoff meeting took place at Maynooth University in Ireland over November 11th – 13th, 2019. Mark Wheatley attended the meeting and gave a presentation about the barriers that elderly deaf people face,

alongside highlighting the responsibilities of the project for EUD. He emphasised that deaf elderly people face a high risk of social exclusion, and therefore EUD's involvement in the project is crucial.

EUD INITIATIVES

MEDIA

For a number of years now, EUD has been determined to produce high quality and fully accessible information to its members and other interested parties.

This is done to increase EUD's visibility for two reasons—firstly, our campaigns to raise our profile and become more well-known among political stakeholders, and secondly, for the wider deaf community to be aware of

what we are working towards. EUD's approach to disseminating information generally takes the form of International Sign with selected feature(s) like: English subtitles; and/or a voiceover in English; and/or a transcription of video in English text on the same page as the video. This format for dissemination is aimed at being fully accessible for all, bringing to life the disability movement's slogan "Nothing about us, without us."

WEBSITE

The EUD website that was launched in 2015, allows us to release a variety of catalogued information and enables us to be more innovative with regards to accessibility, providing press statements in International Sign and English. Furthermore, more video-friendly features were added, for instance

a way to allow deaf citizens to contact EUD with video messages in sign language. The website's new design already attracted more people after its decline in the past few years due the emerging social media channels within the EUD.



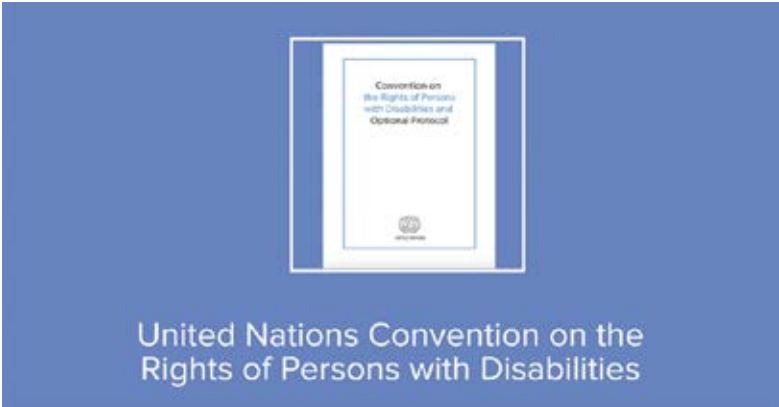
Statistics

The website, eud.eu, attracted 159,728 users in 2019 who clicked on 300,403 pages in total. The most popular months were April and May, during the European Elections. Now, focusing on the video statistics, there were 39,723 hits on the videos embedded on our website in 2019.

EUD developed a toolkit that explains in great detail the UN CRPD committee's work and its country review processes. This toolkit provides an in-depth overview of the United Nation's Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (the UN CRPD or the Convention), and explains why is the UN

CRPD is important for the deaf community, including how it is monitored, how the state parties to the Convention report to the UN CRPD committee, and how national associations of the deaf can become active players in the process.

UN CRPD
TOOLKIT



EUD's CRPD toolkit for the National Associations of the Deaf



EUD INITIATIVES

TOOLKIT ON TRANSPPOSITION

The toolkit for transposition of the Audiovisual Media Services (AVMS) Directive was made available in International Sign on EUD's website. This toolkit was developed by the European Disability Forum in collaboration with its member organisations including EUD.

The AVMS directive creates an EU-level framework to coordinate national legislation on all audiovisual media, including both traditional TV broadcasts and on-demand services (such as Netflix, Amazon Video, and Now TV for example). It further sets out the requirements concerning aspects such as prohibition of hate speech and discrimination based on disability and other grounds, commercial information on TV programs, the protection of minors, the independence of the national regulatory bodies that monitor audiovisual services, and the promotion of European audiovisual productions.

This new text is the revised version of a Directive first adopted in 2010. The previous version had a soft approach to media accessibility, so we strongly supported this revision, which has led to improvements in

relation to the accessibility of audiovisual media services for persons with disabilities, and the prevention of discrimination on the grounds of disability in commercial audiovisual services. The revised Directive was adopted in November 2018 and represents an opportunity for EU countries to advance media accessibility and consumer protection against discrimination and hate speech.

The EU member states must transpose the Directive into national law by 19th September 2020, and communicate the text of those provisions to the European Commission. By "transposing" this directive, we mean reforming or adopting national laws that ensure the countries obey the terms of the Directive. This toolkit aims to provide disability advocates with tools and proposals to push for strong national legislation and adequate implementation in order to strengthen the right to access audiovisual media services that do not discriminate against us.

The toolkit is available on EUD's website in the training section.



EUD's Audiovisual Media Services
Directive - Toolkit for transposition

In 2019, the European elections took place, which EUD worked extensively on before and during.

EUD produced materials that the National Associations of the Deaf or any other interested parties could use for their lobbying efforts during the 2019 European elections.

On EUD's website you can find:

- Advocacy materials
- Information on the European elections
- EUD's tips for the political campaigning which took place during the 2019 European elections, and which explained how all of the materials could be used on the national level.

The advocacy materials section contains materials that NADs should have used while campaigning for more accessibility during the EU elections. EUD had written a statement,

in 24 languages, that should have been disseminated among the candidates and political parties in order to ensure that they considered and could guarantee the rights of people with disabilities during the European Parliament elections. It can be downloaded as a Word document and can be easily edited. In this section you can also find materials produced by the European Disability Forum (EDF) including EDF's petition and manifesto on the EU elections.

Information in the section for each language provided information on the European elections, including information on the This Time I'm Voting campaign, including information on the lead candidates, and some infographics and statistics. We made sure it is available in your language. Yes, each one of the 24 official EU languages!

EUROPEAN ELECTION 2019



EUD INITIATIVES

SOCIAL MEDIA

Although the EUD website is valuable and beneficial tool 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 has attracted many more fans this year; in fact we have increased our 'likes' from 54,800 to 55.800. The information that is being disseminated on our website is also shared on our 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 the various events and subjects that EUD addresses. We attract an average of 60,000 fans to our Facebook page every day.

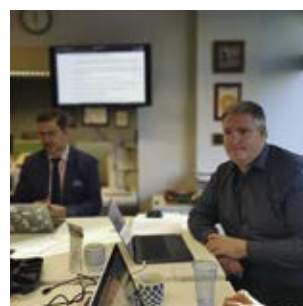
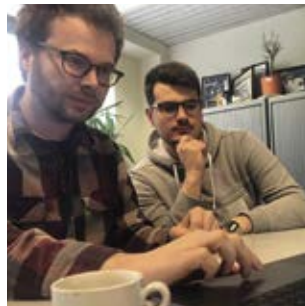


Twitter

Twitter enables the daily activities of EUD's board members and staff to be shared with the multitudes immediately. It also serves as an ideal platform for sharing information regarding special events, including the annual General Assembly in Bucharest and board meetings when they occur. We anticipate this area of our work will connect with a much larger audience in time, as during 2019 we already made 202 tweets for our 5200 followers.

Instagram

The social media platform, Instagram, was first introduced in September 2013 and continues to represent a distinctive manner for capturing political life through an artistic lens. This platform represents a small, but growing niche audience for us. Back in 2016, we had 950 followers, but this year we now have 2,300 followers.



EUD INITIATIVES

INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

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

as well as their knowledge of European policy, media production and administrative work. EUD's interns have come from many different EU countries to support and inspire the local deaf community and younger deaf people.



Cezar Dragulin

Cezar Dragulin from Rome, Italy have completed his internship placement from March 2019 to May 2019. He have assisted with the General Assembly in Bucharest, Romania and contributed a lot with the Communication and Media officer throughout the internship placement.



Sara Palmeira

Sara Palmeira from Porto, Portugal have completed her internship placement from September 2019 to December 2019. She have assisted with the administration and communicated a lot with the Executive Director throughout the internship placement.

12th Session of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the United Nations

From the 11th to 13th of June 2019, EUD participated in the 12th Session of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Prior to COSP, EUD had also attended the Civil Society Forum organised by the International Disability Alliance.

The Civil Society Forum was an opportunity to highlight current issues relevant to the disability movement and realisation of the UN CRPD, that had not specifically been addressed during the 12th COSP session. Additional room for civil society was provided in order for it to make its own contributions. EUD delivered a statement during an interactive, participatory dialogue on the protection of the rights of children with disabilities to live with their family, through deinstitutionalized, inclusive education, and access to health and adequate medical services. EUD highlighted that deaf children have the right to live with their family, which ensures early access to sign language and the acquisition thereof, including creating a sign language environment which understands and educates about deaf culture and deaf identity. Moreover, EUD highlighted that the implementation of Article 24 of the UN CRPD as well as SDG 4 and the creation of an inclusive general education system for all must not exclude deaf learners from quality education, social inclusion and language acquisition, and as such must allow them to fully participate in order to thrive academically, linguistically and socially.

An overarching theme of the 12th Session of the Conference of States Parties (COSP) to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was ensuring the inclusion of persons with disabilities in a changing world through the implementation of the UN CRPD. Three sub-themes for the three roundtable discussions were: (i) Technology, digitalization and ICTs for the empowerment and inclusion of persons with disabilities; (ii) Social inclusion and the right to the highest attainable

standard of health; and (iii) the Inclusion of persons with disabilities in society through participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sports. During the roundtable discussion on technology, digitalisation and ICTs, EUD made an intervention that was based on the EUD position paper adopted in 2018 on the Accessibility of Information and Communication for the Deaf. EUD highlighted that state parties to the UN CRPD must ensure that during the development of ICTs, developers include features important to deaf users, such as customised vibration and visual alerts, sign language, real time captioning, translation and other options, and manufacturers and developers should from the very early stages and throughout the entire process of developing accessible ICTs, directly collaborate with deaf experts and/or experts on accessibility for deaf persons, that are recommended by an organisation representing deaf persons. EUD also highlighted the importance of applying universal design, and making emergency communications, audio-visual media services and new technologies fully accessible for the deaf users.

During COSP, EUD met with the Disability Data Advocacy Working Group of the Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities and discussed future prospects for collaboration. EUD also had the chance to meet the newly elected UN CRPD Committee members and discuss how to establish a relationship and long-term partnerships with them. At the event organised by UN Women, EUD also witnessed the signing of the Beijing + 25 declaration.

Additionally, EUD attended numerous side events organised by various organisations that focused on inclusive education, empowerment through employment, data collection, political participation and others. COSP to UN CRPD was an incredible experience where EUD made sure that the European deaf perspective was visible and considered during the general debates on the implementation of the UN CRPD by the state parties to the Convention.

Celebration of the 2nd International Days of Sign Languages

On the 19th of September, EUD took part in a series of events organised by the United Nations Offices at Geneva to celebrate the International Day of Sign Languages and raise awareness of their importance.

With the support of the permanent missions of Bangladesh, Brazil, Finland, and France, alongside the Swiss Federation of the Deaf and the World Federation of the Deaf, several activities were held at the Palais des Nations to highlight sign languages and their value. Of particular interest were the Pop-up Sign Language Café and the guided tour of the Palais des Nations in sign language.

In the context of this day, EUD took the opportunity to follow, participate, and engage in a high level panel entitled "Sign Language

Rights for all," moderated by Her Excellency, Maria Nazareth Farani Azevêdo, ambassador and permanent representative of Brazil with the valuable presence of Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguilar, Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities, Dmitry Rebrov, Expert at the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), and Joseph Murray, President of the World Association of the Deaf.

As the event also coincided with the CRPD session, members of the CRPD also participated in the interactive dialogue to exchange views and discuss the rights of deaf people.

This remarkable day was concluded with a theatrical performance in sign language revolving around the theme "To Sign is Human," and acted out by deaf students.



From left to right, **Mark Wheatley**, EUD Executive Director and **Frankie Picron**, Policy Assistant

The European Accessibility Act: final steps on the European level – first steps on the national level

In 2019, the European Accessibility Act (EAA) was finally adopted and published in all EU languages in the Official Journal of the EU. Subsequently, the transposition period on the national level started. Furthermore, the European Accessibility Act establishes common European accessibility requirements for numerous digital products and services but excludes the obligations to make transport, buildings and household appliances more accessible for people with disabilities.

Importantly for the deaf community—the EAA now obliges Member States to make the single European emergency number, 112, accessible to everyone in the EU. Common accessibility requirements in the EAA dictate how to make 112 accessible for everyone across the EU, including deaf persons across the EU. This is a milestone achievement, and EUD is particularly excited to see EUD advocacy efforts materialising in concrete action on the European level. It was one of the main advocacy priorities for EUD since ensuring

accessibility to 112 for the deaf community is vital. Moreover, the EAA supports the public procurement of accessible products and services, and public authorities will be obliged to only procure accessible products, services and facilities.

EUD informed the National Associations of the Deaf (NADs) that the European Accessibility Act is now published in the Official Journal of the EU, so NADs can start their advocacy on the national level during the transposition period of the EAA into national laws.

EUD has remained in close contact with NADs and will equip them with tools to make sure that the NADs can convince their national governments to be ambitious when transposing and implementing the EAA into national legislation so it can bring about meaningful change for deaf persons across the EU.

Mark Wheatley,
EUD Executive Director



EU POLICY INITIATIVES AND EVENTS

The revised Audio-Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD)

In 2019, EUD focused on supporting its members during the transposition period of the recently revised Audio-Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD).

The revised AVMSD entered into force on the 20th day following its publication in the Official Journal of the EU and since then, the Member States of the EU have 21 months to transpose it into national legislation.

The revised AVMSD significantly improved Article 7 on the accessibility of audio-visual media services. The AVMS directive of 2010 only called upon Member States to encourage media service providers in their country to ensure that their services were gradually made accessible to persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind or partially sighted, but it did not create any obligations. The revised AVMSD sets out the legal obligation for Member States to ensure that public and commercial TV channels, as well as video on-demand platforms (such as HBO and Netflix), make their services continuously and progressively more accessible to persons with disabilities through proportionate measures. The recital of the revised AVMSD dictates that the means to achieve the accessibility of audio-visual media services include, but are not limited to, the provision of sign language, subtitling for the deaf and hard of hearing, spoken subtitles, and audio description.

Regarding emergency information which is made available to the public through audio-visual media services, the revised AVMSD obliges Member States to ensure that such information is provided in a manner which is accessible to persons with disabilities.

Moreover, the revised AVMSD dictates that Member States must ensure that media service providers report on a regular basis to the national regulatory authorities or bodies on the implementation of the measures that make their services more accessible to persons with disabilities. Member States will also have to report to the European Commission on the implementation of such measures by the 19th of December 2022 and then every three years thereafter. Furthermore, Member States are obliged to designate a single accessible contact point to provide information and to receive complaints from viewers regarding accessibility.

The revised AVMSD entered into force in December 2018 and since then, Member States of the EU have 21 months to transpose it into national legislation. EUD made the toolkit on transposition of this Directive available in International Sign for its members. Also, EUD remains available for advice and support to NADs with regards to advocacy work on the national level for a strong transposition of the revised AVMSD into national law.



The recast European Electronic Communications Code

The recast European Electronic Communications Code was officially adopted in December 2018. This was the final stage of the legislative procedure on the European level. Now, Member States have to transpose and implement this law into their national

legislation by 21 December 2020. Throughout the year, EUD remained at the disposal of all NADs to provide advice and support with regards to national advocacy work for a strong transposition of the directive into national law.

The proposal for the new Multi-Annual Financial Framework 2021-2027 (MFF)

In May 2018, the European Commission adopted a proposal for the next multi-annual financial framework (MFF) for the period 2021-2027. EUD, in collaboration with the European Disability Forum, started following the developments regarding the proposal for the new Common Provisions Regulation, the new proposal for the European Social Fund Plus, the new proposal for the Justice Rights and Values fund and the new proposal for the Erasmus + programme.

Throughout its advocacy campaign, EUD highlights the fact that the EU and all of its member states have ratified the UN CRPD, therefore the EU budget should be a tool to implement the UN CRPD and should not support actions which are in conflict with it.

1. The Common Provisions Regulation (CPR)

EUD supported EDF in its advocacy work for the new Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) and fought for it to contain strong references to the UN CRPD. This is to ensure that the new CPR ensures accessibility for persons with disabilities and make accessibility a criterion for selection of operations. Moreover, for EUD it is essential to ensure that the CPR contains strong partnership principle within the Regulation. EUD provided EDF with input for their first assessment of the proposal, including recommendations on how to improve it.

2. The European Social Fund+ (ESF+)

Regarding the new proposal for ESF+, EUD agreed with and supported EDF's priorities, which are to maintain and strengthen references to the UN CRPD as well as having a clear mention of the inclusion of persons with disabilities in actions, targeting the most marginalised groups. The funds must not be used for inaccessible infrastructure, products or services. EUD gave comments and recommendations to EDF in their first assessment of the proposal. In particular, EUD highlighted the fact that funds should not only be earmarked for capacity-building of civil society organisations, but also for accessibility and reasonable accommodation for persons with disabilities and their organisations to ensure equal participation.

The European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Semester

EUD regularly attends meetings and strategic dialogues organised by the European Commission that focus on the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights and the European Semester.

In March, EUD attended the Strategic Dialogue meeting on the European Semester organised by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL) of the European Commission (EC). The event focused

on the Country Reports, which are part of the European Semester and analyse the overall situation of economic policies as well as the economic and social hurdles of the Member States. In July EUD participated in the Strategic Dialogue meeting that focused on the Country Specific Recommendations for the EU Member States.

EUD encourages National Associations of the Deaf (NADs) to become involved during the European Semester process as they can positively influence national legislation in the fields of employment, education, social care and other. EUD has developed a toolkit on European Pillar Social Rights and European Semester that is available on EUD's website, which explains the processes in detail.



Evaluation of the European Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020

In 2019 EUD started contributing to the evaluation of the European Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020. EUD participated in the consultation developed by the European Commission specifically targeted at non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and organisations of people with disabilities (DPOs). The purpose of the consultation was to gather feedback from organisations representing people with disabilities on the implementation of the European Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020. EUD disseminated a consultation among

its members - the National Associations of the Deaf, and also participated in the consultation itself.

Later in 2019, EUD participated in and disseminated among members an open Public Consultation, to which individual citizens were able to reply. EUD encouraged all disability rights advocates to answer the survey and evaluate the European Disability Strategy 2010 – 2020 and to deliver the future European Disability Strategy 2020 – 2030.

The Sustainable Development Goals

A) Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE) Region

In March EUD participated in the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN ECE) Region in Geneva, Switzerland. Representatives from the UNECE Member States, European Union, United Nations, intergovernmental and regional organizations, private sector and NGOs participated in the Forum to discuss the progress of SDG implementation in Europe region.

EUD is a member of the UN ECE Constituency of Persons with Disabilities, which is coordinated by the European Disability Forum. UN ECE Constituency of Persons with Disabilities aims at ensuring that the views of persons with disabilities are included in the SDGs work of the UN ECE.

The Forum was an excellent opportunity for EUD and all relevant stakeholders to review progress, and exchange with best practices towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Throughout the discussions it was emphasized that it is essential to leave no one behind and to ensure that societies do not suffer from inequalities and exclusion while implementing SDGs.

B) Data collection and Washington Group (WG) Short Set of questions

In order to track the implementation of SDGs data collection is the key. In March, Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities for Sustainable Development, the focal point for UNDESA, ECOSOC and the GA for all UN Sustainable Development policies, hosted a webinar which focused on country experiences collecting disability data.

It was highlighted that disaggregated data by disability exists and is available, but it is limited, contains gaps and doesn't identify key issues faced by persons with disabilities. During the webinar the Washington Group (WG) Short Set of questions was presented. WG Short Set of questions is designed to identify (in a census or survey format) people with a disability. Presenters highlighted that due to the complexity of disability, the questions in the short set are not designed to measure all aspects of difficulty in functioning that people experience, but identifies people at greater risk than the general population for participation restrictions due to the presence of difficulties in six core functional domains, if appropriate accommodations are not made. During the webinar presenters highlighted that the Washington Group (WG) Short Set of questions can be a feasible tool of data collection.

EUD explores options how to use the Washington Group (WG) Short Set of questions on the national level as a tool to collect disaggregated data by disability type. Disaggregating data by disability type is extremely important as it would allow to measure the levels of implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Sustainable Development Goals and other commitments to certain groups of people with different disabilities. Available quality data disaggregated by disability type would also make sure that resources are spent on the areas in which actions are needed.

From left to right, **Serafine Duss**, former EUD Intern, **Martyna Balčiūnaitė**, EUD policy officer, **Annika De Maeyer**, former EUD Policy Officer and **Romy O'Callaghan**, former EUD in-house interpreter.



Do not take my spot! – The EU Disability Parking Card

On the 18th of March, EUD attended the event on the EU Disability Parking Card hosted by the Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament in order to discuss the main issues concerning the EU Disability Parking Card, such as the different means by which the parking card would be issued as well as the fraudulent use and blocking of parking spaces.

Adam Kosa, Member of the European Parliament (MEP), opened the event by stating that the confusion regarding the use of parking cards stems from administrative problems. Parking cards are issued not only to people with reduced mobility, but also to other people with disabilities. He also noted that the different terminologies and legal bases within the EU have led to this continued confusion. The objective would thus be to harmonise and minimise such differences.

Emmanuelle Grange, Head of Unit for Equality and Inclusion at the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs, and Inclusion at the European Commission, presented an overview on the implementation and use of the Disability Parking Card in the EU Member States. Although the card model is mutually recognised by all Member States, she stressed that differences persist. The issuing system is centralised in some Member States, while other Member States have decentralised systems. The differences in terms of eligibility were also noted. The question of fraudulent use was also discussed—such as the use of the card by a person to whom it does not belong,

the use of the card of a deceased person, or false use and identity theft through duplicating the card to name but a few. Some Member States are trying to combat such incidents of fraud—for example, Belgian authorities use a mobile application called “handy2Park”, which allows the police to better control the cards and confiscate them if necessary.

Afterwards, participants had the opportunity to exchange their thoughts and views. Antoine Fobe, Head of Campaigning at the European Blind Union, considered that fraud is a problem that crosses borders and should be addressed at the European level. Mark Wheatley, Executive Director of the European Union of the Deaf, noted the problems that can arise from applications such as handy2park if we do not also consider privacy and data protection. Marie Denninghaus, Policy Coordinator at the European Disability Forum (EDF), advocated for the need to harmonise the issuing rules into a form which would be binding among Member States. She also recommended the establishment of a comprehensive database summarising the rules of each Member State for the use of disabled parking spaces for better understanding by card holders.

In her closing remarks, Helga Stevens, MEP, made the link between the EU disability card and the EU disability parking card but also pointed out that the two should not be integrated because not everyone has both cards, especially since the parking card must remain reserved for those who truly need it.



Do not take my spot! – The EU Disability Parking Card event, Brussels, Belgium

Disability Intergroup: Political Participation Seminar

On the 30th of January, the Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament organised a seminar on political participation for persons with disabilities.

Ádám Kósa, Member of European Parliament (MEP), opened the event by stating the importance of ensuring that the 2019 European Parliament (EP) elections were accessible to all voters. In this regard, the election procedure itself and the access to information and communication prior to and following the election must have been made fully accessible to all.

Rodolfo Cattani, Executive Committee member of the European Disability Forum (EDF), took the floor and recalled the duties of the European Union and its Member States to respect the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for rights relating to political participation and eliminate any legal and administrative barrier to exercising these rights. He thanked the Disability Intergroup for the work that had been undertaken and stressed the importance of having an ambitious Disability Intergroup for the next mandate.

MEP Helga Stevens moderated the first panel, during which Krzysztof Pater of the European Economic and Social Committee presented a report concerning the actual right to vote for persons with disabilities in Europe. Associate Democratic Governance Officer Anete Erdmane of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR),

presented the report entitled "Persons with Disabilities and Ensuring their Right to Participate in Political and Public Life" and enumerated the common barriers to political participation for voters with disabilities, such as legal and administrative barriers, a lack of accessibility, limited support and funding for participation, outdated paternalistic approaches, and prevailing social stereotypes. Afterwards, Martha Sticking, researcher at the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights, presented an update of the 2014 report entitled "The Right to Political Participation of Persons with Disabilities" with key indicators for assessing the political participation of persons with disabilities in the EU. Adolfo Barroso was the final presenter on the panel, who explained his experience as a European citizen and the obstacles he faced in exercising his right to vote.

MEP Marek Plura moderated the second panel, during which Stephen Clark, Director for the EP Liaison Offices, presented the campaign "This Time I'm Voting." Pat Clarke, EDF vice-president, presented EDF's European election campaigns which comprised of: guidelines for accessible political campaigns, the "European Elections for All" petition and the #disabilityvote campaign.

MEP Marek Plura gave the closing words by expressing his wish that the citizens of the European Union are the winners in the then-forthcoming elections by not leaving anyone behind.

Disability Intergroup: Political
Participation Seminar,
Brussels, Belgium



Training by the European Academy of Law (ERA) on Disability and Non-Discrimination in the European Union, in Trier, Germany

On the 6th and 7th of May, EUD took part in a training seminar for national civil servants and the staff of non-governmental organisations (NGOs), disabled persons organisations (DPOs) and equality bodies. This training session was provided by the European Academy of Law (ERA) on Disability and Non-Discrimination in the European Union, and took place in Trier, Germany.

Key aspects of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), such as its purpose, general principles, and review process, were addressed before exploring the relationship between the UN CRPD and the legislation of the European Union. In particular, the seminar explored the influence that the UN CRPD has had on the development of the Court of Justice of the European Union's interpretation of EU legislation regarding the concept of disability and reasonable accommodation.

Subsequently, there was a discussion on how to fight discrimination against people with disabilities and how to remove both the legal and practical barriers to exercising the right to political participation for those people with disabilities. Also addressed was the topic of what are the specific needs of people with disabilities among vulnerable groups at the national level. These needs included violence against women with disabilities and the right to inclusive education for children with disabilities.

In addition, the availability and access to the European Union's financial instruments while observing compliance with the principles of the Convention was discussed. This session represented opportunity for the participants to exchange good practices on how to ensure that public funds are used properly for people with disabilities.

This training was useful for EUD's Policy Assistant as it sharpened and expanded their knowledge on human rights which will be used in EUD's daily work and activities.



Frankie Picron,
EUD Policy Assistant

HUAWEI

Following the launch of StorySign last December, Huawei, a company that is a global provider of information and communications technologies (ICT) and smart devices, made a generous donation to EUD. This money was dedicated to funding projects across the EU that aim at increasing the literacy of deaf children.

EUD assumed the responsibility of the project management of Huawei's funds. In doing so, EUD developed an online application process for all NADs to submit their project

applications. Then, EUD and Huawei evaluated each application and provided feedback to all NADs, before then approving the projects and distributing the funding to the NADs. EUD and Huawei will follow up on all of the projects, and hopefully during 2021 there will be a conference in Brussels for the NADs to showcase the results of their projects. EUD is very grateful to Huawei for making this happen and also most importantly, giving deaf children opportunities to read and sign with their parents.

DigitALL 2019 Chinese New Year Reception

On the 7th of February, Huawei, provider of information and communications technology (ICT), hosted their annual Chinese New Year reception in Brussels, during which a panel discussion entitled DigitALL took place. EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley was invited as a keynote speaker to present an app developed by Huawei - StorySign.

The panel discussion was opened by Abraham Liu, Chief Representative of Huawei to the EU Institutions, who spoke about the investments made by Huawei over the last 18 years in the field of technology, research & development, as well as Huawei's commitment to creating a more-inclusive digital world.

Walter Ji, President of Huawei's Consumer Business Group, presented StorySign, a free app that runs on Artificial Intelligence and translates popular children's books into sign language. This app aims at improving the literacy skills of deaf children and is available in ten EU Member States and in eleven sign languages.

EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley, took the floor to present the positive impact of the StorySign app for deaf children. Mark Wheatley highlighted that the app plays a large role in helping parents to read stories to their deaf children. Furthermore, it does not only help deaf children learn how to read and to enjoy it, but also helps parents learn how to sign.

The event was closed with a performance by the Cabra Deaf Choir from Ireland. EUD is excited to see that Huawei is committed to continuing development of StorySign, an app holds a great deal of potential.



Meeting with 10 NADs, Bucharest, Romania

On 17th May in Bucharest, Romania, there was a side event following the seminar led by Huawei and EUD. This seminar represented an excellent opportunity for the NADs to provide feedback on the progress of the StorySign campaign, especially with the quality of the

sign language translation. The opportunity was also taken to brief NADs about the procedure involved when it came to applying for funding for their projects. It was a beneficial session for all parties involved.

MICROSOFT

On the 11th and 12th of April, EUD attended the EU Accessibility Summit hosted by Microsoft which took place in Brussels. This represented an opportunity for Microsoft to present the state of play regarding the development of assistive technologies for persons with disabilities as well as increasing their accessibility.

The summit began with the welcoming remarks by John Frank, Vice-President of EU Government Affairs at Microsoft. Then, Jessica Rafuse, Senior Program Manager for Accessibility at Microsoft, took the floor to present Microsoft's philosophy on addressing disability and increasing accessibility. She indicated that disability is perceived as an environmental obstacle during human and environmental interaction and not a personal health condition. The unique situations of people with disabilities assist the company with better solving accessibility problems. Therefore, Microsoft's recruitment policy focuses on abilities, not disabilities. Microsoft aims at making the workplace fully accessible since better accessibility at the workplace will help to better optimise the productivity of those workers with a disability.

Furthermore, Jeff Petty, Head of Windows Accessibility engineering at Microsoft, highlighted his work towards identifying a solution regarding how to improve accessibility for his team. He discussed several learning tools that few people are aware of, such as screen readers. This is because, paradoxically, accessibility options are not easy to find. Therefore, they got to work on this issue in order to make such tools easier to

discover and use. Among such assistive tools, PowerPoint has a presentation translator as an option which allows for the display of automatically-generated subtitles during a presentation, in addition to the example of the subtitles automatically generated for videos (Microsoft Stream) via the use of automatic speech recognition technology.

Afterwards, Adina Braha-Honciuc, Government Affairs Manager at Microsoft, presented that the development of technologies that operate using Artificial Intelligence (AI) could be underpinned by an ethical framework. She emphasised that several principles such as reliability and security must be respected, while ensuring that AI takes care of repetitive tasks so that decisions and accountability always belong to human beings. Inclusivity was also mentioned since the rise of new technologies must not lead to new forms of discrimination by excluding segments of the population. A reference was also made to the accessibility standard (EN301549) whose guidance is extremely helpful regarding how to include accessibility in the public procurement of ICT products and services. She emphasised that the principle of accessibility should be kept in mind when governments undertake public procurements, as increased accessibility has the potential to solve certain current problems such as the low levels of employment for people with disabilities. Additionally, it could also help to create new forms of completion in business which could benefit everyone.

Finally, the summit continued on the second day during which Microsoft presented its current technologies and products such as assistive technologies. Some EUD members, including national associations of the deaf, had the opportunity to attend the summit and exchange their views with representatives at Microsoft regarding the role of AI and new technologies in increasing accessibility for the deaf.



From left to right, **Cezar Dragulin**,
EUD Intern and **Frankie Picron**,
EUD Policy Assistant

EU Disability High Level Group meetings

On the 14th of May, EUD participated in an EU Disability High Level Group meeting, organised by the European Commission in Brussels.

During this meeting, representatives from Bulgaria, Spain, Norway and Denmark provided information on the implementation of the UN CRPD at the national level in their respective countries, alongside sharing their experiences while reporting to the UN CRPD Committee. Mark Wheatley, EUD Executive Director, took the opportunity to ask that the representatives of the Member States whether they will fully ensure that all organisations which represent people with disabilities, including national associations of the deaf, have a meaningful and accessible way to be consulted and provide input to the State Party reports. Mr. Wheatley also highlighted that an accessible consultation procedure with NGOs and DPOs on the national level is key to ensuring that the perspectives from all disability groups are reflected during the reporting cycle. Any consultation with organisations representing deaf persons must be available in national sign language(s) and the Member States should ensure the availability of sign language interpreters during any public consultations.

During the second half of the meeting, latest EU policy developments were presented. The current state of play of the European Accessibility Act (EAA) was explained, stating that the Act will soon be published in the Official Journal of the EU and subsequently its transposition period will start. The European Commission encouraged the Member States to work closely with representatives from civil society and the officials at the European Commission during the transposition of the EAA into their national legal systems. Other important topics, such as the evaluation of the European Disability Strategy 2010–2020, the state of play of the EU Parking Card, and the state of play of the European Semester, were

also discussed. At the end of the meeting, the Academic Network of Disability Experts (ANED) gave a presentation on the disability assessment. This presentation was given by Ms. Lisa Waddington, Maastricht University, ANED.

On the 23rd of October, EUD participated in the second High Level Meeting on Disability of 2019. During the meeting, the Croatian representatives presented their priorities as Croatia at the time was the then-next (and now current) country to take over the Presidency of the Council of the EU in the first half of 2020. Among others, it was highlighted that the Croatian Presidency will focus on continuing discussions on the adoption of the Equal Treatment Directive, which is of high importance for persons with disabilities.

Representatives from the European Commission provided an overview of the latest developments on the recently adopted European Accessibility Act (EAA). It was emphasized that the transposition of the EAA had already begun and that the European Commission was working closely with the Member States during the implementation and transposition period as timely transposition is of high importance. Moreover, representatives from the European Commission, in particular DG Connect, presented that at the moment they had been conducting conformity checks on the transposition of the Web Accessibility Directive, as the deadline for its transposition had expired in September 2018. The European Commission also highlighted that it was currently evaluating the European Disability Strategy for 2010–2020.

The meeting was also an excellent opportunity to meet government representatives and discuss country specific issues. The next High Level Meeting on Disability will take place in the first half of 2020.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth 2019 and the side event organised by EUD, EDF, Inclusion Europe and EAPN

On the 20th of May, EUD participated in the 2019 Annual Convention for Inclusive Growth which took place in Brussels and which had been organised by the European Commission.

That year, the Convention focused on the future of Social Europe post 2020. Recently, the EU and its Member States have committed to realising the principles laid out in the European Pillar of Social Rights and the 2030 Agenda. During the Convention, participants discussed how the new multiannual financial framework and future policy and legislative initiatives will provide the structure to realise the commitments and strengthen the social and economic inclusion.

This year, EUD, together with the European Disability Forum, Inclusion Europe and the European Anti-Poverty Network, organised a side event entitled "Employment and social benefits in the context of the European Semester and post-2020 EU Strategy: combatting in-work poverty for persons with disabilities," in the context of the implementation and assessment of the Europe 2020 Strategy, the EU Disability Strategy 2010-2020 and the European Pillar of Social Rights. This side event explored the risk of poverty and social exclusion for persons with disabilities when undertaking employment and entering the workforce, as well as the interplay between wages and disability benefits, to ensure adequate incomes. It also discussed the threat to freedom of movement posed by a lack of

coordination in social security systems across the EU for economically active people with disabilities.

EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley, gave a presentation on a particularly important issue for the deaf community in the EU – the lack of coordination of social security benefits for deaf people while they exercise the right to freedom of movement. In particular, it was highlighted that currently in the EU there is no system for the coordination of the benefits provided to persons with disabilities who are economically active (both workers and job-seekers) that allow them to access the open labour market on an equal basis with others.

At the conclusion of the event, EUD made several recommendations for the EU. Particularly, EUD highlighted that it is essential to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities regarding free movement by ensuring the coordination and full portability of their social security benefits, including all kinds of disability benefits. The European Union must take immediate action to ensure that all persons with disabilities and their families can enjoy their right to freedom of movement on an equal basis with others, including with regard to the portability of social security benefits, in a coordinated manner across its Member States, and establish a clearly coordinated system of work-related disability benefits for economically active persons with disabilities. Moreover, legislators in the EU must perceive people with disabilities as economically active players in the labour market and reflect this in the definitions in EU legislation of the benefits that are coordinated among member states for people with disabilities.



Annual Convention
for Inclusive Growth 2019,
Brussels, Belgium

High-level conference on the Future of Work)

On the 9th of April, the European Commission (EC) organised a high-level conference on the Future of Work which gathered together representatives from the EU Member States, the European institutions, civil society, and academia. Participants explored the different methods for responding to the changes taking place in the world of work while also taking into account the interests of workers, employers, and the economy.

The opening session featured several political figures, including Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills, and Labour Mobility, who highlighted that digitalisation, while representing an opportunity for change, can also create certain challenges for the future of work as well as for the economy, society, and democracy. She emphasised that digital policies must succeed in addressing this change. In other words, legislators must ensure that employers, both public and private, as well as education systems, can adequately support and empower people.

Afterwards, the conference was divided into six parallel sessions. In one of the sessions, the opportunities that the impact of digitalisation can bring about while reducing the possible risks by as much as possible were discussed. Concretely, digitalisation can offer more flexibility which would improve quality of life and increase productivity, as it provides an opportunity for remote work and flexible working-time arrangements. However, the downside of the digitalisation of work is that it is harder to maintain a reasonable work-life balance and disconnect from work while one is working digitally.

During the parallel sessions, perspectives from social partners and civil society were presented. Among others, Catherine Naughton, Vice-President, Social Platform, highlighted the commitments that the governments have made to the people, enshrined and listed in the European Pillar of Social Rights, the European Treaties, Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, alongside the ratified human rights conventions, such as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. All of these instruments dictate that it should be ensured that workers in the EU have equal opportunities and access to the labour market, fair working conditions, and are assured of having adequate social protection and inclusion.

Discussions on the future of work will continue from a global point of view during the next event that will be organized by the International Labour Organisation and which will take place in Geneva. This event will represent an opportunity to celebrate the centenary of the organisation.

EUD was present at this first event since ensuring equality in employment is part of its mission. It is therefore important to carefully monitor and address the obstacles that currently exist for deaf people in the future of work.



EXTERNAL CO-OPERATION

2019 Work Forum on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the EU and its Member States

On the 13th of May, EUD participated in the Work Forum on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD) in the EU and its Member States. This Forum was organised by the European Commission and has taken place annually since 2010.

The Forum gathered together representatives from Member States, the European Union, civil society, focal points, and all other stakeholders who are responsible for monitoring the implementation of the UN CRPD on both the national and EU levels. During the Forum, participants shared their experiences on the practical implementation and monitoring of the UN CRPD and searched for solutions to address common challenges. This event addressed both substantive rights as well as governance matters.

In this iteration, the Work Forum focused on the right to political participation during the 2019 EU Elections and how to ensure that people with disabilities could meaningfully exercise

their right to vote. During the Forum, the participants also discussed how to claim their rights under the UN CRPD, e.g. how to enforce the right to inclusive education, and what is the role of equality bodies, the European Ombudsman or the special rapporteur and the UNCRPD Committee in complaint procedures. Participants also discussed what interplay there is between the UNCRPD and the other international conventions, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) or The Hague Convention on the Protection of Vulnerable Adults.

The Work Forum on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities took place in Brussels and represented an excellent opportunity to network with representatives from the Member States and EU officials as well as an opportunity to discuss how the UN CRPD can be effectively implemented in the Member States and to make a meaningful change for the deaf communities across the EU.



From left to right, **Frankie Picron**, EUD Policy Assistant, **Mark Wheatley**, EUD Executive Director and **Martyna Balčiūnaitė**, EUD Policy Officer

European Day of Persons with Disabilities 2019 and Access City Award

The annual European Day of Persons with Disabilities (EDPD) conference took place over 28th – 29th of November 2019, in Brussels. The EUD Board and staff attended the 2019 EDPD, which focused on the evaluation phase of the European Disability Strategy for 2010 – 2020. During the conference, the participants discussed the preliminary findings of the public consultation on the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, as well as presenting their expectations for the next decade.

During the second panel, EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley, emphasised that, if developed, the new European Disability Strategy 2020 - 2030 should demonstrate a clear commitment to fully implementing the UNCRPD, the UN CRPD Committee's Concluding Observations, the principles of the EU Pillar of Social Rights and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. It was also highlighted that the new strategy, if developed, should also take into account different perspectives on accessibility (e.g. the deaf perspective) and encourage actions that would ensure accessibility that go beyond physical accessibility, especially the full accessibility of information, communication and knowledge for all.

It should also aim at establishing a coordination of social security systems for

economically active persons with disabilities across the EU and ensure that everyone can exercise their freedom of movement. Moreover, the new strategy must highlight that digitalisation and developments in the field of Artificial Intelligence cannot leave people with disabilities behind and should be seen as means of empowerment. The new strategy should focus on a digital 'up-skilling' of people with disabilities, should take a cross-cutting approach and should include perspectives from different genders, the elderly, and children.

During the second day of the conference, the participants discussed how to achieve sports accessible to all. The panelists agreed that sports play a crucial role in the inclusion of persons with disabilities and therefore more financial support is necessary for initiatives that foster the participation of persons with disabilities in sports. EUD President, Markku Jokinen, emphasised that the Deaflympics are significantly important for the deaf community and wanted to know how the European Commission could support it.

Lastly, the Access City Award 2020 ceremony was the occasion for the European Commission to unveil the award's 10th winner. That year, out of the 47 cities that sent in their applications, Warsaw in Poland was awarded first place.

From left to right, **Daniel Büter**, EUD Board member, **Louise Danielsson**, EUD Board member, **Sofia Isari**, EUD Board member, **Mark Wheatley**, EUD Executive Director, and **Dr. Gergely Tapolczai**, EUD Vice President



Equality Commissioner – Helena Dalli

On the 2nd of October, the European Parliament's (EP) Women's Rights and Gender Equality Committee (FEMM), together with the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs (EMPL), led the hearing of the Commissioner-designate for Equality portfolio, Helena Dalli from Malta, who later was officially appointed as the Equality Commissioner.

The role of the new Commissioner for Equality is critically important for deaf persons in the EU, as her main task will be to strengthen Europe's commitment to inclusion and equality in all of its senses. As part of this, the new Commissioner for Equality will lead the fight against discrimination wherever it exists and will propose new anti-discrimination legislation. She will also lead the EU's implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability.

During the hearing Mrs. Dalli highlighted that she is fully committed to leading the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities across the EU. The Commissioner emphasised that prior to launching the European Disability Strategy 2020-2030, it would first be necessary to carefully study the results of the evaluation of the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, which the European Commission expects to finish by mid-2020.

Mrs. Dalli also expressed her will to directly involve persons with disabilities and their families and to consult organisations for persons with disabilities in her work. During the hearing, Mrs. Dalli also emphasised that she would do her utmost to unblock the Anti-Discrimination Directive by meeting with ministers to convince them to move forward.



Helena Dalli,
Equality Commissioner

CONCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

On the 22nd of October, EUD participated in the breakfast briefing on disability inclusion in humanitarian action. This briefing was organised by the Finnish Presidency and took place at the Council of the European Union.

During the hearing, representatives from UNICEF gave a presentation and highlighted that persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected in situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies, and that they face multiple barriers when it comes to accessing protection and humanitarian assistance. UNICEF presented that the Charter on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action, launched at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, called for the development of guidelines supporting humanitarian actors to improve the inclusion of persons with disabilities in emergency preparedness and response. These Guidelines on the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Humanitarian Action will be launched soon. Moreover, earlier that year, the European Commission's Directorate-General for

European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations launched a Guidance Note on disability inclusion to guide the humanitarian work of EU-funded NGOs which can now be used to ensure that persons with disabilities receive the necessary support they need.

EUD Policy Officer, Martyna Balciunaite, highlighted that during humanitarian emergencies some groups of persons with disabilities, such as deaf persons for instance, can remain unnoticed or be overlooked due to the fact that their disability is invisible, and therefore proper identification systems must be in place to ensure that persons with invisible or less noticeable disabilities are not left behind and have their needs adequately addressed. For instance, the provision of sign language interpretation is essential for deaf persons who are affected by humanitarian emergencies in order for them to receive accurate information and communication.

EUD would like to thank the Finnish Presidency for organising this event.

Breakfast briefing on disability inclusion in humanitarian action, Brussels, Belgium



EXTERNAL CO-OPERATION

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

PACE Committee on Equality and Non-Discrimination

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted a report on promoting and protecting sign languages in Europe in May 2019. In addition, an expert report on the use of sign languages in the Organisation's member

States had been prepared at the request of the Finnish Presidency of the Committee of Ministers. EUD was consulted throughout the process and had the opportunity to give a speech about sign languages during one of their plenary meetings.



From left to right, **Dr. Markku Jokinen**, EUD President and **Eeva Tupi**, a representative of World Federation of the Deaf

ECML 25th anniversary conference Languages at the Heart of Learning: 25 years of inspiring innovation.

On Thursday 5 and Friday 6 December 2019 the European Centre for Modern Languages of the Council of Europe organised a high-level conference to celebrate its 25th anniversary (as well as the Council of Europe's 70th anniversary) and reflect on the important contribution made by the Centre to the field of language education.

EUD President, Markku Jokinen and Board Member, Sofia Isari attended the conference in Graz, Austria to note the ECML's 25th anniversary. During the conference entitled 'Languages at the Heart of Learning: 25 years of inspiring innovation' EUD President gave a presentation during the special session on 'Protecting and Promoting Sign Languages in Europe' and highlighted that the right to sign language is a human right.



ECML 25th anniversary conference,
Graz, Austria

European Elections 2019

In 2019, there were European Elections being in place. EUD have worked extensively before and during the European elections.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Leave no one behind campaign with EUDY and efsli

Eud together with EUDY and efsli released the joint statement 'Don't Leave Deaf Voters Behind'. The statement is available online in English and International Sign. We also produced 5 social media videos with references to the joint statement.



Deaf candidates for the European Elections

During the European elections 2019, there were eight deaf candidates aiming to be elected as MEPs:

Kaija-Liisa Savolainen	Finland
Ida Collu	Italy
Amílcar Morais	Portugal
Steffen Helbing	Germany
Ádám Kósa	Hungary
Alexander Exner	Germany
Edgars Vorslovs	Latvia
Dimitra Paschali	Greece

The results have concluded with just one deaf MEP for 2019 to 2024. It's Ádám Kósa from Hungary. He have secured his 3rd parliamentary term.



Kaija-Liisa Savolainen



Ida Collu



Amílcar Morais



Steffen Helbing



Ádám Kósa



Alexander Exner



Edgars Vorslovs



Dimitra Paschali

EXTERNAL CO-OPERATION

European Debate

On the 15th of May, candidates for the presidency of the European Commission took part in a live Eurovision debate at the European Parliament in Brussels. It was the first time that

the debate was available in International Sign. We strongly support this initiative as it made the debate accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing audience.



European Debate,
Brussels, Belgium

European Parliament's campaign video

For the first time ever, EUD worked together with the European Parliament to produce a campaign video on the 2019 European elections in 31 sign languages!

We were particularly excited as this was the first time in history when video content produced by the European Parliament was made available in the mother tongues of many deaf Europeans – in this case 31 sign languages. The videos informed deaf voters about the European elections in an accessible manner, as the accessibility of information and communication are key to ensuring the effective and meaningful political participation of deaf voters.

EUD saw this initiative as an excellent opportunity to reach out to all Europeans during the elections and highlighted that ensuring accessibility was an opportunity, not a burden. EUD called upon the candidates for the European Parliament and all relevant national authorities to empower deaf voters to meaningfully exercise their right to vote by removing significant obstacles to accessing information and communication during the European elections, and to have made all information and communication available in national sign languages.

EUD hopes to collaborate with the European Parliament in the future in the production of further and more accessible content for deaf Europeans.



Choose your future campaign video

On the 1st and 2nd of June, EUD attended the Annual General Assembly (AGA) of the European Disability Forum (EDF). EUD's official delegate to the AGA was EUD Vice President Dr. Gergely Tapolczai.

Prior to the EDF AGA, the European conference entitled "Smart Travel - Partnership and technology making European travel more accessible" took place during which there were discussions on partnerships with and participation of persons with disabilities during policy making as well as the roles of technology and innovation in ensuring accessibility while traveling.

Following the conference, during the EDF's AGA, the report on EDF's achievements in 2018 as well as its work programme for 2019 were presented. Topics such as the 2019 EU Elections, the Disability Strategy for 2020

– 2030, the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights, the UN CRPD, the process of the European Semester, and the involvement of organisations representing people with disabilities were discussed.

EUD Vice President Dr. Gergely Tapolczai presented EUD's advocacy campaign for the 2019 EU Elections 2019, which included the collaboration with the European Parliament in producing the video 'Choose Your Future' and making it available in 31 sign languages, EUD EUDY and efl's joint advocacy campaign 'Don't Leave Deaf Voters Behind' and other actions that were undertaken by EUD to ensure that deaf voters could meaningfully exercise their right to political participation during the 2019 EU Elections.

EUROPEAN DISABILITY FORUM (EDF)

Dr. Gergely Tapolczai,
EUD Vice President



EDF ENGO meetings

EUD regularly attends the meetings of the European Non-Governmental Organisations that focus on disability. The meetings are organised by the European Disability Forum.

During the meetings EUD together with other organisations discuss common policy plans, coordinate future actions and discuss how to better collaborate together.

EXTERNAL CO-OPERATION

EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF YOUTH (EUDY)

In 2019 EUD and EUDY worked together during the European elections campaign and continued collaborating for a more inclusive and accessible Erasmus Plus program.

On 11th May, EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley attended the General Assembly of EUDY as an observer. He also gave a presentation about EUD's cooperation with EUDY over the past year.



European Union of the Deaf
Youth's General Assembly,
Ghent, Belgium

THE WORLD FEDERATION OF THE DEAF (WFD)

EUD representatives attended the congress and the XX General Assembly in Paris, France in July. At the XX General Assembly, EUD Vice President, Gergely Tapolczai was an official non-voting delegate for EUD and EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley was appointed as a minute taker.



World Federation of the
Deaf's XX General Assembly,
Paris, France

EUD continued its cooperation with EDSO, as the EDSO board used EUD's facilities for their board meeting, they also used EUD's facilities for the live draw of the European Deaf Volleyball Championship which Mark Wheatley participated in. This was broadcast live to all EDSO members.

EUROPEAN DEAF SPORTS ORGANISATION (EDSO)

EUD continued its cooperation with EDbU through email support and had the opportunity to have discussions with its president during the European Day of Persons with Disabilities conference.

EUROPEAN DEAFBLIND UNION

EUD president and the president of the European Network of Sign Language Teachers, Luigi Lerose, signed a memorandum of understanding which established an official cooperation between EUD and ENSLT on 18th May in Bucharest, Romania.

EUROPEAN NETWORK OF SIGN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

From left to right, **Luigi Lerose**, President of the European Network of Sign Language Teachers and **Dr. Markku Jokinen**, EUD President



Twice a year, EUD attends meetings organised by the European Platform of Deafness, Hard of Hearing and Deafblindness. This platform has been formed to enhance, strengthen and cultivate a robust and enduring collaboration between the European Cochlear Implant Users (EURO-CIU), the European Deafblind Union (EDbU), the European Deafblind Network (EDbN), the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH), the European Federation of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children (FEPEDA),

the European Union of the Deaf (EUD) and the European Union of the Deaf Youth (EUDY). In 2019, the first meeting took place in Barcelona and the second meeting took place in Brussels. The members of the platform discussed how to support each other while advocating for the swift and ambitious transposition of the recently adopted EU accessibility legislation that would bring about meaningful changes for deaf, hard of hearing and deafblind persons in the EU.

EUROPEAN PLATFORM OF DEAFNESS, HARD OF HEARING AND DEAFBLINDNESS

EUD ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF THE DEAF

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 Slovenka (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)

BOARD



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



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Budapest, Hungary
Member of the Hungarian Parliament



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(January 2019 - December 2019)

This report is supported by the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020

Objectives of the Programme

This programme shall contribute to the further development of an area where equality and the rights of persons, as enshrined in the Treaty, the Charter and international human rights conventions, are promoted and protected. Its nine specific objectives are to:

- Promote non-discrimination
- Combat racism, xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of intolerance
- Promote rights of persons with disabilities
- Promote equality between women and men and gender mainstreaming
- Prevent violence against children, young people, women and other groups at risk (Daphne)
- Promote the rights of the child
- Ensure the highest level of data protection
- Promote the rights deriving from Union citizenship
- Enforce consumer rights

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

