

Prague Declaration 2013

'A better quality of life for the hard of hearing people in Europe'

PREAMBLE

We, the representatives of the National Members of the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, **EFHOH**; members of the European Union and other European countries, believe in and strive for equal rights of hard of hearing people.

We adopt the following declaration by mutual agreement and by full acclamation today as the closing of the conference entitled " **The access of people with hearing disabilities to information**" hosted by the Czech Deaf and Hard of Hearing Association and EFHOH under the support of Member of the European Parliament, Dr. Ādām Koša.

SUBJECTIVE

One condition for good quality of life is that all citizens have access to information.

An accessible society for hard of hearing people benefits whole population.

EFHOH emphasizes that a hearing loss itself is no obstacle for full inclusion. In order to secure a good quality of life for all citizens, hard of hearing people should have access to fair working conditions, a good quality health care and meaningful social activities on the same conditions as others.

According to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), it is obvious that persons with disabilities should have the same living conditions as others. An estimated 15% of the world population has some sort of a hearing loss and the World Health Organisation (WHO) lists hearing loss as one of the most frequent public health problems

Article 9 in the CRPD points out that the convention state parties should take necessary measures to secure that persons with a disability have equal access to information and well-functioning communication, including information and communication technology (IT) and systems.

For hard of hearing people, the following is essential:

- Access to audiological rehabilitation, including hearing aids with a telecoil; access to additional alerting systems for door-bells, phones, fire alarms etc.
- Well functioning hearing loops and good audio technical solutions in public premise
- Visual information in public transport
- Possibility to send text messages to the emergency authority in case of an emergency
- Accessible information to the public
- 100% TV captioning/subtitling
- Right to well-functioning communication/interpreter support including speech-to-text reporting, lip-speaking, note-taking and communication tactics supporting lip-reading.
- Problems related to hearing loss are addressed in schools/education systems and working life: Employments agencies, work places, insurance matters.
- A positive attitude toward hard of hearing people

Realizing the above, life of hard of hearing people would be remarkably improved.

We urge European governments to use the UNCRPD as the point of departure in their disability policies and to work actively for ratification and implementation of the UNCRPD.

We trust that the EU member states and other European countries have the will and the means to actively support this declaration.

We urge national mechanisms monitoring the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to include the hard of hearing perspective in their monitoring and reporting.

We call upon the European Union and the Council of Europe to provide speech-to-text services within its institutions to model best practice.

SIGNATURES OF THE PRAGUE DECLARATION

EFHOH

Member of European Parliament
(Questor)

IFHOH

Member of European Parliament
(President of Disability Intergroup)

Marcel Bobeldijk
President

Lidia Geringer de Oedenberg

Avi Blau
Vice- President

Dr. Adam Kosa

AUSTRIA

Österreichischer
Schwerhörigenbund, ÖSB

BELGIUM

Onder Ons – Vereniging
voor slechthorenden en
doofgewordenen

CZECH REPUBLIC

Svaz neslyšicich a
nedoslychavych v ČR

CZECH REPUBLIC

Ceska Unie Neslyšicich

FRANCE

BUCODES- Surdi France

DENMARK

Hoereforeningen

GERMANY

Deutscher Schwerhörigen-
Bund e.V., DSB

HUNGARY

NABOKE

IRELAND

Irish Hard of Hearing
Association, IHHA

SWITZERLAND

Pro Audito

NETHERLANDS

NVVS

BELGIUM

Horgeschädigte
Ostbelgiens VoG

FINLAND

Kuuloliitto ry

POLAND

Polska Fundacja Osób
Słabosłyszacych

SLOVENIA

Zveza Drustev Gluhih in
Naglusnih Slovenije

SWEDEN

Hörselskadades Riksförbund

UNITED KINGDOM

National Association of
Deafened People

NORWAY

Hörselhemmedes
Landforbund

The EFHOH Annual Conference in Prague, Czech Republic, 6 April, 2013