

# Prague Declaration

*'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. *Ádám 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

Marcel Bobeldijk  
President

### IFHOH

Avi Blau  
Vice- President

### Member of European Parliament (President of Disability Intergroup)

Dr. Adam Kosa

### AUSTRIA

Österreichischer  
Schwerhörigenbund, ÖSB

### BELGIUM

Onder Ons – Vereniging  
voor slechthorenden en  
doofgewordenen

### CZECH REPUBLIC

Svaz neslyšících a  
nedoslychavých v ČR

### CZECH REPUBLIC

Ceska Unie Neslyšících

### 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

