



2011



# IMPACT REPORT

European Union of the Deaf

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EUD would like to thank the European Commission for funding this 2011 Impact Report under the auspices of the PROGRESS programme . Without their substantial financial contributions the publication of this report would not have been possible.

The support by the EUD Board and President have been of invaluable help to create an accurate and up-to-date account of the EUD activities in 2011:

|                        |                        |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>President:</b>      | Berglind Stefánsdóttir |
| <b>Vice-President:</b> | Yannis Yallouros       |
| <b>Board Member:</b>   | Dr Gergely Tapolczai   |
| <b>Board Member:</b>   | Dr Humberto Insolera   |
| <b>Board Member:</b>   | Asger Bergmann         |

We are also indebted to the National Associations of the Deaf (NADs), which supported us throughout this exciting and successful year and continuously supplied us with photos of numerous events and activities. In particular we are thankful to the Slovenian Deaf Association for providing us with photos of the EUD General Assembly in Budapest, Hungary in May.

The European Disability Forum (EDF), of which EUD is a full member, has been collaborating with EUD on several issues and levels, including this report.

EUD has been in close contact with a number of MEP offices throughout the year, most notably the office of MEP Ádám Kósa. EUD are very pleased with the continued co-operation.

# FOREWORD BY EUD PRESIDENT

2011 was a very successful year for EUD. We managed to secure funding from the European Commission for the next three years (2011-2013) and employed two new members of staff: Lars Knudsen from Denmark, who is now the Communication and Media Officer and Annika Pabsch from Germany, the new Policy Officer. The EUD team has thus now become even more European, representing six nationalities.

We were able to set up a successful internship programme that takes place twice a year. It gives young Deaf Europeans the possibility to get to know EUD's work and structure and bring the acquired knowledge back to their home countries.

The enlargement of the team has had a very positive effect on the visibility of EUD. Our new website and the presence on social media sites have contributed greatly to an increased awareness of EUD and its activities within its member base but also individuals across the world.

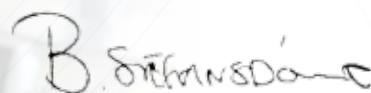


In terms of national legislation there various positive and important changes took place in 2011: As I am myself Icelandic, I am very proud to say that Icelandic Sign Language was recognised as an independent language in an Act in May 2011. Furthermore, the Polish Deaf community was able to achieve the recognition of Polish Sign Language in September 2011.

During the EUD Annual General Assembly representatives of all full member NADs signed a support letter to ask for the formal recognition of Italian Sign Language due to concerns about the law not being passed by the Senate. Although EUD's support was highly appreciated the current economic situation does not allow the Italian Senate to pass additional legislation in this legislative period. This clearly exemplifies the effect the economic downturn has on local Deaf Communities not only in Italy but also across the EU. It is EUD's aim to achieve equal and basic human rights for Deaf people. Formally recognising the national sign languages is crucial to grant these rights even with less than ideal economic circumstances.

EUD has been able to assist its members in fighting for sign language recognition and equal access in 2011 and will continue to do so in 2012, especially in view of the recent ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) by the EU. This milestone document advocates the rights of all disabled people, including Deaf sign language users. EUD took the opportunity to make the UNCRPD the main topic of its annual General Assembly, workshop, and seminar. The event was a great success with participants from all full member States and nearly all affiliated members, giving members the possibility to learn about lobbying strategies and details of the Convention regarding the rights of Deaf sign language users.

Overall, 2011 was a very eventful year with many positive changes that led to EUD being more visible and productive at national, regional, and EU level. I wish the EUD team all the best for 2012 and look forward to good co-operation with the Board and national members, as well as stakeholders at the European institutions and other relevant bodies.

  
EUD President, Berglind Stefánsdóttir

# INTRODUCTION EUD

## EUROPEAN UNION OF THE DEAF

Based in Brussels, Belgium EUD is a not-for-profit European non-governmental organisation (ENGO) comprising National Associations of the Deaf (NADs). It is the only supranational organisation representing Deaf sign language users at European level and is one of the few ENGOs representing associations in all 27 EU Member States, including Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland. EU candidate countries, such as Croatia and Turkey are affiliated members with the option to become full members as soon as they officially enter the EU.

Aiming to establish and maintain EU level dialogue with the European Union institutions and officials in consultation and co-operation with its member NADs, it also has participatory status with the Council of Europe (CoE). Furthermore, 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 to tackle issues of global importance.

## MISSION STATEMENT

To promote, advance, and protect the rights of and opportunities for Deaf people (including sign language users) in the European Union is the core mission of EUD.

It is EUD's aim to achieve equality in both public and private life for Deaf people all over Europe to ensure they can become full citizens in their own right. In order to reach these goals, 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 way the Brussels office works. It is a fully accessible signing environment with international staff from different countries across the EU. The majority of staff are Deaf sign language users and all hearing staff must know at least one national sign language as well as International Sign. EUD also takes into account gender equality, having employed a high percentage of women.

## SIGN LANGUAGES AS HUMAN RIGHT

Inherent to EUD's work is the belief that the right to sign language is a basic Human Right. Sign language users, similarly to national minorities, are in need of particular protection regarding their language and Human Rights. The national sign languages are the mother tongues of Deaf sign language users across the EU and the world.

The right to sign language in itself is a Human Right but access to sign language is also essential for the fulfilment of other Human Rights, such as the right to equal education, information, or a fair trial. Without early access to sign language programmes and an educational system that fosters the acquisition of sign language (and the national written language) Deaf children will not be able to enjoy their basic Human Rights as children or later in their adult life.

EUD therefore advocates the right to sign language as an essential prerequisite to a fully equal life, making Deaf people citizens who can participate in society on an equal footing to others.



*The right to sign language in itself is a Human Right but access to sign language is also essential for the fulfilment of other Human Rights*



# EUD INITIATIVES

## THE ART OF LOBBYING

### WORKSHOP

The EUD workshop, along with our annual seminar, was presented under the main theme: 'The Art of Lobbying – Strategies to Maximise the Implementation of the UNCRPD'. The workshop provided hands-on tools on how to implement the UNCRPD at national level and showcased lobbying strategies on the realisation of the aims of the Brussels Declaration on Sign Languages from 2010.

Dr Gergely Tapolczai (first Deaf Member of the Hungarian Parliament & EUD Board Member) presented the first half of the workshop. He initially explored the differences between the legally binding instrument UNCRPD and the Brussels Declaration on Sign Languages in the European Union, which is a document advocating the rights of Deaf people across Europe. Then he continued to explain how EUD members can influence the implementation of the Convention, especially by taking part in the parallel reporting process.

Mark Wheatley (EUD Executive Director) initiated the second half of the workshop, concentrating on the definition of lobbying and then analysing different very concrete strategies and techniques. Traditional methods as well as 'soft' measures, such as informal meetings and other subtle techniques were introduced and potential target groups identified.



*The main theme was the UNCRPD and the national implementation and positive effects that legislative measures have in the daily lives of Deaf people*



### SEMINAR

The public EUD seminar that is organised every year in conjunction with the General Assembly and the workshop was well received and fully booked. Participants from over 30 countries attended the successful event.

Speakers included – among others – MEP Ádám Kósa, then WFD President Markku Jokinen, Miklós Soltész, the Hungarian Minister of State for Social, Family, and Youth Affairs, and Ildikó Bernáth, the Hungarian Ministerial Commissioner for Disability Affairs. The main theme was the UNCRPD and the national implementation and positive effects that legislative measures have in the daily lives of Deaf people. It also focussed on how Deaf people can become active themselves for example through a national disability caucus or other civil society activities at grassroots level.



# EUD INITIATIVES

## WORKING GROUPS

The funding received from the European Commission enabled EUD to install three Working Groups to further develop current topics of interest to the European Deaf Communities. The three Working Groups are:

- Accessibility
- ICT
- Deaf Lawyer

Each Working Group is chaired by a Board Member who has detailed knowledge of the specific area. The three Working Groups gather Deaf experts from all over Europe to discuss current trends regarding policies affecting Deaf Europeans and facilitates the exchanging of ideas. The Working Groups meet once to twice a year to evaluate the status quo and formulate recommendations for the Member States and at European level. They also work on providing good practices as well as negative examples in their respective Member States and at European level. A comprehensive report is drawn up after each session and sent to the member NADs and the European Commission. The new EUD website will serve as a platform to ensure continued discussion (in International Sign and written English) after the face-to-face meetings at the EUD office in Brussels.



### ACCESSIBILITY

The Accessibility WG is chaired by Asger Bergmann, EUD Board Member. The invited Deaf experts discussed a range of issues, mainly the accessibility of employment, education, and also culture. Accessibility at the work place varies greatly in the different EU Member States. The Deaf experts provided input by giving positive and negative examples from various countries.

Lars Knudsen, EUD Media and Communication Officer presented a large-scale media campaign that demonstrated the value of 'the Deaf employee' and was led by the Danish Deaf Association. It concentrated on stereotypes hearing people have regarding Deaf people and showed how they actually contribute to the active workforce rather than being a burden.

### ICT

Yannis Yallouros, EUD Vice-President and ICT expert is the chair of the ICT WG. The main points of discussion were the Written Declaration on the need for accessible 112 emergency services (led by EUD), e-inclusion and Video Relay Services.

Gary Machado, the Executive Director of the European Emergency Number Association (EENA) presented the REACH112 project, which aims at making 112 emergency services accessible using the Total Conversation concept, which includes for example access in sign language or realtime text. EENA and EUD have agreed to work closely together also in 2012 to ensure all 112 services will become accessible to Deaf citizens all across Europe.

### DEAF LAWYER

The Deaf Lawyer WG was the only one to meet twice this year. The first meeting was on an ad-hoc basis to tackle the text of the Written Declaration regarding the accessibility of 112 emergency services and attended by two young Deaf lawyers along with Brussels-based EUD staff.

Dr Gergely Tapolczai, a Deaf Lawyer himself, chaired the second meeting. Legal practitioners from several countries were present and Helga Stevens, Deaf Member of the Flemish Parliament, joined the meeting as an external expert. The meeting focussed on MEP Ádám Kósa's Mobility Report, the UNCRPD, and the European Citizens' Initiative.

## INTERNSHIP PROGRAMME

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*This gives young Deaf sign language users the opportunity to gain valuable experience at European level and transport that knowledge back to their local and national Deaf Communities*



In 2011 EUD was able to install its new internship programme, which allows young Deaf people from across the EU to gain insight into the everyday work of EUD. Thanks to the funding from the European Commission EUD is in a position to offer two three-month internships every year. This gives young Deaf sign language users the opportunity to gain valuable experience at European level and transport that knowledge back to their local and national Deaf Communities. At the same time the intern will be able to improve their International Sign skills and its political awareness, which is crucial for equal political participation, one of the rights postulated by the UNCRPD.

Sofiya Kalinova from Bulgaria was the first intern in 2011 concentrating on collecting data regarding the UNCRPD and lobbying strategies for the annual EUD seminar and workshop in Budapest, Hungary. After her experience at EUD she continued being interested in EU affairs and is now studying Law with Politics in Dublin, Ireland.



Sofiya Kalinova, Bulgaria

The second intern was Delphine le Maire from Belgium. Having studied Law and having undergone a traineeship at the European Disability Forum (EDF) she supported the EUD team in analysing legislative proposals and in its work with the European Parliament.



Delphine le Maire, Belgium

Both interns were of great assistance to the team and provided videos in International Sign, as well as reports and abstracts in written English. In the coming year EUD will continue with its very successful internship programme and hopes to attract a wide range of young Deaf people to ensure they can become the leaders of tomorrow.

# EUD INITIATIVES

## EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

In 2011 EUD completely revamped its website to make it even more accessible for Deaf sign language users. The majority of information is now available in sign language. To facilitate the use of our website for users who are not fluent in International Sign a large number of videos have subtitles in English and other official EU languages, such as Spanish, German, or Danish. EUD reports regularly from the events it attends, creating a substantial database of videos in International Sign.

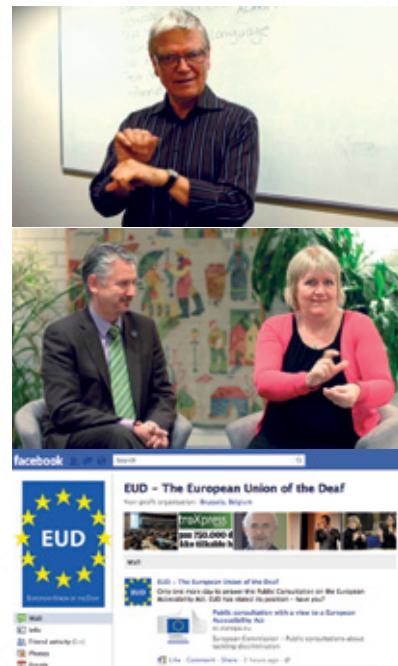
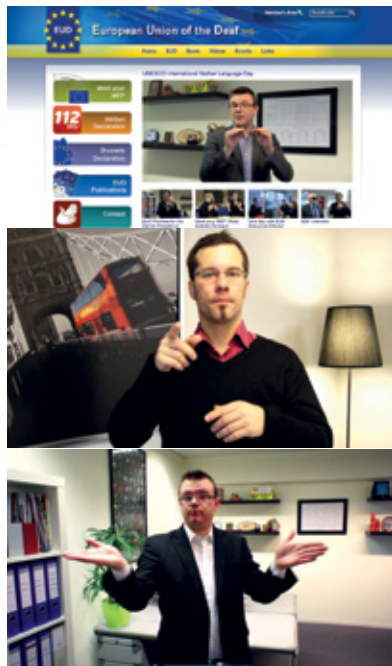
The past year has brought EUD closer to the European and global Deaf Community by expanding its social media base through Facebook and Twitter. The EUD Facebook page now has over 8,000 likes and 2 million friends of fans and is still growing. The Facebook page features videos, photos, and links to the EUD website and other interesting news from the European Union and our members. It is updated almost every day. The EUD website has over 8,000 hits per week on average and is updated with news several times a week, spreading knowledge to the Deaf Community about European politics and news of local and national importance.

Our social media presence has made us into a gateway for European Deaf sign language users and other interested parties, conveying information about our political work at the European institutions, including the European Parliament and the European Commission.

8,000  
LIKES

2,000,000  
FRIENDS OF FANS

8,000  
HITS PER WEEK





# HUNGARIAN PRESIDENCY

## HIGH LEVEL DISABILITY CONFERENCE

The Hungarian Presidency hosted a High Level Disability Conference in April 2011 in Budapest entitled: 'New Challenges in the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020'.

EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley was one of the moderators of the conference, chairing two sessions that included – among others – the Minister of National Resources in Hungary, Dr Miklós Réthelyi and Jean-Marc Delizée, the Belgian Secretary of State for Social Affairs. Having both MEP Ádám Kósa and EUD Executive Mark Wheatley using sign language at such a public event was of great importance to increase the visibility of sign language users and their issues.

The mains topics of the conference were the UNCRPD and its implementation in the EU, as well as the improvement of employment opportunities, creating inclusive education, and combating poverty for people with disabilities.



*The mains topics were the UNCRPD and it's implementation in the EU*



# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

EUD is in close contact with all European institutions to represent the interests of Deaf sign language users at European level. The European Parliament – as the only directly elected organ of the EU – is an important point of contact. EUD closely follows the activities of the European Parliament and the recommendations formulates. In its day-to-day work EUD staff attend Public Hearings, Committee meetings and meet MEPs.



*EUD closely follows the activities of the European Parliament and the recommendations formulates*



## MOBILITY REPORT



In November 2010 EUD and its members adopted the so-called Brussels Declaration, which advocates the rights of Deaf people in all spheres of life highlighting the right to learn and use a sign language. It demands the recognition of the national sign languages at an equal footing with spoken languages to ensure Deaf people can become equal and full citizens. EUD formulated the text of the Declaration in co-operation with MEP Ádám Kósa and his office; and in 2011, continued working on the priorities stipulated.

When MEP Ádám Kósa initiated a report on the mobility and inclusion of people with disabilities, which was adopted by a majority of MEPs on 25 October 2011, EUD worked closely together with the MEP's office to ensure the Brussels Declaration and the rights of sign language users were taken into account.

The report – as part of the EU-wide Disability Strategy 2010-2020 – is a significant contributor in achieving EUD's aims and priorities. Just as the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities the report recognises the distinct needs Deaf sign language users have and formulates rights accordingly.

EUD was actively involved in shaping the final resolution taking part in consultation meetings and discussions with MEP Ádám Kósa. Most importantly, the resolution refers to the Brussels Declaration on Sign Languages in the European Union in its article 105, calling on the Member States and the Commission to recognise sign language as an official language in the Member States and asks them to take into account the Brussels Declaration.



*It demands the recognition of the national sign languages at an equal footing with spoken languages to ensure Deaf people can become equal and full citizens.*



# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

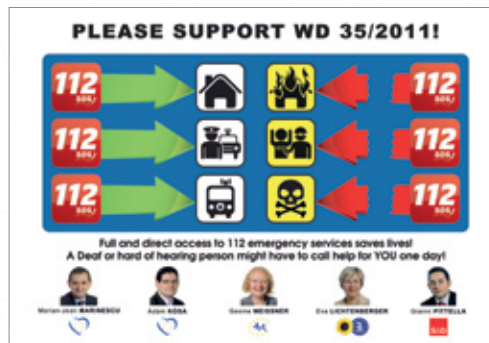
## WRITTEN DECLARATION 112

In November 2011 EUD finished a very successful Written Declaration campaign regarding the access to 112 emergency services in the EU. A Written Declaration is a short text that is drafted by up to five MEPs and, if signed by a majority of parliamentarians, is passed on to the Commission, which then has to give feedback on its future steps within six months.

The EUD-led campaign was able to gather 483 signatures, a record number of MEPs for the 2009-2014 Parliament. Its aim was to show the lack of accessibility to 112 emergency services in the EU Member States.

The Written Declaration was tabled by the following five MEPs: **Marian-Jean Marinescu** (Romania), **Dr Ádám Kósa** (Hungary), **Eva Lichtenberger** (Austria), **Gianni Pittella** (Italy), **Gesine Meissner** (Germany)

In close co-operation with the MEPs offices and the EUD member NADs, EUD brought this very important issue to the Commission in 2011 and is continuously working on the implementation of Next Generation 112 services using the concept of Total Conversation that are accessible to all citizens, including Deaf sign language users.

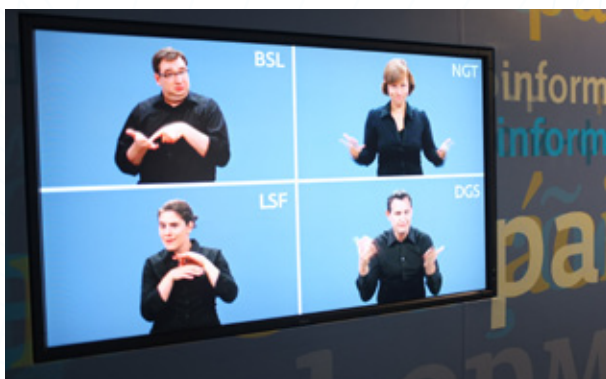


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MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

SIGNATURES

## VISITORS' CENTRE - PARLAMENTARIUM



In October 2011 the new Visitors' Centre of the European Parliament opened its doors to the public. For the first time, a European institution information centre was made accessible for the Deaf Community, offering comprehensive information in four different European sign languages.

EUD was contacted by the European Parliament and was involved in the process of making the Parliamentarium accessible to Deaf sign language users. The Parliamentarium is the largest parliamentary visitors' centre in Europe and the first ever exhibition in the world that is not only fully operational in 23 spoken languages but also four signed languages. It is also thanks to EUD's efforts that the Parliamentarium can now be accessed in British Sign Language (BSL), Dutch Sign Language (NGT), French Sign Language (LSF), and German Sign Language (DGS). Media guides are equipped with sign language videos in these four sign languages.

EUD is pleased to have achieved such a high level of accessibility for the Deaf Community but at the same time urges the Parliament to provide access in all the 29 national sign languages of the EU.



# EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

## DISABILITY INTERGROUP

The Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament is an informal grouping of MEPs from a large number of political groups and nationalities. Members put disability issues high in their agenda and promote disability policies in their general parliamentary work. It is organised and maintained by the European Disability Forum of which EUD is a full member.

MEP Ádám Kósa is the President of the Disability Intergroup, heading the Intergroup Bureau, which regularly meets at the European Parliament and organises public hearings on current trends and issues. The EUD team attended all public Disability Intergroup meetings in Brussels and provided feedback to its members by producing reports in both International Sign and written English.

Topics of importance this year were the European Social Fund in view of the Economic crisis and the role of the implementation of the UNCRPD in EU Member States. At the beginning of the year a meeting regarding disability during the Hungarian Presidency was held. EUD staff was present at the meetings to ensure the voice of Deaf people was heard directly with the MEPs present and other officials in charge.



*Topics of importance this year were the European Social Fund in view of the Economic crisis and the role of the implementation of the UNCRPD in EU Member States*





## DISABILITY HEARING

In September MEP Ádám Kósa and the EPP Group hosted a Disability Hearing entitled "Rights? Opportunities? Equal Opportunities?". Viviane Reding, Vice-President of the European Commission and EU Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights, and Citizenship presented her view on the promised European Accessibility Act and the involvement of NGOs and civil society. EUD is very keen to get the Act passed as soon as possible and was therefore present at the meeting to gain more information on how to include the views of Deaf people in Europe.

The Accessibility Act is the EU's response to the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. To implement it, Viviane Reding promised to create an EU Accessibility Act by the end of 2012. The public consultation, which EUD is actively involved in, will close at the end of February 2012. It is EUD's aim to ensure the rights of Deaf sign language users are taken into account by contributing to the consultation as a member of EDF, but also independently, and urging its members to answer on behalf of their countries.



*The Accessibility Act is the EU's response to the ratification of the UN Convention in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*



# EUROPEAN COMMISSION

The European Commission provides the main source of our funding. Without this support, EUD would not have been able to achieve as many goals and to participate in such a high number of important events.

Just as the European Parliament is one main point of contact for EUD, the European Commission is also an important partner in realising our long and short-term aims. EUD staff regularly attends Commission-organised events or events that feature Commission staff as speakers. Meetings with Commission officials were also set up to mainstream sign language issues in all areas of EC competency. This includes ensuring sign language interpretation at major events with the presence of Deaf people either at the event itself or following online.

## DIGITAL AGENDA ASSEMBLY

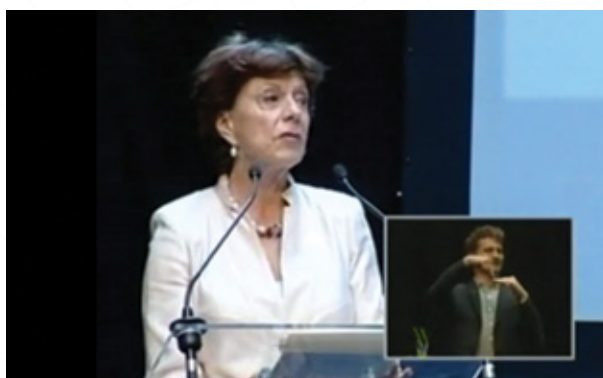
EUD staff attended the first Digital Agenda Assembly organised by the European Commission. It concentrated on very important EUD issues such as website accessibility and e-inclusion. It was the first time that a European Commission conference was webstreamed with sign language interpreters visible not only at the conference venue for the Deaf people attending but also live online. Furthermore, the in-vision signing was archived on the EC website for later consultation. It is due to EUD's joint efforts that this was possible and has now become good practice at large-scale EC events.

The Commission not only provided sign language interpreters for the main event and the workshops but also for the breaks to ensure networking was possible. Additionally, the main speeches were live captioned, allowing Deaf and hard of hearing participants to fully access the event.

This was in line with the Disability Strategy and the UNCRPD, which grant full and equal access to information, also at European level. This was a first event in 2011 to ensure such accessibility but EUD can see a positive trend in events organised at European level, which provide more and more anticipatory accommodation for Deaf sign language users.



*Meetings with Commission officials were also set up to mainstream sign language issues in all areas of EC competency*





## EUROPEAN DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES



Every year the European Commission in co-operation with the European Disability Forum organises a conference around the European Day of Persons with Disabilities in the first week of December. This year's conference was called: 'Europe's way out of the crisis: The disability rights perspective'. EUD Executive Director, Mark Wheatley, was among the invited guests.

The conference gathered relevant stakeholders from all EU Institutions and European NGOs working on a common framework to effectively implement the UNCRPD. In particular, it addressed the effects the economic crisis had and still has on persons with disabilities. The conference also featured the Access City Award Ceremony, honouring Salzburg as the most accessible city in 2011.

## WORK FORUM ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNCRPD

The Work Forum on the Implementation of the UNCRPD brings together representatives from national and European NGOs, and political stakeholders to discuss the implementation process and share national experiences. EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley is regularly invited to the Forum as an expert on the issue.

This year's Forum was threefold: The co-ordination of the implementation in the Member States, within the EU, and the reporting to the UN. A main focus was on the involvement of civil society especially in the parallel reporting. EUD will play an important role in empowering the European Deaf Communities to become involved in the parallel reports even more and will contribute to the EU level report. To be able to serve its members even better in 2012 EUD is planning to attend the UNCRPD Committee sessions in Geneva.



*A main focus was on the involvement of civil society especially in the parallel reporting*



# COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Although EUD's full members constitute the EU Members States (including Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland) EUD also has participatory status with the Council of Europe (CoE). As a European NGO this consultative position strengthens participatory democracy and active citizenship on a pan-European basis.

## WORKSHOP ON UNIVERSAL DESIGN

The Council of Europe (CoE) regularly organises a workshops relating to disability and other current issues. One of their workshops in Odessa, Ukraine focussed on Universal Design (UD) and was attended by EUD Executive Director Mark Wheatley. The Heads of both the European Commission Disability Unit and the Council of Europe Division for the Integration of Person with Disabilities were present.

The concept of Universal Design aims at making the environment fully accessible for all citizens. According to CoE barriers can be avoided if taking UD principles into account right from the beginning, in the planning stages of any new building or service.

Mark Wheatley gave a presentation on the reality of measures and applications of Universal Design within the CoE Disability Action Plan. The focus of presentation was with the built environment and the area of transport, giving concrete examples from different countries. The EUD Executive Director highlighted for instance that information in public buildings (e.g. train stations, or public services) has to be available visually, not only via loudspeakers.



*The concept of Universal Design aims at making the environment fully accessible for all citizens*





*The recommendations cover for example access to elections and electoral campaigns, or broadcasters, and the built environment*



## EUROPEAN DAY OF LANGUAGES

EUD and the Council of Europe celebrated the 10th anniversary of the European Day of Languages on 26 September 2011. For the first time sign languages were included in the European Day of Languages. This was only possible due to the continuous work of EUD Board Member Humberto Insolera and the close co-operation between EUD and the Council.

To mark the anniversary a conference was hosted by the Language Division at the CoE in Strasbourg and co-organised by EUD under the theme: 'Sign languages: a unique contribution to our linguistic and cultural diversity'. Speakers included EUD staff and Board Members, as well as MEP Ádám Kósa and representatives from the Council.

The inclusion of sign languages on such an important day is a milestone achievement for EUD and gives hope for further legal recognition of sign languages also in the CoE Member States.

## COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS (CAHPAH-PPL)

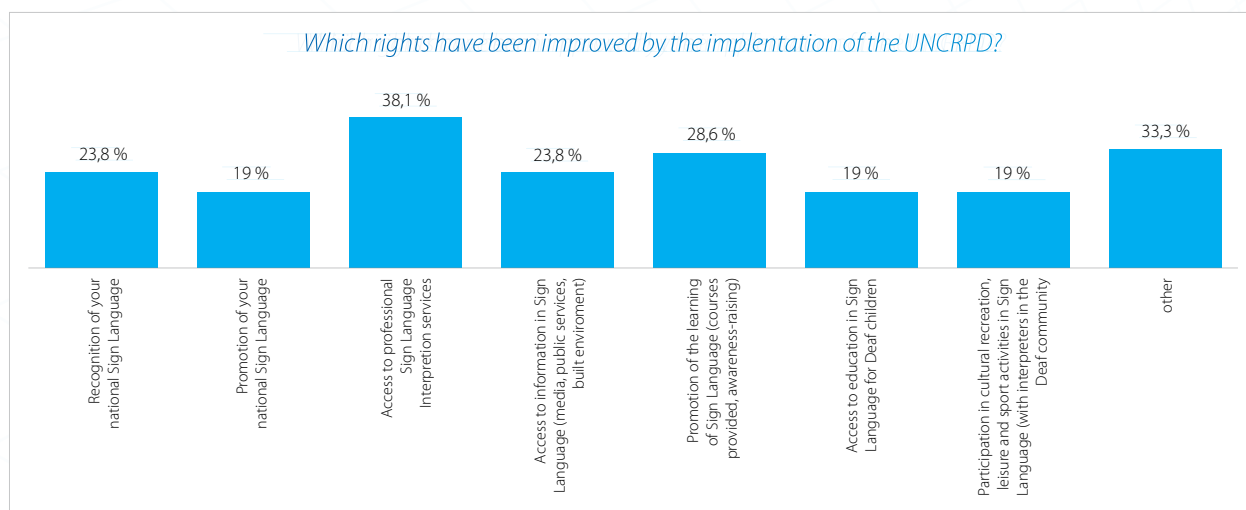
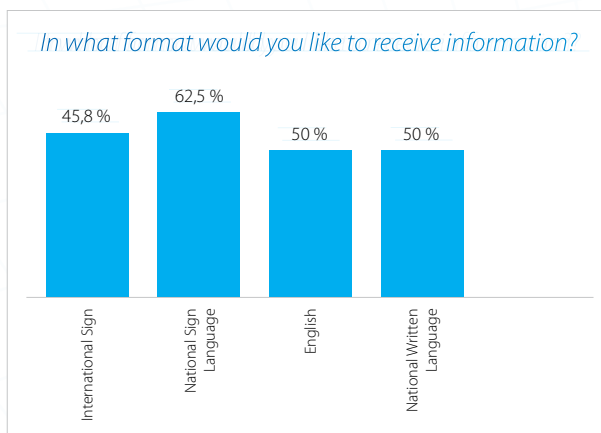
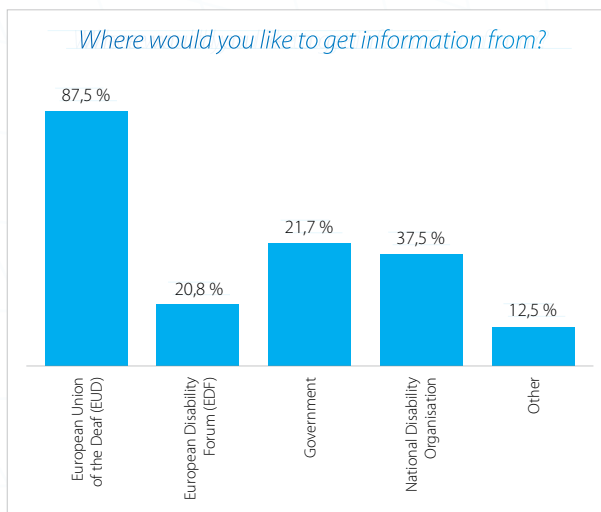
The European Co-ordination Forum for the Council of Europe Disability Action Plan 2006-2015 (CAHPAH) assists in the implementation of the Plan and is the first-ever intergovernmental body that includes all 47 Member States. The CAHPAH-PPL is a sub-committee of this Forum focussing on the participation in public and political life. Humberto Insolera, EUD Board Member has been attending all meetings since 2009, ensuring that sign language was explicitly mentioned in the recommendations formulated. The recommendations cover for example access to elections and electoral campaigns, or broadcasters, and the built environment.

# EUD SURVEY

In order to assess its members' understanding of the UNCRPD and to find out more about the topic of Active Ageing, EUD created two surveys, which were both uploaded to our new website and were fully accessible in International Sign. The results of the survey on Active Ageing will be presented at the annual EUD seminar in Copenhagen in 2012. The UNCRPD survey will serve as a basis for further research and a large-scale report in 2012, highlighting the status of the implementation of the UNCRPD in the EUD member countries in relation to sign language and Deafness.

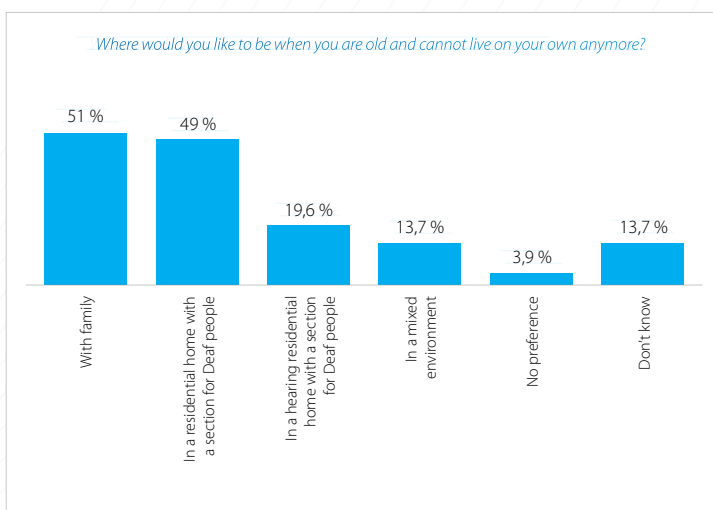
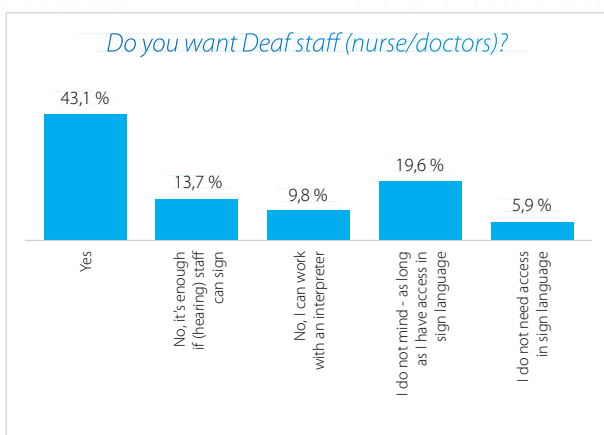
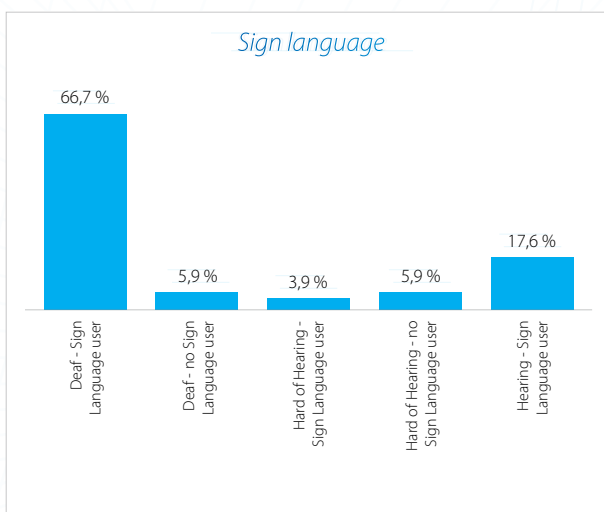
## UNCRPD

The UNCRPD implementation process is progressing and EUD is keen to be involved in the parallel reporting at EU level but also facilitates its members to do so at national level. According to the survey the situation regarding the awareness and the involvement of the Deaf Associations is very varied. It becomes clear that almost 90% want information through EUD in either their national sign language or International Sign. 38% of respondents felt that the access to professional sign language interpreters has improved since the ratification of the UNCRPD but a number of respondents said their NAD was not involved in the parallel reporting process. Overall, it seems the UNCRPD has improved the situation but at the same time a lot remains to be done.



## ACTIVE AGEING

2012 is the European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity. In view of the ageing population it is more and more important to keep the available workforce as active as possible for as long as possible. EUD investigated what (older) Deaf people's expectations and ideas were regarding their future. 67% of answers were from Deaf sign language users, and 20% from hearing sign language users. The majority of respondents would like to be with their families when they grow older or in a residential home with a Deaf unit. Although 40% would prefer Deaf staff, almost 20% do not mind, as long as access is in sign language. When specifying what additional support they would like when they grow older, most respondents wanted access in sign language, interpreters, and video relay services. The survey clearly showed the importance of trained staff that knows sign language or are themselves Deaf. EUD therefore advocates further training in sign language and for sign language users for those who work with older Deaf people.



*The majority of respondents would like to be with their families when they grow older or in a residential home with a Deaf unit.*



# EUD PARTNER INITIATIVES

## EDF: ICT EMAIL EXPERT GROUP

EUD is a full member of the European Disability Forum (EDF), an ENGO representing the interests of all persons with disabilities across Europe. EUD staff as well as Board Members stay in close contact with EDF co-operating on all issues related to Deafness and sign language.

EUD Board Member Yannis Yallouros is a co-opted Board Member of EDF and in this function also an active member of the ICT Email Expert Group.

EDF e-mail expert groups play an important role in shaping EDF's position on specific issues. E-mail expert groups provide inputs on on-going issues within the EDF work programme, or other unexpected issues that might need immediate input from the experts. EDF also sets up ad-hoc meetings to meet with officials from the institutions, shaping and influencing current legislative proposals.



Yannis Yallouros, Greece

## WORLD DEAF DAY

World Deaf Day is celebrated across the world in September, in accordance with the Deaf week that is used to raise awareness and eliminate stereotypes about Deaf people all across the world. EUD usually takes part in programmes organised by their national members. This year Mark Wheatley, EUD Executive Director, attended the 4th Swiss Federation of the Deaf Congress under the headline: 'Integration – Inclusion – Chances and risks in school, education and employment'. The Congress invited Deaf experts from across Europe and the world to discuss the integration and inclusion of Deaf people.



# EUD ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

## NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS OF THE DEAF

**Austria** - Österreichischer Gehörlosenbund (ÖGLB), **Belgium** - Federatie van Vlaamse DovenOrganisaties (FEVLADO), Fédération Francophone des Sourds de Belgique (FFSB), **Bulgaria** - Съюз на глухите в България (СГБ / UDB), **Cyprus** - Ομοσπονδία Κωφών Κύπρου, **Czech Republic** - Svaz neslyšících a nedoslýchavých v ČR (UDHH), **Denmark** - Danske Døves Landsforbund (DDL), **Estonia** - Eesti Kurtide Liit (EAD), **Finland** - Kuurojen Liitto (FAD), **France** - Fédération Nationale des Sourds de France (FNSF), **Germany** - Deutscher Gehörlosen-Bund (DGB), **Greece** - Ομοσπονδία Κωφών Ελλάδος (HFD), **Hungary** - Siketek és Nagyothallók Országos Szövetsége (SINOSZ), **Iceland** - Félag heyrnarlausra, **Ireland** - Irish Deaf Society (IDS), **Italy** - Ente Nazionale Sordi (ENS), **Latvia** - Latvijas Nedzirdīgo savienība (LAD), **Lithuania** - Lietuvos kurčiųjų draugija, **Luxembourg** - Vereinigung der Gehörlosen und Schwerhörigen Luxemburg (VGSL), **Malta** - Għaqda Persuni Neqsin mis-Smigh, **Netherland** - Dovenschap, **Norway** - Norges Døveforbund (NDF), **Poland** - Polski Związek Gluchych (PZG), **Portugal** - Federação Portuguesa das Associações de Surdos (FPAS), **Romania** - Asociația Națională a Surzilor din România (ANSR), **Slovakia** - Asociácia nepočujúcich Slovenska (ANEPS), **Slovenia** - Zveza društev gluhih in naglušnih Slovenije, **Spain** - Confederación Estatal de Personas Sordas (CNSE), **Sweden** - Sveriges Dövas Riksförbund (SDR), **Switzerland** - Schweizerischen Gehörlosenbund, Fédération Suisse des Sourds, Federazione Svizzera dei Sordi (SGB-FSS), **United Kingdom** - British Deaf Association (BDA)

## BOARD



**President - Berglind Stefánsdóttir**  
Reykjavik, Iceland  
Rector of Ál Residential School,  
Norway.



**Vice President - Yannis Yalouros**  
Athens, Greece  
Journalist & IT Specialist



**Board - Dr Gergely Tapolczai**  
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Member of the Hungarian  
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**Board - Dr Humberto Insolera**  
Rome, Italy  
Consultant & Expert, National  
Association of the Deaf in Italy



**Board - Asger Bergmann**  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
Former President of Danish Deaf  
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The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

For more information see: <http://ec.europa.eu/progress>

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

