

IFHOHYP

# Autumn 2008 newsletter

International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People Magazine

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## NEWSFLASH

*Prepared by Karina Chupina*

Noora Penttinen participated in the French Intercultural Language Course held by the Council of Europe in August in Strasbourg, on behalf of IFHOHYP.



Lianne de Jonge participated on behalf of IFHOHYP in the Info Day on Funding for International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations in October, in Brussels. She learned more about funding opportunities offered by the European Commission and the Council of Europe.



Karina Chupina was nominated by EFHOH for membership at the Youth Committee of the European Disability Forum. She will represent EFHOH in the committee, because only full EDF members can be represented in the committee (IFHOHYP is an ordinary member of the EDF at the moment).



IFHOHYP volunteers applied for the next study session to be held in cooperation with the Council of Europe next year in autumn. The proposed theme is "Training of Facilitators for Inclusion".



Many new organisations became new members of IFHOHYP or will become next year. **Welcome!**

*Bundesjugend im DSB e.V.* from Germany

*Danishkadah* from Pakistan

*Hørselshemmedes Landsforbund* from Norway

*Ho Chi Minh Deaf Association* from Vietnam

Israeli organisation for hard of hearing people *Bekol*

*Association du Sourds du Faso* from Burkina Faso

*Høreforeningen* from Denmark

And there is more news: read below!

## *IFHOHYP AGM*

*By Juraj Variny and Lianne de Jonge*

The IFHOHYP annual general meeting of 2008 was organized in Valencia by the Spanish organization Bonaventura during the Easter weekend 20<sup>th</sup> March till 24<sup>th</sup> March 2008. This year, there were eight organization represented; ASF from Burkina Faso, Bonaventura form Spain, FFHOH from Finland, Fund of Assistance to Disabled Children and Youth from Russia, Jugehörig from Switzerland, SHJO from the Netherlands, SOMNED from Slovakia, UH from Sweden. At prior to the AGM, there were hold typical Spanish parties; the Fiestas. Some participants arrived a few days in advance to join the Fiestas. Much from that atmosphere, however, still lingered for next days and whole city was nicely decorated.



Prior to the AGM, two days of workshops were held. During these days workshops were organized and discussions took place. The main focus was on the development of the strategy plan of IFHOHYP. The mission, vision and possible actions were discussed. The first steps in the development of the strategy plan were undertaken. Further, the IFHOHYP constitution was discussed as it is important that everyone does understand the constitution, there was a need to simplify the language. Attention was given to improvement of IFHOHYP. The main areas for improvement were identified which are improvement of communication, human resources, political agenda and expanding of IFHOHYP. These main areas werealso included in the strategy plan. In the field of communication, it was concluded that the website and the newsletter need to become more up to date and modern. In the context of political issues, participant suggested to give more attention to subsidizing hearing aids and subtitling.

After two inspiring days with workshops, it was time for the general annual meeting (AGM). The chairman of this meeting was Matthias Lundgren and the minutes secretary was Lianne de Jonge. After a welcome by the IFHOHYP president Karina Chupina, the meeting started. The minutes of 2007, the annual report of 2007 and the auditor report of 2006 were approved. The auditor report of 2007 could not be approved and will be discussed in 2009. Further, the budget and membership fees were discussed. Subsequently, new board members were elected. Karina Chupina was re-elected as president for the next two year. Maria Lopez Garcia was re-elected as vice-president for the next two year. Christi Menheere was elected as treasurer for one year and Lianne de Jonge was elected as board member for one year. Claudio Nicita was elected as auditor. The next agenda point was the strategy plan.

The priorities for 2008/2009 are:

- 1) Adapting the constitution,
- 2) Improving communication,
- 3) Developing political agenda
- 4) Promoting IFHOHYP in national organisations and
- 5) Developing strategic plan.

Thereafter, the coordinators of the committees were selected. Information about the Summercamp 2008 was given by the delegates of the Slovak organisation SOMNED. There was no delegate from Poland and no one informed the Board about their progress in Summercamp 2009, so it was unclear if there will be a Summer camp at all. In 2010, the summer camp will be hold in Switzerland. Karina Chupina informed about results of Multimedia project and status of Research project, as well as on other IFHOHYP activities related to European Youth Forum and Advisory Council on Youth of Council of Europe. Finally, after a long day the AGM could be closed. The AGM of 2009 will be organized by UH in Sweden.

Beside days with high workloads and intensive discussions, there was also some time to discover Valencia and to enjoy local cuisine. At one of the evenings, the intercultural evening was held. Participants brought some local food of their country of origin with them what contributed to an evening with fun and cosiness.

*At last, thanks to Bonaventura for the well organized AGM 2008 which made it possible to discuss about IFHOHYP issues, to exchange information and ideas and to have fun together. Thank you Bonaventura!*



## *Invitation to AGM 2009*



Swedish HoH organisation UNGA HÖRSELSKADADE invites all IFHOHYP members and friends to AGM in Sweden. Each member organization is allowed to send 1 delegate and 1-2 observers. Any youth, youth hard of hearing organization or other organization, which is not a member of IFHOHYP, can send its representatives as observers to the AGM. Since the places are limited, the amount of observers can be discussed directly with the organisers.

The AGM for 2009 is held in **Malmö, Sweden**. Malmö is situated in the very south of Sweden and it is really close to the modern international airport of Copenhagen. For those who wish there is an airport of Malmö, called Sturup, but Copenhagen is just as close and with better local transport.

The dates for the AGM of 2009 are the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 13<sup>th</sup> of April. Thursday is arrival-day with no other activities than dinner and ice-breaker. Monday is departure-day with only breakfast.

Deadline for the application is 6<sup>th</sup> of March 2009, but if you need visa, please give us the possibility to help you. That means we must have your application as soon as possible.

If you've got any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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## Summercamp 2008 in Slovakia

By Juraj Variny

This year the Summercamp was organized by Solidarity of Hard of Hearing people in Slovakia. There were 31 participants. Most of them were from Italy and Spain, then from Czech rep., The Netherlands and Finland. Several people from Africa were strongly interested, but sadly they were not able to get visas in time.



First three days were spent in the capital Bratislava and next 10 days in the village named Vernár in nice mountain setting. In Bratislava our group visited old city, castle, outlook tower and many interesting places. In the evening there was a disco night on the boat. Some people mentioned famous horror movie *The Hostel* made in these places. Fortunately, team was not in the mood to draw inspiration from the film.

The team prepared many trips to near and far places from Vernár. It was a hike into Slovak paradise and High Tatras mountains, to unique ice cave, historical train and horseback riding. People even got fed up a bit with the trips, they would prefer to stay near pension and do some group games or sport activities there. Then were football and ping-pong tournaments and girls had a workshop, where they made their own jewellery.



SOMNED organized such international activity for the first time, so not everything went smoothly. Participants didn't like shortage of english-speaking volunteers that could keep everyone accurately informed. The activities were not planned with every occasion in mind, worst what happened was that one day the group missed last bus. But the team happened to solve everything and we got plenty of experience. Where there are people from so many different cultures, there will certainly arise complaints about food. Most people wondered about how many kinds of fried food we eat in Slovakia. Afterwards, people exchanged tons of nice photographs and according to their words, they liked this Summercamp very much.



Photos: Javi Velázquez (Spain), Andrea Pietrini (Italy). The flowers in Newsflash are also by Andrea from Summercamp.

*Next year Summercamp in Poland will not happen. Damian Dudala wrote that he is unable to work as coordinator, as he has other duties. Moreover, the situation of Polish IFHOHYP member IISCE changed so that it will stop IFHOHYP membership and another organisation will apply for membership in its place.*

*If anyone has an idea that their organisation can prepare some activity in summer 2009 instead, the Board and, later, AGM is here for you to discuss.*

## *“I improved my English at the Summercamp very much”*

*Interview by Kristina Kratochvílová(Czech Republic)*

Ivona Striová and Martin Výborný spent 14 days together with another hard of hearing young people at the Summercamp in Slovakia. They both study and live in Prague, Czech republic. Ivona and Martin returned from Slovakia delighted and full with so many experiences that is not possible to gather them all into one article.

**Ivona Striová** (19) is currently a student of the 3-rd grade of the secondary school of A. Klár, in the specialization masseur. (The secondary school of Alois Klár is originally a school for visually disabled students, where are also students with another disabilities “integrated”.)



**Martin Výborný** (23) got trained in the profession of an upholsterer at the secondary school of A. Klár. He has worked as an upholsterer for one year and now is he a student of an extension study of business.



*How did you learn about the Summercamp?*

**Martin:** I read in the magazine Gong about it and I got interested in it. Then I found more information in internet. I did not want to go alone to here, so I talked Ivona into going along with me.

*What was it like to communicate there?*

**Ivona:** The good English of the other participants surprised me, they had not any problems even with the spoken English. There was a good communication, we endeavoured to speak English and we helped us by signs. It was very demanding at the beginning, I had to get used to communicate in a foreign language. Step by step I talked more and more and was getting better and better at it. I had got a very strict English teacher at my school, but she managed to teach us a lot. Now we have got a new teacher and I must get used to her pronunciation, but it is good for me because I will understand more people. We have 4 English lessons per week at my school, beside that I take tutorage in order to manage it. I improved my English very much in Slovakia at the Summercamp and now I have got a great motivation for the further learning. I have never liked English before that but now - thanks to my new friends - I have got finally a reason to keep learning it. I am going to take the school leaving exam from English next year.

**Martin:** I don't speak English, I have only learned German at my school. I communicated with Slovak people, I was able to chat about everything with them. Otherwise, I kept myself apart from the other people, as I also don't know the sign language. I hope it will be better at the next time, I'll have got more experience and may be I will start learning English.

*Were there only hard of hearing people or also deaf people?*

**Martin:** For the most part there were hard of hearing people, some of us had got the cochlear implant.

**Ivona:** Mostly we spoke and some of us could use the sign language, at least the elements of it. It made easier our communication. I learned new signs of the Spanish sign language. The organizers spoke English very well; we helped to each other in the communication, so there was no problem.

*How many participants you were there?*

**Ivona:** We were together 31 people, but some of them left after the first week. Mostly Italian and Spanish people were there, beside that Finnish, Dutch, Slovak - and of course we two Czech people and a Girl from Moravia. The age of the participants was from 18 to 40 years, I was the youngest.

**Martin:** We had an international party, where we represented our countries. Every country prepared their typical foods and drinks. Also the good-bye party in the last evening was successful. We prepared some refreshment, sandwiches, drinks, balloons ...

*What was your program?*

**Martin:** At first we stayed in Bratislava for three days, we have seen all the sights and every evening we went to disco. Then we transferred to a village Vernar that is situated very close to Tatras. We went hiking to the mountains a lot.

**Ivona:** We visited many beautiful places; we took a ropeway to a tarn, saw waterfalls, climbed to an ice rock, and rode a mountain scooter... We revelled in the Aqua park Tatralandia. I like adrenalin, so I went into every event (smile). In evenings we played games, every country had to prepare an amusement. We played a lot of pantomime.

**Martin:** In the Aqua park there was a disco, where people dance in water, we have not got something like that in my country. Beside that there was a 15 minute show, where pictures of Slovak symbols and monuments were screened. In the water I was of few people who could hear the music, so I could dance in the rhythm, in contrast to the others (laughter). Except that all we visited High Tatras, Slovak Paradise (a beautiful countryside with many waterfalls), we just experienced a lot.

**Ivona:** We did sport as well - football, tennis, table football and tennis, bowling... The program was optional, for instance we could go hiking while an other group went to play bowling. When I came back home, I felt sad. Sometimes we write emails to each other, the people from the Summercamp.

**Martin:** Please write to the article also that we are very thankful to the organizers for the very good program, fun, sport... just for everything. The next Summercamp is expected to be in Poland and we would love to be at it!

## *Three days of IFHOH Congress*

*By Karina Chupina, IFHOHYP president*

### **An opportunity to learn and to share**

Antoine de Saint-Exupery once said: *The only true luxury I know is a luxury of communication.* For hard of hearing people who encounter communication obstacles at least once every day (if not every hour), this saying conveys an especially profound meaning.

Over 500 hard of hearing delegates from Vietnam to the US to Australia, gathered this July for the International Federation of the Hard of Hearing (IFHOH) Congress, *A Global Community of Communications* that was held for the first time in North America. The event was hosted by the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA).

*How can we effectively raise awareness about hearing loss?*

*How can we improve the quality of life of hard of hearing people through policies?*

*What are the recent hearing aid technology advancements?*

These questions, and many others, were answered at the IFHOH Congress workshops. Congress discussions touched upon multidimensional issues of communication for people with hearing loss, such as hearing loss stigma and empowerment, hearing loss issues in the workplace, use of cochlear implants by adults, and ways to combine technology and bilingualism.

### **Key highlights of the Congress**

The story of flying all over the world as a hard of hearing pilot was retold by Johan Hammarström as the opening keynote speech for the Congress. The President of IFHOH, Jan-Peter Strömgren, as well as former IFHOH President Marcia Dugan and Charlotta Göller shed light on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The importance of the Convention for hard of hearing people worldwide is that it is a legally binding international human rights treaty that makes people with disabilities visible in the human rights arena and reinforces already existing rights for people with disabilities. While the Convention does not directly refer to people who have hearing loss or who identify as hard of hearing, its references to people with disabilities include both deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

A few articles in the Convention are particularly relevant for people with hearing loss. Article 2 (*Definition of communication*) touches upon the display of text and communication technology; Article 9 stresses the importance of information and communication accessibility; Article 24 discusses the most appropriate methods of communication for the individual. Article 27, centering on employment, addresses reasonable accommodations in the workplace. The work that went towards creating the Convention was partly conducted by the International Disability Alliance (IDA). The IDA is comprised of 8 international



*On the photo: pilot Johan Hammartström, Noora Penttinen, Karina Chupina, Hanh Duong Phuong (Vietnam), Lianne de Jonge.*

and 2 regional disability organisations, including the IFHOH, World Federation of the Deaf and World Federation of the DeafBlind.

There were many other notable highlights of the Congress. Launching the Virtual Institute for Hearing Accessibility Research was definitely one of them. The brainchild of Dr.Charles Laszlo of the CHHA, the Virtual Institute allows researchers and practitioners of hearing loss-related issues unite in an online consortium that would serve as a centre for research, training, and dissemination of information in the field of hearing accessibility. This mission includes the coordination of collaboration among a broad range of disciplines, professions, industries, and organizations of hard of hearing people to promote hearing accessibility around the world. The initiative was met with an ovation.

The Swedish workshop on bilingualism led by Maria Midbøe of Unga Hörselskadade had a big success. It even changed minds of many those who were sceptic about bilingual approach, and raised controversial questions (see my article on bilingualism in Sweden at <http://www.i711.com/my711.php?tab=2&article=125>). It would be important to have more such workshops at international level, to let people know about all the options of making communication effective.

Several workshops were held within the Youth section. CHHA-Youth led such effective sessions as “Power me Up!” on empowerment, “Identifying and Exploring Issues Relevant to HoH Young Adults” and “Peer Mentoring”. The latter was conducted by James Ferguson, known to IFHOHYP as active

participant of IFHOHYP study session in 2007, and I was invited as one of the speakers.

Three days of the Congress saw many more workshops which I would never rate as “less” or “more important” -- all of them were valuable! I would have experienced all of them if I had been able to split into a dozen people at once.



*Workshop on bilingualism by Maria Midbøe (she is in the middle)*

### **Communication, communication...**

IFHOHYP delegates (myself, Lianne de Jonge and Noora Penttinen) had an educational role at the Congress, too: preparing and running an IFHOHYP workshop. The first part of the workshop presented the results of the pilot survey on the situation of hard of hearing youth across Europe. Another part was highly interactive. In this part, we conducted a role-play on intercultural learning - and the participants were pleasantly surprised by this unconventional change of format from speech to role-play. After experiencing funny and confusing moments of communication in the roles of “wild tribe” and “researchers” groups, participants discussed how intercultural differences and hearing loss affect each other in our cross-border work towards improving the quality of life for hard of hearing people.

Do hard of hearing people have their own culture? In which countries do people conceal their hearing problems? And what terms do we use to identify people with hearing loss in different cultures? These were the questions that

participants discussed in small groups. Interestingly enough, in Russia, Laos and the UK, “there are no hard of hearing people.” You are only ‘deaf’ or ‘hearing’, as my Swedish colleague put it. An Israeli participant said that when he started working with the Europeans, it took him a long time to adjust to how they work and communicate (conducting meetings, writing emails and discussing projects)-- “Sometimes I thought they were hypocrites, but then I understood I was wrong”. Both the tension of intercultural learning and many different ways of speaking English, compounded with a hearing loss, may often create ambiguous situations in international work. “I never had a chance to think about these issues and they are very important to all of us,” said Ahiya Kamara, IFHOH Vice President. The workshop was a real success.

What are the results of the Congress for IFHOHYP?

- greater visibility
- trust that IFHOHYP does serious work and unique projects on international level - new partnerships

...Communication and its methods grow and expand: bilingual, electronic, oral...The trick is to use them to the benefit of as many people with hearing loss as possible. Then, and only then, the luxury of communication will truly belong to us.

On behalf of IFHOHYP I express big thanks to Ruth Warick, Janice McNamara, CHHA, James Ferguson, CHHA-Youth, Caldor Foundation, Dr. Charles Laszlo, IFHOHYP Board, IFHOH and EFHOH for their support and making IFHOHYP participation at the Congress possible!

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## **IFHOH and CHHA about IFHOHYP's contribution**

IFHOHYP Board received a letter from the Congress Chair Ruth Warick, where she thanks to IFHOHYP on behalf of the Congress organizing committee and the two sponsoring organizations, the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association and the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People. She also wrote:

*We know that the success of the Congress was, in large part, due to you and other presenters who were willing to step forward to share knowledge, experiences and perspectives. Feedback received about the Congress was overwhelmingly positive, which is a tribute to your contribution.*

*This was the largest conference organized by hard of hearing consumers in Canada, with 553 persons registered from 26 different countries. A third of the registrants were from outside of Canada making the Congress truly international. As a legacy, the Congress closed with a session about establishing an internet-based capacity for on-going communication, V-IHEAR, and you will be hearing more about this in upcoming issues of the publications of CHHA and IFHOH.*

*We have posted presentations on the Congress website*

*[www.chha-ifhohcongress2008.com](http://www.chha-ifhohcongress2008.com).*

## *Training day on Funding for International Non-Governmental Organisations*

*Lianne de Jonge*

The training day on Funding for International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO's) was held on 24<sup>th</sup> of October in Brussels and was organised by the European Youth Forum (EYF). The day started with some coffee or tea, where after an introduction to this day was given by the Diogo Pinto, the secretary-general of the European Youth Forum. The European Youth Forum is a platform for National Youth Councils and international youth NGOs from across Europe. The EYF aims to be the voice of young people in Europe.

During the training day, information was given on the possibilities to finance programmes and projects of INGO's. Two important organisations who provide grants to INGO's are the European Commission through the Youth in Action program and the Council of Europe through the European Youth Foundation.

The Youth in Action program of the European Commission is divided into five actions:

- 1) Youth for Europe,
- 2) European Voluntary Services,
- 3) Youth in the world,
- 4) Youth Support Systems and
- 5) Support for European Cooperation in the Youth Field.



These actions are subdivided in more actions. At the training day, action 4.1 was central and many interesting information about these actions was given. Also information about action 3 was given during the day. The focus was on the guidelines for applications. The Youth in Action program does work with priorities. The permanent priorities are to promote young people's European citizenship, active participation in everyday life, cultural diversity and inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities. More information about action 4.1 and the Youth in Action program can be found on the website <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth>.

The Council of Europe provide financial support to youth organisation by means of the European Youth Foundation which is a division in the Council of Europe's Directorate of Youth and Sport. The European Youth Foundation does support international youth meetings, youth activities other than youth meetings, administrative grants and pilot project. The permanent priorities of the European Youth Foundation are human rights, intercultural dialogue, youth policy development and youth participation in democratic citizenship. More information about the European Youth Foundation is available on the website [www.eyf.coe.int/fej](http://www.eyf.coe.int/fej).

Personally, I considered the training day as very informative and I will thank the organisation of the training day. As mentioned before, you can find more information about the Youth in Action program on the website <http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/youth> and more information about the European Youth Foundation is available on the website [www.eyf.coe.int/fej](http://www.eyf.coe.int/fej).



## *DYS Training Course for Facilitators of Non-formal Education Activities*

*Juraj Variny*

The course was held on 1<sup>st</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> February 2008 in European Youth Center Budapest. It was organized by Council of Europe - Directorate of Youth and Sport. The participants were 34 activists from international non-governmental organizations with many diverse areas of interest, such as youth political parties, LGBT and environmental activism, student exchange, voluntary service, community development and peacemakers. However, I was the only person with disability or from disability organization. The aim of the course was to improve quality of future study sessions and their follow-up.

### **Group building and introduction**

First morning there was CoE lecture followed by quiz and team building exercise. Participants decided to have international Coffee breaks instead of intercultural evening. We liked it and first one was immediately that day.

In the evening there was NGO exchange and discussion - every participant prepared poster, placed her organization on the map of Europe, attached it to the relevant areas of interests and placed a request for new people to WANTED table. Many NGOs, especially those concerned with minorities, are interested in improving the diversity of their membership. We discussed together possible ways to get hard of hearing people more involved in their organizations.

### **Non-formal education**

Non-formal education is sometimes hard to distinguish from formal or informal (spontaneous) education. The Compass refers to non-formal education as any planned programme of personal and social education for young people designed to improve a range of skills and competencies, outside the formal educational curriculum. Non-formal education as practised by many youth organisations and groups is :

- voluntary;
- accessible to everyone (ideally);
- an organised process with educational objectives;
- participatory and learner-centred;
- about learning life skills and preparing for active citizenship;
- based on involving both individual and group learning with a collective approach;

- holistic and process-oriented;
- based on experience and action, and starts from the needs of the participants.



*Theatre workshop*

Following was material on various learner types and learning phases. Non-formal education facilitators should make their activities attractive to all types of learners. We also discussed necessary competences of facilitators and then took a jump into European Portfolio. The Portfolio should serve as aid in personal development of youth leader / youth worker. Everyone in this area is invited to use the Portfolio to evaluate his/her competences and prepare a plan to further develop them.

### **Study sessions**

CoE values that are to be present at every study session are human rights, intercultural dialogue, democratic citizenship and social inclusion. We learned how to plan study session from aims through objectives to plan. Participants tried in groups to prepare plan of example study session. Then there was review of the plans followed by extensive discussion about experiences from study sessions in the past. Most interest was put into improving follow-up and multiplication after the study sessions. After coming back home, people usually create an internet group that is initially very busy, but it always dies in few months. We did not come with any good conclusion what could be done to improve that.

### **Preparing our own workshops**

In the morning we got basic information how to prepare our own workshops and then we were let on our own. Some groups had to prepare workshop for the same day, so there was real rush to get something done. In the afternoon first of these workshops took place, but no disaster happened. Despite not having enough time to prepare the workshop, good discussion on chosen topics happened there.

Next day more of us tested our skills on preparing and facilitating of workshops. Topics of the workshops were presentation skills, teamwork and group dynamics. Final workshops on intercultural learning shown that their

facilitators really had enough time to prepare them and they went on very well. In the discussion an “intercultural evening” activity resonated quite much. Some people openly acknowledged they hate it because the net result is often only reinforcing of intercultural stereotypes. Others like it and would just like to add some learning/debriefing aspects.

All the workshops were outstanding and every team has shown creative approach to debriefing and evaluation. They also shown differences in expertise level of course participants. People from large and well-established international organizations said they didn't learn so much because they are doing workshops often. But less experienced people from other organizations, such as me, enjoyed this activity and learned very much.

## **Evaluation and Reporting**

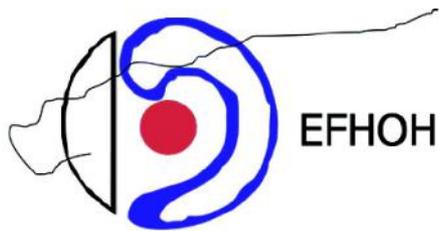
In the morning everyone could evaluate whole course through expressing himself onto big paper on the floor. The result was really nice piece of artwork. Following discussion on evaluating non-formal education activities was facilitated by Rui Gomes, an head of DYS department of education. The evaluation of quality in non-formal education should have some minimal standards. Many people asked for more innovative methods of evaluation, everybody is tired from filling lengthy evaluation forms. But evaluation goal is to have people started thinking about their experiences and having to fill questionnaire is good way to do it.

## **Closing and follow-up**

On this training was introduced a new manual for facilitators of non-formal education, written by Sabine Klocker, as well as European Portfolio for youth leaders and youth workers. For further study, they recommended Compass materials.

It took me 2-3 days to adapt to the environment and be able to fully participate. EYCB provided me a FM system, which helped me much, mostly in small group discussions. Maybe my positive experience helped EYC in its decision later to buy FM systems for whole group. In the plenary I could also use headphones, they had much better sound quality than unreliable T-coil. I had sometimes hard time to formulate my needs, as this was new type of activity and environment for me – I had been at study sessions before, but all of them were prepared specially with HoH people in mind. But in the end, every concern that I expressed concretely was successfully solved. Part of every workshop was debriefing, which was initially done with all participants sitting in a „heap“ on the ground. I questioned that, because it was hard for me to follow the discussion this way. Afterwards, debriefing was changed into sitting on chairs in circle or in plenary and it was better.

I wish to thank the whole team – Sabine, Iris, Ufuk, Darko, Annette and to Rui Gomes for preparing this learning opportunity. I am also very thankful to IFHOHYP for nominating and supporting me and I am looking forward to help improve IFHOHYP study sessions and other non-formal education activities.



European Federation of Hard of Hearing People



## *European Disability Forum Youth Committee – representing HoH young people*

Prepared by Karina Chupina

Since autumn 2008 I became a representative of EFHOH and hearing disability at the EDF Youth Committee. As a full member of EDF (IFHOHYP is an ordinary member), EFHOH had a right to nominate a hard of hearing young person to be their representative in the EDF Youth Committee.

In EDF, there are only two working committees since 2008: Women's Committee and Youth Committee. It is a really big step success for EFHOH and IFHOHYP that hard of hearing representatives were selected for both committees on behalf of EFHOH: Anna Klemettila (Finland) in Women's Committee, and myself, in Youth Committee. As a result, I am representing the interests and needs of hard of hearing AND young people in the EDF Youth Committee.

The Youth Committee today consists of six members: Aurelie Baranger (Autism Europe), Gina Waggott (ELSA – European League of Stuttering Associations), Giovanni Padovani (FID), John Patrick Clarke (EDSA – European Down Syndrome Association), Milla Ilonen from Finland, and myself. At the meeting on 18 October in Brussels, we in the Youth Committee discussed action plan and decided on three major types of actions in 2008-2009:

- I. Mainstreaming youth issues within EDF structure and policies
- II. Lobbying the European institutions on ongoing dossiers regarding youth with disabilities
- III. Implementing the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed with the European Youth Forum.

### **1. Mainstreaming youth within EDF and its policies:**

Within EDF, the Youth Committee's role is to support the implementation of the 2009 EDF work programme and especially the point 18 "Greater participation of young people with disabilities in its work, as well as in Youth organisations". In this area, the Youth Committee suggested the following actions:

- Contributing to the EDF 2009 manifesto for the European elections.
- Commenting on the EDF position paper on health, education and employment.
- Monitoring areas of importance to young with disabilities – mainly legal capacity, gender equality and employment.

- On the basis of the publication “Young and disabled: daily challenges for equality”, writing a leaflet on the main priorities for youth with disabilities.
- Exploring how to improve the participation of young people with disabilities, through:
  - 1) Conducting a survey on participation of young disabled people in disability movement & NGOs – barriers + good practices
  - 2) On the basis of the collected data analysis, writing a toolkit to EDF membership for improving participation of young with disabilities

## **2. Lobbying the European Institutions**

The EDF Youth Committee will closely monitor EU actions regarding youth. It aims at raising awareness on the needs of youth with disabilities and influencing the dossiers concerning disabled young people. In this area, the Youth Committee suggested the following actions:

- Answering the online public consultation on the future of EU youth policies + monitoring the following European Commission Communication.
- Examining potential activities related to the 2010 year on poverty.
- Exploring possible participation in the activities of the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport and cooperating with the Advisory Council on Youth.

My suggestion was that the EDF Youth Committee lobbies for the Training of Trainers with disabilities to be included in the agenda of the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport. Discussion is going in this direction.

## **3. Implementing the Memorandum of Understanding with the European Youth Forum (YFJ)**

The European Youth Forum is a crucial partner to work with on youth issues at the European level. The EDF Youth Committee will be closely in contact with the YFJ and with its Policy Officer in charge of non-discrimination in view of reinforcing contacts, exchanging information and best practices as well as identifying potential future coordinated actions. In this area, the Youth Committee suggested the following actions:

- Taking part in the YFJ General Assembly.
- Meeting with the YFJ for: an exchange of views, conducting training of the YFJ on disability and accessibility issues, issuing a joint declaration.
- Exchanging information and best practices on youth with disabilities' participation in YFJ and EDF.

Most of the work of the committee is done via email and active participation in relevant European events. A good start for actions was given. The next Youth Committee meeting will be held summer or autumn next year. We will keep you updated!

## *The mission of IFHOHYP*

IFHOHYP is committed to promoting equal rights for hard of hearing young people at all levels of the community. We believe that hard of hearing young people have the right to a good education, freedom of choice, the right to equal treatment at labour market, necessary support and technical aids they need to assimilate to life in the hearing community.

- 👂 To encourage a better understanding of hard of hearing young people and their problems among the general public.
- 👂 To defend the interests of hard of hearing young people and express them towards international bodies.
- 👂 To serve as a platform for cooperation and exchange of information between organizations of hard of hearing youth.
- 👂 To establish links with organizations of and for hearing-impaired people, improve communication and cultural interchange between all hard of hearing young people worldwide; to receive new information from other international youth or disability organizations and provide with it hard of hearing youths in different countries.
- 👂 To collect and make available all information on different aspects of hearing loss, on technical advances, facilities and assistive listening devices for hard of hearing people.

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