



# ***Building a Socially Inclusive World through Personal Empowerment***



Report of the 11<sup>th</sup> study session run by the  
International Federation of Hard of Hearing Young People (IFHOHYP)  
in co-operation with the  
European Youth Centre of the Council of Europe  
**European Youth Centre Budapest, 6 – 11 March 2017**

This report gives an account of various aspects of the course. It has been produced by, and is the responsibility of, the educational team of the study session. It does not represent the official point of view of the Council of Europe.



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## Who We Are

IFHOHYP is an international non-governmental federation for national and regional youth organizations that are dedicated to hard of hearing (HOH) young people, age 18 to 35, throughout the world and is independent of sex, race, religion, nationality and politics. Our primary aim is to enhance the quality of life for HOH youth worldwide by advocating and promoting equal rights in all levels of society such as the rights to: education, employment, health, and freedom of choice with necessary accommodations to meet their accessibility needs for full inclusion. We strive for empowerment of HOH young people for visibility of youth with disabilities being represented at European and international levels.

Since its inception in 1968, IFHOHYP has transformed from a coalition of HOH organizations within Europe into an international federation with members spanning across Europe, North America, and Africa. The focus on peer support and social activities has shifted into international advocacy via human rights work and non-formal education training. We continue to work towards developing quality educational projects and expanding our membership into other regions of the globe.

Our work encompasses a variety of projects set to raise disability awareness specific to the impacts of hearing loss on national and international levels through activities run by, with and for HOH young people. Each activity serves as a platform for intercultural dialogue and exchange, mutual cooperation between member organizations in devising solutions to issues facing their communities. Through these non-formal learning experiences participants acquire competence skills to carry out the IFHOHYP mission as well as their own personal and professional developments.

IFHOHYP is the only international youth disability organization with an active cooperation with the Council of Europe, providing a voice for youth with disabilities in discussion relating to accessibility and advocacy for human rights. We are also a member of the European Federation of Hard of Hearing, an associate member of the European Disability Forum, and an observer in the European Youth Forum.

IFHOHYP has also been involved in World Youth Conferences and Forums organized by the United Nations since the 1990s. We had representation at the UN high level meeting on Youth in

2011 and received a UN Special ECOSOC Consultative status in 2013, giving us access to various events held at UN Headquarters in New York, NY and Geneva, Switzerland. Our work is guided by the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Additionally, we are in cooperation with Global Partnership on Disability and Development, International Disability Alliance, and International Federation of Hard of Hearing.

## Our Vision & Mission

### Vision

IFHOHYP aims to support the development of a future global society where hard of hearing (HOH) young people will have equal opportunities, with appropriate support, to be integrated into the community and viewed as contributing members. This will be realized by **H.E.A.R.:**

- H**olistic inclusion of HOH young people to raise their visibility worldwide
- E**stablishment of a strong voice as an inspiration for HOH young people worldwide
- A**ctive awareness of hearing loss and its impacts in all levels of society worldwide
- R**ecognition of HOH young people's rights and needs worldwide

### Mission

IFHOHYP will be a global unified voice for hard of hearing young people by:

- ❖ Encouraging a positive attitude towards their identities and roles in the society
- ❖ Influencing programme and policies at all levels through capacity building, dissemination of information, and exchange of inclusion practices through its members
- ❖ Advocating for an inclusive global society with equal opportunities for access, participation and support in community activities

## The Study Session

In August of 2015, IFHOHYP organized a joint Board and Committee meeting, which was also considered a follow-up meeting to the previous study session: “*Tune up Your Organization, Fight for Your Rights*” in 2014. Through a series of round-table discussion, it was felt that effort should be focused on educational activities rather than political work, which we would work in partnership with other disability and mainstream youth organizations in producing position papers regarding issues relevant to our demographics. By making a shift into an educational framework, we will make the activities more relevant to young people.

Organizing a study session is one of the significant activities to realize these educational goals, particularly given that we have specified a goal in our 2016-2020 strategy plan that 2/3 of our members will be able to clearly define the UN CRPD and explain its significance in their advocacy work to promote full inclusion in the society. The previous study session was focused on the organizational development of our member organizations in relation to social inclusion. This session continues to focus on the same topic, but from an individual development perspective. By addressing the individual capabilities of young hard of hearing (HOH) people, it will improve an organization’s effectiveness in carrying out work. Young HOH people need to:

- Reflect on who they are and what their beliefs/values are
- Be inclusive amongst themselves to be credible in asking the society to be inclusive
- Be informed of their rights, specifically on the UN CRPD

### Aims and objectives

This **first** aim of this study session was to let participants reflect within themselves on how they have been socially inclusive. Upon that reflection, participants may realize they were socially exclusive unconsciously. This sets a framework to explore how we can practice being socially inclusive before we advocate for others to do so for hard of hearing (HOH) young people. Competence skills, such as human rights education and teamwork were discussed.

The **second** aim was to equip participants with the tools, including use of technology, to showcase the obstacles impeding the full participation of HOH young people in the society under a research-based approach. Collecting evidence-based information is a crucial skill for participants to acquire

so they can build a strong case in their call for action to establish a fully inclusive society, such as public accessibility and many more.

The **third** aim was to provide information on the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, through an expert session. Participants need to understand their rights and recognize their roles as monitors in the implementation of the Convention, particularly at the EU level. Case scenarios were used to analyse when a situation is considered an act of discrimination or not. These activities tie into the overall theme of personal development as participants are empowered with the confidence to take on a personal leadership in enacting a meaningful change for social inclusion.

By the end of the study session, participants have:

- ✓ Defined social inclusion and explained what it means to have an inclusive society
- ✓ Reflected on their own contribution/non-contribution to social inclusion
- ✓ Recognized when discrimination is in action and explain how a solution can be developed
- ✓ Developd competence skills in building self-esteem, teamwork (e.g., communication, trust), data collection, and strategic planning (e.g., realistic project development)
- ✓ Applied shared examples of policies and strategies implemented in favour of social inclusion in their own advocacy work
- ✓ Identified the available technology as empowerment tools to promote social inclusion
- ✓ Explained the significance of UN CRPD in their advocacy work to promote full inclusion in the society
- ✓ Strengthened their roles, as an individual and part of the D/HOH organization, to address social inclusion by fighting all forms of discrimination from regional to international level, as guided by the UN CRPD.
- ✓ Created a plan of action in following up the outcomes of the session using a SMART goal-oriented approach

# Outcomes

## 1. Understanding HOH situation in countries

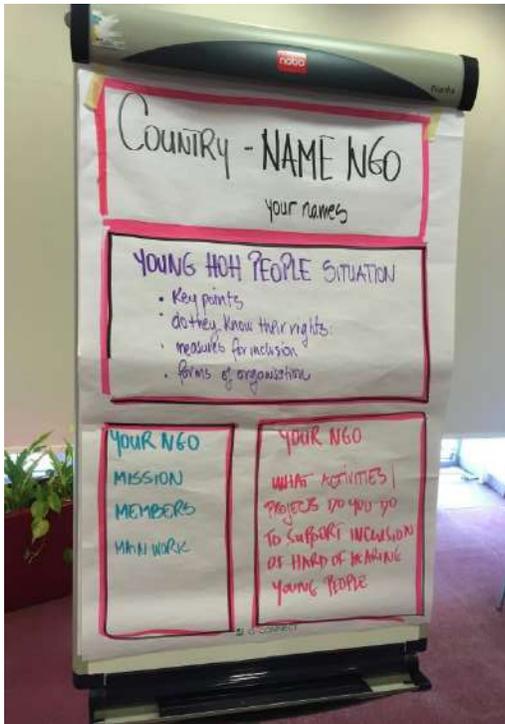
We started the study session with an opportunity for participants to share situations for hard of hearing young people in their countries. The main aim was for participants to become familiar with one another and learn how each person's experience was shaped by the available resources and standards of living in their homelands. This was essential for participants to gain an understanding of where their countries are at in being inclusive for hard of hearing young people and how it can be even better.

By the end of the sharing, it was concluded that the commonalities of problems faced by many countries are:

- Many members of their hard of hearing organizations are not aware of their rights or know how to use their rights to advocate for inclusivity. All participants' countries have signed and ratified the UN CRPD, but there is still a lack of understanding at government level and amongst general public
- Many hard of hearing young people feel excluded in different settings, particularly social places. This is particularly problematic in developing countries because of the society's lack of awareness about hard of hearing people's needs
- Most countries do not have high quality speech-to-text service; some even do not have this technology available! This poses a significant barrier for hard of hearing young people in being successful in their education and career lives. Speech-to-text service should be advertised as a profession on demand and should be supported by governments
- Quality of technology support such as hearing aids, cochlear implants (CI), and assistive listening devices (e.g., FM systems) are not consistent amongst the countries – some cover the whole cost, some provide only one free CI, and some don't even provide any at all! In some cases, hard of hearing young people are expected to bear the burden of cost when they have no source of income

- Despite laws put in place to encourage diversity hiring in some countries, it remains difficult for hard of hearing young people to find employment even for those who received higher education
- There is a weak sense of hard of hearing culture compared to generally strong Deaf culture typically seen in many countries. Thus it is important to have an organization specifically for hard of hearing group so that appropriate support can be given

An organizational market was held on the second night as an informal way for participants to present their hard of hearing organizations back home, exchange activity/project ideas, and discuss possible collaboration in the future.



## **2. UN CRPD for HOH**

We invited an expert speaker, Janina Arsenjeva from International Federation for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus (IFSBH), to introduce UN CRPD and give the participants an understanding of what it means and why we have it. We first talked about what human rights are and what they are for. We distinguished the differences a disability sickness. We spoke about the importance of the UN CRPD, a powerful tool to reaffirm that all people with disabilities have equal rights and insist that governments must involve people with disabilities (PWDs) in their work. A monitoring mechanism, both at national and international level, must be set up to ensure that PWDs are able to exercise their rights.

Participants engaged in several discussions, such as sharing whether they had ever been treated unfairly as a result of having a disability. We explored different case studies to analyze and identify if it is a form of discrimination or harassment. We also looked closely at the Articles 4, 5, and 24 of the UN CRPD as they are most relevant to young people and finally how our members can become active as an individual or with an association in raising public awareness about UN CRPD.

## **3. Social Inclusion**

Three activities were delivered to introduce and practice the concept of social inclusion. Each one involved participants taking an active role to promote engaging conversations about what it means to be socially inclusive.

### **a) Forum Theatre**

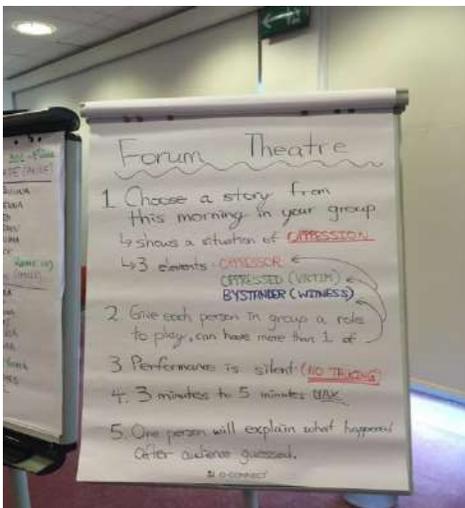
Inspired by the work of renowned theatre practitioner Augusto Boal, we held our own “*Theatre of the Oppressed*”. Participants were divided into groups, which they then had to perform a scene portraying an oppression. The scene should include a victim, a bystander, and an oppressor. After each scene the audience were invited to give their interpretations and identify the state of oppression. Four scenes were presented:

1. A hard of hearing female was successful in obtaining a job at a factory. She made notified the employer about her hearing loss and was cleared to work. On the first day the factory manager noticed she was hard of hearing and fired her. Her colleague stood idly by.

2. A deaf male was travelling on the bus with a hearing friend. He was mistaken by the police for a criminal at large and was arrested, not given an opportunity to clear himself. Communication barrier made it particularly difficult. His friend attempted to help to no avail.
3. A hard of hearing person was on a train. An announcement was made, but the person could not understand what was said. His request for assistance from other passengers were ignored and at one point was intimidated by an aggressive passenger.
4. Four women were partying at a nightclub, two decided to go out for a smoke. Once they finished they tried to go back inside, but were stopped by security. One stated she needed to get her purse and as she made her way through, was pushed down to the floor. The other woman watched helplessly.

The first scene was selected by the participants as a case to discuss what they can do to change the state of oppression. Suggestions range from having the victim be more assertive and confident, making a case that her hearing loss does not affect her ability to perform to having the bystander step in and advocate for the victim, such as reporting to the employer who did the hire. Three final thought-provoking comments resonated with the whole group:

1. Why did the oppressor do what he did? Was he truly being discriminating or was he simply fearful of the uncertainty, not knowing how to communicate with a hard of hearing person?
2. What can we do to change the mentalities of others so that they see that hearing loss do not define who we are?
3. We need to get out of the victim mode and take the wheels to show the world we are much more than they give us credit for.



### **b) Self-Esteem and Empowerment**

As per the theme of this study session: “*Through Personal Empowerment*” participants were given time to reflect on their strengths, challenges, past accomplishments, and future aspirations by listing them out on a personal paper. They then discussed with each other about their reflections. Participants reported feeling more confident at the end, after being affirmed and reassured by peers on their positive and negative experiences as hard of hearing persons. The aim of this activity was accomplished in empowering participants so that they are ready to take action (details to come in the later section).

### **c) “I Am...” Silent Reflection**

The last activity required discretion and vigilance from the participants. Statements were presented in which participants had to select one of the three spaces: “yes”, “no”, or “*unsure*”. There were sensitive statements that could expose participants to vulnerability. “*I am accepted by my family*” or “*I am homosexual*” are two such examples. Despite feeling insecure, participants readily chose their spaces, attesting to the level of bond and trust they developed with each other up to this point.

Seeing that they are not alone in the space they have chosen or someone being by themselves built the confidence that we need to move forward, the strength to support one another, and the empowerment for change. It also showed us that we are not just hard of hearing people, but also share many other commonalities while all the same diverse and unique.

## **4. International Women’s Day**

March 8<sup>th</sup> was International Women’s Day, thus together with another study session group, OBESSU, we spent an afternoon to honour the moment by participating in a No Hate Speech Campaign. We identified what hate speech is and come up with ways we can approach hate speech, recognizing it and provide an appropriate solution. We were given several cases involving a form of hate speech, which we discussed whether it was a hate speech or not. The next task was a statement photo challenge, where the participants in the groups would agree on a single statement against hate speech.

The statement was written down on a poster paper. Selfies with the group were taken and posted on social media with the hashtag #nohatespeech. Some statements include “*Equal sex makes the best sex*” and “*Men are humans, Women are humans, Humans should have the same rights*”. IFHOHYP participants enjoyed the collaboration with OBESSU participants.



## 5. Design Thinking

With the problems come solutions – after two days spent on highlighting the challenges faced by hard of hearing young people, participants spent the majority of a whole day learning about the innovative concept of design thinking. Igor Lobanov, an expert speaker from Russia, gave an overview of universal design, primarily composed of 3 main phases: research, ideation and

prototyping. An effective design needs to keep in mind of equitable usage, flexibility, simplicity, information receptiveness, tolerance for errors, low physical effort, and appropriate size and space. For the purpose of this study session, the practical case for design thinking is: How do we help people who design and build products and services reach a greater level of empathy towards people with disabilities?

Four ideas were developed:

1. A game application that allows the user to understand communication issues hard of hearing people face
  - Player A records some speech, which gets distorted, and then Player B listens and repeats it as he or she heard. The designers can then compare the difference between the original and edited recordings to experience the challenges first hand. An example: *“I will go out with my family to the cinema”* vs. *“I without my female to the sin Emma”*
2. A heavyweight headband and shoulder pads to portray the physical fatigue that hard of hearing people experience from putting in extra effort listening all day
3. A virtual reality helmet with earphones which the user is presented with background noise and other barriers while interacting with other actors in VR
4. An tap application to navigate emergency services using a “if...then” algorithm

Overall the participants took away the message that the best ideas often are simplistic ones, go with the flow as it allows us to be creative in the process of design thinking.



## **6. Thematic Workshops**

In this part of the study session 4 topics were offered to participants in selecting which one they would like to learn more or build on their current competence skills. The 4 topics are *Campaigning*, *Human Rights Education*, *Strategic Planning*, and *Teamwork*.

### **a) Campaigning**

Through this workshop participants are expected to understand the rules of campaigning, what is and what is not campaigning through success and failure examples, and brainstorm a campaign idea to raise awareness about hearing loss in their local communities. Below is the summary of key points:

- A successful campaign needs a clear and short message
- A campaign needs a plan with a timeline, to be carried out by a team. Ideally it should be done in a related date about the subject (e.g., World Hearing Day – perfect time for a public awareness campaign about hearing loss)
- Campaigns must lead to an action – show the public the proposed solution to implement and how they can take part
- Utilize social media as efficiently as possible and visuals (i.e. posters and videos) are important contributors to a successful campaign

Participants are then asked to brainstorm a campaign slogan for accessibility related to hard of hearing people:

1. Short sign language videos to teach basic and simple signs: “good morning”, “I love you”, “food”, etc. Aim is to show that sign language is easy and simple to learn as a communication tool with deaf and hard of hearing people
2. “I See, I Hear” – a poster that portrays the hands of speech-to-text experts (i.e. palantypists) to show that these hands help hard of hearing people to hear through seeing the text on screens. A hashtag #TurnSoundToText was recommended.

### **b) Human Rights Education**

The purpose of this workshop is to extend the conversations participants already had about human rights and UN CRPD, specifically what they can do to educate others hence term human rights

education. The minimum criteria to be an educator is to believe love can solve everything: love for humanity, democracy, and equality. Participants are asked to discuss the three main questions:

- 1) Why is important for young people to have knowledge about human rights?
- 2) What the values and attitudes that young people should have?
- 3) How can your organization educate others about human rights?

Information from the COMPASS Manual was referred throughout the session.

### **c) *Strategic Planning***

Through this workshop, the business model (<https://strategyzer.com/canvas/business-model-canvas>) was introduced as a way for reshape the organizations' mode of thinking when it comes to strategic planning. Participants should think about how their not-for-profit organizations are like a business, such as recognizing volunteers not only as human resources, but also sources of revenues. The members are the customers, how do we attract them to join the organization and stay for a long term?

Participants are invited to compare their current structure to the business model so that they can see where the issues are and improve the situation. SMART (Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-oriented) goals and SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat) analysis are discussed in this session as well.

### **d) *Teamwork***

The session started out by defining what team work is, when to use team work as a tool, and why it is important. It was brought up about the different kinds of teamwork that exist to serve a specific purpose.

Participants were divided into two teams, each assigned the same task to move from Point A to Point B. Between the points are small area of squares that the whole team had to get into. The team must start over if one member stepped outside the square. Adding to the task difficulty is each team has one member with no use of legs, one that is blind, and one with only one arm. The teams had some time to discuss and plan their approach. It was interesting to observe how some people

instantly adopted the leadership role while some were passive. There was an instance of miscommunication that caused one team to fail the task.

At the end each participant shared their thoughts on what worked well and what didn't, particularly how they should have utilized each other's strengths better to compensate the weaknesses. We talked about defining the roles of each person in the team and making sure that everyone understands the plan beforehand (in the absence of speech-to-text support). Keeping these in mind will allow us to solve any problems together as an effective team.



## 7. IFHOHYP Talk Videos

In the previous study session participants created four videos which were part of the No Hate Speech Campaign, with support from Chris Schuepp. We are privileged to have him again this time in helping us. It was decided that participants would be recorded talking about selected topics in a format similar to TedTalk. Chris gave useful suggestions on what makes a good talk, such as using visuals as opposed to text and body movements. The ultimate tip was to use the power of stories. Participants were divided into six groups, where one person was selected to be the speaker. We have included direct links to each video in this report:

1. [Exclusion and Hearing Loss](#)
2. [How Do We Empower Ourselves?](#)
3. [Read My Lips](#)
4. [Three Stories, Common Challenges, One Solution](#)
5. [What Does It Mean to be Socially Inclusive?](#)
6. [What is UNCRPD?](#)



## 8. #Hear2Stay

Nearing the end of the study session where participants have been equipped with knowledge about the UN CRPD, social inclusion, human rights education, and competence skills: campaigning, strategic planning and teamwork, the final task was given. Participants were asked to develop and agree on a global awareness campaign that leads up to the next World Hearing Day, 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2018.

Preliminary ideas were presented, some of which include:

- 1) Organizing a festival for all people that stimulates all your senses, including hearing (e.g., Sencity Festival 2017 – Rotterdam)
- 2) “An Hour of Silence” (inspired by Earth Hour) where participants will be given noise cancelling headphones to experience total silence for an hour
- 3) #GuessTheWord where participants have to fill in the missing pieces as they listen to an audio/video recording complemented by white noise
- 4) #Hear2Stay photo challenge as a way to make hard of hearing people visible to the public as hearing loss is often seen as invisible

Ultimately the participants decided to combine #GuessTheWord and #Hear2Stay as the action plan, which will involve two parts:

- A) Leading up to World Hearing Day, everyone is encouraged to take pictures of hard of hearing people participating in various aspects of life, such as going to classes, in meetings,

partying, etc. Technologies that we use will be highlighted as well. These pictures will then be shared on Facebook and Instagram using the hashtag #hear2stay

- B) On the day we will put a “hearing booth” in public spaces and invite people to experience what it is like to have a hearing loss by putting on a pair of ear muff, then they try to repeat words or sentences. The level of difficulty will increase as we cover our mouths, whisper, mumble, etc. Posters and videos are published with the hashtag #guesstheword

Afterwards the participants formed into country/region groups which they had to use SWOT analysis as a method to identify challenges and problems in the implementation of the plan. For example it is difficult to recruit human resources and obtain financial resources depending on the geographical locations. They then created a to-do list (e.g., forming preparatory teams, contacting government and sponsors) and timeline (e.g., when the campaign starts). Discussions between groups brought up the importance of coordinating internationally, using a common poster. A point was raised that the hashtag #hear2stay may need to be translated into local language to ease understanding.

Participants requested that IFHOHYP provide an official letter to take to their local governments in presenting this campaign. The campaigns of all countries can be shared under the same website so there is a platform to update each other throughout the year. A working group in which one person from each country will communicate between the IFHOHYP Board and local organizations.

Council of Europe Youth Department can inform their statutory bodies that this campaign is taking place and potentially also notify the committee that deals with the rights of people with disabilities. Once we are close to implementation, Council of Europe will give visibility in all of their media.

Participants were also introduced to the European Youth Foundation, a funding opportunity that they can apply to implement this pilot activity, up to an amount of 10,000 euros.

Overall participants were satisfied with the outcomes and ready to build a socially inclusive world through personal empowerment.



## Summary

In the evaluation process, participants did an activity in which they answered the question by standing up (very happy) or standing down (neutral/bad). The majority of the responses were positive. Participants shared they had a great time. Most of the criticism was related to the timing and structure of the programme. Afterwards, we had the opportunity to view the videos that were created. Everyone was satisfied with the production. Final words of thank yous were given to the educational advisor, palantypists and members of the preparatory team.

In general the study session fulfilled the expectations of the participants and even more. They liked this study session. The most part of comments were written as: *“I feel sad because I have to leave this study session. If this was school it would be amazing. My head is full of information and I'm really excited to go and work on my action plan”* or *“It helped mainly to self-developing and giving it forward to other members in our country”* or *“I learned a lot and I feel like I grew as a person. I can do so much in my NGO now.”*

Formal evaluation via survey (1 - not achieved 5 - fully achieved)

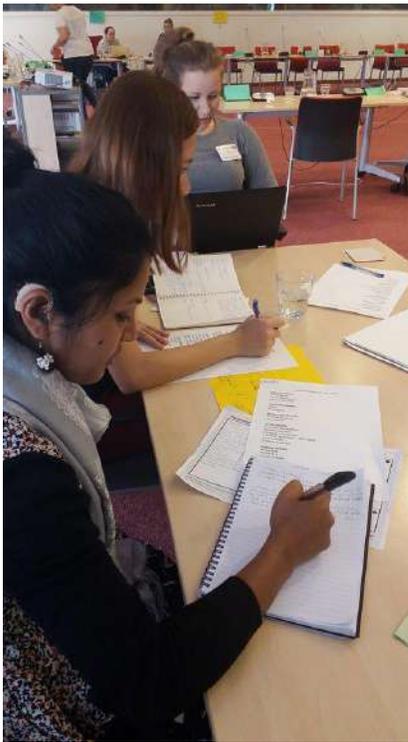
<b>Num.</b>	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Mark</b>
1	Define social inclusion and explain what it means	3,9
2	Recognize when discrimination is taking place and explain how a solution can be developed	3,8
3	Develop personal competence skills in building self-esteem, teamwork and strategic planning	4,1
4	Explain the significance of UN CRPD in their advocacy work to promote full inclusion in the society	3,8
5	Working on creating awareness and to create powerful videos about human rights.	3,9
6	Equip participants with the tools, including use of technology, such as Design Thinking, Business Model etc.	3,4
7	Create a plan of action	4,2
8	Networking between organizations	4,2
	<b>Total average for main aims</b>	3,9

## Useful Materials and Links

1. Compass - Manual for human rights education for young people:  
<http://eycb.coe.int/compass/>
2. Study Session After Movie: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6Mi1CYilb0>

## List of Participating Organizations

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Country</b>
The Voice of Silence	Armenia
Canadian Hard of Hearing Association	Canada
Høreforeningen	Denmark
Kuuloliitto Ry	Finland
Svenska Hörselförbundet R.F.	Finland
Hearing Impaired Support Network	Hong Kong, SAR China
Bekol	Israel
AFaMUT	Italy
National Association of Hard of Hearing and Deafened Nepal (SHRUTI)	Nepal
SH-Jong	Netherlands
Hørselshemmedes Landsforbunds Ungdom (HLFU)	Norway
Surdus Loquens	Poland
FADCY	Russia
Unga Hörselskadade	Sweden
Jugehörig	Switzerland
Academy of Sports and Education for Deaf of Tunisia	Tunisia
İsitme Engelliler ve Aileleri Derneği (IED)	Turkey





## Daily Programme

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday Women's	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
07:30-09:30		Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Departure
09:30-11:00		Introduction to Study Session	Intro to Human Rights	Social Inclusion	Parallel workshops	Summary of Days, Action Plan	How to implement Action Plan	
11:00-11:30		Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break	
11:30-13:00		Team Building Activities	UN CRPD	Design thinking	Parallel workshops	Action Plan	Action Plan	
13:00-14:30		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
14:30-16:00		Presentations by Participants	Cases, Recognition Discrimination Theatre	Design thinking	Free afternoon	Creating awareness	Presentation of plan	
16:00-16:30		Break	Break	Break	Free afternoon	Break	Break	
16:30-18:00		Presentations by Participants	Self esteem, Empowerment	Women's Day Activities	Free afternoon	Creating awareness	Evaluation	
19:00-21:00	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner	Dinner - in town	Dinner	Dinner	
	Welcome Evening					Video party	Party	