



***Fédération Européenne des Parents d'Enfants Déficients Auditifs
European Federation of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children
Europäischer Verband der Eltern Hörgeschädigter Kinder
Federación Europea de Padres de Niños con Discapacidad Auditiva***

FEPEDA Newsletter 1/2022

Greetings from the President

The main event in the first semester of 2022 has been the occurrence of the war in Ukraine.

Ukrainian people are suffering and a lot of them moved outside in various Europe Countries.

If the situation is hard for Ukrainian people in general, it can be harder for people with disability. FEPEDA is concerned by this situation and specifically by families with deaf and hearing children.

FEPEDA is in contact with European organisations as EDF (European Disability Forum) and other ones to know what kind of actions are done or are possible to do at European level in a coordinated way.

FEPEDA and its members, national organisations, support Ukrainian Families. A specific Bureau meeting has been held to define main ideas to support Families. The actions have been presented and discussed in the Management Committee Meeting held on April, 8th and 9th, 2022.

COVID pandemic, even if the situation is better, leads to continue to hold FEPEDA meetings on-line. However, the efficiency of the work done by the members of FEPEDA has not been affected as shown in this Newsletter.

These actions are done thanks to the work and the help of the members, who are volunteers.

FEPEDA thanks a lot the members for their involvement

I wish you a nice Summer and good holidays.

André Cuenca, President of FEPEDA

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Previous FEPEDA meetings

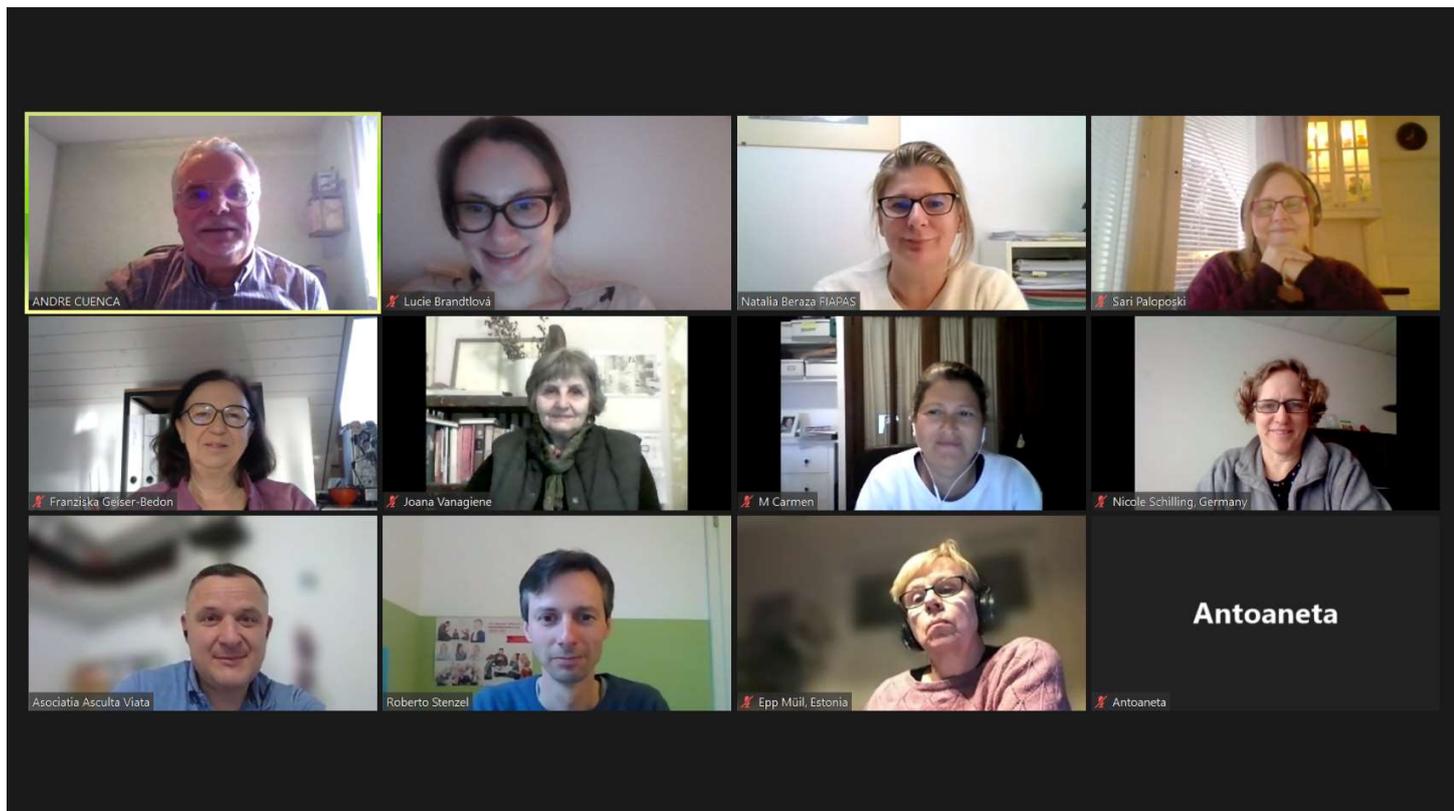
A Bureau meeting was held on 7th March, 2022. Members of the Bureau are:

André Cuencá as new President of FEPEDA
Sari Paloposki as Vice President
Carmen de Lamo as Vice President
Cosmin Brasov as Vice President
Franziska Geiser-Bedon as Treasurer

An extra Bureau Meeting about support to Ukrainian families with deaf and hearing-impaired children was held on 16th, March, 2022. Two documents have been issued and distributed to organisations:

- A letter about FEPEDA proposals to support families
- Suggestions of actions to support families

A Management Committee meeting was held on 8th and 9th of April, 2022. Due to the COVID19 pandemic, the meeting was held virtually by zoom.





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Upcoming FEPEDA meetings

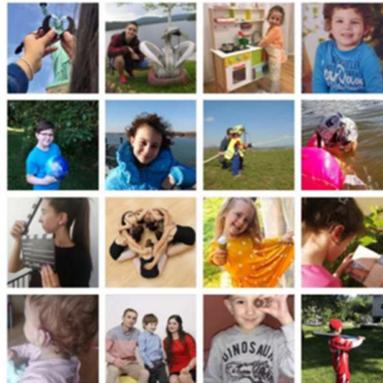
Bureau meeting virtually by Zoom will be held on 5th September 2022

General Assembly and Management Committee meetings:

21st and 22nd October, 2022 in Paris, France with the possibility to have an hybrid meeting

FEPEDA Projects

Photo campaign:



FEPEDA Photo Campaign was originally launched in autumn 2020. The campaign has been successful amongst the families around Europe.

We can conclude that it has been a project that has fulfilled its objectives, has served to raise awareness of the abilities of deaf children and, in addition, has increased the visibility of FEPEDA. It will be necessary to assess whether a new edition can be carried out in the near future and what innovative aspects can be included in the project

Family survey:

FEPEDA carried out family survey in autumn 2020. The first results were presented at the Management Committee meeting in April 2021 and a synthesis report has been issued and presented to GA in October 2021. Final report is in progress and will be ready for next GA in October 2022.

FEPEDA external relations

European Disability Forum's Annual General Assembly was held in Athens Greece, in June, 25th and 26th. A delegate of FEPEDA attended to this AGA.

FEPEDA continues its participation in the European Platform of Deafness.



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FEPEDA is in relation with [Global Coalition of Parents of Children who are deaf or hard-of hearing](#). GPODHH is currently working on its strategical plan for the next 4 years. For this work three working groups have been established (governance, advocacy and knowledge repository). The plan had to be approved at the face-to-face meeting in June in Bad Ischl

About the [World Hearing Forum](#), there was a focusing on the International Day of Hearing, March 3rd and the different activities carried out.

FCEI-conference was held in June 8-11, 2022. The conference will be held in Bad Ischl, Austria. The representative of FEPEDA was also speaker. The foreseen presentation was about Diversity: communication (oral and sign language), technical aids (hearing aids, cochlear implants or none), schooling (mainstreaming schools, special schools, schools for the deaf), ... It is highlighted that FEPEDA represents all kind of deaf and hard-of-hearing people and their families.

Students exchange

The idea is to give the possibility to young deaf or hearing-impaired people to participate and live in a foreign family for a certain time. A working group has been defined. High level requirements have been issued. FEPEDA had held several meetings with the Rotary Club who already have an exchange programme, in which they admit all types of students, including deaf students. Their programme is generally aimed at 15–18-year-olds, although they are very flexible. Exchanges are normally between continents, although they would be open to exchanges within Europe. As these progresses, we will need to look for interested young people and families interested in hosting students.



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Country News

Bulgaria

The Bulgarian Association of Parents of Hearing-Impaired Children celebrating its 30th anniversary

Association of Parents of Hearing-Impaired Children (APHIC) was established on 23rd February 1992 in Sofia. It was a natural process resulting from the increasing needs of the parents of the hearing-impaired children to share their problems and to look for alternatives for integrating the children into the groups of children of their age. The main functions of the Association are to support the children and their families through organizing speech and hearing rehabilitation, trainings, cultural events, encouraging the children in visiting the public schools aiming at facilitating the process of their integration.

The first steps of the Association were difficult, and a lot of problems had to be overcome – lack of support and understanding from the civil society and from the Government. Thanks to the efforts made by all the members of the Association, as well as their personal input to the public awareness – the society has become more cooperative and the number of people understanding the problems of the hearing-impaired children and their families had become significantly higher. The communication with public institutions and other organizations had been improved.

In 1993 Bulgarian **APHIC** has become an associate member of the **European Federation of Parents of Hearing-Impaired Children (FEPEDA)** and therefore invited to participate in the Federation's annual meetings. With a Council of Ministers Decision No. 1149 dated 17.10.1996, APHIC was recognized as Nationally represented Non-Governmental Organization. Consequently, APHIC became a member of the National Council for rehabilitation and social integration, and it is being supported financially by the state budget.

Nowadays APHIC works primarily for the provision of social care, integration and educational inclusion of children and young people with hearing impairments and their families. The association has more than 700 members in all over the country. APHIC has built 4 supporting centers in the country and network of coordinators.

The anniversary will be celebrated with exhibitions in the central parts of Sofia and Plovdiv.



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Hear me!
A campaign in support of the hearing impaired people

Myth: If you speak loud, hard of hearing people will hear you better.

Nothing like that - when you shout, you look angry and that disturbs your hard of hearing partner. It is enough to speak slowly with clear articulation and of course with a smile.

Hear me!
A campaign in support of the hearing impaired people

Myth: Deaf people are also mute.

Deaf people can talk! There are people with impaired hearing who for various reasons choose not to use their voice when communicating. The word "deaf-mute" is totally inappropriate in modern life and even considered offensive.

Hear me!
A campaign in support of the hearing impaired people

Myth: Deafness can be treated.

Impaired hearing may be compensated, supported, trained and developed. Deafness is not a disease, it is rather a state of being! If there was a cure for it, there wouldn't be any deaf people and we would've been deprived of the ability to communicate with these beautifully distinctive and attractive personalities.

Hear me!
A campaign in support of the hearing impaired people

Myth: The sign language is universal and is used all around the world.

The sign language is not universal. It has as much varieties as in the spoken languages. There is also an international sign language that is mostly used for international events.

Czech Republic

We gradually came back to the mostly offline regime for our services. It was also possible after a two-year break to host our traditional event called "Night with Andersen" full of fairy tales and adventures for children.

In our specialized journal Idetskysluch.cz (and its printed version) we focused on the following issues in the first trimester of this year: bilateral hearing loss, mild hearing loss and progressive hearing loss. We also released an article about two movies about deaf people nominated for Oscars (CODA and Audible) and what this means for deaf population, Deaf culture and Deaf history. We also used the opportunity of a World Hearing Day to release an article about noise pollution and the necessity of prevention and better solutions in this area.

For the next issue on the topic of financial support for deaf children, we would like to kindly ask our dear fellow members to fill in a questionnaire about what is the experience in other countries.

We are deeply concerned about the situation in Ukraine. So far our country accepted more than 300 000 refugees and the capacity of many Czech services started to be at their total limit. Our befriended organization CDS Tamtam offers psychological help and social counselling for Ukrainian deaf refugees together with standard services (early intervention, social activation services, etc.). A new team for the needs of Ukrainian clients was created and we have interdisciplinary meetings regarding the best support for individual cases. Our director Mgr. Jana Fenclová is in contact with a director of a Ukrainian school for deaf children, so CDS Tamtam managed to collect material aid for children from this school based on their needs and sent it to them. I asked another three main organizations in Czech Republic to give their consent that I can send their contacts and service information to FEPEDA. I expect to deliver this information very soon. The organization called Znakovárna created a Facebook group of volunteers called "Czech Deaf People helping Czech Deaf Ukrainian people" and they are helping in the first lines regarding journey coordination, temporary accommodation, interpreters, and many other services.



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We welcome any materials on the issue of psychological help and crisis intervention specifically for deaf Ukrainian children. We see a lack of specialized materials and resources in that specific field, now. So, it might be interesting to mutually share any good practice, experience and tips.

Lithuania

A Variety of Activities for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Children in Lithuania

In 2022, Lithuanian association PAGAVA organizes 5 educational activities for deaf and hard of hearing children, including music therapy, arts and crafts, computer literacy classes, sign language lessons, and sports classes. These activities are a great opportunity for the children to meet new friends, reveal their creativity, improve their communication skills, and boost their confidence.

PAGAVA has been organizing music therapy classes since 2006. This is a place where deaf and hard of hearing children can learn about musical instruments – what they look like and how they sound – and try something new for themselves. Music therapy classes help develop a sense of rhythm in children; and for some children music classes help develop voice and hearing. Children after music classes feel more positive, joyful and calm.

Arts and crafts classes are a development tool and an excellent choice to uncover the creative abilities of deaf and hard of hearing children. Children have a possibility to use a wide range of drawing tools and techniques, they also learn how to sculpt using clay; they are taught not to be afraid to express their feelings and thoughts. Arts classes help to develop children's vocabulary, their observation skills, improve self-knowledge and self-confidence.

Sign language lessons are intended for parents, children and family members. In these classes, the participants learn about deaf culture and get acquainted with sign language, how to correctly display hand gestures and use facial expressions. Children and parents learn finger alphabet, basic signs and phrases that are most frequently used, so they can start or understand the essence of the conversation, be able to ask questions and respond them in sign language. On the whole, the participants are encouraged to use sign language.

At the computer literacy classes, children are introduced to computer programs that help develop mathematical, logical, language and other skills in accordance with children's individual needs. These programs facilitate learning and improve the cognitive functions of children and young people. The ability to use information technology has become essential during the pandemic, when most classes were held remotely.

This year PAGAVA offers a new activity for children – sports activities. During sports classes, children play various games, they perform exercises to strengthen various muscle groups, compete in relay matches. Sport is a great way for children to spend time, have fun and improve their health.



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Arts



Arts



Sports



Sports



Signs





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Romania

WaveforMe, for you, for us!

VAR Cultural Association, Romania, with a wide experience in implementing and developing projects with a strong socio-cultural character, has launched, this year in February, the first international project **WaveforMe** dedicated to promoting the creative potential of the youth with hearing impairments, cochlear implant/ hearing aids carriers.

The project was created due to the positive impact of the previous approaches. An emblematic item, "Sound Imprint" (2021), a medium-length film which captures the portraits and presents the voices of 29 youth with hearing impairments, cochlear implant/ hearing aids, the protagonists and makers of the film, is available for free in English too. <https://www.varcultural.eu/proiecte/amprenta-sunetului/> (a project supported by the Community Foundation and MOL Romania).

WaveforMe develops on 3 directions and in different stages: social, educational and cultural.

In the first stage, the interdisciplinary team formed of professionals, coordinated and held 3 workshops with 5 meetings (visual arts, public speaking and percussion) that 20 Romanian youth with hearing impairments (aged 14-18) benefited from. The character of the meetings was a recreational one, meant to encourage creativity and innovation. The activities that were organized during the workshops helped the youth to discover and potentiate the inner resources in order to value them. They were encouraged to take initiatives, express their views so as to improve their communication strategies. Last but not least, the aim was to support and strengthen the process of commitment , resilience and adaptation.

The second stage requires the production of six podcasts with hearing- impaired adult guests from Romania and abroad who work in various cultural fields. So far, 4 podcasts with guests from Romania have been broadcast (available for free, with English subtitles: <https://waveforme.org/podcast/>). The series will be completed with two more guests from Austria and Belgium. By means of these materials, we wish to bring together people from different geographical backgrounds with similar experiences, interests and needs, giving the teens with hearing impairments the chance to discover exactly the type of influencers they need.

At the same time, **the third stage** has started, a stage in which we've set up the platform that will also host the visual art gallery - an exhibition area dedicated to the youth with hearing impairments in the country and abroad. Even if the open - call was addressed to young people aged 12-18, there was also a demand from those aged 18-30. Taking this into account, **on the 1st of June 2022 with the launch of the virtual gallery**, there will be an exhibition area reserved for them as well.

We encourage young people all over to join us, participating with artwork, the WaveforMe platform being an open and constantly improving area.

This year in July there will be an **itinerant exhibition** with a selection of works exhibited in the virtual gallery, contributions created during the visual art workshop that will artistically summarize the whole project. It will be opened for the public in four cities of Romania: Sibiu, Timișoara, Iași and Bucharest,



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where members of the hearing impairments community, experts in the educational, socio- cultural and medical field will be invited.

By means of WaveforMe project we wish to promote diversity and tolerance, increasing the awareness and acceptance of reality for these talented young people.

The evolution of the whole project can be followed on the facebook [WaveforMe](#) page and on instagram, where you can find us as [waveforme.var](#).

An article by Vero Nica (project manager/representative of VAR Cultural) și Magda Cernea (psychologist, audiologist, drama therapist).

Parteners: The National Association of People with Hearing Impairments from Romania- "Listen to Life", "The European Federation of Parents of Hearing Impaired Children" (FEPEDA), "Audiosofia" Association, "The Immigration Research" Forum (IRF), Washington D.C., "Koala Auditive and Verbal Rehabilitation" Association, Aures Foundation, ASTRA County Library- Sibiu, Hermes Association for contemporary Art (Calpe Gallery)- Timisoara, National Museum Centre "Moldova"- Iasi, ATELIER 030202" Gallery– Bucharest, B-Critic, FM Bucharest, IQads, Modernism, Propagarta, the magazine "Culture", Radio Romania Cultural, Viva FM

* Cultural project, co-funded by The National Administration of Cultural Fund.

**The project does not necessarily represent the position of The National Administration of Cultural Fund. AFCN is not responsible for the project's content or the way the results of the project can be used. They are entirely the beneficiary of the funding sole responsibility.





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Spain

FIAPAS INCREASES ITS VIRTUAL LIBRARY IN ENGLISH

In order to promote the internationalisation of FIAPAS' action and contribute to the transfer of knowledge, the Spanish organisation has translated into English and published in its Virtual Library several of its informative and informative materials.

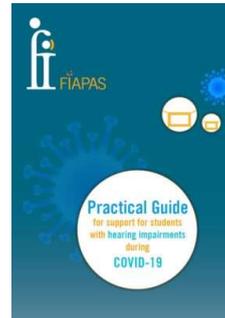
Please, kindly find some of the more relevant ones:

[oral](#)



[Inclusive and accessible digital education environments. Guide to support the communication of students with deafness](#)

[Practical guide for supporting hearing impaired students in](#)



[the COVID-19 context](#)



[Studies on the situation of deaf students in Spain \(2017\)](#)

We invite you to bookmark this website to keep up to date with new publications as they become available.



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Sweden

Riksförbundet DHB is an organization for families who have children who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a language impairment. We work in terms of interest and for our members through activities, camp activities and projects.

This autumn, DHB will end its three-year project for young people with language disorders. The project "Finally" aims to start a youth organization for young people with language disorders as there has long been a lack of an organization to meet and bring their case through.

During the project years, the foundation for the organization has been laid, study materials have been produced and the young people have received training in board work and lobbying. The youth association regularly arranges social activities for young people and there is an opportunity for interested to participate in reference and working groups.

When the above project ends, DHB's next project "Between two worlds" will start up. The purpose for this three year project is to enhance the life quality for young people with hearing impairment. Many young people with hearing impairments cannot, despite having hearing aids, fully participate in the hearing society as they would like. Also, they have lived in a non-sign language environment and may therefore have limited knowledge of sign language. This could mean that they can't participate in the sign language world to the extent they might like to. They are between two worlds and need keys to both of them.

One of the goals of "Between Two Worlds" is to strengthen young people's self-esteem and increase awareness of the challenges they may face and hopefully they will be better equipped to find their own strategies. The other target is that the society will acquire more knowledge about how the situation can be for young people with hearing impairment.

In the project, young people with hearing impairments will produce various materials in the form of films, lectures and texts with information and life stories about their situation, their experiences and why they have made certain choices in life. All which hopefully will be of help for others in similar life situation.



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Have a nice Summer!