



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 1/2024

Greetings from the President

One of the main events on the this first semester of 2024 was the European elections and the consideration of the rights of people with disability in Europe.

FEPEDA did a lot of advocacy work, through EDF (European Disability Forum) to ensure that the rights of children and young people and their families will be taken into account and improved.

In 2023, the President of FEPEDA participated in the 5th European Parliament of people with disability and the Manifesto for disabled people, approved during this Parliament, was commented and amended by FEPEDA.

During EDF General Assembly on May 11 et 12, 2024, where FEPEDA where FEPEDA was represented by its delegate, the main points about European elections were:

- Inclusion of EDF manifesto proposals on the EU political agenda
- Accessibility of campaigns by EU institutions, political parties and candidates
- Increase in the number of disabled elected representatives
- Meetings with political parties and main candidates
- Contributions to political party manifestos
- Model letter for EDF members to national parties
- Leaflet and short videos setting out the Manifesto's 10 main proposals
- Meetings with Disability Intergroup members of the Parliament after the elections (FEPEDA will contact them through EDF and also directly)

The other event for FEPEDA was the Management Committee (MC) meeting held in Goteborg – Sweden on April 26 and 27, 2024. The main topics were the workshop on FEPEDA strategy and the meeting with the Swedish organisation members who presented the 75 years history of the organisation. MC meeting was well organised by Swedish organisation with an excellent welcome of FEPEDA members.

FEPEDA thanks a lot the members for their involvement to defend the rights and to improve the quality of life of deaf and hard of hearing children and their families, with respect for the way of communication and the method of education they have chosen.

I wish to all of you a very nice Summer.

André Cuenca, President of FEPEDA

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European Disability Forum (EDF) Annual General Assembly (AGA) meeting

EDF AGA meeting was held on May 11 and 12, 2024 in Ljubljana – Slovenia. FEPEDA attended as full member. The delegate was the President of FEPEDA. The main topics were:

- Welcome by the President of Slovenia (Video message)
- Inclusion of people with disability in work:
 - Presentation of findings: European research on Digital Skills, Accommodation and Technological Assistance for Employment (DATA)
 - Technologies for an inclusive labour market
 - Employees and employers: ask, listen, implement
- Main findings of the Human Rights Report on Legal Capacity
- Disability rights, peace and conflict resolution
- Situation in Ukraine, especially for people with disability
- European Disability Card and Parking Card
- European election 2024 (see Greetings of the President)
- EDF new strategy for the next 4 years
- EDF Women's Committee
- EDF Youth Committee





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Participants to WHF stakeholders meeting

FCEI (Family Centred Early Intervention) Conference

The 7th International Conference on Family Centred Early Intervention for Children who are deaf or hard of hearing [FCEI 2024](#) was held on May 2024, 15 to 17, in Bad Ischl -Austria, under the motto 'Connect, Communicate and Collaborate'. The Austrian member was one of the keynotes presenters.

Previous FEPEDA meetings

Three Bureau meetings were held by videoconference:

- On January 31, 2024: ordinary Bureau meeting
- On April 4, 2024, to prepare the MC meeting in Goteborg and specially the workshop on FEPEDA Strategy
- On June 26, 2024, to review the outputs of the workshop during MC in Goteborg and define the actions to be approved to next General Assembly in October 2024

Members of the Bureau are:

- André Cuenca as President of FEPEDA
- Antoanetta Yarichkova as General Secretary
- Sari Paloposki as Vice President
- Carmen de Lamo as Vice President
- Cosmin Brasov as Vice President
- Franziska Geiser-Bedon as Treasurer

A FEPEDA Management Committee (MC) meeting was held on 26 and 27 April 2024 in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Eleven members attended the meeting plus two assistants. Three members sent apologies before the meeting as they were busy with other meetings. In addition, two members who were foresaw to take part had commitments at the last minute and were unable to attend.

The meeting was marked by a lot of exchanges between members, thanks in particular to:

- the workshop on FEPEDA's strategy, held on Saturday 27 morning with the help of a facilitator. Interesting and concrete suggestions were issued during the workshop. They concerned the functional aspects of FEPEDA, advocacy for the defence of the rights of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people and their families, ideas for involving associations more closely in FEPEDA's work and motivating new associations to become members of FEPEDA.
- the presentation provided by the DHB, the Swedish association, on Saturday 27 afternoon to mark its 75th anniversary this year. This presentation and the discussions that followed gave a better understanding of the evolution of the rights of deaf and hard-of-hearing people over several decades and an assessment of the current situation.

The results of the strategy workshop were analysed during FEPEDA Bureau meeting on June 26 to define an action plan to be proposed to the members of the Board and the Annual General Assembly Meeting (AGA).



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MC members agreed to keep the FEPEDA Board as it is until the AGA meeting (some members, including the President, have reached the 3-year term of office stipulated in the FEPEDA Constitution). A call for candidates was made, in particular for the Presidency.

Many thanks to the members for their active participation in this MC meeting

It was agreed that the AGA meeting 2024 will be held on 18 and 19 October 2024 in Madrid, Spain. As usual, it will be preceded by a MC meeting and followed by another MC meeting.



Workshop on FEPEDA Strategy



Previous Presidents and current President of FEPEDA



Presentation of DHB history, the Swedish organisation



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Upcoming FEPEDA meetings

Bureau meeting virtually by Zoom in September 2024

Management Committee meetings on October 18 and 19, 2024 in Madrid – Spain

General Assembly meeting on October 19, 2024, in Madrid -Spain



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Country News

Czech Republic

Articles, events and more

Our themes of published **articles** (printed and online) involved **microtia and atresia** and also a topic focusing on **generations of parents, grandparents and their adult deaf children or grandchildren**. Three FEPEDA members were kind enough to agree with interviews for this issue: [Eka from Georgia](#), Carmen from Spain and [André from France](#). Their stories are unique and very enriching for our readers and you will find them if you click on their names in the last sentence (Carmen's will come out online on our website idetskysluch.cz very soon).

We have celebrated **World Hearing Day** and published an article and press release about this year's topic **Changing Mindsets**. We challenged stereotypes about deaf people and pointed out outdated and stigmatizing words that are still being used in Czech language about deaf people (like the word "*dumb*"). This way we tried to do our part in educating our society about deaf people and the necessity to respect everyone's identity according to how they identify: what word they are using to describe their deafness, whether they feel like a part of a Deaf community with capital D or more like a part of the hearing community and/or both or anything else.

The article was also about **audism** and how it can be challenged by different approaches like the **social model of disability**. In the words of **Tiffany Storrs**, a **hearing health advocate** who wears a cochlear implant: *The social model of disability advocates that there is nothing inherently wrong with people with disabilities. The problem lies within a society that does not make life accessible to us. We are not broken nor do we need to be fixed. Society is broken. If we make changes to make life more accessible to people with disabilities, we are benefitting society as a whole.*



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Night with Andersen, a traditional event to support children's reading, took place this year on Friday, March 22. This year was focused on Old Greek myths and legends as you can see in the photo. There were several other cultural events that we organized or co-organized and sign language interpreting was provided by external cooperation.



Our **psychologist** from CDS Tamtam is happy to report that more and more clients are giving a chance to psychology consultations and psychotherapy especially because they are encouraged by social workers and early care workers to do so. But the problem in the field of psychotherapy and psychology in the Czech Republic is that there is not enough capacity, especially in some regions and paid by insurance. Children's clients are so happy in the Snoezelen room that addresses all senses and provides an opportunity for a more informal environment where they are more

likely to open up. The cooperation with sign language interpreters during sessions has also further developed lately.

Social activation service (SAS) at CDS Tamtam organizes **discussions with interesting speakers**: experts or successful role models. The topics are requested directly from client families. Given that the SAS service currently operates at three workplaces in the Czech Republic as one service (Prague, Pardubice, Ostrava), it is important to unify the specific procedures of the service and look for inspiration from each other for working with the target group. A working group on the development of communication skills was established, which is made up of colleagues from all three workplaces, and they inspire each other with ideas for their work.

Early intervention service team of CDS Tamtam is currently preparing for a campaign called "Early Care Week" with the motto "We are building bridges". Its aim is to raise awareness of early care among the professional and lay public. A lot of activities are planned in individual regions (round tables, newspaper articles, workshops for students, "community breakfast" for those who are based or live nearby). Also several meetings with current and former client families in various regions of the Czech Republic are to be held. As part of interdisciplinary cooperation, this team actively participates in the phoniatics conference (Phoniatic Days - June 2024) and the international conference on early care in **Bad Ischl, Austria**.



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Bulgaria

The international youth exchange "I can't hear, but I'm here and I have something to say" implemented by the Bulgarian Association of Parents of Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children, was among the awarded projects representing Bulgaria during the European Youth Week held in Brussels. In the period April 10-24, the project was presented at a large outdoor exhibition in front of the European Parliament. Our organization has been awarded for its contribution to youth participation in social, cultural and environmental engagement.

APHIV is among the 35 selected projects under the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programs, which represent the best examples of youth participation in 33 countries covered by the youth programs of the European Union.



European Youth Week 2024 Outdoor exhibition



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France

Sporting stays for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people



ANPEDA (National Federation of Parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing children) organises, in collaboration with UCPA, sporting stays during summer holidays for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people with a team aware to hearing loss people:

- Adapted activities
- Inclusion of your children with other children
- Instructors experienced in supervising groups
- Supervision of group life and daily activities by qualified activity leaders
- An animator with a confirmed level in LSF and LfPC
- Adapted activities to young people's needs

UCPA means in French: Union des Centres sportifs de Plein Air and in English: Union of Outdoor Sports Centres.

UCPA proposes a lot of sporting activities in all seasons: sea, mountain, ...

In UCPA:

- A specific director to the age group
- A team that listens
- Learning to live in a community
- Creating social links
- Independence
- A varied range of activities
- Trainings open to all levels, whether you're a beginner
- beginner or expert in the activities on offer.

There are 3 age groups:

- 8 – 11 years old
- 11 –14 years old
- 13 – 17 years old

Most of the cost of the stay for deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people is covered by fundings from the Foundation of France. So, the remaining cost for families is very low.



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Experience in previous years has shown that these stays are very appreciated by the families and allows young deaf and hard-of-hearing people to benefit from holidays in the same way as hearing ones. Moreover, these stays contribute to the inclusion of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people who share these stays with hearing ones.





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Have a nice Summer