

EUD Update**What's up for Deaf people in the European Union?**

Volume 10

Number 4 - December 2006

European Union of the Deaf**Galerie de la Toison D'Or / Galerij van het Gulden Vlies****29 Chaussée d'Ixelles / Elsense Steenweg #393/32****B - 1050 Brussels – BELGIUM**

Fax: +32 9 225 08 34

E-mail: info@eudnet.orgWebsites: www.eudeaf2003.org and www.eudnet.org**TABLE OF CONTENTS****EUD MEMBERS NEWS**

The Finnish Association of the Deaf lead agency in a large development education project

EDF NEWS

EU-25 commits to the protection of disabled people's Human Rights through a new UN Convention

EUROPEAN UNION NEWS

European Day of Disabled People Conference: "Europe belongs to you, Europe is yours"

Germany will try to revive the European social model during its presidency

Launch of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency

A new education and training programme

New on the anti-discrimination website

DEAF NEWS AROUND EUROPE AND THE WORLD

New Human Rights Convention protects widely Deaf people's rights

Deaf Leader to Take Over at Gallaudet

Frontrunners III – Deaf International Leadership Training

Deaf woman is challenging the state about Jury exclusion

OTHER NEWS

International Day of Disabled Persons - Art museum is made fully accessible to persons with disabilities

VACANCIES

Programme Development Department Manager – Action on Disability and Development (ADD)

Programme Fundraiser/Co-ordinator - Action on Disability and Development (ADD)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS/AGENDA

Critical Link 5 – Quality in Interpreting: a shared responsibility

Deaf in the Picture 2007 – New Deaf Cinema
2nd European Games without Borders for Deaf 2007
Deaf Arts Now! 2007
WASLI 2007: “Diversity and community in the worldwide sign language interpreting profession
15th World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf
Junior and Teen Camp 2007
7TH European Congress for Mental Health and Deafness “Joining Forces”
EUDY GA 2007

EUD MEMBERS NEWS

The Finnish Association of the Deaf lead agency in a large development education project

The Finnish Association of the Deaf, FAD, has been active in development cooperation for the past two decades. International activities related to human rights and development cooperation have become an integral part of FAD’s strategy. Currently FAD has sixteen development cooperation projects in three regions: Sub-Saharan Africa, South Eastern and Central Asia, and the Balkans. FAD also cooperates in the Nearby Regions (North Eastern Russia) with local deaf associations. The development cooperation activities cover over ten percent of FAD’s total volume.

In order to maintain continuing support for development cooperation and to raise awareness about the interdependence of the EU and developing countries, FAD has begun to put more emphasis on development education. Since March 2006 the Finnish Association of the Deaf has been the lead agency in a large development education project called FEST funded by the EU and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The project consists of seven partner organizations in Finland, Estonia and Sweden (hence the name FEST – Finland, Estonia and Sweden Together for Development) with varying scope of action and experience in development cooperation.

The FEST-project aims at strengthening development NGOs’ capacity to disseminate information on EU development policy and to participate in the planning of and the debate over development policy in the EU context. It also works to help NGOs in Finland, Estonia and Sweden to carry out awareness raising and advocacy activities and to facilitate the creation of new networks between the civil societies in the three countries.

The project activities include national and international trainings and seminars, information dissemination, study trips to Brussels, summer school and the creation of a mentoring program for development NGOs. The three project years focus on different themes: 1) EU development policy, 2) policy coherence for development and 3) the role of civil society in the planning and implementation of EU development policy.

According to the UNDP target 2% of the overall Official Development Assistance should be spent on development education and awareness raising.

For more information about the FEST project please contact the Project Co-ordinator Ms. Satu ELO at satu.elo@kl-deaf.fi.

Written by Ms. Satu ELO (Finnish Association of the Deaf)

EDF NEWS

EU-25 commits to the protection of disabled people's Human Rights through a new UN Convention

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities represents a historical moment for the European disability movement. The innovative Convention, not only is the first official recognition of disability as a Human Rights issue, but also, it will be the first Human Rights Treaty to be signed by the European Communities as a legal entity, since the beginning of the European integration process.

All men and women shall benefit from their most fundamental rights. Very often, this principle is far from daily reality. None of the EU-25 can claim that they are respectful of disabled people's Human Rights, a group facing discrimination and prejudice in all fields of life.

This is the first time that an international instrument of this kind covers both the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of people with disabilities, establishing an effective framework for the rights' protection of 650 million people in the world. The ratifying countries will now be legally obliged to treat people with disabilities as individuals with rights, clearly defined throughout the 50 articles of the Convention text, covering all fields of life.

The European Disability Forum (EDF), the representative organisation of 50 million disabled people in the European Union, has played the leading role in the negotiations and final approval of the Convention. Even more, the adoption process of the Treaty has constituted a newness in the UN negotiation procedures, as for the first time, disability NGOs from all over the world have represented a driving force towards the final adoption of the text.

"I am very proud and satisfied with the adoption of the Convention. I am proud of EDF's leading role in the whole process, representing the interests of all European with disabilities at an international level and raising their visibility. I am also extremely satisfied because for the first time, disability is officially recognised at world level and by the European Union as a Human Rights issue and this recognition will become part of EU's *acquis communautaire*", declared the President of the European Disability Forum, Yannis VARDAKASTANIS.

The Convention's signature and ratification process

On 30 March 2007, the Convention will be opened in for the signature and ratification of the 192 UN-Member States. The Convention needs to be ratified by at least 20 countries to enter into force. As a signatory entity, the European Communities will also be scrutinised regarding the implementation of the rights of persons with disabilities in the EU-25.

Moreover, it commits to the adoption of the necessary measures and legislation to effectively protect these rights.

The European Commission shall submit a proposal to the Council of the European Union, early 2007, in order to establish the signature and ratification procedure to be adopted by the European Communities. The decision will be taken by unanimity.

EDF is confident that the EU Member States will sign the Convention jointly, in accordance with the common strategy adopted by the European Union during the whole negotiation process. EDF calls on the European Communities and the Member States to concurrently sign the 18 articles of the optional protocol of the Convention about individual (or group) complaints and State enquiries.

For the European Disability Forum, this major success shall be reinforced by the development of stronger disability legislation in the European Union at all levels. So far, only a European directive protects disabled people from discrimination in the field of employment.

"Disability has generally been considered by the European Union as a non priority issue, despite the systematic violation of disabled people's rights in all Member States. From now on, there is no doubt that the EU-25 has the legitimate role and the moral obligation to actively protect the Human Rights of all Europeans with disabilities, until discrimination totally disappears in Europe", stressed VARDAKASTANIS.

The text of the Convention can be downloaded from:

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/enable/>

Source: EDF Press release

EUROPEAN UNION NEWS

European Day of Disabled People Conference: "Europe belongs to you, Europe is yours"

European Commissioner Vladimir SPIDLA stresses the key role to be played by young people in the future EU.

"Europe is diversity. Europe means fighting discrimination. Europe belongs to you", said the European Commissioner on Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities to an important assembly of young Europeans with and without

disabilities. "The European Union must recognise the potential of its young people, with or without disabilities. The future Europe is inclusive, accessible to all, a Europe in which disabled people are full citizens, free to make their own choices, in charge of their own lives".

This was the first time that the traditional conference organised by the European Commission in close cooperation with the European Disability Forum, was dedicated to youth. During a day and a half, 350 participants, mostly young people, have shared their vision of the European Union, presenting their demands and expectations to EU officials. The discussions included the right to education and training, to access the employment market, goods and services and the means to guarantee the full participation of young disabled people in society and in particular, in the activities and programmes.

"In this conference, we will have the opportunity to practice democracy and take advantage of the interaction between young people with disabilities, EU officials, representatives of the European disability movement, policy makers..." said the General Director of DG Employment and Social Affairs, Nikolaus VAN DER PAS. "For the first time, I have a better vision for the EU's role and a better conscience of Europe's impact and responsibility in my daily life", reacted one of the young participants with a disability, coming from one of the 27 European countries represented.

The leader of the European Disability movement, Yannis VARDAKASTANIS called on young people with disabilities to play an active role in the European integration process: "It is time to make your voice heard and to tell all stakeholders present what you want them to do. You are the main actors, make yourselves visible and raise your concerns at all levels." He also reminded the EU's responsibility to listen to its citizens: "This is a unique opportunity for decision-makers to hear from young people how they see and believe in the EU". VARDAKASTANIS also stressed the importance of the European youth and the disability movements: "No movement has future without the young people involved. We need a new radicalism, a new way of thinking and acting. We need a European Day of Disabled People, but most important, a day to be heard".

Signature of Memorandum of Understanding

The conference was closed by the official signing of an official Memorandum of Understanding between the European Disability Forum and the European Youth Forum, the two European NGOs that represent the rights and concerns of young people and of disabled people in Europe. The good cooperation between the two organisations is a key example of how disability should be integrated in the work and policies of all EU institutions and relevant actors:

"The European Youth Forum sees the European Day of People with Disabilities 2006 as an important step to change prejudice and to question the assumptions that have been shaping the mentalities of Europeans over the years", pointed out Diogo PINTO, General Secretary of the European Youth Forum. "I believe this conference

is one among the growing number of positive signs that shows that the world of disability that our ancestors designed is no longer acceptable to the younger generations of Europeans”, he added.

Lisa PAVAN-WOOLFE, General Director for Equal Opportunities: “This Memorandum shows that we must continue to place disability policies at the core of our work”.

Source: Press release by EDF

Germany will try to revive the European social model during its presidency

Germany is to seek ways to breathe life into the European social model during its six month stint at the helm of the EU beginning in January.

According to an outline of the programme for its EU presidency, Berlin will concentrate on creating more jobs, as this is one of the main concerns of citizens and will also try and make the bloc's social model more relevant.

It plans to host a ministerial conference that makes clear that the economy, employment and social affairs do not contradict one another and wants to make sure that the social effects of European laws are taken more strongly into account.

The European social model, which has proved hard to pin down to a single coherent definition, has been a constantly recurring theme in EU debate over the last two years.

It was a dominant feature of discussions on the EU law on opening up the market in services, with its opponents claiming its aims of making it easier for service providers to set up in different member states would undermine the social model's fabric.

It has also cropped up in several other debates including the one leading up to the referendum on the constitution in France and in issues such as protecting European shoe manufacturers from cheap Chinese shoe imports.

Berlin's stated intentions in its programme indicate it is going to have another stab at the problem of how to keep essential elements of the model such as social protection, with Europe facing an increasingly tougher struggle to keep itself competitive, against other rising economies such as China and India.

Source: Social Platform Weekly Mailing

Launch of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency

On 5 December 2006, the EU Ministers reached an agreement regarding the creation of the Fundamental Rights Agency. The Agency will formally start its work on 1 January 2007, replacing the European Monitoring Centre against Racism and Xenophobia in Vienna.

The objective of the Agency will be to provide the relevant institutions and agencies of the Community and its Member States when implementing the Community law with assistance and expertise relating to fundamental rights through collecting and examining the information on the development of fundamental rights and formulating opinion on the compatibility of legislative proposals with fundamental rights.

The main focus of the Agency's work would be on the EU and its Member States. The candidate countries will have the possibility to participate in the Agency as observers. However, it will not monitor the state of fundamental rights in individual Member States.

There are certain serious clauses limiting the scope of the Agency's work, which may serve to the detriment of the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. A number of provisions, such as giving due emphasis to groups experiencing discrimination as provided in Article 13 of the EC Treaty (such as persons with disabilities) and cooperation with the civil societies, can only be found in recitals of the Regulation establishing the Agency.

Moreover, the scope of the Agency's work has been limited to so-called 'Community law', de facto excluding the area of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, which is potentially an area most open to abuses of fundamental rights of citizens. This limitation has been criticized by the European NGOs, including EDF.

More information can be obtained from the websites of the EU Institutions
http://www.consilium.europa.eu/cms3_fo/focusView.ASP?lang=en

Source: EDF Weekly Mailing 33/2006

A new education and training programme

On 25 October the European Parliament adopted the Commission's ambitious proposals for the "Lifelong learning" Programme, a new action programme in the field of education and training.

For the first time, a single programme will cover learning opportunities from childhood to old age. The Lifelong Learning Programme will cover the period 2007-2013, and is the successor to the current Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and eLearning programmes. It has a budget of € 7 billion to support projects and activities that foster interchange, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems within the European Union, so that they become a world quality reference.

Source: Commission Press Release

New on the anti-discrimination website

The Equality and non-discrimination annual report, new language versions of the 'Putting equality into practice' brochure and key information pages in 20 languages have all been added to the European Commission's anti-discrimination website.

The Equality and non-discrimination annual report highlights the progress on implementing the 2000 Equality Directives and also features a section on the forthcoming 2007 European Year of Equal Opportunities for All. The publication is available in English. Translations will follow in the 19 other official EU languages.

'Putting equality into practice' takes a thematic approach to the Community Action Plan. The latest edition includes features on legal advice, training schemes and awareness raising. It is now available in all 20 EU languages to order or download.

Detailed information on the Equality Directives, rights and obligations, and work to combat discrimination has also been made accessible to a wider audience thanks to translation, in all 20 EU languages, of key information pages on the anti-discrimination site.

If you would like to know more, please visit the following link: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/fundamental_rights/index_en.htm

Source: EDF Weekly Mailing 33/2006

DEAF NEWS AROUND EUROPE AND THE WORLD

New Human Rights Convention protects widely Deaf people's rights

The World Federation of the Deaf (WFD) hails the newly adopted UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for covering widely Deaf people's rights. There are still serious shortages in the protection of Deaf persons' rights both in developing and developed countries. The convention will be a significant step forward, especially in the promotion of equal participation as well as in prohibiting discrimination based on disability.

The World Federation of the Deaf regards the most significant achievement for Deaf people the recognition of Deaf people's linguistic rights. For example, the new convention outlines rights to receive education and access to information in sign language, to have professional sign language interpreting, to accept and facilitate the use of sign languages, and to promote cultural and linguistic identity of the deaf community. In addition, sign languages are defined as languages, more to say, as equal languages together with spoken languages.

Altogether five articles have a direct reference to Deaf people's rights. In addition to linguistic rights, most of the 50 articles of the convention protect Deaf people of all ages in many aspects of life.

Discrimination based on disability is still a big problem in the world. Most of the Deaf people do not get any education in developing countries and approximately 80 % of the world's 70 million Deaf people do not have any access to education. Only about 1-2 % of the Deaf get education in sign language. In particular the situation of women and children is weak. Legal development and recognition of sign languages can promote many Deaf people's equal participation in society.

WFD hopes that countries ratify the convention and also implement it in their national legislation. WFD wishes that the convention will be translated into different national sign languages soon. In future, WFD will participate in the international monitoring and also supports national monitoring in many ways. It is important that Deaf people are actively engaged in the implementation and monitoring of the convention.

In future, WFD will train its national members and to assist in the implementation of the convention with its members, states and UN's special organizations. "There is a new time arising for all the world's Deaf that use sign languages, a time to recognise our equal rights", says Liisa KAUPPINEN, WFD's president emerita, who represented WFD at the General Assembly.

The World Federation of the Deaf has been part of the convention process from the beginning and has participated in all the sessions over the five years. Non-governmental organizations as well as disabled people's organizations have actively participated in the creation of the new human rights treaty. Also the World Federation of the Deaf has been part of the larger coalition in the drafting process called the International Disability Caucus.

Links:

- World Federation of the Deaf: www.wfdeaf.org
- Comprehensive and Integral International Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons with Disabilities: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/>

Source: World Federation of the Deaf press release

Deaf Leader to Take Over at Gallaudet

Gallaudet University has a new leader: Robert DAVILA, 74, who is stepping out of retirement to become interim president next month. DAVILA, a nationally known deaf leader, takes over a university that has been in chaos.

DAVILA, who got a warm reception from students and faculty, succeeds I. King JORDAN. He steps in after the board decided against plans to name former provost Jane K. FERNANDES as president. Her appointment was terminated by the board in late October after students had shut down the university for several days, the faculty voted no confidence, students were arrested and about 2000 protesters marched on the U.S. Capitol. DAVILA will serve for no more than two years while the board seeks a permanent president.

DAVILA spoke with affection of the school but also shared a full slate of ideas. He told his audience that they would move forward because they love Gallaudet. "If we cannot do it together, it will not happen," he said.

He has something that pleases everybody," said Mark WEINBERG, chairman of the faculty senate. "He knows the university, knows the federal bureaucracy, knows higher education issues, and he's highly respected in the deaf community

Davila will have to take on divisive issues such as racial tensions and debates over the importance of American Sign Language to the school, cultural and social issues that take on added weight because Gallaudet is for many the heart of the deaf world.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/10/AR2006121000242.html>

Frontrunners III – Deaf International Leadership Training

Frontrunners is a unique Deaf International Leadership Training Programme. The Frontrunners is about taking efforts to make sure that each individual has the ability of paving the way to better conditions for Deaf People, in their country and also worldwide.

The vision of Frontrunners is to give tools to be able to make a difference! You will learn how to start and plan the project. We will discuss Deaf issues and Deaf Culture, Sign Language, Deaf History, etc.

We would like to inform you that Frontrunners 3 will be organised next year. The course will be taken 1 year long. There are 3 modules:

- **Module 1:** course (15 weeks)
- **Module 2:** you can go back to your country and be involved in variety work in deaf community or in the developing country for the project (2 months)
- **Module 3:** evaluation, discussions, wrap up, analyse of your project and course (13 weeks)

You can find more information on the website: www.frontrunners2.dk and www.frontblog.dk. Don't miss this fantastic 1-year-long opportunity programme!!

Please feel free to contact us at fv@cbg.dk or ov@cgb.dk

Written by Filip VERHELST – contact person Frontrunners 3

Deaf woman is challenging the state about Jury exclusion

A Deaf woman has brought a landmark legal action challenging her exclusion from jury service — allegedly on grounds of her deafness.

Ms Joan CLARKE, a mother-of-two, claims she is entitled to be facilitated to serve on a jury by means of a sign language interpreter.

She claims the failure to allow her do so earlier this year breaches her rights under the-Constitution and European Convention on Human Rights Act.

Ms CLARKE says she wanted to perform "this important civic duty" on the same basis as everyone else and was frustrated at not being allowed to.

She also felt she was being discriminated against because she is a deaf person and was being treated as inferior to a person with hearing.

She later made contact with the Free Legal Advice Centre in Dublin about the matter and they were representing her in her action.

The case has been brought against the Galway County Registrar, the Courts Service, Ireland, and the Attorney General with the Human Rights Commission as a notice party

Ms CLARKE, a homemaker of Ashlawn, Co. Galway is proficient at lip reading and is also fluent in Irish Sign Language.

She is seeking an order quashing the decision of the Galway County Registrar and/or Courts Service of May 15 last purportedly excusing jury service, apparently on the grounds of her deafness.

She is also seeking declarations that any decision on her eligibility for jury service is for the judicial branch of government to make.

Source: Irish Deaf Society

OTHER NEWS

International Day of Disabled Persons - Art museum is made fully accessible to persons with disabilities

An art museum in Italy has marked the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, 3 December, by making its galleries fully accessible.

The Pinacoteca Nazionale (<http://www.pinacotecabologna.it>) in Bologna inaugurated its new accessible tour route from which all architectural barriers have been eliminated. Visitors with disabilities were able to enjoy a route planned specifically for them but that is part of the common museum space and available to all.

Throughout the day, in addition to the regular guided tours, sign language interpreters explained paintings to deaf visitors while museum guides led visually impaired visitors to touch tactile reliefs of paintings while describing them.

“A museum cannot exclude but must integrate,” said Franco FARANDA, the museum’s director. “We intend to offer a tour route which is personalized but does not exclude, to be followed together with everybody else. The goal is to adapt the museum to the needs of the visitor with disabilities, not the other way around.”

The initiative must be expanded with input from different users and especially from those who live in situations of exclusion, he said, adding “we ask for the contribution of everyone so that together with architectural barriers all others are overcome.”

Source: U.N Press Release and EDF Weekly Mailing 33/2006

VACANCIES

Programme Development Department Manager – Action on Disability and Development (ADD)

ADD is an international development agency, working in 12 of the poorest countries of Africa and Asia, to facilitate the work of disabled people's organisations fighting for the rightful inclusion of disabled people in society. We have 170 staff, of whom 23 are based in our fully accessible UK office.

ADD has a vision of a world where all disabled people are able to participate as fully as they choose at every level of society

We now have an exciting vacancy for a disabled person to join our senior management team. The post holder will lead the Programme Development Department managing our overseas programmes; UK-based policy and lobbying; and institutional funding, together with managing a staff of 6. As a member of the senior management team, the post-holder will share strategic leadership responsibility for ADD. UK and international travel will be required. Salary £35K+ p.a. depending on experience

This post is open for suitably skilled disabled people only. Disabled people from Asian or African ethnic origins are particularly encouraged to apply.

For an application pack go to www.add.org.uk; telephone +44 (0)1373 473064; email info@add.org.uk; fax +44 (0)1373 452075 or write to ADD, Vallis House, 57 Vallis Road, Frome, Somerset, BA11 3EG, UK

ADD intends that these processes are fully inclusive. Any reasonable adjustments will be made, including the provision of information in alternative formats.

Closing date: 12 January 2007

Programme Fundraiser/Co-ordinator - Action on Disability and Development (ADD)

We are seeking a committed and experienced person to support and manage our West African programmes; to raise funds from institutional donors and manage contracts; and to pursue policy and lobbying objectives within the UK. This full-time job is offered on a one year contract; some international travel will be required. French language skills desirable.

Salary £24K+ p.a. depending on experience

As a temporary position, this vacancy is open to all suitable candidates. Disabled people, and people from Asian or African ethnic origins, are especially encouraged to apply.

For an application pack go to www.add.org.uk; telephone 01373 473064; email info@add.org.uk ; fax 01373 452075 or write to ADD, Vallis House, 57 Vallis

Road, Frome, Somerset, BA11 3EG, UK.

ADD intends that these processes are fully inclusive. Any reasonable adjustments will be made, including the provision of information in alternative formats.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS/AGENDA

Critical Link 5 – Quality in Interpreting: a shared responsibility

Date: 11 – 15 April 2007

Place: Sydney, Australia

Website: <http://www.criticallink2007.com>

Deaf in the Picture 2007 – New Deaf Cinema

Date: 10-14 May 2007

Place: Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Website: www.deafinthepicture.nl

2nd European Games without Borders for Deaf 2007

Date: 7-9 June 2007

Place: Dornbirn, Austria

Website: www.gehoerlos.eu

Deaf Arts Now! 2007

Date: 15 – 17 June 2007 (Festival) and 18 – 22 June 2007 (workshop)

Place: Stockholm, Sweden

Website: <http://www.deafartsnow.com> and <http://www.zoom.coip.no> (new website!)

WASLI 2007: “Diversity and community in the worldwide sign language interpreting profession

Date: 13 – 15 July 2007

Place: Segovia, Spain

Website: <http://www.wasli.org>

Call for papers: deadline 28th February 2007

15th World Congress of the World Federation of the Deaf

Date: 16 – 22 July 2007

Place: Madrid, Spain

Website: <http://www.wfdcongress.org>

Junior and Teen Camp 2007

Date: 16 – 22 July 2007

Place: Madrid, Spain

Website: http://www.peretarres.org/apansce/index_eng.asp and
<http://www.difusord.org> (video in international sign)

7TH European Congress for Mental Health and Deafness “Joining Forces”

Date: 11 – 14 September 2007

Place: Haarlem, the Netherlands

Website: <http://www.esmhdcongress2007.com>

EUDY GA 2007

Date: 20 – 23 September 2007

Place: Zürich, Switzerland

Website: <http://www.eudy.info>