

AEA: European Association Of Hearing Aid Professionals

EFHOH: European Federation of Hard of Hearing People

EHIMA: European Hearing Instrument Manufacturer Association

EFHOH – AEA – EHIMA: Joint Policy Paper


More than 52 million EU citizens report to have hearing difficulties. Hearing loss is one of the most prevalent disabling health conditions in adults.

The financial cost of untreated hearing loss is estimated at € 178 billion in Europe.

Untreated hearing loss leads to **“Difficulties in Finding and Retaining Employment”, “Earlier Retirement” and “Reduced Personal Income”, “Social Isolation”, “Depression”, “Cognitive decline”, “Reduced Activities of Daily Life”, “Reduced Quality of Life”, “Frailty” and “Loss of Independence”.**


Therefore the joint policy of the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH), the European Association of Hearing Care Professionals (AEA) and the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA) is to activate and promote **the following joint action plan.**

Prevention



- *Avoid Noise*
- *Promote safe listening*
- *Protect your ears*
- *Prevent and treat ear infections...*

Awareness

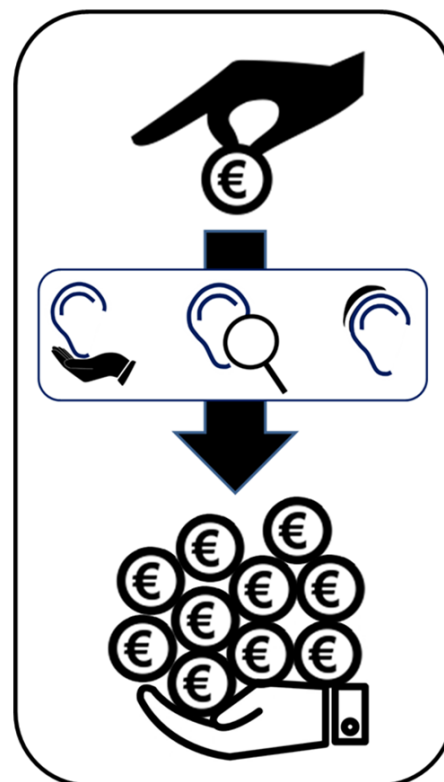


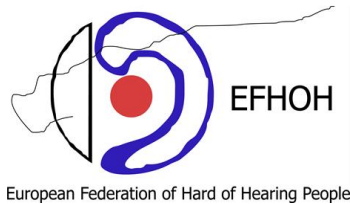
- *Hearing Screening*
 - *National paediatric screening*
 - *School children screening*
 - *Adult screening (from 50 years onwards)*
- *Information & Awareness campaigns*

Intervention



- *Rehabilitation*
- *Hearing Systems & Assistive Listening Devices*
 - *Hearing Aids*
 - *Cochlear Implants ...*
- *Professional Hearing Care*





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- **PREVENTION: Prevent Hearing Loss**

We aim to promote the World Health Organization’s “Make listening safe” campaign and actions – EU Directive on Noise Protection, Safety of Personal Music Players, Personal Sound Amplification Products (PSAP’s) and Smart Wearables. We promote and give Professional Advice on Personal Hearing Protection.

- **AWARENESS: Promote Awareness on Hearing Loss**

We support and lobby for the introduction of hearing screening programs both for new-borns, children and adults from 50 years onwards. This will ensure early intervention and make sure that unaddressed hearing loss does not contribute to cognitive decline.

We work together to build and support public awareness of the consequences of hearing loss and tinnitus, including information on how to seek help.

We join forces to promote the World Health Organization’s “World Hearing Day” initiative at European Level.

- **INTERVENTION: Guarantee Access to Professional Hearing Care & Quality Hearing Solutions**

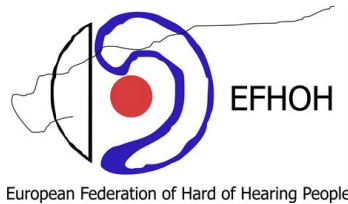
- We actively promote and urge policy makers to ensure access to hearing care in all countries. Every hard of hearing person has the right to hear well. (UN Declaration on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities & UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

We support well organized access provision, meaning access to opportunity, education, professional development and better inclusion in society as stated in EFHOH’s Essen Declaration.

- We advocate counselling and fitting of hearing aids by qualified professionals, who keep up to date through mandatory continuous education in accordance with current guidance as stated in EN 15927, the European Standard on services offered by hearing aid professionals. In addition, we actively participate in developing a new International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) norm on “Hearing Aid Fitting Management”.

- For the benefit of the end-user, and to ensure quality of hearing care and loyal co-operation between healthcare practitioners in the best interests of society, we support the new AEA Code of Conduct for European Hearing Care Professionals.

- We strive to ensure interference-free access to standardised wireless communication regardless of the type of assistive device used.



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- For the sake of user safety, we work with policy makers to make sure only officially approved medical devices are used as part of hearing care provision.
- Patient safety and satisfaction requires that a qualified hearing aid professional is responsible for the selection, fitting and ensuring the immediate and ongoing optimisation of the effectiveness of hearing aids and other hearing solutions.

Action for Hearing Loss is a Sound Investment. The total budget of prevention campaigns, awareness actions and granting access to professional hearing care for all persons with self-reported hearing loss, is significantly lower than the cost of untreated hearing loss. Therefore it's a sound investment. For every 1 Euro invested, 10 Euros are saved.

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (**EFHOH**) is a non-profit European non-governmental organisation consisting of/for hard of hearing, late deafened people, those living with tinnitus, hyperacusis, Ménière's disease and Cochlear Implants, as well as parent organisations and professional organisations. EFHOH has been funded and registered as a charitable organisation in 1993. EFHOH's aim is a Europe where hard of hearing people can live without barriers, and have the opportunity to participate at all levels in society. EFHOH realises this vision through a series of actions, contacts and campaigns, involving EFHOH members and partners. EFHOH membership currently represents 21 different countries and over 52 million hard of hearing people across European Union.

The European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals (**AEA**) was founded in 1970 as the European umbrella organisation for "Hearing Aid Professionals". It is an association of national professional organisations representing a total of 20,000 hearing care professionals in the following 13 European countries: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

AEA strives to improve the quality of hearing care services, ensure a transparent, fair and competitive market, and safeguard freedom of choice in the interest of the end-user.

The European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (**EHIMA**) represents the six major European hearing instrument manufacturers, producing up to 90% of the hearing aids manufactured in Europe.

EHIMA was founded in 1985 and its members are among the world's largest and most advanced hearing aid manufacturers.



World Health Organization

WHO References:

Safe Listening:

<http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/activities/MLS/en/>

http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/news/safe_listening/en/

World Hearing Day:

<http://www.who.int/pbd/deafness/world-hearing-day/en/>

Information on Hearing Loss and Professional Hearing Care:

<http://www.who.int/pbd/publications/en/>



European Federation of Hard of Hearing People

EFHOH References:

Safe Listening:

EFHOH/AEA Joint Report on (PSAP's)

<http://www.efhoh.org/resources>

World Hearing Day:

<http://www.efhoh.org/campaigns>

Information on Hearing Loss and Professional Hearing Care:

<http://www.efhoh.org/resources>



UNITED NATIONS

United Nations References:

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child & People with disabilities

<http://www.un.org/disabilities/convention/conventionfull.shtml>



Europäischer Verband der Hörakustiker
Association Européenne des Audioprothésistes
European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals

AEA References:

Information on Hearing Loss and Professional Hearing Care

[https://www.aea-](https://www.aea-audio.org/portal/index.php/aea-action-plan)

[audio.org/portal/index.php/aea-action-plan](https://www.aea-audio.org/portal/index.php/aea-action-plan)

World Hearing Day:

[https://www.aea-](https://www.aea-audio.org/portal/index.php/world-hearing-day)

[audio.org/portal/index.php/world-hearing-day](https://www.aea-audio.org/portal/index.php/world-hearing-day)



European Commission References:

Safety standards for personal music players

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32009D0490>

Environmental Noise Directive

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/noise/index_en.htm

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/noise/evaluation_en.htm

Noise Protection Automotive Industry

https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/automotive/environment-protection/noise-reduction_en



EHIMA References:

Market Surveys

<http://www.ehima.com/documents/>

Socio-Economic Documents

<http://www.ehima.com/documents/>



Hear-it References:

Market Surveys

<http://www.hear-it.org/>