EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF HARD OF HEARING PEOPLE

Accessibility in the workplace: practical resources from EFHOH

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European Federation of Hard of Hearing (EFHOH)

- A European Federation of national associations working across the EU and geographical Europe to further the **rights of persons who are hard of hearing.**

- **OUR COLLECTIVE VISION**:

- A Europe **where hard of hearing people can live without barriers**, and have **the opportunity to participate** in all levels of society

EFHOH

Funded by the European Union

Insights from the data





eurostat

On prevalence:
In the **European Region**, approximately 190 million people have some hearing loss or deafness. This represents **20%** of the population. In other worlds **1 in 5** have some hearing loss or deafness. (WHO)
On average, **11.1% of the population of the European Union, Norway, Switzerland, and UK, or 59 million people, self – reported hearing loss.** Among the population of 65+-year-olds, this proportion rises to 20.7%. (EFHOH)
On employment:
Adults with hearing loss have **increased odds of unemployment or underemployment** (*WHO World Report on Hearing)*
40 – 45% of Europeans with hearing loss employed in comparison with **75%** of people without disabilities (Eurostat)

Home – Eurostat (2022)
Getting the numbers right on Hearing Loss, Hearing Care and Hearing Aid Use in Europe (2024)
WHO, Deafness and Hearing Loss (2025)

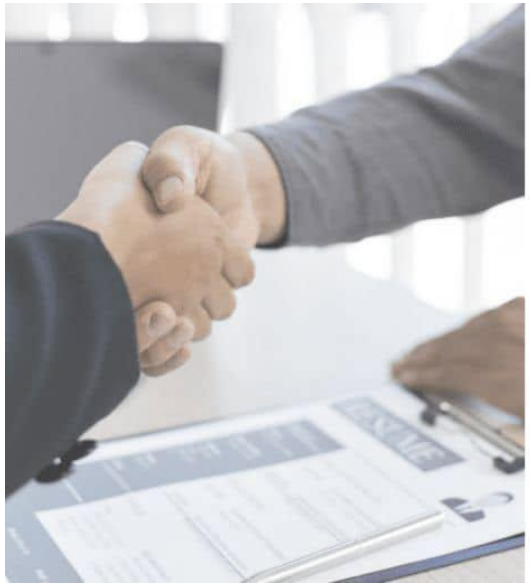
Challenges in employment



Photo: Unsplash

- Difficulty in understanding spoken instructions in noisy places , participating in meetings, and social interactions.
- Feeling isolated
- Communication fatigue → many hard of hearing people choose part-time work.
- Hiding hearing loss, stigma → Fear of losing the job or promotion, treated differently.

Findings from EFHOH survey – still active



941 Hard of Hearing participants

Key Insights from Hard of Hearing Employees

Insights from the EFHOH–AEA study on Hearing Loss and Employment Survey (2025–2026):

Communication is crucial in our working life

95%

of respondents work in roles requiring constant or frequent communication, yet accessible communication environments remain the exception, not the norm.

When Reasonable Adjustment are Provided

82%

of those who received accommodations said they were effective. The gap is in awareness and proactive provision, not in the value of adjustments.

Awareness of Support is limited

53%

of respondents were not informed about possible workplace accommodations, and only 9% said they received this information from their audiologist.

Discrimination based on hearing loss is Underreported

31%

reported exclusion or discrimination at work, often without resolution or with further exclusion. Some did not report because they did not know how or where to do so.

Accommodations

Survey

Types of accommodations

- None **(25%)**
- Assistive listening devices **(20%)**
- Captioning, instant messaging & transcripts **(20%)**
- Flexible work arrangement **(12%)**
- Occupational health assessment **(7%)**
- Workplace adaptation **(7%)**
- Communication training & awareness for colleagues **(4%)**



Assistive listening devices



Flexible work arrangement



Captioning & messaging



Workplace adaptation



Occupational health assessment

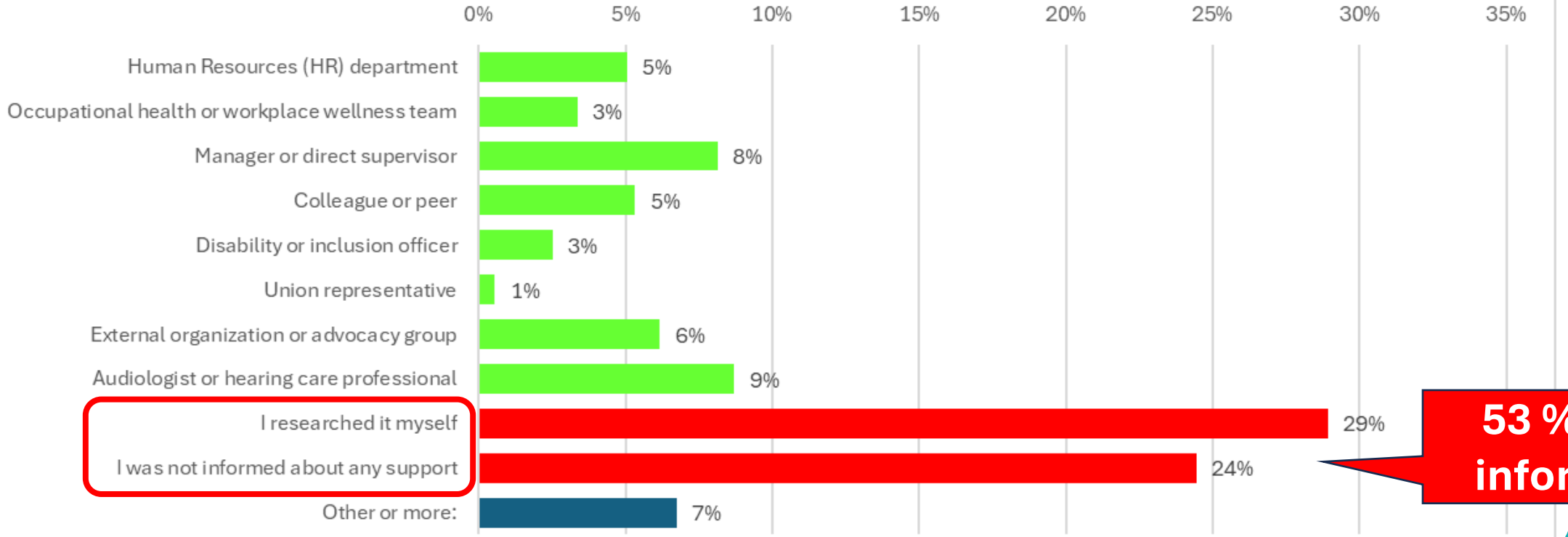




Communication training

From Survey Findings to Practical Solutions

Who informed you about the possible support you could receive as a hard of hearing person at the workplace?



What does the Toolkit provide?

- **Practical guidance** for employers and HR professionals and advocacy tool for hard of hearing employees
- Clear understanding of **hearing loss and its impact** at work
- **Tips** on inclusive communication, recruitment and returning to work
- **Examples** of support for reasonable accommodation and inclusive workplaces
- Actions for managing **listening fatigue**
- **Real-life** examples and employer good practices
- Simple **checklist**





SCAN HERE
German Version

DOWNLOAD EFHOH'S HEARING LOSS INCLUSIVE EMPLOYMENT TOOLKIT

SCAN HERE
English Version

1 HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY

Clear communication reduces misunderstandings and repeated explanations

2 TALENT RETENTION

Experienced employees are more likely to remain in work when communication barriers are removed

3 INCLUSIVE INNOVATION

Diverse teams contribute broader perspectives and problem-solving approaches

4 BETTER MEETING EFFICIENCY

Captions, agendas, and written summaries benefit all participants

5 AGEING WORKFORCE READINESS

As hearing changes with age, accessible workplaces support a larger share of employees

Awareness rising with "Sound of the Office"

- Complimenting the Employment toolkit, EFHOH has developed a new awareness rising tool for advocacy

- The book follows workplace experiences of hard of hearing professional, brought to life through Comics with humour, honesty, and powerful storytelling



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AEA
European Association of Hearing Care Professionals

NEW! Accessible Healthcare Toolkit

- Practical Toolkit for healthcare professionals meeting hard of hearing patients.

- Toolkit provides lived examples , tools and guidance to ensure effective and equitable access to healthcare, including telehealth services.



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THANK YOU

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