



EUROPEAN *dyslexia*
ASSOCIATION
AEBL

COMMUNIQUÉ
OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
24th to 25th of September 2011 in Luxembourg

- 1) The next Meetings of the Board of Directors have been fixed between the Board Directors:
 - .) Copenhagen 11th -13th of November 2011
 - .) Växjö 20th to 22nd of January 2012
 - .) San Marino 9th and 10th of June 2012
- 2) The Board is continuing preparations for the IV. All-European Dyslexia Conference. The conference is planned for September / October 2013. **Please try to avoid planning any major events in this period.**
- 3) The EDA is involved in the preparation of two EU project proposals (EUPALT+VIP-BOOKS [second proposal]). They have been submitted in early 2011. The EDA was invited from the Project Leaders for the dissemination parts. At the moment EUPALT has been accepted from the EU agencies.

Our member DYSPEL, Luxembourg, will coordinate a new Grundtvig (European Lifelong Learning project): DYSSpeLD – Roadmap for Teacher and Adult learner training. EDA members will be contacted.
- 4) The EDA News becomes the EDA Flash published on the website. Official messages will be sent to the Boards of our members by email again.
- 5) The 3rd EDA Community Summer School will stage from 6th to 8th June 2012 in San Marino again. As the Board wants to keep the structure and setting, attendants nominated by EDA-member organisations will preferably be admitted to attend.
- 6) The website www.dyslexia.eu.com will be restructured, more information to follow. Until the end of this year it will be linked to the new www.eda-info.eu. Please use the new website address and inform your members about this change.
- 7) In accordance with the World and European Blind Unions the EDA suspended the attendance at the stakeholder meetings on EU and WIPO level relating to exceptions to the national copyright laws and free exchange of accessible format between countries. Updated information will be sent to you regularly via EDA Flash at the website.

At the high level committee meeting at the WIPO assembly in Geneva in June 2011 substantial steps forward have been achieved. The EDA decided to continue this campaign in accordance with the Blind organisations.

We have successfully submitted a petition to the EP; Raymond Claes attended a hearing about this petition at the EP on the 3rd of October. Here is a press release of our ally European Blind Union:

Visually impaired people should have full access to books and other printed products, said the Petitions Committee on Monday. Following a complaint by the World Blind Union, the European Blind Union, the European Dyslexia Association and the Royal National Institute of Blind People (UK), MEPs called for a binding treaty to ensure that persons with print disabilities can make accessible copies of published works and send them to other countries. Only 5% of published books are made accessible in richer countries, and less than 1% in poorer ones.

"Do you know what it is to go to a public library and to find that you do not have access to 95% of the books?" asked Chris Friend, Chair of the World Blind Union Right to Read Campaign. "We only want the opportunity that you have to go to a local seller and to borrow or to buy the latest best-seller that our relatives or our friends talk about", he added.

A legally-binding international treaty?

The European Parliament adopted May 2011 a resolution calling on the Commission to "work actively and positively within the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) to agree on a binding legal norm based on the treaty proposal drafted by the World Blind Union and tabled at WIPO in 2009".

The proposed treaty would make it legal for people with print disabilities and specialist organisations to make accessible copies of published works in all participant countries. Copyright laws are mainly national, which prevents the import and export of accessible books. The treaty proposal would also remove this legal barrier, making it legal for blind people's organisations in different countries to circulate accessible

books.

Parliament's demand for a legally-binding instrument has not been met so far. The Commission representative said that "we need a mandate by the Council for these negotiations". The next WIPO meeting will take place in November and the Commission expects to "continue working with the text that we have on the table, although we do not have a mandate for a full Treaty".

"Over 100 Member States at the WIPO support the call for a binding treaty", said Mr Friend.

"It is a form of discrimination, people's basic right to education and culture is being neglected", said MEP Angelika **WERTHMANN** (Non Attached, AT). "It is simply unacceptable that a part of society is being denied access to books", added MEP Peter **JAHR** (EPP, DE). "The right to culture is not a commercial matter", pointed out Victor **BOȘTINARU** (S&D, RO) and Sonia **ALFANO** (ALDE, IT), adding that denying access to published works represents a "violation of fundamental rights". Margrete **AUKEN** (Greens/EFA, DK) insisted that "the European Parliament is in favour of a binding law".

Situation within the EU

"We have legislation within the EU that provides Member States with the possibility to limit copyright to guarantee access to books by disabled people", stressed the Commission representative referring to the EU Directive on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright.

She also mentioned a memorandum of understanding on access to copyright works for people with print disabilities, whose aim is to support publishers' efforts to produce accessible content and to develop a network of "trusted intermediaries" in all EU Member States. The memorandum of understanding was signed in September 2010 and is not a binding document.

"A memorandum of understanding is not a treaty" said Dan Pescod, Vice-chair of the World Blind Union Global Right to Read Campaign. "Two thirds of the world countries do not have any exception to copyright", he added.

Next steps

The Petitions Committee decided to leave the case open and to address urgently an oral question to the Commission on this issue.

In the chair: Erminia Mazzoni (EPP, IT)

Report from this meeting:

This petition concerning our issue was „fast-tracked" onto the agenda of the European Parliament's Petitions Committee meeting on 3rd October 2011.

Raymond Claes, Vice Chair of EDA, Chris Friend, Chair of WBU's Right to Read Campaign, and Dan Pescod, EBU campaign leader, attended the meeting in Brussels. Chris spoke on our behalf, after which the Commission's Head of Copyright replied. Then various MEPs spoke on the matter, before a couple of very brief and totally inadequate comments from the Commission's Justice DG. Finally, Dan Pescod had the opportunity to counter a couple of points from the Commission.

Below you will find the Petitions Committee press release on the matter, as well as a link to the video of the session for those interested (our section starts on the video at 15.30 and ends around 16.10).

In summary, all MEPs unanimously and strongly backed our call for a treaty, and our request for the matter to be further examined via an oral question in the Parliament's Plenary. The Committee rejected the Commission's arguments and action on the matter to date as insufficient.

The conclusion is that the Committee will put an oral question on this to the Plenary.

Of course, though this result in the Petitions Committee is satisfying, there is far more to be done. We must keep in mind that the main aim of this work is to get the EU negotiators in WIPO (the Commission and Council share this job) to support our call for a treaty, rather than just to have warm support from Parliament. But there is no doubt that along with our lobbying of our respective countries, it helps to get Parliament to ask questions of the Commission and Council in this way.

On the subject of lobbying Member States, we have a note of colleagues contacting the following governments on the matter:

Austria, Estonia, France, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, UK and Poland.

Michael Kalmár will attend as ad hoc observer at the WIPO meeting in Geneva in November 2011.

8) Elections of the Board, functions:

President: Michael Kalmár
Vice-President: Raymond Claes
Vice-President: Lars Sander
Secretary: Anne-Marie Montarnal
Treasurer: Rudy Vandevoorde
Administrator: Kate Saunders
Administrator: Christina Sczigiel

Administrator: Giannis Karagiannakis
Administrator: Giacomo Stella

Next GA will take place on Friday 8th of June 2012 in San Marino, following the EDA Community Summer School.
Proposed topics of the Summer School:

Teacher and adult learner training
Adult dyslexia II
Dyslexia and IT, including typing as primary cultural ability

The Board will send a flyer early 2012

Further information can be found in the minutes of the General Assembly 2011 in Luxembourg which you receive soon.

Best wishes

Brigitte Kalmár, Volunteering Assistant

on behalf of

Dr. Anne-Marie Montarnal, Secretary of the EDA