

AEA Action Plan for World Hearing Day 2018

About us

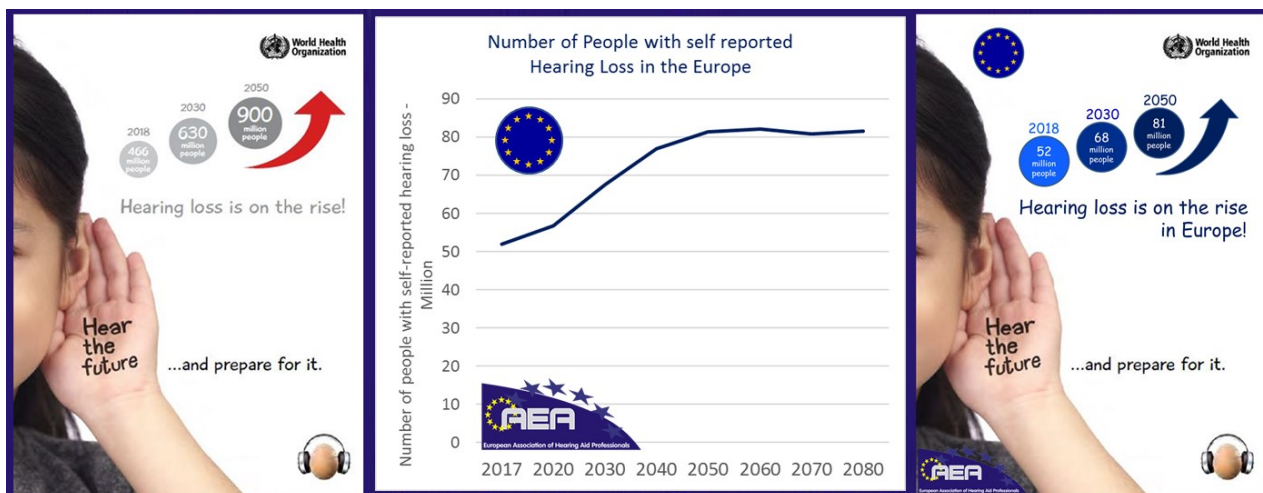
The AEA (European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals) was founded in 1970, and is headquartered in Brussels since 2008.

It is an association of national professional organisations representing a total of 22,000 hearing care professionals from 14 countries across Europe.

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.

Hearing loss in Europe

More than **52 million EU citizens report having hearing difficulties**, making hearing loss one of the most prevalent disabling health conditions in adults.



Hear the future ... and prepare for it.

AEA fully supports the WHO (World Health Organisation) World Hearing Day theme 2018.

Hearing loss is on the rise, in Europe the number of people with hearing loss will grow from 52 million today, to 68 million in 2030 and further to 81 million in 2050.

We need to be prepared for this, since hearing loss does not only lead to communication problems, but also to cognitive decline and being dependant on others.

The best way to act is by prevention (safe listening), awareness (check your hearing at all ages) and intervention (accessible quality hearing care for all Europeans).

The European Association of Hearing Aid Professionals

Action plan

In light of the alarming extent and consequences of hearing loss, **AEA has developed the following action plan**, which we have started to implement:



Prevent Hearing Loss

- We have joined forces with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) in their **“Make listening safe” campaign**, which draws attention to noise-induced hearing loss. We also work to improve and actualise regulations on safe listening like the **EU Directive on Noise Protection, Personal Music Players, Smart Devices & Personal Sound Amplification Products**.
- We provided feedback on the European Commission’s **“Smart Wearables: Reflection and Orientation Paper”**, stating that **“Smart Wearables** intended to be used by people with normal hearing **should not cause hearing damage**” and that “Smart Wearables intended to be used by people with hearing loss should either be connected to hearing aids, which are medical devices, fitted and provided by a recognised hearing care professional, or be classified and regulated as hearing aids when directly providing amplified sound”.



Promote Awareness on Hearing Loss

- We support and advocate for the introduction of **quality hearing screening programmes** for new-borns, children and adults, to ensure **early intervention** and optimum cognitive capacities.
- We work together with the **World Health Organization (WHO)** in the framework of the **World Hearing Day**, to build and support **public awareness** on hearing loss and tinnitus, notably through the provision of information on how to seek help.
- We have developed a report together with EFHOH and the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA) on **“Getting our Numbers Right”**, to **inform policy makers and stakeholders** on the prevalence of hearing loss and the impact of professional hearing care.

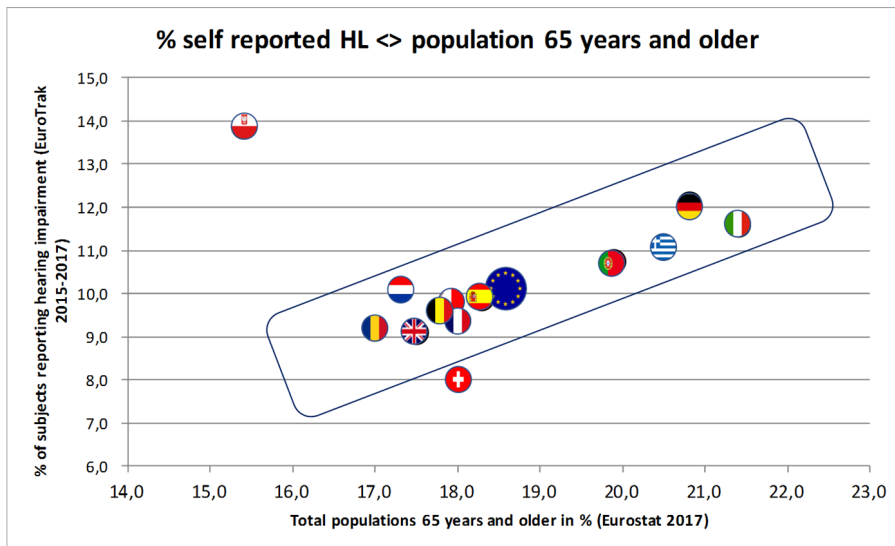


Intervention - Professional Hearing Care

- We **support professional counselling and fitting** of hearing aids by qualified professionals, who are kept up to date with current guidance set out in EN 15927 the **European Standard on services offered by hearing aid professionals** through mandatory continuous education. In addition, we **actively participate in developing a new International Organisation for Standardisation (ISO) norm** on a “Hearing Aid Fitting Management”.
- With the aim to **respect the end-user, ensure quality of hearing care** and **loyal co-operation between healthcare practitioners** towards the best interests of society, together with EFHOH we have developed a new European AEA **Code of Conduct for Hearing Care Professionals**, which was formally accepted by all AEA member associations.
- **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, cochlear implants and assistive listening systems**.
- We strive to ensure **interference-free access to standardised wireless communication** regardless of the type of assistive device used.

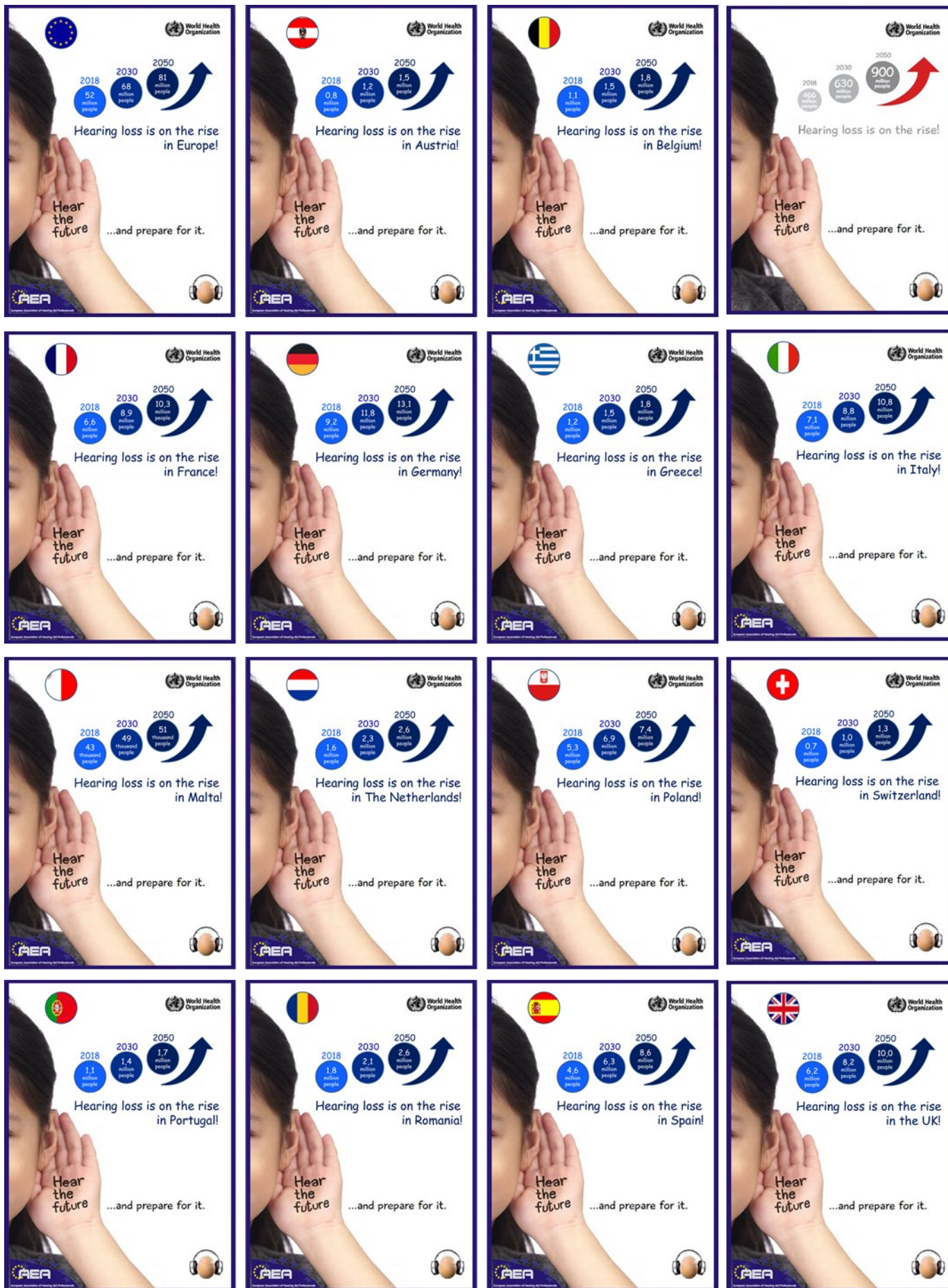
Self-Reported Hearing loss in the AEA members' countries

	% Population >= 65 Year	% Self Reported Hearing Loss
Europe	18,5	10,0
Austria	18,3	9,9
Belgium	17,8	9,6
France	18,0	9,4
Germany	20,8	12,1
Greece	20,5	11,1
Italy	21,4	11,6
Malta	17,9	9,7
Netherlands	17,3	10,1
Poland	15,4	13,9
Portugal	19,9	10,7
Romania	17,0	9,2
Spain	18,5	10,0
Switzerlandland	18,0	8,0
United Kingdom	17,5	9,1



The rise of Self-Reported Hearing Loss in the World, Europe and in AEA member countries

See next page.



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