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Message from Beate Gromke

Dear Sir or Madam,

Welcome to the 65th International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians held in Hanover!

A lot has happened since spring 2020. The pandemic is also affecting hearing and hearing health. Wearing mouth and nose protection can reduce speech by up to 10 dB and the mouth image is not visible. This has an impact on communication between people with and without hearing loss. The first studies in the field of "Covid-19 and hearing loss" are available indicating that hearing loss and tinnitus could be among the long-term consequences of Covid-19.

Hearing aid acousticians are important counsellors in this situation. For people with hearing loss who use hearing systems, special mask programs have been developed that can be adjusted by the experts so that conversations are possible from a distance. For all those who have no hearing loss but understand less when face masks are worn, a free hearing test offered by local hearing aid acousticians can provide information about their personal hearing status.

Around 15,000 hearing aid acousticians across Germany ensure that people have good hearing, and that 5.4 million people with hearing loss can be cared for. There is a tendency for people to be younger at onset of hearing loss. Early care can prevent social isolation and dementia, and ensure better quality of life. I should like to ask you to support us in our educational work on the subject of hearing and to draw the attention of your audience to the fact that a hearing test can be carried out free of charge in each of the approximately 7,000 specialist shops run by hearing aid acousticians.

The 65th International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians provides various opportunities to find out more about modern hearing: twenty-four lectures, four tutorials, and more than ninety stands at the industry exhibition. We look forward to an inspiring Congress, and will also be at your side as a contact after the event.

Best wishes,



Beate Gromke

President
European Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians

**Special programme for media representatives:
Wednesday, 15 September 2021**

Our press centre (Convention Center, Room 13/14) will be open between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. providing you with information and documentation, offering space for discussions, for interviews, and providing workstations and internet access.

Between 10:00 a.m. and noon you are invited to join our guided tour of the trade exhibition and the showroom (Convention Center, Room 15/16). The tour will take you to a number of selected exhibiting companies who will be briefing you on current topics, trends, and innovations regarding hearing aid fitting.

Representatives of the media will be introduced to our "ambassadors of hearing", cellist Ida Riegels and rally driver Walter Röhr. You will also be able to find out why good hearing is a challenge in times of face masks - both for people with impaired or normal hearing. Thanks to modern technology and the specialist knowledge brought to bear by hearing aid acousticians, solutions for these special requirements have been made available.

Start: 10:00 a.m. from the press centre (Convention Center, Saal 13/14)

At our showroom (Convention Center, Room 15/16), open between 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m., there will be a special exhibition exclusively developed for representatives of the media where you may take a close look at product innovations.

Moreover, you are cordially invited to attend the Congress opening ceremony starting at 12:30 p.m.

65th International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians 2021

Schedule for the guided tour of the exhibition [Group 1]

15 September 2021

10:00 h: **Welcome address from Beate Gromke (EUHA President) and Kay Buchhauser (Member of the Board of the German Hearing Instruments Industry Association)**
Cello: Ida Riegels, ambassador of sound

[approx. 10:10 h] **Made-to-measure**

It is part of a very special platform, is placed directly in the ear, and is individually adapted to the respective ear - made-to-measure by the hearing experts.

The in-the-ear hearing system has comfortable Bluetooth connectivity, combined with powerful lithium ion battery technology. Racing legend Walter Röhrl already has experience with the new platform → technology - augmented by the best fitting quality provided by hearing aid acousticians.

Presenter: Sascha Haag [Signia, Hall 6, Stand 211]

[approx. 10:25 h] **Sound message**

An award-winning cellist and composer talks about her passion for sound and music, she loves pure sound and is enthusiastic about the sound innovations that modern hearing systems make possible. Sound is at the heart of everything Ida Riegels does. Without sound, there would be no music. And without music, Ida would not cycle through Europe and give cello concerts. Another topic is sound customisation through artificial intelligence, a new function in hearing systems learns continuously and dynamically - that's really smart!

Presenter: Simon Müller [Widex, Hall 6, Stand 313]

[approx. 10:40 h] **Cochlea**

Today, hearing loss or deafness can be overcome. Hearing systems are implantable! So-called cochlear implants can help when hearing systems are no longer sufficient. An industry pioneer will present this hearing solution and explain the various elements and benefits of cochlear implants and the role played by the cochlea.

Presenter: Christian Hofereiter [Med-EL, Hall 6, Stand 509]

[approx. 10:55 h] **Custom-fit**

Custom-made earmoulds in hearing aid fitting guarantee a high quality standard. The earmoulds ensure a good connection between the ear and the hearing system, optimum sound transmission, and a secure hold - because they are precisely fitted to the ears of those who wear the hearing system. How it all works and why earmoulds are a good choice for almost every user of a hearing system will be explained at stand 302.

Presenter: Matthias Hepp [Dreve, Hall 6, Stand 302]

[approx. 11:15 h] **Masquerade**

During the pandemic, face masks have become daily companions. At the same time, misunderstandings are increasing and people without hearing loss suddenly hear less. We will explain the reasons in the showroom. Product innovation highlights for 2021 will also be presented.

Presenter: Nicole Meyer; team of experts: Janina Gregori, Hörhaus Tuttlingen, and Dr. Hendrik Husstedt, Deutsches Hörgeräte Institut [Showroom, Room 15/16]

Future Friday: 17 September 2021

65th International
EUHA
Congress & Exhibition
15-17 September 2021
Hanover



Future Friday has exciting keynote lectures on the future of hearing aid acoustics and hearing technology in store. The event is set to start on Friday, 17 September 2021, at 9 a.m., at the exhibition stands. Participating exhibitors will offer insights into the future of hearing at their stands. Delegates can discover more by going to <https://www.ausstellung-euha.org/en/future-friday-2021/> in the run-up to the event.

As soon as the industry exhibition ends on Friday at 2 p.m., the special lecture programme of the Future Friday will kick off: exciting forward-looking topics will be presented in four keynotes by eminent experts. Prof. Dr. Tobias Moser has an update on the optogenetic cochlear implant. Dr. Birgitta Gabriel will be depicting "The hearing care professional of the future". Stefan Menzl is going to shed light on the future of hearing systems. Scott Peterson will introduce the new cloud-based NOAH ES opening up fresh perspectives for hearing aid acousticians to work with their customers.

Opening ceremony

Dr. Matthias Neumann, Federal Ministry of Health, Medical Devices Safety Division, Berlin

Keynote address at the opening ceremony



"Medical Device Regulation (MDR) and its importance for the healthcare trades"

The new Medical Device Regulation (MDR) has been in force in all European countries since May 2021. In the MDR, the European legislator specifies the requirements that manufacturers and distributors of medical devices must observe when manufacturing and/or dispensing medical devices. The new Medical Device Regulation further tightens the medical device legislation that has been in force in the European countries to date.

The new Medical Devices Regulation also covers products that are individually manufactured for the individual patient as so-called "custom-made products". It also applies to digital medical devices and the import of medical devices from non-European countries.

In general, the new Medical Devices Regulation is intended to further improve the quality of medical devices and increase patient safety.

This presentation will take a closer look at what the new Medical Devices Regulation means for the healthcare trades.

Ida Riegels, ambassador of sound

Ida Riegels, the cycling cellist and composer, will attend the 65th International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians. She not only gives an insight into her life for music at the opening reception. Good hearing and enjoying music are inextricably linked. There are many people who put all their heart and soul into the quest for the perfect sound. Ida Riegels, the sound ambassador for hearing aid manufacturer Widex, is one of them.

The award-winning cellist and composer became known in Germany a few years ago as a cycling cellist. When she raves about her self-made cello, her favourite composer Bach, and the effect of music, it sounds like music to the ears. The level of detail with which Ida Riegels describes sounds is unbelievable, and yet she says of herself: "Since I came into contact with Widex, I've started to be aware of the sounds in a different way, and I've realised how important hearing is for us, and how important it is how much information we get through the subtleties of sound." Both privately and professionally, she has contact with people with impaired hearing and knows how difficult conversations can be as a result. Modern hearing systems give back precisely these sound nuances and thus an inestimable quality of life.

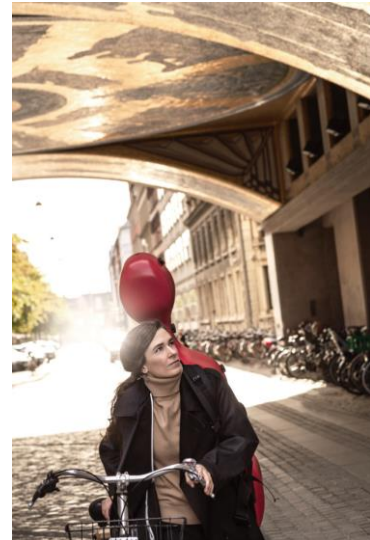


Photo: Widex

Ida Riegels' route to music

Ida Riegels grew up in a family where she had access to every conceivable instrument. But the cello became her great love. A love that even led her 400 km in the footsteps of Johann Sebastian Bach by bike in 2017.

Not being satisfied with standards is what connects Ida Riegels and the Danish hearing aid manufacturer for whom she is active as a sound ambassador. Out of curiosity, she built a tailor-made cello herself - a perfect fit for her hands, her way of playing, and her longing for the soft overtones. She shares this curiosity with the company's development engineers. She premiered her self-made cello during her concert tour in 2018, which took her 1,000 km by bike along the Rhine - from the river's source in the Swiss Alps to its mouth in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. Her credo: "Classical music is so beautiful, and I think it's a shame when it isn't there for everyone. I bring classical music to the streets, so to speak."

Ambassador of hearing, Walter Röhrl - a genius on wheels

Walter Röhrl may be the most brilliant rally driver of all time, and he cannot be stopped. Especially not from a hearing loss. As a two-time rally world champion and four-time winner of the Monte Carlo Rally, he not only has a permanent place in the history books of racing, but also in the Hall of Fame of German sport. His recipe for success: his tireless drive to get the most out of people and technology and not to compromise. This also applies to his hearing systems. He is the new Signia ambassador for good hearing.



Photo: Signia

Essential: Sound and Walter Röhrl

Walter Röhrl, who, unlike most of his competitors, never used hearing protection when driving, always listened carefully when the engine spoke to him - and discovered irregularities in the sound of his car immediately. Based on such information, his mechanics were able to carry out repairs and maintenance before a serious breakdown could occur on rallies many of which covered thousands of kilometres. "If Röhrl says he hears something, there is something to it, and you fix it immediately!" a former team boss would say to the mechanics. Walter Röhrl's hearing was always reliable, but almost 30 years after his last race, he noticed that the noisy environment and the lack of hearing protection were taking their toll.

Uncompromising: His hearing systems

A constant desire for perfection: that's what drove Walter Röhrl and still characterises him today - as a racing driver, as a sportsperson, as an individual. And hardly anyone has such high demands on technology as the long-time Porsche test driver. In the summer of 2020, when it was becoming more and more difficult for him to understand his counterparts in conversations, at press meetings, and due to the mask requirement, Walter Röhrl decided to have hearing aids fitted. After a few weeks of trying out different models, his choice fell on Signia. He now enjoys listening without compromise and the perfect balance between speech and ambient noise: thanks to the Pure Charge & Go AX hearing systems process speech and background noise separately in two processors and signal paths for the first time, thus significantly improving speech intelligibility.

Ideal: As an ambassador for good hearing

In addition to his urge for perfection, another attribute is closely linked with Walter Röhrl: credibility! What Walter Röhrl thinks is good, has shown its worth for him. Hiding one's true opinion, that doesn't suit him. Moreover, Walter Röhrl is very well known to several generations - but especially among the large target group of baby boomers. All of this makes him an ideal ambassador for good hearing. A role model that inspires people of all ages.

"I've spent my whole life in the car. And at some point you will pay the price." (Walter Röhrl)

Facts and figures

65th International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians, organised by the EUHA (European Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians), 15 to 17 September 2021, held in Hanover

- The largest specialist event in the world in our industry featuring more than 8,000 trade visitors
- 24 expert lectures, 4 tutorials, special programme for the Future Friday
- 30 lecturers from Germany and abroad
- International industry exhibition featuring 89 exhibitors from 16 countries (top five: Germany, Denmark, France, Netherlands, Italy)
- 62 percent of exhibitors from Germany, 38 percent from abroad
- Trade exhibition; gross exhibition space: ca. 15,000 sqm

Hearing impairments and hearing aid supply

- Studies show that approx. 5.4 million people living in Germany are affected by hearing deficiencies. And the trend continues upwards. Impaired hearing is among the ten most frequent health issues. Of those affected, some 3.7 million people have been fitted hearing systems. [Source: Bundesinnung der Hörakustiker (biha)]
- In Germany, the provision of hearing systems is based on contractual agreements with the public health insurance funds as well as pension insurance and employers' liability insurance associations. If hearing aids are indicated, people with impaired hearing who are insured under public health insurance plans are entitled to have hearing aids fitted, which is paid for by the relevant insurance provider. There is a wide range of hearing solutions tailored to individual needs.
- Compulsory health insurance funds pay for hearing aids up to 650 euros per hearing aid. As a rule, both ears will be fitted with hearing systems. Hearing aid provision has never been as comprehensive and inexpensive as today.
- To advise the public on ways of preserving good hearing and offering best possible care for people with impaired hearing, the BVHI, as a partner of the World Health Organisation, organises the World Hearing Day in Germany (www.welttag-des-hoerens.de). Next World Hearing Day on 3 March 2022.

- The Association for the Promotion of Good Hearing (www.fgh-info.de) regularly organises a hearing tour across Germany to provide information about good hearing, and offers the opportunity to have your own hearing ability tested.

Further trade information

- Currently, there are 7,000 dispensing shops specialising in hearing aids, with a workforce of 15,000 employees and 3,200 apprentices in Germany. [Source: Bundesinnung der Hörakustiker (biha)]
- At 20 percent, the training quota (ratio between apprentices and total number of employees) has reached a peak among German businesses. [Source: Bundesinnung der Hörakustiker (biha)]
- Compared to 151 trades, a high proportion of high-school graduates goes on to train as a hearing aid acoustician, and about half of those training as hearing aid acousticians are high-school graduates. [Source: Bundesinnung der Hörakustiker (biha)]
- In 2020, hearing aid acousticians across Germany fitted some 1.44 million new hearing systems. [Source: Bundesinnung der Hörakustiker (biha)]
- Hearing aid acousticians are members of a profession that requires formal training. Training is based on the dual system of vocational education. Moreover, academic training enables students to graduate with a Bachelor of Science or Master of Science in hearing aid acoustics degree.

Knowledge update: Hearing health and Covid-19

(Mainz, 26 August 2021) "Sorry?" In times of face masks, people frequently - and more often than usual - ask this question. The reason: the helpful virus protection suppresses spoken words by up to 10 decibels (dB) - which is enormous. Even people without hearing loss can hear less than usual.

At the beginning of the pandemic, studies were carried out on the insulating effect of different variants of facial masks. Compared to surgical masks, which attenuate sound by around 5 dB, FFP2 masks (KN95 or N95) attenuate sound by 10 dB.

As a result, special mask programs for hearing systems were developed. Hearing aid acousticians can set up the minicomputers so that the wearer can have a conversation even when wearing a mask and is able to understand speech despite keeping a distance. Modern microphone and signal processing technology as well as the know-how of hearing aid acousticians make this possible. This is also critical because the mask hides the face and is therefore not a helpful support for speech intelligibility for people with impaired hearing. Uncertainty is also increased as feelings, often reflected in facial expressions, are not immediately perceptible. Well-adjusted hearing systems can be helpful here.

Apart from this everyday phenomenon that affects many people, initial studies and analyses on the subject of hearing loss and Covid-19 are currently being carried out.

A meta study estimates that almost eight percent of people with Covid-19 may have impaired hearing. The authors suggest that more than seven percent of people affected may develop vertigo and almost 15 percent may develop tinnitus. In addition, reports indicate that people with hearing loss during the Covid-19 pandemic may experience other health consequences - these include increased stress, loneliness, depression, and an increased risk of suicide. These potential effects are suspected to be related to social distancing and wearing masks.

Acting early to stop any possible consequences is essential. If hearing loss and tinnitus are involved, these are counted among the long-term effects of Covid-19, which may have a permanent impact on quality of life. Beate Gromke, master craftswoman of hearing aid acoustics and President of the European Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians:

"Hearing aid acousticians are important counsellors on any questions about hearing. The federal government has classified this professional group as relevant to the social system. Acousticians have the technical know-how on how to adjust modern hearing systems so that speech intelligibility is possible even from a great distance."

She recommends having your hearing tested by your local hearing aid acoustician. This is a free service. Hearing loss often occurs gradually and is recognised late.

People who feel that they can no longer perceive or hear everything clearly, should have their hearing checked at an early stage.

Hearing aid acousticians from all over the world will find out more about the effects of Covid-19 on hearing and many other specialist topics at the 65th International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians, scheduled to be held from 15 to 17 September 2021 at Deutsche Messe Hannover. Twenty-four specialist lectures provide further training for acousticians to support their professional work with customers. In addition, 91 exhibitors from Germany and abroad will be showcasing their product innovations at the accompanying industry exhibition.

ⁱ Almufarri, Munro 2021

ⁱⁱ Emamzadeh, 2020



**If you wish to use the photo,
we are delighted to provide
the file upon request.**

Caption: Hearing aid
acousticians can adjust hearing
systems so that conversations
are possible, even if people
wear face masks.

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Rechnitz

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European Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians (EUHA)

With a total of some 700 members, the EUHA is the oldest professional association of hearing aid acousticians in Europe. In 1960, it was founded in Würzburg under the name of Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians (UHA), and was headed by Dr. phil. nat. Werner Pistor for 25 years. In 2004, the UHA turned into the EUHA. The reason was that, due to the increasing legislative involvement on the part of the European Union (EU), one wanted to ensure that the interests of the EUHA members are efficiently represented in the whole of Europe. As of 1 September 2016, the German job title of *Hörgeräteakustiker* was changed to *Hörakustiker*. On 19 October 2016, the General Meeting of the European Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians passed a vote in favour of adapting the name of the organisation to match the new job title, changing the German name to Europäische Union der Hörakustiker e. V.

Since 1960, the EUHA has been in charge of organising the International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians. Over the years, the event has gained international renown, and is considered the industry's most important specialist congress held in Europe. The event offers two attractions: on the one hand, the comprehensive, multifaceted, and ambitious programme of presentations given by distinguished experts, on the other hand, the trade exhibition which mirrors the current high standard of, as well as future-oriented innovations in, hearing aid fitting and technology.

EUHA's aims

The European Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians is an association for all persons working in hearing aid fitting and supply. It provides a platform for hearing aid acousticians, scientists and laymen with an interest in trade-specific and economic issues, who want to take part in specialised further education and vocational training in order to provide the best possible care for persons with impaired hearing. In doing so, the EUHA provides a platform for all those involved in the rehabilitation of hearing impaired persons and acts as a partner focused on quality. Further aims of the European Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians include the cultivation of solidarity, responsible professional principles and the professional honour, laid down in a separate Code of Honour. While the EUHA focuses on scientific work within the profession, trade-political representation for hearing aid acousticians is taken care of by the Federal Guild of Hearing Aid Acousticians (Bundesinnung der Hörakustiker KdÖR).

Further activities of the EUHA

Encouraged by the EUHA, hearing aid acousticians and academics cooperate on national and international levels. A vivid exchange of information on an advanced professional level forms the basis for keeping EUHA members up-to-date on the latest developments in Germany and abroad.

Regional meetings, seminars and conferences are focused on practical information and technical knowledge. Moreover, business issues and other concerns from the field of hearing aid acoustics can be discussed here.

The EUHA cooperates with the Association for the Promotion of Good Hearing (FGH), an association in charge of doing PR work for our line of business, and sharing information on

hearing, across Germany. The EUHA has close relations with the Research Association of German Hearing Aid Acousticians (FDHA). The awards ceremony for the Sponsorship Award of the FDHA Foundation is part of the International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians. Since 2010, the EUHA has presented an annual EUHA Sponsorship Award for young talents in hearing aid acoustics; since 2014, the EUHA has sponsored the European Phoniatics EUHA Hearing Award for phoniaticians awarded biannually.

President of the EUHA: Beate Gromke, Leipzig

Eva Keil-Becker, Vice President, Koblenz

Jürgen Matthies, Vice President and Treasurer, Nienburg

Tom Aerts, Member of the Executive Committee, Herentals, Belgium

Dirk Köttgen, Member of the Executive Committee, Cologne

Werner Köttgen, Chairman of the Council of Honour, Cologne

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The German Hearing Instruments Industry Association (www.bvhi.org) represents the manufacturers that produce medical hearing systems and that operate in the German market. It is responsible for the communication on topics related to hearing technology as well as the prevention and care of hearing loss. The BVHI operates www.ihr-hoergeraet.de, the largest online portal on hearing healthcare and the supply of hearing systems in Germany. Collaborating with the World Health Organisation, the BVHI organises the World Hearing Day on 3 March every year (www.welttag-des-hoerens.de).

The BVHI is also in charge of organising the world's largest industry exhibition showcasing hearing technology as part of the International Congress of Hearing Aid Acousticians held by the European Union of Hearing Aid Acousticians (EUHA) every year.

Chairman of the Board of the German Hearing Instruments Industry Association:

Dr Stefan Zimmer

BVHI member companies:

Audia Akustik GmbH, Sömmerda
Audio Service GmbH, Löhne
Bernafon Hörgeräte GmbH, Berlin
Hansaton Akustik GmbH [Sonova Deutschland GmbH], Fellbach-Oeffingen
Interton [GN Hearing GmbH], Münster
MED-EL Elektromedizinische Geräte Deutschland GmbH, Starnberg
Oticon GmbH, Hamburg
Phonak [Sonova Deutschland GmbH], Fellbach-Oeffingen
ReSound [GN Hearing GmbH], Münster
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