

30 April 2014

International Noise Awareness Day

Message from the President of EAA

Prof. Michael Taroudakis

On the 30th of April 2014 the Noise Awareness Day (INAD 2014) was celebrated worldwide. The aim of the day is to raise public awareness about noise and its risks. Scientists dealing with acoustics and medicine are sounding the alarm about the effects of prolonged human exposure to all kinds of noise. In this context, numerous professional associations around the globe organize special workshops and seminars in order to inform the public about the problems that the noise brings to human life.

As demonstrated by the studies of the World Health Organization noise comes second (after air pollution) in the classification of environmental risks to health. According to the research conducted, exposure to noise is an insidious process of which the immediate and long-term consequences are neither visible nor identifiable, but systematically undermine health and affect the expected duration of life. The sustained and long-term exposure of people in noisy environments causes severe cardiological problems, temporary or permanent hearing damage, discomfort, sleep disorders and learning problems. Especially with regard to children, exposure to noise during the critical school years brings damage on memory and on their educational performance. But beyond the dangers of hearing loss, noise causes a variety of psychological disorders.

The European Acoustics Association being very sensitive to environmental problems has adopted the celebration of the International Noise Awareness Day (INAD) as an important opportunity to encourage the National Societies to become more active in their interaction with the people informing them of the risks of exposure to noise and the authorities, asking them to keep applying noise measures following the EC regulations on noise control or even applying more severe rules in the sensitive urban areas. Of particular importance are the educational activities addressed to the young people, as the awareness about noise risks is well built among the youth. Besides the traditional speeches, workshops and press releases, new tools such as interactive computer games and similar multimedia applications have been developed and have become available to young children, who, as we know, are familiar with all new information tools which have direct impact on their way of thinking or behaving. It is very important to help in the raising of a new generation of citizens who will avoid creating noise themselves but will also demand a quiet environment and a soundscape friendly to human life. Among the National Acoustical Societies of EAA, the Spanish (SEA) the German (DEGA) the Italian (AIA) and the Greek (HELINA) have informed us on their specific activities for INAD 2014. If other Societies have also been active in this context, please send us the relevant information which will be presented in the next edition of our newsletter.

One of the goals of EAA with respect to noise awareness day is the organization of a Paneuropean event in one the next years (2016 or 2017) which will bring together European and National authorities as well scientists and public to discuss about noise problems in a way conceivable by a great audience. We are aiming at a global broadcasting of this event using the media available at that time.

It is an obligation of the acousticians to help in the creation of conditions for the generation of lower level noise from all its human related sources and the development of measures leading to less exposure to noise. Let's hope that with all our efforts the new European generations will live in a quieter environment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Taroudakis', is written over a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp or watermark.

Prof. Michael Taroudakis
President of the EAA