



The “Sound of my place” experience in the frame of the International Noise Awareness Day

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ABSTRACT

In 2017 the International Noise Awareness Day (INAD) was celebrated in Europe by EAA and National Acoustic Societies that joined the successful INAD IN EUROPE campaign, aimed to promote the awareness on noise exposure problems related to environmental issues as well as occupational and everyday life ones. EAA coordinated a Pan-European competition among European schools, involving pupils and students in the production of original audio, video, drawings and texts on the subject “Sounds of my place”.

In the frame of INAD 2018, EAA has produced a short film containing a selection of materials sent by European primary and high schools that have participated at the Pan European Competition.

The film describes the INAD activities and reports the interviews by EAA INAD IN EUROPE Steering Committee and EAA board on INAD-organization, focusing the importance to protect and to preserve the soundscapes of our living environment.

The film has been distributed in European schools during 2018-2019 school year and in the frame of INAD 2019 campaign.

In this paper the film is presented by the authors in its different contents and its backstage.

Keywords: Awareness, INAD, Communication, School, Noise exposure, Annoyance

I-INCE Classification of Subject Number: 07

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1. INTRODUCTION

Every year, around the end of April, the EAA supports INAD, the “International Noise Awareness Day” promoted by The Center for Hearing and Communication.

The National Societies of Acoustics organize several activities on noise awareness and other acoustic issues, involving many schools around Europe, in cooperation with Institutions, Scientific Associations, Experts and Teachers.

In 2017, the European Acoustic Association decided to organize a special edition of Noise Awareness Day: “Inad in Europe”.

The theme was “Sounds of my place”, aimed to identify the sounds that represents the identity of a place. The objective was to make young people aware about the importance of living in an environment free from unwanted noise but, at the same time, characterized by sounds that represent the identity of the places.

INAD in Europe considered the implementation of the following initiatives:

- development of a website dedicated to INAD 2017, used as the focal point for the dissemination of the information about the events;
- collection and condision on EAA Documenta Acustica, the literature information product of EAA, of the materials produced by European pupils and students of the involved schools;
- development of a power-point presentation, showed in conferences, workshops and other events organized by EAA or by national societies of acoustics;
- organization of two Pan-european competitions for students of primary and secondary schools, where students, groups of students or classrooms were asked to produce drawings, audio and video describing the sounds of their places;
- production and distribution of the video-cartoon “Noisella in the sound space”[1];
- participation at the conference “Noise in Europe”, organized by the DG Environment of the European Commission, held in Brussels on 24 April 2017.

2. THE SOUNDS OF MY PLACE DOCUMENTARY

In 2018 as a follow up of INAD in Europe initiative, the European Acoustics Association produced the film “Sounds of my place” [2], supported by Head Genuit Foundation, as a documentary film describing some of the INAD 2017 activities.



Figure 1 – Film “Sounds of my place”

The storyboard of the film is composed of various elements: informative and educational materials, contributions from European pupils and students and short comments and tips given by experts in Acoustics from EU Commission and EAA.

The main focus is on a selection of contribution sent by pupils and students to the pan European competition of 2017. In particular most of the winners in the different categories are shown.

Hereafter, some of the texts and comments by experts are reported.

3. THE FILM “SOUNDS OF MY PLACE”

The Environmental Noise Directive (END) defines the environmental noise as unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities, including noise emitted by means of transport, road traffic, rail traffic, air traffic and industrial activities. Another possible definition of noise is *sound out of place*. In the places where we live, man-made elements and their sounds play a decisive and discriminating role. Our places and their landscapes are made of noisy buildings, noisy infrastructures together with quiet areas.

In our everyday life we are so much immerse in a huge variety of sounds, often heard unconsciously. They are “the soundtrack of our life”. Sounds and soundscapes are a part of the identity of the places where we live, work, study and have fun.

The large variety of soundscapes, let say the “sonic diversity” as transposition of the biodiversity concept, is also a sign of social and cultural identity to be preserved.

From this idea, a nominated EAA-INAD Steering Committee (including the EAA President, vice presidents, past-president and other members of the executive council) decided to coordinate a Pan-European competition among pupils and students of European schools.

Students were invited to produce original audio, video, drawings and texts.

More than 2000 students from primary and secondary schools of 24 countries were involved, coordinated by the National Representatives of European Societies of Acoustics. 23 videos and 19 drawings were selected as national winners by a jury of expert and a popular vote based on facebook “likes”.

The film reports some short interviews made to the EAA INAD IN EUROPE Steering Committee and EAA board, focusing on the importance to protect and to preserve the soundscapes of our living environment.



Figure 1 – Contributes by Acoustics experts for INAD film

Soundscape is any acoustic environment that is surrounding us and this means we have very many soundscapes that are different from each other and people look the soundscapes from different point of view.

The students' works show natural environments with their own sounds, like those from animals, water streams and sea waves, bird twittering, as well as anthropic sounds at schools, markets, and so forth.



Figure 2 – Contributions by students for INAD film

In urban areas traffic noise is one of the most cited noise, as it is becoming the soundmark of our crowded cities. This negative situation is clearly reported in the drawings and videos done by the students, from primary to secondary schools, who enthusiastically participated at INAD 2017.

The high quality and the originality of the students' works were impressive and it is reasonable that their awareness of noise pollution will encourage less noisy behaviours of people, necessary for preserving and recovering a more sustainable sonic environment, which promotes our health and well being.

In the film 42 national winning materials are shown, in addition to other disseminating materials collected during past editions of INAD.

The film also presents a brief summary of the topics discussed in the Conference "Noise in Europe" [3], organized under the coordination of the DG Environment of the European Commission, held in Brussels (headquarters of the EC) on 24 April 2017, in which invited speakers stressed out the importance of updating the European legislation and presented new findings on health problems due to noise.

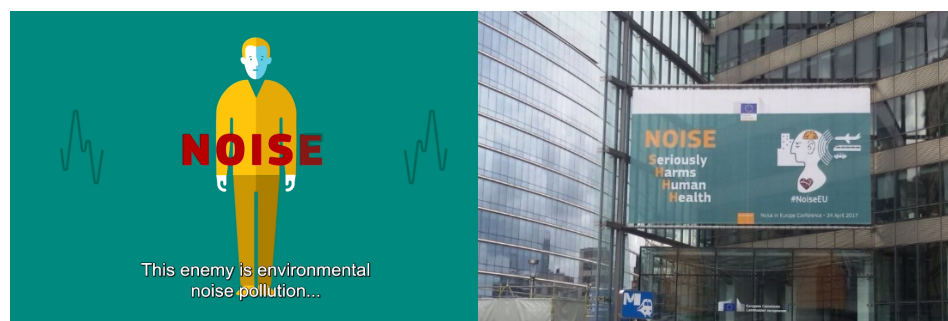


Figure 3 – Conference “Noise in Europe”, Brussels, 24 April 2017

The film reports some frames by the video-cartoon “Noisella in the sound space” [1] produced and distributed in all the European schools involved in INAD in EUROPE initiative.

The film “Sounds of my place” is distributed in the European schools during INAD 2019 initiative and it is available on YouTube [2].

4. CONCLUSION

The International Noise Awareness Day (INAD) is an event conceived and organized for the first time in 1995 by the Center for Hearing and Communication in the USA, to promote awareness of the dangers of long-term noise exposure and to counteract its effects both on hearing and, more generally, on people's health.

Every year the event involves schools and institutions in many countries of the world and involves various National Acoustic Societies, benefiting from the support of the EAA.

The INAD gives the opportunity to introduce children and young people to problems related to excessive exposure to noise and to educate in listening to sounds and soundscapes, shared with schools around the world.

In 2017 a special edition of INAD, called “INAD in Europe” was organized by EAA and European national societies of acoustics and in 2018 the documentary film “Sounds of my place”, supported by Head Genuit Foundation, was produced by EAA: its contents, interviews and selected materials collected during the “INAD in Europe” are show in this paper.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors thank all the EAA INAD IN EUROPE Steering Committee, the EAA board, the DG Environment of the European Commission, the INAD working group and the students and teachers who have participated at the competition.

6. REFERENCES

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