

ICEVI European Newsletter

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The President's Message

Dear members and non-members of ICEVI-Europe

This is the first newsletter of ICEVI-Europe in 2018. I hope you will read it with pleasure. In the last one, I informed you about the evaluation of the 2017 European conference in Bruges, Belgium and our board meeting in Helsinki.

I can mention you now we have had recently a board meeting in Birmingham, UK. Some of our issues of our plans of action are becoming more concrete.

Prior to the board meeting, the program committee of the tenth ICEVI-European conference has had their first meeting. The President of the host committee of Israel, Tomer Rosner, is one of the members. We discussed the place and venue of the conference, the theme and many organisation issues. Probably the conference will be in Jerusalem in 2021.

This year, there will be a regional conference of East European countries in Saratov, Russia. Soon, there will be more information on our website. In preparation, there is a conference of Balkan countries in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Consultation is underway about the conference for German speaking countries. This will be a conference of VBS in 2020 in Marburg, Germany and ICEVI-Europe will be participating, once again, as a European Co-Operation Partner.

In the coming year, there will also be conferences of the ICEVI-Europe professional interest groups, particularly of the group Teaching and Teacher training. The theme will be mathematics. The second professional group concerns Rehabilitation.

Also, our website will be changed, so that it has a new structure and content with a modern graphical design and information is easier accessible. The website will be accessible as well for persons with visual impairment. Our webmaster did a great job.

All activities of ICEVI are only useful when these contribute to the quality of life of people with visual impairment and their full participation in the society.

Recently, the Election Commission of India organized a workshop on inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in electoral process. The Election Commission has already issued guidelines that all ballot paper should be made available on all polling in braille as well. India is planning to produce 700.000 ballot papers in braille in the forthcoming elections to be held during 2019. The President of West Asia, Bhushan Punani was one of the speakers in the workshop.

Recently, there were local elections in the Netherlands. The local authorities of The Hague introduced digital facilities for people with visual impairment.

Both issues are nice examples of implementation of the CRPD. A society for all.

We encourage you to use the website of ICEVI-Europe. You can find the most actual information there. We continue to welcome your valuable contributions for publication in the issues of our European Newsletter. Please send articles, identifying any special events, news, projects, activities, scientific work or good practices undertaken by your organization in your country in the field of visual impairment to the Coordinator of our European Newsletter, Andrea Hathazi, at ahathazi@yahoo.com.

I wish you a nice summertime and hope we will meet in one of the conferences in the coming time.

On behalf of the Board of ICEVI-Europe,

Hans Welling
President



The Israeli Knesset approved the regulations on accessibility to education

By **Yael Weisz-Rind**, Director and **Guila Seidel**, Chair of Ofek Liyladenu

After years of deliberations, the Welfare and Social Services Committee of the Knesset, the Israeli Parliament, approved on January 17th 2018, the 'Accessibility in Education Regulations'. This was the last stage of the legislation process of the 'Equal Rights for Persons with Disabilities Law 1999-5748'. The regulations define a system of accessibility arrangements to education for people with disabilities, and were a product of a long-term joint effort by parliamentarians, disability rights organisations, parents' organisations, educators, experts and government officials.

Ofek Liyladenu, Israel National Association of Parents of Children with Visual Impairments played a key role in the process. The organization took the lead on voicing the needs of children and parents with visual impairments and ensuring integration of all their accessibility requirements into the regulations. The legislation is a milestone in the promotion of rights of people with disabilities in Israel. It regulates responsibilities of service providers and clarifies the enforcement and supervision powers by the relevant authorities. For example, now the Commission for Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the Ministry of Justice can bring to court municipalities that fail to provide services at their local schools.

Among the many issues, the regulations cover school admission procedures and places an obligation on schools to meet the needs of children with VI in areas such as the provision of school books and materials in an accessible format, the lighting and shading of playgrounds and classrooms, marking of paths and the removal of obstacles, appropriate storage and wiring for technical equipment etc. Furthermore, the regulations provide detail on the institution's obligation to ensure the accessibility of school activities, outdoor trips, as well as training and guidance for staff in all aspects of the educational work.



At the center: MK Ilan Gilon, Chair of the sub-committee of the Welfare and Social Service Committee in The Knesset holds the approved regulations.

It is important to note that the regulations address also the needs of parents with disability and their accessibility requirements.

We are proud of this achievement and hope that the implementation of the regulation will bring a new era for our children.

Rehabilitation using yoga elements

Martina Sedlar, mag.rehab.educ.

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Rehabilitation using yoga elements is one of the specific educational rehabilitational and therapeutic activities in Day Care Center Mali dom-Zagreb. Goal of using the elements of yoga in rehabilitation for children with MDVI is (a) giving a better motor response, which is manifested by coming into a position with instruction, by increasing the level of participation in transfers and by encouraging the independence in coming into a certain position, (b) establishing a better self-regulation, (c) extension of period of focused attention by holding a position and, in the end, (d) transferring learned skills on to child's daily living. Activity goals for every child are accordant with the goals in his Individualized Educational Plan. In Mali dom, this form of rehabilitation is carried out by a special education teacher and the activity is individually performed in 30 to 45 minute sessions, depending of child's

developmental stage. Activity is performed on a yoga mat, usually without using any props.



Program consists of five yoga elements (chanting, breathing exercises, eye exercises, yoga poses, relaxation), which are performed always in the same order to ensure anticipation and learning of sequence of steps.

Chanting (vocalization) is the first step that ensures the child to become aware of himself, here and now. Special educational teacher and child are chanting together, thus encouraging turn taking and development of responsiveness in communication. Chanting is combined with hand movements and combinations of sound. Repeating of some sound patterns has a calming effect on the child. After this step, eye exercises are performed, but only with children with functional vision. Movements are done in all four directions (clockwise and counterclockwise). Learning how to increase the capacity with deep abdominal breathing when specific breathing exercises are performed, correlates with an increase of vital energy flow towards different organs in our body. Nostril breathing is encouraged during the whole activity, due to constant mouth breathing seen in many children with multiple disabilities.



Yoga postures are special postures of the body which are both durable and comfortable at the same time. During practice the focus is on the body. The biggest benefit of practicing these postures comes from complete relaxation in the positions. The postures are done in the positions which the child can perform with assistance (standing, sitting, lying prone and laying supine) and are always done in the same sequence. It is important that the body moves in all anatomical planes and axis during the séance. After performing all the postures, child relaxes lying on the mat while listening to relaxing music, is receiving a massage or lying in silence.



Progress of children with disabilities in yoga practice is assessed through four stages. In the beginning an assessment of functioning level is made to determine appropriate program to which a child can be included. Preparatory stage (typically corresponds to developmental period from birth to six months) consists of 11 exercises conducted to prepare a child to practicing yoga postures. In this stage, a child is completely passive during a séance and is absorbing benefits, without any noticeable response. Inductive stage (6 months to 1 year) contains many of the same exercises as in the previous stage, with some basic yoga postures that are relatively easy to perform. In this stage, a child learns to react with flexion and extension in accordance to guided movement from the therapist. Interactive stage (1 to 2 years) begins when a child learns to participate in many different movements and postures. The need for assistance is then reduced. Imitative stage (2 to 3 years) is the one in which motor and cognitive abilities enable a child to stand and walk

without any assistance and to imitate others' movements. The child starts to practice yoga postures and breathing exercises with the minimum of support.

A child that hasn't yet gained basic motor skills (for example during early childhood, in a child with the dysfunction of nervous system, a child with high hypertonia or hypotonia, like children with Down syndrome or cerebral palsy), starts to practice yoga using exercises from the preparatory stage. A child who is already showing some sort of self-body awareness and can minimally participate during initial assessment can start from inductive stage. If there are doubts with which program a child can start, the best option is always to involve him in a less challenging program.

School readiness for children who are blind or severely visually impaired: Assessing skills and support needs

By **Elina Annikki Lehtinen**, elina.lehtinen@valteri.fi
University of Jyväskylä, Department of Psychology

Using a qualitative research approach, a method has been developed to evaluate and monitor the skills and support needs of blind or severely visually impaired children at the pre-school stage. The method takes key characteristics in the development of blind or severely visually impaired children into account. The method is named SoLa (in Finnish: Sokeat - means blind and Lapset - means children).

To develop the method, a review of literature was undertaken on the development of blind or severely visually impaired children, an analysis was made of assessment tools used with pre-school-aged children in Finland and ideas were taken from a focus group of specialist teachers working with visually impaired children. In addition, when developing the method, my personal experience in assessment, evaluation and rehabilitation work was utilized.

The special characteristics in the development of blind or severely visually impaired children that emerged from the literature review included factors related to gaining information, interaction, the development of motor coordination and orientation, independence and daily living skills. Other key factors identified in the literature related to differences in reading and writing and basic numeracy. Key areas of effective intervention included the use of auditory and tactile senses, professional guidance, allowing additional time for information processing and management, and plentiful training in key skills.

The SoLa form, developed during the research is designed to evaluate the needs of blind or severely visually impaired children and to capture information so that it can be transferred when a child is moving from pre-school to school

(in Finland normally at seven years age). It can be used both by the pre-school education staff and others working with children. To improve the usability of the SoLa form, a manual will be drawn up containing advice on the assessment of a blind or severely visually impaired pre-school-aged child's skills and needs.

[The full report is available in Finnish.](#)

TURN AROUND - a successful continuation school for students with visual impairment

By **Berit Houmølle**, Deputy Head & Bendt Nygaard Jensen, Knowledge Consultant, Synscenter Refsnaes – the National Resource and Knowledge Centre for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment
(www.synref.dk)

At the Synscenter Refsnaes - the National Resource and Knowledge Centre for Children and Young People with Visual Impairment, we provide an organized continuation school ("efterskole") for students with visual impairment. The main aim is to support the students' prerequisites for being included in the mainstream youth education environment.

The Danish school system consists of municipal primary and lower secondary schools, private primary and lower secondary schools and independent secondary schools called continuation schools ("efterskole").

The "efterskole" is a uniquely Danish model – it's an independent boarding school for students aged 14 to 18. Presently there are approximately 250 such schools throughout Denmark attended by some 28.500 students.

At continuation schools students attend classes and live at the school for 1 or 2 years and take the leaving examination. Although parents have to pay for their child, it is common to use this type of school.

Our continuation school is funded by the local municipal authority where the student lives and local authority representatives are always encouraged to visit.

We offer:

- Teaching according to the Public Schools Act
- Accessible teaching materials
- Laptops with adaptive software
- iPads
- Accommodation (meals and lodging)

- Activities of Daily Living (ADL) and mobility as an integral part of everyday life
- Differentiated homework
- A Leaving examination

Our expectations of the student during lessons include:

- Active participation in lessons and social activities
- Good preparation and organisation (homework done, sports clothing ready, equipment charged etc.)
- Being open to new opportunities and new challenges

During leisure periods at the continuation school the focus is on the development of competences including:

- Self-confidence and self-advocacy
- Practical skills
- Social skills and relations

Competence development is supported by:

- Activities of Daily Living (ADL) that support inclusion include:
 - Cooking – we have a fixed day for preparing food
 - Dining – taking meals with other students
 - Cleaning - every week
 - Laundry - fixed weekday
- Mobility in everyday life
 - Activities at Synscenter Refsnaes include:
Music, goalball, swimming, running, fitness room, mobility course, outdoor activities (shelter, bonfire, beach, forest), a night orienteering race, orientation and mobility courses, following traditional activities related to festive national or local days of celebrations and anniversaries
- Social participation in everyday life
 - Activities in the local community including:
Electronic shooting, city tours, youth school, horse riding, cultural events etc.

Cooperation with Parents

Dialogue and cooperation between parents, teachers and educators is a very important part of the continuation school. All parents are allowed access to the

diary System (through a Parental Intranet), which includes written information and dialogue. The continuation school also posts newsletters/announcements on Facebook.

We are available by mail and phone. We expect the parents to contact us as needed, just as we contact the parents if there are any special situations.

Results and observations from four years of the continuation school

- Some students improve 1-3 years in a single school year
- A short turn around for most of the students makes it possible for them to continue in mainstream education programs instead moving to specialist settings
- Increased independence in accessing information (through the internet, documents, books and other media) and in managing the adaptive technologies that offer enhanced accessibility. This supports the development of the skills that students require for inclusion and participation in the mainstream secondary education environment.
- The goals we set out are achieved, and the Local authority representatives are pleased with the result of their visits
- Reports indicate that students' personal development is much improved
- Students often find social development as the greatest challenge

At the Synscenter Refsnaes we are constantly seeking to develop our continuation school for students with visual impairment in close dialogue with our students, their parents, our staff and the municipalities.

PRECIVIM – a new European Erasmus+ Project

By **Dr Vassilis Argyropoulos**, University of Thessaly, Greece

The European project titled "Promoting Effective Communication for Individuals with a Vision Impairment and Multiple Disabilities – PrECIVIM" has been approved by the EU (Project Number: 2017-1-EL01-KA201-036289) and comes under the Erasmus+ programme (Key Action 2: Co-operation for Innovation and the Exchange of Good Practices).

The aim of this project is to develop a screening inventory of the communicative profile and potential of MDVI students, using direct observation and adapted materials. It is expected that the screening inventory will highlight the difficulties and the unique challenges faced by the students in their efforts to respond to their wider physical and social environment. The difficulties that each child experiences will inform the planning and the

application of a child-centred intervention based on the implementation of methods and material adapted to the individual. This project will produce resources for educational teams who are responsible for developing appropriate adaptations and strategies for children with MDVI.

The project will be implemented through an outstanding collaboration of researchers and practitioners who have both shared interests and a unique mix of skills and experience, both inside and outside academia, regarding people with multiple disabilities and visual impairment (MDVI).

The Consortium consists of 10 major organizations in 5 European countries (one is considered as an associated partner). The members of the PrECIVIM project are the following: The University of Thessaly (Greece, Coordinating Organization), The University of Babes Bolyai (Romania), University of Roehampton (United Kingdom), St Barnabas School for the Blind (Cyprus), The Special School For the Deafblind (Greece), Liceul Special pentru Deficienti de Vedere Cluj-Napoca (Romania), Whitefield Academy Trust (United Kingdom), AMIMONI (Greece) and an IT company (DATABANK). The EBU (associated partner) will act as a European channel for disseminating the outcomes of the PrECIVIM project.

The objectives of the project are briefly described as follows:

- a. The development of a situational analysis – a scoping exercise that identifies and addresses the special needs and challenges that arise from the current situation of students with MDVI (Intellectual Output O1).
- b. The development of relevant training material which will be based on a common corpus consisting of: a. Situation Analysis (scoping), b. relevant Conventions and Acts which are pertinent to people with MDVI, and c. the characteristics, abilities and special needs of persons with disabilities (Intellectual Output O3).
- c. The design and development of the IT support platform, which will enable dissemination of public information and it will also act as a central point for partners' collaboration throughout the project's life, enabling information exchange (Intellectual Output O2).
- d. The conduction of training events.
- e. The implementation phase. This phase will include the procedures that the trainers will follow and the methods that they will use in collaboration with the participants (teachers, support staff, etc.) to identify the needs of each student with MDVI. The areas addressed will include programming, implementing the communication screening tool and developing differentiated and accessible material to improve communication and education for each student with MDVI.
- f. Dissemination of the results through the project's website, the policy guidelines and recommendations (Intellectual Output O7), as well

announcements through events and academic papers (Intellectual Output O6), and

g. The development of a guide of best practices (Intellectual Output O5)

At present the consortium is working on IO1 and based on this outcome will then focus on the design and development of the training material.

Establishing a Centre of Expertise for holistic support to blind and partially sighted children and youth, and children and young people with special educational needs

By **Nina Čelešnik Kozamernik**, MSc, Centre IRIS, Ljubljana, Slovenia



Centre IRIS – Centre for Education, Rehabilitation, Inclusion and Counselling for the Blind and Partially Sighted will run a project (from 2017 to 2020) titled Centre of Expertise for holistic support to blind and partially sighted children and youth, and children and youth with special educational needs, funded by the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Slovenia and the European Union, European Social Fund.

The project is designed to identify the additional elements required to enhance the activities already provided at the Centre. Their outcomes will have an impact on the independence, social inclusion and the health of blind and partially sighted children and young people with additional needs and their families, and will provide a better understanding of blindness in the whole environment.

The project will also involve children and young people with other special educational needs and their families. It will impact on professionals working in kindergartens, schools and other institutions, potential employers, and the wider community.

The project activities are divided in 4 sections: overall assessment, the extended curriculum, consulting and education and the professional centre.

Activities are precisely planned and cover the period from birth to the entry into the labour market.

Why is this project needed?

Persons with visual impairment need comprehensive support throughout their lifetime. Blindness and visual impairment are sensory conditions that affect the development of communication, movement and socialisation skills. Children and adolescents with associated disabilities (eg deafness, autism, learning difficulties) have even greater needs. For children and young people with visual impairment and their families, regular and well organised support is necessary from birth on in order to maximize the overall development of the child and to empower the family. Teachers, professionals, employers and the whole social environment around the child and young person also need advice and support.

Services offered by the Centre of Expertise

Within the project, various activities will be carried out, including

- professional counselling for children, adolescents and parents;
- multidisciplinary pedagogical assessments and individualized programs;
- activities to help individuals and families manage visual impairment;
- advice about adaptations of the environment (school, home, work, the wider environment);
- developing compensatory skills to overcome barriers;
- developing the communication skills of children and adolescents;
- advising on the selection, use and maintenance of personalized adaptive equipment
- planning and participating in leisure and recreational activities
- providing practical training and vocational preparation
- providing additional technical assistance for children and adolescents with special educational needs (eg computer courses, courses for developing reading skills; organisation skills, camps)
- residential schools for parents
- training for professionals on assessments and report writing

Areas of activities of the Centre of Expertise

The project will enable the Centre of Expertise to extend its support for parents of visually impaired children and young people in hospitals and health clinics, kindergartens, schools, specialist centres and at home. It will also be able to offer counselling and education for parents, professional staff and other interested public bodies on the organization of lessons, preparation of teaching materials, social inclusion, choice of learning materials and equipment, planning of activities, the development, production and hiring of teaching

equipment , tactile books, maps etc. The centre will facilitate the loan and hiring of computers and optical equipment, access to adapted materials and other teaching/education resources and public information programmes about the special needs of people with visual impairment.

Sustainability of the results

The project is designed to provide the basis for a systematic reorganisation of the Iris Centre to enable it to offer holistic support to blind and partially sighted children and young, as well as to children and adolescents with other special educational needs, and enables the sustainability of these services even after the project is completed.

Contact details:

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Project manager: Katjuša Koprivnikar, Director of Centre IRIS

Coordinator: mag. Nina Čelešnik Kozamernik

Slovak Youth Experiencing YALTA

By **Tímea Hóková**, Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union

YALTA - this exotic-sounding name is not just a tourist destination, but also the title of an international project funded by the Erasmus+ Program. The Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union (UNSS) together with the Slovenian Association of Disabled Students (DSIS) and the Platform of Volunteer Centres and Organizations (PDCO) were partners in the YALTA (Youth Activation – Long Term Ambition) project which ran from September 2015 until December 2017. Its main goal was to motivate blind and partially sighted young people to their increase their own social activity and civic engagement.

The project aimed to tackle the isolation and passivity experienced by many blind and partially sighted youngsters through a cycle of targeted educational activities. We attempted to familiarize young people with and without visual impairment with various topical issues and key skills such as project management, leadership skills and working with peer groups. We also focused on training social workers from UNSS in conducting youth work with mixed groups, offering mentoring and coordinating volunteers. We offered activities for young people such as a beauty workshops, discussions and escape room activities.

Want to find out more? The lessons and learning relating to youth support are contained in two YALTA toolkits designed for young leaders and youth workers.

The toolkits cover the following topics:

Toolkit for Youth Workers:

- Specific needs of people with visual impairment (VI);
- Mentoring/support for young people;
- Inclusive volunteering;
- Accessing information for VI;
- Assistive technology & compensatory aids;
- Accessibility of environments

Toolkit for Young Leaders:

- Youth work methods
- Coordination of volunteers
- Team work
- Project coordination

- Leadership competences
- Self-advocacy
- Adapting games

[The toolkits \(print and accessible versions\), as well as full details of the YALTA project can be found on Yalta webpage.](#)

Contact Person:

Tímea Hóková, Slovak Blind and Partially Sighted Union (hokova@unss.sk)

Nature for All

By **Evan Barnard**

Nature for All is an organization dedicated to connecting people who are visually impaired or have other disabilities with outdoor opportunities and to promoting the development of inclusive and sustainable cities worldwide. [Nature for All's main website](#) is dedicated to promoting sports opportunities for people with disabilities. It lists opportunities for people to engage in sports activities at recreational, team, national, or Paralympic levels, and contains contact information for over 20 different types of adaptive sports. It has links to national sports organisations from over 100 countries for people with visual impairments and other physical disabilities.

An important part of Nature for All's work has been the establishment of the website [Nature for the Blind](#), which has a directory of over 200 braille nature trails and sensory gardens in 37 countries so people who are visually impaired or have other disabilities can enjoy nature experiences near where they live. The website also contains information on educational resources, sports, assistive technology, travel opportunities, and more. In its first year, the website was visited by viewers in 58 countries and translated into 47 languages with over 10,000 page views. CNN's Great Big Story created a short film about Nature for All, which has already been viewed online worldwide over 250,000 times. [Please watch and share this story - Braille Trails: Helping the Visually Impaired Experience Nature.](#)

[Nature for All also has a Facebook page](#), which features links to nature opportunities, sports, articles about education programs and adaptive technology, and stories about successful people and programs. Please assist these efforts by liking, following and sharing our Facebook page.

Promoting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals for inclusive and sustainable community development, Nature for All was one of 50 youth-led projects internationally featured in the [UN's inaugural Youth Solutions Report](#) (page 55). The UN's commitment to creating inclusive communities and providing more opportunities for people with disabilities to experience the outdoors is phenomenal for people around the world who have disabilities and

those who work to support them. Nature for All has recently been accepted as one of the UN's Sustainable Development Solutions Network youth partner organizations and will continue to advocate for inclusive opportunities for people with disabilities around the world.

As community partners, I would greatly appreciate if members of ICEVI could share this information with their contacts and support our website and Facebook page. I would also love for you to share any information you may have on sports, braille trails, sensory gardens, schools and summer camps, new technology, and especially cities that are making efforts to provide accessible outdoor opportunities and inclusive community design for people with disabilities, I will continue to work towards supporting worldwide efforts to provide these opportunities.

Evan Barnard

Founder and President of Nature for All

News from Denmark

The Danish Pre-Employment Program (PEP)

The Pre-employment Program developed by Karen Wolffe Ph.D. has been widely used across a range of English speaking countries with good results. IBOS and the social development company 'All Ears A/S' have decided to adapt the PEP material to the Danish language and systems. On May the 2nd 2018 IBOS will offer the first free trial run of the adapted PEP to job seeking adults with a visual impairment. Interested persons are already being screened for job readiness at interviews. In 2019 three new PEP rounds will be offered around the country.

The PEP program consists of 15 one-day modules specially designed for people with visual impairment. The idea is that participants go to work, except that their job in PEP is to prepare themselves to look for work. Clients learn to analyse their employment goals and competencies and are helped to find out which companies have the jobs that interest them. Skills taught include matching jobs to your abilities, how and when to disclose your disability to an employer, understanding the expectations at a workplace, building a job seekers portfolio, managing a job interview and getting feedback etc.

The purpose of the program is to boost the participants' own capacity to find themselves a job, so that the number of people with a vision impairment included in the labour market and earning an independent income will increase.

The project has been funded by STAR and will be evaluated in 2020.

[For more info on PEP in Danish.](#)

Contact Person: PEP Project Manager: Dorthe Marie Degn, Development and Project Consultant, IBOS, ab8e@sof.kk.dk

Researching the effects of Neuro Technology Training

IBOS is the only organisation in Scandinavia offering a dynamic Neuro Vision Training (NVT) to persons with brain damage - often stroke related - that has affected their vision. In 2017 A research protocol was agreed with Herlev University Hospital and external reviewers to measure the effects of NVT and the Ethics Committee has accepted the research design. Currently five persons have been referred from hospitals to take tests to see if they pass the researchers' exclusion criteria.

Danish Eye Doctors have recently expressed an interest in participating as partners if we can also set up a control group. We are currently considering these possibilities, as although it would prolong the project and require more funding, it would also make the results more interesting.

Contact Person and Project Manager at IBOS: Anne Marie H. Schaarup, Occupational Therapist and Team Manager, ab7n@sof.kk.dk

New EBU Report on Braille

An EBU expert group has considered the importance of Braille literacy and current barriers (technical, financial, psychological, etc.) to its development, in particular for young persons. This resulted in a final report detailing the results of the work carried out over a two-year period, and led by EBU's member in Denmark, DAB (Danish Association of the Blind).

[Link to the EBU Report.](#)

Invitation to the International Leo Youth Camp for Blinds 2018



Dear Sir or Madam,

Please take note of an event in the upcoming summer of 2018: the International Leo Youth Camp for Blinds.

The International Leo Youth Camp has been organized by Leo volunteers from Northern Germany every second summer over the past 20 years.

The Leo-Club is an organization of young adults (18-30 years) who are committed in community service. Under the patronage of Lions Club International we attend to projects in our local communities as well as in whole Germany, Europe and worldwide. Please visit [Leo Youth Camp for Blind website](#) for further information.

Every second year the camp takes place in Northern Germany next to the Baltic Sea. We invite blind and partially blind young people (18-25 years) to visit Northern Germany. The participants have the chance to spend an exciting time in Germany and also make friends with young people from all over Europe. We try to offer a lot of extraordinary activities such as dragon boating, horseback riding, visiting a climbing crag and even car driving. We pieced together some impressions from the past camps and further information in our flyer. We are looking forward to spend a wonderful summer with young people from all over Europe in Northern Germany!

Please do not hesitate to contact us for further information: blindencamp@leo-club-luebeck.de.

Summing up

What? International Leo Youth Camp 2018

When? 05th August 2018 until 17th August 2018

Where? Klingberg/Scharbeutz (Germany, Schleswig-Holstein)

Who? Blind and partially sighted young adults at the age of 18-25*

Accommodation? Handicapped accessible youth hostel

Admission Fee? 150€

*those who already participated twice will be excluded

We kindly ask you to forward this information to anybody whom it may concern.

Kind regards,

Sebastian Jung and Sara Eileen Meyer

Participation-coordinators

International Leo Youth Camp for Blinds 2018

International Leo Youth Camp e.V.

[International Leo Youth Camp 2018 flyer for download, PDF format, 702kB](#)

Index Braille

We are proud to announce our brand-new Index Braille Donation Program 2018! Organisations are encouraged to apply for the prize of a free Everest-D

V5 with an Acoustic Hood. One entry will be chosen from the applications, and the lucky winner will be announced by Index on their website during World Braille Day, 4th of January 2019.

Literacy for the blind



Literacy is one of the most important aspects of successful progress and development. This applies for both individuals and societies, for sighted and blind persons alike. Sadly, a majority of the world's blind population is illiterate. This obstructs their opportunities in life. It is clearly stated* that blind and visually impaired persons should have the obvious right to access the same information as sighted persons.

As a small private company with 15 employees, Index may not have the power to change the world, however we are doing our best to improve literacy amongst the blind.

Our goal is "Braille Printing made Easy" and our new developments include:

- Easy to use and operate V5 Braille printers.
- Embossing Braille from standard files (doc, docx, pdf, etc.) without prior translation or formatting with a separate Braille editor.
- Printing Braille directly from a USB memory stick.
- Printing Braille from all major operation systems (Windows, iOS, Linux, Unix, Android, Chrome) using a web app.

The Donation Program 2018



The Index Donation Program began on the 4th of January 2018 on World Braille Day and marks the start of an annual donation program by Index as part of the celebrations.

Each year Index Braille will donate one set of Index Everest-D V5 and Acoustic Hood Everest free of charge. This way, we want to show that Index stands for something we truly believe in: to improve braille literacy for the blind.

Index Braille printers



The Index Braille embosser line offers high-speed embossing and exceptional braille quality at an affordable price. For more information about the model that will be donated, Everest-D V5, or other models of Index Braille printers, please click the link below:

[Index Braille Website](#)

E-mail: info@indexbraille.com

Main phone number: +46 920 20 30 80

Address: Hantverkarsvägen 20, 95423 Gammelstad, Sweden

Announcements

11- 12 October 2018 - **Groupement des Professeurs et Educateurs d'Aveugles et d'Amblyopes**, 54th Pedagogical Days, Paris (France), You adapt, I adapt, 13 years later: sustainability and evolutions, National Institute of Blind Youth, For further information, please visit [GPEAA's website](#), [Announcement of 54th Pedagogical Days, PDF format, 63kB](#)

Moldova is the 35th country to ratify the **Marrakesh Treaty**.