



**International Council for Education and  
Rehabilitation of People with Visual Impairment**

# **Annual report 2020**

## **Content**

- 1 Preface**
- 2 Report from the Board**
- 3 ICEVI-Europe activities 2020**
- 4 Financial report 2020**
- 5 Budget 2021**
- 6 Looking to the future**
- 7 Members of the Board as of 31 December 2020**
- 8 ICEVI regions of Europe as of 31 December 2020**

# 1 Preface

Herewith the board of ICEVI-Europe presents the annual report 2020. This year was in many aspects a productive year. Many of the plans that the Board had for 2020 have also been implemented.

This is how the Annual Report begins. 2020 has been a different year for our organization. This year, ICEVI-Europe will go down in history as the year of the Covid-19 pandemic with all the limitations that this entailed.

In February, a board meeting took place in Paris, at the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles, I.N.J.A. The Institute of Louis Braille. It would be the penultimate meeting for our European Conference in Jerusalem. All preparations had been made so that the last meeting for the conference could be scheduled in April 2021.

The outcome went differently. Covid-19 seized, prompting ICEVI-World to move its general assembly from 2020 to June 2021 to be held online. This made the board and the host committee decide to adjourn the European Conference (i.e. The 10th ICEVI-Europe Conference originally scheduled to be held on 8-12 August 2021 in Jerusalem with August 13 -14, 2021 as Optional days for excursions). Two international conferences in such a short period of time in succession did not seem justified.

As a result of Covid-19, two conferences of Professional Interest Groups were also postponed. In Leuven, Belgium, a Conference on Early Intervention originally scheduled to be held on 23 & 24 April 2020 was prepared and in the Czech Republic, Prague, the 8<sup>th</sup> European Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment with the Theme: „Real life (In) dependence.” This last conference has been moved to 1-2 July 2021. We encourage you to make frequent visits to the homepage of ICEVI-Europe, <http://www.icevi-europe.org/> as it is regularly updated with latest developments and announcements regarding these conferences, as this information becomes available to us.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to get a good picture of the impact of Covid-19 on education and rehabilitation opportunities for people with visual impairments. The board has therefore decided to open a section on the ICEVI-Europe website under the title, "Covid-19 Online Resource Library." We strongly encourage you to visit this special dedicated page on our website about the effects that the pandemic is having on the services for the visually impaired <http://www.icevi-europe.org/covid.php> It is up to members (i.e. Individual Members, Organization Members & National Representatives) to fill this resource library with their experiences and solutions and share it with their fellow colleagues. Please send us any best practices, learning resources, and other practical information that may be useful in describing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on facilitating equal access to appropriate education and rehabilitation opportunities for people with visual impairments. Everyone is therefore invited to send relevant information for publication to Martha Gyftakos, Executive Assistant to the President, at [mgyftakos@yahoo.com](mailto:mgyftakos@yahoo.com) Our COVID-19 Online Resource Library page will be regularly updated for the benefit of our members and visitors, so please continue to share your experiences and information.

In 2020, as usual, our European Newsletter was published periodically. A new ICEVI-Europe brochure was also put together, which will be available at conferences to bring ICEVI-Europe's activities to the attention of professionals working in the field of education and rehabilitation.

At the end of 2020, our board member Anne Kristine Grosbøll, sitting on behalf of the Baltic and Nordic Countries region, has ended her board membership in connection with the acceptance of another position. The board is indebted for her contributions in recent years. It was discussed with her successor on how ICEVI-Europe can temporarily fill this vacancy.

May we take this opportunity to remind you to pay your annual membership contribution. Your membership fee is crucial to the work of ICEVI-Europe. Membership fees are the organization's main income and they enable us to continue to promote international cooperation in broadening the knowledge and skills of professionals working in the education and rehabilitation of persons with visual impairment. For further information regarding the membership benefits and payment details, please visit the relevant pages on the ICEVI-Europe website.

As you may notice, for this year under review, certain Regional Reports that follow in Chapter 2, lack information from certain countries as normally provided by the relevant National Representatives, or are missing all together. This could be attributed as a negative consequence of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic on professional service providers for people with visual impairments and the possible lack of activities in certain countries.

The board would like to thank all of you who have contributed and given shape to ICEVI-Europe activities in 2020. We hope you will continue to participate in 2021 with the goal of improving the quality of services to people with visual impairments.

This Annual Report was sent to all of the National Representatives, being that they are members of the General Meeting, asking for their agreement. We have made some textual changes to the Annual Report, as per the feedback provided by the National Representatives, and it was approved by them.

The board hopes to make a fresh start in 2021 together with all members in good health.

On behalf of the Board,



Hans Welling  
President

[www.icevi-europe.org](http://www.icevi-europe.org)

## 2 Report from the board

ICEVI-Europe is an association of professionals and service providers that supports persons with vision impairment to achieve their right to participate as full members of society with equal access to appropriate specialist support and adaptations in education, training and habilitation/rehabilitation. The preparation of an annual report is therefore an excellent opportunity to summarize what initiatives have already been implemented and see how this mission can further be achieved.

As usual, in 2020 we published and disseminated our 3 regular issues of the ICEVI-European Newsletter for members and interested parties (non-members) and kept the website up to date, but also, our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/icevieurope/>. In February 2020, we published and disseminated a Special Edition of our Newsletter, which was the Proceedings of the 7th ICEVI Balkan Conference in Sofia, Bulgaria held 20.10.2019-23.10.2019 with the theme, "Free access, real educational inclusion and unlimited technologies."

It is very important for specialists in the field of visual impairment to share their practices, to disseminate their publications and research or projects. Therefore, we invite you to submit articles and announcements to the Coordinator of our ICEVI European Newsletter, Andrea Hathazi ([ahathazi@yahoo.com](mailto:ahathazi@yahoo.com)), identifying any special events, news, projects, activities, scientific work, research or good practices undertaken by your organization in your country in the field of visual impairment, in order to be published in the future issues of our ICEVI European Newsletter.

ICEVI-Europe was once again invited to participate as a European Co-Operation Partner in the upcoming, 37th VBS Congress for the Blind and Visually Impaired. After a circular procedure, the VBS Board of Directors decided at the end of 2020 that the VBS Congress will now be held from July 31 to August 4, 2023 on the blistaCampus in Marburg / Hessen. For further information on the Congress, please follow the developments on the VBS website at <http://www.vbs.eu>

The board continues to look forward towards exploring opportunities for future cooperation between GPEAA in France and the European Blind Union with the goal of mutually beneficial outcomes. The board desires to realize a successful collaboration with both organizations in hopes of organizing joint regional conferences and conferences or workshops for professional interest groups.

As a friendly reminder, please visit the following webpage at <http://icevi-europe.org/professional-interest-groups.php> in order to become familiar with all 7 Professional Interest Groups under the umbrella of ICEVI-Europe and register your interest to become a member of a professional interest group of your choice, by directly contacting the relevant Managerial Responsible Person(s). This presents a good opportunity to engage in the exchange of knowledge and sharing of best practices with fellow professionals and practitioners working in your same field of interest.

As is well known, the Joint General Assemblies of WBU and ICEVI-World, originally scheduled for June 2020 have not taken place at that time, as result of the COVID-19 pandemic. These will now be held on June 28-30, 2021, albeit virtually. The overall

theme of the General Assemblies is “World Blind Summit: What it means to be Blind and Visually Impaired.” For further information, please visit the official website of WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies 2021 at <https://www.worldblindnesssummit.com/en>

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, two EXCO meetings of ICEVI-World have taken place in 2020. A central agenda item was always the WBU-ICEVI-World General Assembly; the cancellation and how the new general assembly should take place.

The position of Regional Advisor, who served as the President of ICEVI-Europe, for the independence of the regional members of ICEVI-World, has been de facto removed by the creation of a governance committee, which will take a closer look at the structure of ICEVI-World.

We encourage you to make frequent visits to the homepage of ICEVI-Europe, <http://www.icevi-europe.org/>, as it is regularly updated with latest developments and announcements regarding new dates for ICEVI-Europe conferences and events, as this information becomes known to us. These events constitute a great opportunity to meet and network with professionals across Europe in order stimulate cooperation with the goal of improving the quality of services to people with visual impairments.

### 3 ICEVI-Europe activities in 2020



#### Report from the Baltic and Nordic countries by Dorthe Marie Degn

Region: Nordic-Baltic region

Period: 2020

Area of Reference	Description
<p>How were practices and/or services regarding the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments affected as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p><b>Sweden:</b> Information from Resource Centre Vision, The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools (SPSM). The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the whole of society, the school, the teaching and the children and students we meet. We have continued providing support, but have adapted our methods of working in order to comply with the authorities' recommendations for slowing the spread of infection. Since March 2020, we provide courses, counselling and support digitally. Our interdisciplinary assessments, which often involve travelling to preschools and schools, have been forced to be postponed indefinitely. In the meantime, we offer in-depth counselling. At the end of 2019 Camilla Forseth joined Resource Centre Vision as our new Deputy Head of Unit. We are very happy about this supplement.</p> <p><b>Denmark:</b> All schools and educations have been referred to online teaching at home since March 2020, except for the summer period, where teaching in small groups keeping up distance became possible and outdoor teaching became popular in schools. Smaller children were given priority for teachings at school when possible, for the parents to be able to attend their jobs at site or from home and hence keep economy and public services going as far as possible. Exceptions from home care and teachings have been made for vulnerable children and young people where possible.</p> <p>At IBOS the Specialized Youth Education, STU, after being referred to online parttime teaching and social telephone calls in the spring, could reopen. They have their own space, teachers are tested weekly, they wear mask or visor, everybody keep their distance, hygiene is increased, special time is reserved in the cantina and other staff keep out of their way. So far, no students or teachers at IBOS have been infected.</p> <p>From Synoptik-fonden IBOS received funding in order to be able to offer Perimetri-examinations of visual fields, etc. Because of Covid, the project has been delayed until restrictions are lifted. Further info: Neuro optometrist Karsten Haarh, IBOS. E-mail: G64L@kk.dk</p> <p>Nov. 2020 Ms. Marie Fasmer was appointed Interim Director for 12 months at IBOS and Kenneth Hartmann became manager for the Dep. of Advice.</p> <p><b>Finland:</b> In Finland schools were closed from mid-March till mid-May 2020. During lockdown attendance was possible in schools, if pupils were in preschool or in grades 1-3 or in a special support level. Most of the VI pupils in Finland need special support, but still some of them were via distance learning, if care givers were able to support the child at home. The Valteri Centre for Learning</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>and Consulting offered support for learning and school attendance to pupils, their families and staff working closely with them. Face to face counselling services were not possible in spring 2020. Instead Valteri provided remote counselling services (online via Teams), online courses, phone calls to care givers and teachers.</p>
<p>Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period</p>	<p><b>Iceland:</b> Due to Covid, we have not held courses during the year, but have maintained good service to our users and have received users who book appointments with us. We have also attended meetings and offered advice through Teams and other forums, which has been very successful in most cases.</p> <p><b>Denmark:</b> For the first time the annual national net-working days with several workshops for professionals, Nov. 18-19th, were held online and with great success. The free version made it possible for more professionals to attend.</p> <p><b>Project P.E.P.</b>  An online version of IBOS' project P.E.P. modules has been developed and tested. In cooperation with career guide Karen Wolfe, Tx, the founder of the American Pre-Employment Programme, consisting of 15-day modules, designed especially for job seeking adults with a vision impairment, IBOS in 2018-2020 developed a Danish version called P.E.P. The project has been funded by STAR.  In the Danish version participants are followed for support and documentation of results 1 yr. after ending the programme. The 3 x 15 on-site modules have received very good evaluations from participants and many are succeeding in finding a job. The whole project is being evaluated Jan.-Feb. 2021, though we will not have the final results from the online version before a year after. Participants evaluations suggests that relations and openness between participants are less deep compared to the on-site version, but both participants, teachers and coordinator have been positively surprised at how much learning and motivation could be achieved online. Also, more participants could attend the modules and at a much lower cost, since accommodation and travelling is a very expensive budget post in the on-site versions. For further info, contact coordinator Lise Plagborg, IBOS. E-mail: AB9R@kk.dk</p> <p>A lot of specialized advice activities have also been referred to online versions with somewhat similar conclusions.</p> <p><b>BlindTech – The use of AI by blind people</b>  In collaboration with the University of Copenhagen, IBOS is involved in a future project on how people with visual impairment or blindness use accessible AI solutions in everyday life.  We will be looking at two different situations: 1) digital assistants in the home, such as Google Home, and 2) apps on the smartphone when on the move, such as Seeing AI. The project will last for approx. three years and consist in ethnographic studies, analyses, workshops, development of learning material and dissemination to all interested parties.  Some of the questions we will explore are:  - How are the technologies used in everyday life?  - How do they take part of social situations?  - How do the blind creatively manipulate the opportunities offered by the technologies and situations to make the most of them?  - What are the advantages and disadvantages of the way the technologies are designed today according to context of use?  - What are the challenges of using the technologies in social contexts?  For more info contact: Assistive tech. consultant, Birgit Christensen, IBOS, e-mail: Birgit.christensen@kk.dk</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>The potential of VR-glasses for persons with Stargardt</b>  In cooperation with optometrists and eye doctor at the Kennedy Center Eye-clinic at Rigshospitalet, Glostrup, IBOS is examining the potential of VR-glasses in relation to other assistive tech for persons with Stargardt disease. The project is funded by Øjenfonden.dk  For more info: Occupational therapist Pernille Duelund Højstrup, IBOS. E-mail: <a href="mailto:HY3H@kk.dk">HY3H@kk.dk</a></p> <p><b>Trainers for Visually Impaired Students Introducing 3D Printing -T4VIS-in3D</b>  The project (2020-2023) aims at implementing new technology in the education of people with a severe vision impairment, thus opening up new job opportunities. A curricula and course in 3D printing will be developed and tested. Project manager: Berufsförderungswerk Düren, Germany. IBOS is partner. Kontakt IBOS: Dep. manager Kenneth Hartmann, e-mail: <a href="mailto:CX60@kk.dk">CX60@kk.dk</a>. Other partners from Italy, Austria, Bulgaria and Spain. Funding by EU - Erasmus+</p> <p><b>Finland:</b> MDVI-Euronet had a zoom-meeting on Fri 11.12.2020. The meeting was organized by ChildVision, Dublin. Misa Möller and Päivi Lång from Valteri, Finland joined the meeting.</p> <p>National training days for multiprofessional staff working with children with visual impairment was organized on December 14 – 15.2020. This annual meeting offers a great possibility for the specialists as teachers and rehabilitation workers to hear the latest situation with the services and trends on the area and naturally discuss and change ideas.</p>
<p>Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website</p>	<p><b>Iceland:</b> Iceland has participated in two European projects this year.  iExpress: The iExpress II project is the logical successor to the iExpress Myself project that ended on January 31, 2018. iExpress focuses on knowledge exchange with regard to the use of supporting IT tools. In iExpress Myself, a screening tool for the use of assistive technologies in blind and visually impaired children with multiple disabilities (MDVI) has been developed. In the current project, a complete toolkit is being developed for professionals who work with MDVI children to better map the skills of children and to help them develop further.  For more information about the project: <a href="https://www.iexpressmyself.com/">https://www.iexpressmyself.com/</a></p> <p>Viva: The main objective of the consortium is to develop an innovative social entrepreneurship training programme to be applied in the youth sector, addressing the needs of young persons with visual impairment, for improved social inclusion and employment opportunities. The program will incorporate a unique delivery approach, i.e. young people with visual impairment will receive a training focused on leadership, entrepreneurial and intercultural skills, transforming them into autonomous members of society and able multipliers of the approach - trainers and motivators of other young people with visual impairment.  For more information about the project: <a href="https://www.viva-erasmusplus.eu/">https://www.viva-erasmusplus.eu/</a></p> <p>Both of these projects should, if all goes well, be completed in the first half of 2021.</p>
<p>Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months</p>	<p><b>Iceland:</b> Due to the world epidemic situation, it is difficult for us to estimate and predict what the next six months will be like for us. We will focus on maintaining good service to our users and try our best to meet their needs and circumstances.  As for courses for teachers and other professionals who work with the blind and visually impaired, we can't say exactly, but we hope that it will be possible to offer such courses at the end of summer or the beginning of autumn 2021.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>Denmark:</b> IBOS offer a webinar on “Lysfølsomhed” Feb. 22. We hope to give a course March 1<sup>st</sup> “Det intelligente hjem. An education module has been canceled and a day about social competences postponed. For more info, see link: <a href="http://www.ibos.dk">www.ibos.dk</a></p>
<p>Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region</p>	<p><b>Sweden:</b> During the autumn of 2020 The Swedish Association of the Visually Impaired (SRF) carried out a campaign to increase the awareness of braille for sighted persons. Information about braille has been highlighted in print on milk and yoghurt packages. On the SRF campaign website <a href="http://www.punktskolan.se">www.punktskolan.se</a> children and schools can find information about braille and a “braille generator”. In the generator they can write text in print and the generator transforms it into braille. Furthermore, SRF has offered schools a digital lesson about braille held by young adults with blindness.</p> <p><b>Denmark</b> A pod-cast series in Danish examining different types of violence towards persons with impairments, presenting strategies to prevent and overcome such unwanted experiences, is currently being developed. The five podcasts are expected to be available April 2021. Funded by: Offerfonden. For further info contact journalist Julie Giese, IBOS. E-mail: <a href="mailto:H41V@kk.dk">H41V@kk.dk</a></p>

This report is submitted by: Dorthe Marie Degn, IBOS, Denmark  
Date: 21.01.2021



## Report from the English speaking countries by Steve McCall

Region: English speaking region

Period: 2020

Area of Reference	Description
<p>How were practices and/or services regarding the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments affected as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p><b>UK</b></p> <p>The effect of Covid on education in the UK has been profound. From March to September, mainstream primary and secondary schools were effectively closed with only a handful of children of key workers and special needs children attending. Special schools have also been severely restricted and most closed their doors to students for health reasons. Although children with visual impairment (like other children) have been sent programmes of work through the internet and have received support through telephone calls, their learning often depends on whether their parents have the knowledge, skills and time to support them at home.</p> <p>Specialist Further Education Colleges for students with visual impairment closed between March and September and moved their delivery during this period from face to face to online teaching. At Queen Alexandra College this move has been successful and has had many positive benefits in terms of increasing staff skills in online teaching, but some students have found the lack of social contact very isolating and require a lot of support from parents to engage with work.</p> <p>There also have been huge challenges for teachers of the visually impaired in assessing student performance in national examinations, assessing new students for entry to schools and further/higher education in and making arrangements for students who are in transition to new places.</p> <p>It is generally very hard for students with VI and additional learning difficulties to understand and comply with the rules on social distancing and mask wearing. Social distancing for students who are totally blind is a challenge even if they don't have additional needs.</p> <p>On the plus side the government guaranteed normal funding for Schools and Colleges, even though students have not been attending in person.</p> <p>The impact has also been great on training for teachers of the VI. Birmingham University normally has residential weekends for its distance learning programme, but these have been moved to online events with video lectures and demonstrations. This has proved popular with students because of the flexibility it gives in timing these studies, but it makes practical sessions such as training in mobility very difficult. The opportunities to work together in groups and to share ideas and learn</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>from other people's experiences is also much reduced. For other teacher training centres that don't already have distance learning delivery models, the situation has been even more very difficult to manage.</p> <p>Since September schools and Colleges have reopened in the UK and most are managing to operate well within social distancing, study 'bubbles' and the use of personal protective equipment (PPE). Even so classes and year groups are often sent home to quarantine when cases of Covid occur.</p> <p><b>Ireland</b>  Childvision, the National Education Centre for Blind Children organised a virtual national summer programme for children with visual impairment to replace of the annual face to face event held at the Centre. A wide range of activities was available including drama sessions, Mindfulness, sports and baking sessions. See more at <a href="#">Virtual-Summer-Programme-PDF_opt.pdf (childvision.ie)</a></p> <p><b>Israel</b>  Services for older people with visual impairments have been sustained through inventive use online support and but they are experiencing additional pressure as clients experience mental health issues resulting from isolation and anxiety. These issues are particularly acute in people who coming to terms with recent sight loss. The fact that the majority of people with visual impairment are elderly and in the most vulnerable age range for complications form Covid is a huge challenge.</p> <p>The Migdal Or Centre conducted a national survey of client need during the lockdown and major findings included increased technical support in areas such as managing communication technology for both leisure and work use, increased emotional support and counselling including online group support services. A copy of the full report and the lessons learnt by Migdal Or can be found in the latest issue of the ICEVI online Newsletter.</p> <p>The Aleh Association continued its support for children and students in Higher Education through online mentoring and loaned laptops to students who needed them to access om for individual and group learning. Calls to the Aleh mental health hotline increased significantly during the lockdown.  Aleh has also organised support for people with VI in care homes but this had to be delivered under high levels of protection.</p> <p>The Eliyah Association for blind and partially sighted children was able to continue its work for children in the day care centres throughout lockdown from March onwards but major changes were required in the classroom delivery and organisation. For example, the purchase of double or triple the numbers of existing toys and pieces of equipment for individual use, especially for the youngest children.  Increased demand for online support also prompted a major upgrading of the organisation's computer infrastructure and online capabilities.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	Fuller reports on the impact of Covid on service delivery for Aleh and Eliyah can be found in the latest ICEVI Europe Newsletter.
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	The English-Speaking countries representative attended the ICEVI Europe Board Meeting in Paris in January,
Global campaign activities, if any	N/A
Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period	<p>In June and July 2020 Professor John Ravenscroft, ICEVI's Scotland representative, organized two webinars hosted by the Scottish Sensory Centre to look at the implications for the education of children with VI of the Covid outbreak. The 4Sight workshop included presentations from academics, independence professionals and teachers from England, Scotland and Wales, and their topics covered adapted habilitation strategies for schools, supporting hybrid learning, curriculum access and service delivery.</p> <p>For further information and copies of the presentations go to:  <a href="http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/courses/videoarchive.html">http://www.ssc.education.ed.ac.uk/courses/videoarchive.html</a></p>
Collaborative activities and meetings with world bodies such as WBU, IAPB, UN, World Bank, and other organizations at the regional level	N/A
ICEVI collaborative work with national governments within the region	N/A
Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website	<p>Two new books have been published in the UK this year relating to the education of children with vision impairment. The first is by Fiona Broadley, an experienced teacher of independence and mobility skills to children and young people. Fiona addresses the main problem areas in developing independence skills for babies and young visually impaired children and their families, by providing simple explanations of skills and offering strategies and techniques to support progression onto the next stage.</p> <p><a href="https://www.routledge.com/Supporting-Life-Skills-for-Young-Children-with-Vision-Impairment-and-Other/Broadley/p/book/9780367435783">https://www.routledge.com/Supporting-Life-Skills-for-Young-Children-with-Vision-Impairment-and-Other/Broadley/p/book/9780367435783</a></p> <p>The second book is a second edition of 'Learning through Touch' by Mike McLinden, Liz Hodges and Steve McCall from VICTAR and is written for practitioners who support learners with multiple disabilities and vision impairment. The text explores the key role that touch plays in the education of these learners and provides practical advice about how to develop the skills through touch that they will need to become 'active agents' in their own development.</p> <p><a href="https://www.routledge.com/Learning-through-Touch-Supporting-Learners-with-Multiple-Disabilities-and/Mclinden-Mccall-Hodges/p/book/9780367203009">https://www.routledge.com/Learning-through-Touch-Supporting-Learners-with-Multiple-Disabilities-and/Mclinden-Mccall-Hodges/p/book/9780367203009</a></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Throughout lockdown the RNIB, VIEW (chaired by ICEVI England Representative Rory Cobb) and Natsip have produced a range of guidance materials for teachers and mobility educators involved in supporting children with VI returning to school after lockdown, You can find them here  <a href="https://viewweb.org.uk/back-to-school-guidance/">https://viewweb.org.uk/back-to-school-guidance/</a></p> <p>Online resources currently freely available from VICTAR (Vision Impairment Centre for Teaching and Research) University of Birmingham UK  Include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Improving access to work experiences for young people with a vision impairment</a>. A resource to help local authorities supporting their students in undertaking work placements</li> <li>• Online <a href="#">resources</a> and <a href="#">guidance</a> for young people with vision impairment going to university which draws upon our research evidence from the Longitudinal Transitions Study.</li> </ul>
<p>Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports for Phase Three of the longitudinal study of the transition into adulthood of young people with visual impairment conducted by VICTAR at the University of Birmingham were published in January 2020. See here for further details:  <a href="https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/victar/research/longitudinal-transitions-study/phase-three.aspx">https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/victar/research/longitudinal-transitions-study/phase-three.aspx</a></li> </ul>

This report is submitted by Steve McCall  
Date December 2020



## Report from French speaking countries by Nathalie Lewi-Dumont

Region: French speaking

Period: 2020

Area of Reference	Description
<p>How were practices and/or services regarding the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments affected as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p><b>France:</b> In spite of the government help, the first period of lockdown (closed schools during around 2 months) has been very difficult, for parents (teleworking), (special) teachers and children who lacked social interactions, adapted tactile tools, etc. A lot of districts (local and national) tried to put online resources for parents and teachers. Some were usable with students with VI.</p> <p><a href="https://eduscol.education.fr/2016/ressources-numeriques-educatives">https://eduscol.education.fr/2016/ressources-numeriques-educatives</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.reseau-canope.fr/actualites/actualite/covid-19-des-ressources-pour-assurer-une-continuite-pedagogique-a-la-maison.html">https://www.reseau-canope.fr/actualites/actualite/covid-19-des-ressources-pour-assurer-une-continuite-pedagogique-a-la-maison.html</a></p> <p>For students with visual impairment:</p> <p><a href="http://www.ash91.ac-versailles.fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2020/03/Podcasts-pour-enfants-DV.pdf">http://www.ash91.ac-versailles.fr/wp-content/uploads/sites/39/2020/03/Podcasts-pour-enfants-DV.pdf</a></p> <p><a href="https://www.inshea.fr/fr/content/ressources-en-ligne-pour-la-continuite-pedagogique">https://www.inshea.fr/fr/content/ressources-en-ligne-pour-la-continuite-pedagogique</a></p> <p><a href="http://gpeaa.fr/continuons-a-partager-nos-experiences/">http://gpeaa.fr/continuons-a-partager-nos-experiences/</a></p> <p>Special teachers used a lot the internet, platforms, but also telephone, WhatsApp, etc. to keep in touch with students, regular teachers and parents. When they could, they tried to send documents printed in braille or raised drawings. Depending on teachers', families' and students' situations, the support has been effective or not. Some schools had only a few days of opening before summer, due to the Covid situation. Public theaters put some accessible plays online, There has been a lot of concerts online too. Public radios played a lot of stories which could be podcasted or listened to later, for example:</p> <p><a href="https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/les-odyssées">https://www.franceinter.fr/emissions/les-odyssées</a></p> <p><a href="https://souffleurs.org/soufflage-a-distance/">https://souffleurs.org/soufflage-a-distance/</a></p> <p>Theaters proposed appointments with actors who read on the phone (poetry and other styles) and speaking to people, which were totally accessible and a very nice human and esthetic experience for sighted and visually impaired people.</p> <p>Here is a Zoom concert Bolero of Ravel, audiodescribed!</p> <p><a href="https://www.apidv.org/Le-Bolero-de-Ravel-par-l-Orchestre-National-de-France.html">https://www.apidv.org/Le-Bolero-de-Ravel-par-l-Orchestre-National-de-France.html</a></p> <p>Some associations proposed some physical education lessons, mainly for adults (online)</p> <p>An emergency aid platform has been created for parents of children with disabilities: <a href="https://www.grandir-ensemble.com">https://www.grandir-ensemble.com</a></p> <p>A "back to school" after lockdown guide edited by the national association of parents of blind children</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><a href="http://anpea.asso.fr/site/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Retour-école_élèves-DV_Fiche-pratique.pdf">http://anpea.asso.fr/site/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Retour-école_élèves-DV_Fiche-pratique.pdf</a></p> <p>In spite of all those initiatives, the sanitary crisis still produces a lot of difficulties regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities: for example, depending on the stakeholders' interpretation, students who depend both on a special unit and an inclusive school remain in their special unit (to avoid too many interactions), and this puts a brake to inclusion. Particularly for blind students, the "touch prohibition" is very difficult.</p> <p><b>Belgium:</b> Q/A about VI and Covid  <a href="https://www.braille.be/fr/a-propos-de-nous/actualites/2020/04/covid-19-et-handicap-visuel-questions-frequemment-posees">https://www.braille.be/fr/a-propos-de-nous/actualites/2020/04/covid-19-et-handicap-visuel-questions-frequemment-posees</a>  <a href="https://www.rtb.be/info/societe/detail_les-personnes-aveugles-et-malvoyantes-souffrent-de-mesures-sanitaires-inadaptees?id=10570537">https://www.rtb.be/info/societe/detail_les-personnes-aveugles-et-malvoyantes-souffrent-de-mesures-sanitaires-inadaptees?id=10570537</a></p> <p>UN award for "Stories on the phone" for Ligue Braille  <a href="https://www.braille.be/fr/a-propos-de-nous/actualites/2020/07/la-ligue-braille-recompensee-par-les-nations-unies-pour-histoires-au-bout-du-fil">https://www.braille.be/fr/a-propos-de-nous/actualites/2020/07/la-ligue-braille-recompensee-par-les-nations-unies-pour-histoires-au-bout-du-fil</a></p> <p><b>Switzerland:</b>  Recommendations for People with VI in Covid time  <a href="https://www.sbv-fsa.ch/fr/prestations/conseils-corona">https://www.sbv-fsa.ch/fr/prestations/conseils-corona</a></p>
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	France: February 26, 27 <sup>th</sup> : Board meeting and programme Committee meeting of ICEVI-Europe organized by INSHEA in Inja (Paris).
Global campaign activities, if any	<p><b>Belgium</b>  January Sensibilization on visual impairment. Experience with Anne in Brussels. "Would you react?"  <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l77RCwWvKTY&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l77RCwWvKTY&amp;feature=youtu.be</a></p> <p>Inquiry among Belgian people on the way they perceive VI:  <a href="https://eqla.be/grande-enquete-2020-malvoyance-cecite/">https://eqla.be/grande-enquete-2020-malvoyance-cecite/</a></p>
Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period	<p>A lot of events cancelled or postponed in the 3 countries.</p> <p>January 16<sup>th</sup>: Research and schooling of students with VI Inja, Paris  January, 23 Lyon: Brailletnet: National meeting about accessible digital books  <a href="https://www.brailletnet.org/compte-rendu-rencontres-nationales-livre-numerique-accessible-2020/">https://www.brailletnet.org/compte-rendu-rencontres-nationales-livre-numerique-accessible-2020/</a></p> <p>Web-conférence ARIBa 5 sept-2020  October 7<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> November GPEAA Webinar Online. Tools and devices for distance learning with students with VI.  November 6<sup>th</sup> online Accessibility and innovating practices; forum GIAA-API DV. Replay:  <a href="https://www.apidv.org/Forum-NUMERIQUE-ET-PRATIQUES-INNOVANTES-AU-SERVICE-DES.html">https://www.apidv.org/Forum-NUMERIQUE-ET-PRATIQUES-INNOVANTES-AU-SERVICE-DES.html</a></p> <p>December 7, 8<sup>th</sup>: seminar technologies and VI online  <a href="https://aveuglesdefrance.org/nos-actions/nouvelles-technologies/journees-d-etude-sur-les-ntic">https://aveuglesdefrance.org/nos-actions/nouvelles-technologies/journees-d-etude-sur-les-ntic</a></p> <p>10-11<sup>th</sup> December: Fisaf cancelled its 40<sup>th</sup> congress, they proposed an e-event on two mornings</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><a href="https://www.fisaf.asso.fr/les-actus-de-la-fisaf-et-du-secteur/item/363-les-rencontres-professionnels-2021-de-la-fisaf-a-votre-agenda">https://www.fisaf.asso.fr/les-actus-de-la-fisaf-et-du-secteur/item/363-les-rencontres-professionnels-2021-de-la-fisaf-a-votre-agenda</a></p> <p><b>Belgium:</b> October Braille tech Digital online</p>
<p>Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website</p>	<p><b>France:</b> Castillan, L., Lemarié, J., Mojahid, M. (2019). L'accessibilité des manuels scolaires numériques: l'exemple suédois, entre édition adaptée et édition inclusive. <i>La Nouvelle revue. Éducation et société inclusives</i>, 87, 149-163. Gaborit, M., Lewi-Dumont, N. (2020). Les besoins prioritaires des acteurs de la scolarisation des élèves déficients visuels dans le second degré: la question des outils numériques. In C. Pélissier (dir), <i>Notion d'aide en éducation</i> (pp. 59-83). Londres: ISTE Editions. Valente, D., Galiano, A.R., Balteneck, N. (2020). Le développement du jeu chez les enfants déficients visuels. <i>ANAE/ Approche neuropsychologique des apprentissages chez l'enfant</i>, 32(165). Mourey Soriano, V. on creativity and accessible books: <a href="http://revues.univ-lemans.fr/index.php/publije/article/view/134">http://revues.univ-lemans.fr/index.php/publije/article/view/134</a></p> <p><b>Belgium</b> Movies: <i>Petits combats de la vie ordinaire</i> (Deauville Green Awards 2020, students award of CYU Paris 2020) <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDxfRvk3RVs&amp;utm_source=Site&amp;utm_campaign=71b8e4c00c-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_06_07_08_25_COPY_01&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_term=0_3ac353bf30-71b8e4c00c-591929685">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDxfRvk3RVs&amp;utm_source=Site&amp;utm_campaign=71b8e4c00c-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_06_07_08_25_COPY_01&amp;utm_medium=email&amp;utm_term=0_3ac353bf30-71b8e4c00c-591929685</a></p> <p><i>Verpeut, B. (2019). L'impact du parcours scolaire des jeunes déficients visuels sur leur inclusion sociale et le développement de leurs capacités. Analyse de six récits de vie. Mémoire de master. Université Catholique de Louvain.</i> <a href="https://dial.uclouvain.be/downloader/downloader.php?pid=thesis%3A18437&amp;datastream=PDF_01&amp;cover=cover-mem">https://dial.uclouvain.be/downloader/downloader.php?pid=thesis%3A18437&amp;datastream=PDF_01&amp;cover=cover-mem</a></p>
<p>Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months</p>	<p><b>France:</b> January, 23 Lyon: Brailletnet: National meeting about accessible digital books May: Spring conference of Ariba May, 10 and 11th: Suresnes, INSHEA. Visual impairment and inclusive education. Learning from all senses. Organized by INSHEA, INJA and ICEVI-Europe French speaking countries May 12<sup>th</sup>: Lego braille training (INSHEA, Suresnes) Typhlo &amp; Tactus award: <a href="https://ldqr.org/association/concours-typhlo-tactus/">https://ldqr.org/association/concours-typhlo-tactus/</a></p> <p><b>Switzerland:</b> Symposium of Neurosciences and Pedagogy : Lausanne, May 21st</p>

<b>Area of Reference</b>	<b>Description</b>
Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region	<b>France:</b> A new website: <a href="http://Abracadabaille.org">Abracadabaille.org</a> (about VI and braille teaching). Lego braille sessions are organized through webinars

This report is submitted by Nathalie Lewi-Dumont and Juliette Boudru  
Date January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020



## **Report from the South European countries by Ana Isabel Ruiz López**

**Region: Southern European Countries**  
**Period: 2020**

The annual report has not been sent because in this region no activities have been carried out throughout 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.



## Report from East European countries by Vladimir Ruchin

Region: Eastern European Countries

Period: 2020

Area of Reference	Description
<p>How were practices and/or services regarding the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments affected as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p><b><u>Armenia</u></b> Georgia Armenia and Georgia, as reported by the representatives of these countries, canceled all events in connection with the pandemic</p> <p><b><u>Azerbaijan</u></b> The celebration of the Day of Disabled People due to the COVID-19 pandemic has been canceled in educational institutions throughout the country.</p> <p><b><u>Belarus</u></b> Regularly during the 2020 some questions of training the visually impaired persons have been discussed with the leadership of the Belarusian Republican Association of the Visually Impaired</p> <p><b><u>Georgia</u></b> Armenia and Georgia, as reported by the representatives of these countries, canceled all events in connection with the pandemic</p> <p><b><u>Kazakhstan</u></b> In Kazakhstan, the work of educational institutions, including special schools, is carried out according to a mixed visiting schedule.</p> <p><b><u>Russia</u></b> <u>Organizations promoting the development of inclusion actively use Webinars, namely:</u> Webinars for blind mobile users; Webinars on information support for visually impaired people; Webinars for visually impaired students.</p>
<p>Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any</p>	<p>Regional on-line meeting Work during the COVID - 19</p>
<p>Global campaign activities, if any</p>	<p><b><u>Belarus</u></b> World Disabled Day and World Autism Awareness Day.</p> <p><b><u>Russia</u></b> A project to develop new forms of work and online technologies to provide social services to visually impaired adults, including people with multiple disabilities, in the context of Covid19. The project is being implemented within the framework of the program «EU Solidarity with Russian Civil Society: Assistance to the Elderly and Adults with Disabilities».</p>
<p>Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period</p>	<p><b><u>Azerbaijan</u></b> A program has been implemented to involve children in special education. Were involved about 20 thousand children with disabilities, including those with vision impairment. Forms of work include family work and school-based work (mixed attendance schedule).</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>Belarus</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This year, cooperation with Russia (Nizhny Novgorod) has increased in training people with visual impairments and the blind.</li> <li>2. The Belarusian Republican Association of the Visually Impaired in the new conditions continues to train the visually impaired.</li> </ol> <p><b>Russia</b></p> <p>Permanent seminar «Opening the world together". The seminar is aimed at the social adaptation and rehabilitation of children with visual impairments and meets the modern realities associated with the coronavirus pandemic. The goal of the project: assistance in the successful socialization of visually impaired children and their adaptation to the conditions of modern life through overcoming the social isolation of families.</p>
Human interest stories from the region as a result of ICEVI initiatives	<p><b>Belarus</b></p> <p>International conference in Minsk concerning visually impaired person. «Continuing professional education of persons with special needs».</p>
Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website	<p><b>Azerbaijan</b></p> <p>In 2020, twelve boarding schools for disabled children deprived of parental care were refurbished in accordance with modern requirements</p> <p><b>Belarus</b></p> <p>ICEVI- journals was distributed among special schools for blind people in Belarus.</p> <p>Regularly during the 2020 some questions of training the visually impaired persons have been discussed with the leadership of the Belarusian Republican Association of the Visually Impaired.</p> <p><b>Russia</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A social project called "Myself a MasterShef" was implemented with the support of the Ministry of Internal Regional and Municipal Policy "Support of socially oriented non-profit organizations in the Nizhny Novgorod region".</li> <li>2. A library for the blind was opened in Omsk.</li> <li>3. A large collection of tactile books has been created in Saratov. The hands of representatives of the Orthodox Church and parishioners have created masterpieces thanks to which blind children learn the world. The work is carried out within the framework of the parish Sunday school.</li> </ol>
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	<p><b>Belarus</b></p> <p>Exhibition of works by blind artists «Path to color»</p> <p><b>Russia</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In Nizhny Novgorod, an inclusive art space for the blind and people with multiple disabilities has been opened. Deaf-blind people and people with visual and intellectual impairments will be able to study there.</li> <li>2. The Association of Persons with Hearing and Vision Impairments is opening a program in Moscow for a series of sports activities that will take place throughout 2021.</li> </ol>
Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region	<p><b>Azerbaijan</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The practice of passing exams in schools for children with limited vision is being implemented. This decision was made by the State Examination Center in accordance with the state program for the development of inclusive education for persons with disabilities. In the</li> </ol>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>current academic year, the participation of students with visual and hearing impairments will be organized.</p> <p>2. In order to optimize the education of children with disabilities, an integrated education program is being implemented, which involves the opening of specialized classes.</p> <p><b><u>Belarus</u></b></p> <p>1. 20 students from Molodechno Special School take part in the excursion to the United Institute of Information Problem of Academy of Sciences.</p> <p>2. Interaction in 2020 together with Institute of Special Education of BSPU.</p> <p>Activities together with Association of Parents of Vision Impaired children in Minsk in Belarus.</p> <p><b><u>Russia</u></b></p> <p>1. The project "Towards the world step by step", implemented in the interests of families raising children with severe multiple disabilities. The project is funded by a grant from the Foundation for Helping Children in Difficult Life Situations.</p> <p>2. A project to provide leisure activities for people with simultaneous visual and hearing impairments. Such meetings are held regularly every month at the Perspective Center.</p>

**This report is submitted**

**Ruchin Vladimir representative of Eastern European countries (Russia)**

**Hajiyeva Malahat, national representative of ICEVI (Azerbaijan).**

**Makiashvili Mariam, national representative of ICEVI (Georgia).**

**Losik GV, national representative of ICEVI (Belarus).**

**Rakisheva Karlygash, national representative of ICEVI (Kazakhstan).**

**Ahoronyan Alexan, national representative of the ICEVI (Armenia).**

**Date 15.01.2021**



## Report from the Balkan countries by Andrea Hathazi

**Region: Balkan Region**

**Period: 2020**

Area of Reference	Description
<p>How were practices and/or services regarding the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments affected as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p><b>Bulgaria</b> Both schools for visually impaired pupils in Sofia and Varna turned fast into remote and online teaching mode and managed very well with the learning process of VI and MDVI. The Rehabilitation center for VI people in Sofia and Sofia University are in cooperation exchanging IT knowledge and information in order to support VI university students in their remote and online education.</p> <p><b>Turkey</b> Covid-19 pandemic has affected Turkey like every country in the world very significantly in terms of the accessibility to education. Especially the children with visually impairment and MDVI and their families had more challenges and in accessing distance education.</p> <p><b>Romania</b> Schools for pupils with visual impairment in Romania had many challenges, but educational and rehabilitation activities continued in an online education form. Teachers, sometimes with the support of parents, managed to organize activities to develop knowledge and abilities in pupils. Technology and equipment were sent home to enable learning activities.</p>
<p>Global campaign activities, if any</p>	<p><b>Bulgaria</b> Bulgarian Government passed a Law for the Sign language as official language of the Deaf people, with texts in it concerning the Deafblind.</p> <p><b>Romania</b> An upgraded National Curriculum for the Visually impaired was issued in 2020.</p>
<p>Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period</p>	<p><b>Bulgaria</b> Project of Sofia University entitled ““Effective approaches to provide an accessible environment and to stimulate the play of children with special educational needs as an element of early intervention and pre-school support”. The TUET assessment tool was professionally translated into</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Bulgarian language and uploaded on the official TUET web-site and available online at <a href="http://www.tuet.eu/tuettoolbul.pdf">http://www.tuet.eu/tuettoolbul.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Turkey</b></p> <p>*<b>Atsavun Uysal S.</b> Rehabilitation of Visually Impairment. Seminars in: Başkent University, Department of Psychology, 17<sup>th</sup> April 2020.</p> <p>* <b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> Adapting the Curriculum for Students with Multiple Disabilities (February 10-November 13, 2020), National Ministry of Education, General Directorate of Special Education and Guidance Services (6 Workshops)</p> <p>* <b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> Characteristics, Education and Field Requirements of Children with Multiple Disabilities (8-9 January 2020), National Ministry of Education, Istanbul Provincial Directorate’s Special Education Academies (Workshop)</p> <p>* <b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> Communication Development of Young Children with MDVI, The PrECIVIM (Promoting Effective Communication for Individuals with a Vision Impairment and Multiple Disabilities Erasmus + project Conference, 27.11.2020, Babeş-Bolyai University (Romania), (Invited speaker).</p> <p>* <b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> Is it really difficult to work with children with MDVI? The myths and the facts-The PrECIVIM (Promoting Effective Communication for Individuals with a Vision Impairment and Multiple Disabilities Erasmus + project Conference, 05.12.2020, Thessaly University (Greece), (Invited speaker).</p>
<p>Collaborative activities and meetings with world bodies such as WBU, IAPB, UN, World Bank, and other organizations at the regional level</p>	<p><b>Turkey</b></p> <p>*The project ‘ToMiMEUs-Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities was approved by the Erasmus+ Programme (Key Action 2)- Turkey is a partner of this project (The coordinator of Turkey’s is <b>Emine Ayyıldız</b> from Istanbul Medeniyet University)- continuing</p> <p>*The project ErISFaVIA (Early Intervention Services for Families with Children with Vision Impairment and Additional Disabilities) was approved by the Erasmus+ Programme (Key Action 2)-Turkey is a partner of this project (The coordinator of Turkey’s is <b>Emine Ayyıldız</b> from Istanbul Medeniyet University)-continuing</p>
<p>Awards, Recognition, etc., to ICEVI members from the region</p>	<p><b>Bulgaria</b></p>

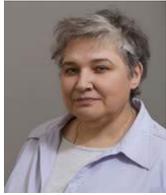
Area of Reference	Description
	Mira Tzvetkova-Arsova was granted a Fulbright certificate for her 5 months specialization at Hunter college in NYC, USA, during February-June 2020.
Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website	<p><b>Bulgaria</b></p> <p>The scientific Journal “Special Education and Speech Therapy” started publishing again as online Journal at <a href="https://fnoi.uni-sofia.bg/magazine/index.php/special-edu_language-therapy">https://fnoi.uni-sofia.bg/magazine/index.php/special-edu_language-therapy</a></p> <p>A new scientific Journal is being published online by Sofia University, Faculty of Educational Studies and the Arts – “Educational and Social Studies” at <a href="https://fnoi.uni-sofia.bg/magazine/index.php/edu-study">https://fnoi.uni-sofia.bg/magazine/index.php/edu-study</a></p> <p><b>Turkey</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Şimşek İE, Şimşek TT, Erel S, <b>Atsavun Uysal S</b>. Factors Affecting Health Related Quality Of Life And Depression Levels Of Mothers In Families Having Children With Chronic Disabilities. <i>HK J Paediatr</i> 2020;25:71-78. (SCI-E).</li> <li>2. Akı E, <b>Atsavun Uysal S</b>, Arslantekin B, Temel C, Polga H, Şen G. I. Project of the development of Educational Sports, and Independent movement skills, 22.th April 2020, (Ministry of National Education, Ministry of Science Industry and Technology, The Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey-TUBİTAK).</li> <li>3. <b>Atsavun Uysal S</b>, Düger T. ‘Motor Control And Sensory-Motor Integration of Human Movement ‘in Comparative Kinesiology of The Human Body, Ed. Angın S, Şimsek E.Elsevier, 2020:443-463.</li> <li>4. Şanlı BB. Investigation of the effect of posture, gait, balance and physical performance on participation in multiple disabled children with low vision, Hacettepe University Graduate School of Health Sciences, Master Thesis in Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Program, Ankara, 2020. (Advisor: <b>Atsavun Uysal S</b>).</li> <li>5. Şanlı BB, <b>Atsavun Uysal S</b>. :“Supporting the Motor Skills of Children with Severe and Multiple Disabilities" <i>in Strategies of the Education of Students with Severe and Multiple Disabilities</i>. Şafak P (ed). 2020; 625- 645. Vize Yayıncılık, Ankara.</li> <li>6. Şanlı BB., <b>Atsavun Uysal S</b>, Topuz S.:’ Which One Is More Effective for the Gait in Children With Multiple Disabilities: Tactile Stimuli or Audible Stimuli’ <i>EACD- Oral Presentations</i>, <i>Developmental Medicine and Child Neurology</i>.2020: 62(Supply. 4): 12.</li> </ol>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>7. <b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> (2020). Beni Dahil Et-Include me! Turkish translation, available at <a href="https://icevi.org/include-me-mdvi-deafblindness-publication/">https://icevi.org/include-me-mdvi-deafblindness-publication/</a>.</p> <p>8. <b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> (2020). Supporting students with severe and multiple disabilities in early childhood. <i>in Strategies of the Education of Students with Severe and Multiple Disabilities.</i> Şafak, P. (ed), pp. 185-214, Ankara: Vize Yayıncılık.</p>
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	<p><b>Turkey</b>  <b>Ayyıldız, E.</b>  The second Infant-Parent Support Program will be starting from 15 of January till the end of June 2021. Since now there are 17 parents have registered for this free program supported by the Erasmus + project ErISFaVIA. Depending on the state of the pandemic process, face-to-face training and home visit support (only for Istanbul) will also be provided.</p>
Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region	<p><b>Bulgaria</b>  Ministry of Education and Science published online several Manuals for teaching sign language to Deaf and to Deafblind pupils. Mira Tzvetkova-Arsova, Darinka Borisova and Svetlozar Parapanov are the authors of a “Manual for teaching sign language and other alternative and augmentative communication systems to Deafblind children and students”. It will be soon uploaded on the official web-site of Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science.</p> <p><b>Turkey</b>  <b>Ayyıldız, E.</b>  With the support of ErISFaVIA (Early Intervention Services for Families with Children with Additional Disabilities) project approved by the Erasmus + Program (Main Action 2), with the cooperation of Istanbul Medeniyet University and Ayşe Nurtac Sozbir Gunebakan Association for the Children with Multiple Disabilities with Visual Impairment and Their Families organized Infant-Parent Support Program for children who have MDVI age between 0-6 and their families. The program implemented in the Core Development Center in Istanbul. This program was held between January-June 2020, face-to-face and with distance education and support. There were 6 children and parents who were benefited from this program. Here is the link of the short video which gave information about the program. Youtube link <a href="https://youtu.be/irfLR9xd9Ww">https://youtu.be/irfLR9xd9Ww</a></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>Atsavun Uysal, S.</b> Sensory, motor, posture problems and solution suggestions in children with severe and multiple disabilities, 15<sup>th</sup> of May, 2020, Instagram live program (Moderator: P. Şafak, Gazi University)</p> <p><b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> 17th April, 2020, Dear parents of children with MDVI, you are our fellow travelers that we fight together for your children., messages from the world about the education of children with multiple disabilities during the pandemic. Website link <a href="http://www.cokengelsiz.com/dunyadan-mesajlar/">http://www.cokengelsiz.com/dunyadan-mesajlar/</a></p> <p><b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> On April 30th 2020, 80 graduates of the Perkins International Educational Leadership Program came together to discuss innovative ways to support children with multiple disabilities and their families. I was lucky enough to talk about our EI program. Youtube link <a href="https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=RDZ43C2Y1p4&amp;feature=s_hare">https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=RDZ43C2Y1p4&amp;feature=s_hare</a></p> <p><b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> The Communication Skills of the Children with Severe and Multiple Disabilities, 30<sup>th</sup> of April 2020, Instagram live program (Moderator: P. Şafak, Gazi University).</p> <p><b>Ayyıldız, E. &amp; Kefe, S.</b> Being the advocators of the rights of children with MDVI! A Story of an establishment and challenges of an association. 7th of May 2020, Instagram live program (Moderator: H. Gürtekin, the president of Ayse Nurtac Sozbir Gunebakan Association for the Children with Multiple Disabilities with Visual Impairment).</p> <p><b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> The Education of the Children with Multiple Disabilities, 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2020, Instagram live program (Moderator: B. Çebi, special education teacher).</p> <p><b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> The Education of the Parents who have Children with Multiple Disabilities, 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2020, Instagram live program (Moderator: B. Kaledibi, guidance counsellor).</p> <p><b>Ayyıldız, E.</b> Deafblindness exists!, 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2020, Instagram live program (Moderator: H. Gürtekin, the president of Ayse Nurtac Sozbir Gunebakan Association for the Children with Multiple Disabilities with Visual Impairment).</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p data-bbox="560 232 692 262"><b>Romania</b></p> <p data-bbox="560 275 1337 488">Bălaș-Baconschi, C., Șerban, I.L. (2020) - Assessment and supervision instruments in the development of training for the MDVI professionals; Annual Scientific Session of the Social Sciences Research Department, G. Baritiu History Institute, Romanian Academy - Cluj-Napoca Subsidiary, 19 November 2020, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.</p> <p data-bbox="560 499 1342 745">Șerban, I.L., Bălaș-Baconschi, C. (2020) - The role of Reflective Logs on the training programs for MDVI professionals – A case analysis; On-line National Conference with International participation: Education of People with Multiple Disabilities and Visual Impairment; 27 November 2020, Department of Special Education, Babes-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania.</p> <p data-bbox="560 790 1315 1037">Hathazi, A., Șerban, I.L., Bălaș-Baconschi, C., Pădure, M. (2020) - Reflection-based strategies in the professional development of teachers in MDVI; On-Line Conference Education of people with multiple disabilities and visual impairment: Contemporary trends and challenges; 5 December 2020, Department of Special Education, University of Thessaly, Volos, Greece.</p>

This report is submitted by Hathazi Andrea, representing region Balkan countries  
Mira Tzvetkova-Arsova, Bulgaria National Representative  
Emine Ayyildiz, Turkey National Representative



## Report from the Central European countries by Beata Pronay

**Region: Central European region**

**Period: 2020**

Area of Reference	Description
<p>How were practices and/or services regarding the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments affected as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic?</p>	<p><b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>            All services were affected, in spring lock down all schools closed, education moved online and parents had to take care of most education of primary school pupils. Resource centers worked also via phone, video conferences, early intervention services worked in spring 2 months via home office – phone, video conference, online meetings and seminars, Summer was open, in autumn schools for children with special needs and kindergartens were open, then closed for two weeks in November. Children in integration had to cope with online education, with less support from assistants. All of them missed contact with classmates and leisure time activities. Parents were and still are overloaded with teaching their children. Early intervention since May work in special mode with staff meetings on line, contacts with clients families according their wishes: personally, online, phone, e-mail. There is higher need for psychological support.</p> <p><b>HUNGARY</b>  <i><b>School for the Blind:</b></i> Our school used all possible channels in online teaching like: FB, viber, phone calls, messenger calls, chat rooms, teams, zoom.            We also provided materials and textbooks in Braille.            Tried to keep in touch with all our students, but their social background and their available IT equipment was very different.  <i><b>ELTE Support Office for students with Special Needs (SHÜTI):</b></i> The professionals working in ELTE SHÜTI made a big effort on teaching students how to use Zoom and Teams with screen readers; created a Facebook group for supporting students in issues related to online education.</p> <p><b>POLAND</b>            The COVID 19 pandemic affected activities of all government and non-government organizations and institutions. With education moved to online teaching special schools reported having to discontinue training in the area of mobility and independence skills. Online teaching affected in particular young learners with a visual impairment as not all of them have access (or necessary skills to use) specialist equipment. Parents of a totally blind child from a mainstream school reported difficulties with full participation of their child in lessons involving graphics (geometry, geography). Online teaching did not have serious negative effect on students with a visual impairment in higher education and practically all universities and colleges have services providing adaptations of educational materials.</p> <p><b>SLOVAK REPUBLIC</b></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Improving distant services (phone, on-line), continuous support provided to VI people (also regarding Covid-19). Our COVID-19 situation described within the enclosed file (ICEVI short questionnaire).</p> <p><b>SLOVENIA</b>  All schools were closed in March, distance learning started almost immediately, all support itinerant teachers provide was carried out virtually. Pupils till the age of 15 returned to school in May, as well as the students in final years of secondary schools who took national leaving school exams, written and oral parts. In May the support of mainstream schools restarted, our itinerant teachers were able to attend primary schools but not secondary schools.  In September school started for all children, the support of mainstream schools was performed in the usual way. Due to serious health situation in October, firstly, secondary schools were closed and distance learning started again, for primary schools and special schools autumn holidays were extended and then distance schooling started for them as well. In December, all pupils and students are still working from home. Special schools are closed as well, which has evolved many problems in the families. All support to mainstream schools is provided virtually. During the holidays and in September special attention was paid to developing ICT skills so that children and their parents are able to use different platforms (Zoom, MS Teams, ...). Particularly blind pupils and students needed extra lessons.  However, it is difficult or impossible to realise some parts of extended curriculum e.g. orientation and mobility training, daily living skills training, training of social skills, etc. when distant learning is taken place. A lot of parents' support is needed and sometimes it is difficult to provide it, especially, when parents are working from home as well or they are not able to stay at home with their children.  The efficiency of distance learning is especially questionable for the group of MDVI children.</p>
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	<p><b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>  There is no regional committee in Czech Republic, contact person has no contact with ICEVI members, information and Newsletter is sent out to all schools, resource centres, universities, early intervention centres and rehabilitation services.</p> <p><b>HUNGARY</b>  <i><b>School for the Blind:</b></i> Annual special educational conference (5<sup>th</sup> year) called "Dimensions"- this year online (Teams) in May  Annual Enviter general meeting and conference this year online (Zoom) 30<sup>th</sup> September, 1<sup>st</sup> Oct.  <i><b>National Deafblind Association:</b></i> cooperation with European Disability Forum in COVID-related policy-making</p> <p><b>SLOVENIA</b>  <i><b>TIFLO section,</b></i> a section within Association of Special Pedagogues of Slovenia, which is a group member of ICEVI and assembles professionals working in the field of education for children and young people with visual impairment, continued its mission in 2020, playing an important role in providing new knowledge and information for the professionals in the field even in these new conditions. However, only the first meeting in February was carried out face-to face. The next two,</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>in July and August, were virtual, as all the meetings within the Centre IRIS which hosts TIFLO section moved to the Internet (MS Teams platform).</p> <p>These meetings provide excellent opportunity to spread information and new achievements acquired within different projects. In 2020 TIFLO section members received information on 3 important projects going on in the field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the new project on Early intervention sponsored by the Lions Club,</li> <li>- the final form of observation tools developed within Erasmus+ project SMILE!, and</li> <li>- the report on the most important national project which was concluded in September, namely "Network of professional institutions to support children with special needs and their families". The purpose of the project was to implement a Centre of Expertise for holistic approach to children and young people with visual impairment, as well as to children and young people with special educational needs. The investment was co-financed by the Republic of Slovenia and the European Union from the European Social Fund.</li> </ul> <p>Besides this, a lively discussion was led on the topic of terminology in the field of visual impairment, due to use of certain terms typical for Slovene language. Some temporary decisions have been taken. Different commissions working under the umbrella of TIFLO section were not very active this year also due to the current situation.</p>
Global campaign activities, if any	<p><b>SLOVENIA</b></p> <p>Active participation in several international projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SMILE! Erasmus+ KA1 project dealing with socialisation issues of children and young people with visual impairment, was supposed to finish with the last training event planned for April 2020 at the School for the Blind Budapest. The training event was postponed to a later date that is why a joint decision was taken that both partners request an extension of the project. Another year has been approved. Since it is not possible to carry out the last training event face-to face at the moment, which is the plan, some online activities have been started to keep the project alive. The final training event is now planned for April 2021.</li> <li>- There is also SMILE too, a KA2 School partnership Erasmus+ project with The Centre IRIS being the coordinator, and The Royal Blind School, Scotland UK, Royal Dutch Visio, The Netherlands, High School for Visually Impaired in Prague (GOA), The Czech Republic, Lega del Filo d'Oro, Italy and Jordanstown School, Northern Ireland UK as partners, trying to continue its work. The main goal of this three-year project is to develop training programmes for teachers in mainstream school and parents of children and young people with visual impairment to assist the development of social skills. The second project meeting, which was supposed to take place in June at Jordanstown school, has been postponed to a later date. The training activities hosted by Royal Dutch Vision, planned for November 2020, will take place online in January and February 2021. The most important thing is that partners continue their cooperation on the project having regular online meetings once per month, on the other hand work also continues in working teams within partner organisations.</li> <li>- Since October 2019, the Centre IRIS has been participating as a partner in a two-year Erasmus + EQUAL project (Professional</li> </ul>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>support for teachers of visually impaired pupils in mainstream schools). There are four partners in the project, besides the Centre IRIS, there are:  Škola za učenike oštećenog vida »Veljko Ramadanović«, Serbia (leading partners),  Istituto regionale Rittmeyer per i chiechi di Trieste, Italy and  Državno učilište za deca i mladi so ošteten vid »Dimitar Vlahov«, Northern Macedonia.</p> <p>- Partner organisations work on two intellectual outputs. The first is publishing a manual for subject teachers in mainstream schools, which will contain practical guidelines for more effective teaching of blind and partially sighted students. The second one is to prepare a two-day training program for subject teachers in mainstream schools, to work with blind and partially sighted students. By achieving these goals, we would empower subject teachers of blind and partially sighted students to be able to adapt methods and forms of work, follow guidelines when adapting materials and thus be even more effective in their teaching.</p> <p>So far, a survey among mainstream school teachers who teach students with visual impairment has been made and work on the manual has started. There were two online activities: a transnational project meeting and a three-day learning teaching training for all the partners hosted by the Centre IRIS.</p> <p>11 schools/centres from the Balkan region, all working in the field of visual impairment, met virtually in November 2020 to start a closer cooperation.</p>
<p>Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period</p>	<p><b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b>  October 2020 online conference Agora, the conference on information and communication technologies for visually impaired users, which has been organized since 2015 by the Teiresiás Center of Masaryk University in its premises on Komenského náměstí 2 in Brno.</p> <p><b>HUNGARY</b>  LARESZ: Seminar on sexual education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CENTRAL-Hungarian Regional Association of individuals with VI (VGYKE): On-line workshop on the labor opportunities for people with visual impairment – October, organized by the Association</li> </ul> <p>ELTE BGGYK: National conference on the education and rehabilitation of persons with VI and MDVI (Oct. 19)</p> <p><b>POLAND</b>  <b>International conferences organized in Poland:</b>  <b>September 2020. Warsaw. Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University:</b> International conference "Building a cross-sectoral coalition for early child development and family support". In collaboration with Ministry of Education, Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy. Active participation of representatives of European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education.  <b>International conferences abroad with active participation of ICEVI members from Poland:</b>  <b>16th – 18th February 2020, West Asia ICEVVI conference – Kathmandu, Nepal</b>  <b>Conference theme: Inclusive Education: Leaving No One Behind</b></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Presentation: Bogusław Marek, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin: Tactile Graphics for Students with a Visual Impairment  <b>26th – 28th February 2020, International Conference on Innovative Practices and Research for Education and Rehabilitation of Persons with a Visual Impairment. Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India.</b></p> <p>Presentation: Bogusław Marek, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin: A Blind Child in a Mainstream School: A Problem or a Chance for Effective Education for All?</p> <p><b>Conferences of national significance</b>  <b>October 2020:</b> REHA FOR THE BLIND® IN POLAND 2020. Originally planned as an on-site event, due to the pandemic organized online.  Topic of the conference: The World of Touch, Sound and Magnigraphics.  <b>November 2020 – 5th Visual Impairment Conference “To See the Invisible”.</b> Online TEAMS conference organized by „Feniks (Society for Social Support), Cieszyn branch of Polish Association of Blind Persons, and University of Silesia. Keynote speaker – member of ICEVI, Bogusław Marek from The John Paul I Catholic University of Lublin.  Special guest speaker- Dr Wanda Diaz Merced <b>a blind astronomer</b> from European Gravitational Observatory.</p> <p><b>Training workshops offered by ICEVI members from Poland</b>  <b>6th – 8th February 2020 Blind People’s Association in Ahmedabad, Gujarat (India)</b>  Bogusław Marek, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin: Tactile graphics for leisure and education. Training for teachers of children with a visual impairment  <b>12th-13th March, Tampere (Finland). Workshop for Valteri (Finnish National Agency for Education)</b>  Bogusław Marek, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin: The Hungry Fingers Way to Tactile Graphics</p> <p><b>SLOVAK REPUBLIC</b>  Online webinars for the Bratislava Tourist Board and the Bratislava City Hall; 4 webinars aimed at accessibility of environment, information and communication for people with VI;  Workshop on accessibility for VI people designed for local authorities</p> <p><b>SLOVENIA</b>  - The annual two-day conference of Association of Special Education Teachers of Slovenia titled Holistic Approach to Treatment of Persons with SEN was supposed to be held in March and finally realised online in November with active participation of our members.  - Most training events for mainstream school teachers within the national project PoMoč Hand in Hand, needed to be carried out online, which is not as effective as when we meet face-to-face and establish a long-term cooperation.</p>
<p>Collaborative activities and meetings with world bodies such as WBU, IAPB, UN, World Bank, and other organizations at the regional level</p>	<p><b>HUNGARY</b>  Hungarian Federation for the Blind and Low Vision (MVGYOSZ): cooperation with EBU on policy making concerning voting</p> <p><b>POLAND</b>  <b>International project:</b>  <b>Invisible heritage: exchange and implementation of good practice in access to cultural resources and their participation in cultural life for blind people.</b></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>Funding</b> Cross-border Cooperation Programme Poland-Belarus-Ukraine 2014-2020. Lead partner: The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin. Partner". Partner: Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University. The project aims at making museum exhibits, historic buildings and architectural details of Lublin (Poland) and Ivano-Frankivsk (Ukraine) accessible to visitors with a visual impairment. The project includes production of accessible adaptations and training workshops for museum Staff, city guides and a group of totally blind persons. Project duration. Dates changed due to Ongoing project.</p> <p><b>SLOVAK REPUBLIC</b> Support Centre for Students with Special Needs at the Masaryk University (the Czech Republic) and FUNKA - company working in the area of accessibility (Sweden) – cooperating on an Erasmus+ project „From Education to Inclusion“ (EDI) aimed at accessibility (<a href="http://www.unss.sk/edi">www.unss.sk/edi</a>); European Blind Union (EBU) – cooperating on the „AVA“ project focused upon accessible voting; active members of the EBU Commission for Liaising with the EU; associate member at an Intereg project aimed at accessibility of air transport (involved countries of the Danube region)</p>
ICEVI collaborative work with national governments within the region	<p><b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b> ICEVI has no branch registered in Czech Republic, so there is no activity in cooperation with local institutions, there is cooperation of School for VI in Nám. Míru in Prague organizing 8 Conference on Psychology and VI in Prague postponed to July 2021 with local authorities and sponsors</p> <p><b>SLOVAK REPUBLIK</b> Participating at a high-level round-table discussion aimed at accessible elections – sharing experience on the accessibility of elections in other EU countries; Meeting purpose: to improve accessibility of elections in Slovakia</p> <p><b>SLOVENIA</b> Two new adapted vocational programmes for students with visual impairment in the field of tourism were approved in 2020. Both of them improve opportunities to acquire qualifications which meet demands in the labour market. A national project called "Network of professional institutions to support children with special needs and their families" was successfully concluded in September. The purpose of the project was to implement a Centre of Expertise for holistic approach to children and young people with visual impairment, as well as to children and young people with special educational needs. The project proved the need for such institutions, organisation scheme was tested and a range of activities was tried out. The project ended; the government still needs to set up a legal frame so that Centres of Expertise for different groups of SEN children may become part of education system.</p> <p>Due to lack of qualified teachers in all areas of special needs and in the field of visual impairment, as well the system supporting inclusive forms of education faces serious problems. Working conditions, especially working hours of itinerant teachers/visiting teachers do not encourage young teachers to start this career. There are efforts to improve the situation.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Special schools being closed due to Covid-19 pandemic parents of SEN children are trying to prove a negative impact the situation has on their children. They launched a campaign for opening special schools and they have lodged a constitutional complaint before the Constitutional Court.</p>
<p>Awards, Recognition, etc., to ICEVI members from the region</p>	<p><b>POLAND</b> Nov. 2020 The Maciej Lis Award of the Commissioner for Human Rights granted to Hanna Pasterny in recognition of her work in the area of defending the rights of persons with disabilities. Hanna Pasterny from CRIS (Centre for Development of Social Initiatives) - a non-governmental organization, consultant on disability issues.</p> <p><b>SLOVENIA</b> Marija Jeraša - got award of Association of Special Pedagogues of Slovenia for her valuable contribution to education practice of VI and MDVI children. Nina Čelešnik Kozamernik - got award of TIFLO section for her leading role in preparing different events to celebrate 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the first school for the blind was established in Ljubljana, and Dušan Škafar - award of TIFLO section for collecting materials and exhibits and preparing the exhibition on the history of education for the blind in Slovenia.</p>
<p>Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website</p>	<p><b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b> Eda PLAY TOM new app for children with MDVI on App Store and Google Play, Work sheets for children with VI and MDVI od web <a href="http://www.edaplay.com">www.edaplay.com</a></p> <p><b>HUNGARY</b> LARESZ: translation and dissemination of Get the Feel (methodological book on sexual education of young people with VI)</p> <p><b>POLAND</b> <b>1. Academic publications Szubielska, M., Imbir, K., Fudali Czyż, A., Augustynowicz, P. (2020).</b> How does knowledge about an artist's disability change the Aesthetic. In <i>Advances in Cognitive Psychology</i>, 16 (2), 150–159. <b>Szubielska, M., Wojtasiński, M., Pasternak, K., Szymańska, A., Wójtowicz, M. (2020).</b> Does art activism affect preschool children's attitudes toward individuals with blindness? <i>International Journal of Disability, Development and Education</i>. Advanced online publication. &gt;&gt; <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2020.1735624">https://doi.org/10.1080/1034912X.2020.1735624</a> <b>Szubielska, M., Fudali-Czyż, A. (2019 – published in 2020).</b> 'If I knew they were the expression of the creativity of people with blindness, I would rate them higher' – Bias in evaluating the work of people with blindness. In <i>Creativity: Theories-Research-Applications</i>, 6(2), 182-197. &gt;&gt; <a href="https://doi.org/10.1515/ctra-2019-0011">https://doi.org/10.1515/ctra-2019-0011</a> <b>J. Kuczyńska-Kwapisz, M. Dycht, E. Śmiechowska-Petrovskij (red.),</b> Kluczowe zagadnienia tyflopädagogiki i nauk pokrewnych. Kraków: Oficyna Wydawnicza „Impuls”. 2020. (Key issues in tyflopädagogy and related sciences) <b>New Polish edition of:</b> The Mangold Braille Program for tactile recognition</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>New Polish edition of:</b> The Oregon Project for Visually Impaired &amp; Blind Preschool Children: Skills Inventory</p> <p><b>New Polish edition of:</b> „Development of Orientation and Mobility Program for Multiply Impaired Low Vision Children” (by <a href="#">Randall K. Harley, Dr. John B. Merbler</a>)</p> <p><b>New Polish edition:</b> N.C Barraga and J.C. Morris. Program to develop efficiency in visual functioning</p> <p><b>2. Braille and tactile graphics publications (The TRAKT Foundation)</b></p> <p><b>Battles of the Polish Armour.</b> Atlas for persons with a visual impairment. 160 sets of 13 raised graphics showing major battlefields. Guidebook in large print and Braille</p> <p><b>The world during the World War II</b> (in preparation). Atlas for persons with a visual impairment.</p> <p><b>Warsaw Old and New Town.</b> (in preparation). Atlas with raised street maps for persons with a visual impairment.</p> <p><b>Castles and fortresses from eastern borderlands</b> (in preparation). Atlas with raised graphics for persons with a visual impairment</p> <p><b>Gulag - repression of the USSR against Poles and Polish citizens</b> (in preparation). Atlas with historic maps for persons with a visual impairment.</p> <p><b>SLOVAK REPUBLIC</b></p> <p>Toolkits on accessibility (environment, information, communication) designed for local authorities and people with VI – to be published at: <a href="http://www.unss.sk/edi">www.unss.sk/edi</a></p>
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	<p><b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b></p> <p>8th European Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment „Real life (In) dependence“ to be held July 1 – 2, 2021</p> <p><b>SLOVAK REPUBLIC</b></p> <p>On-line trainings on accessibility for local authorities and people with VI (prepared in collaboration with the Masaryk University and FUNKA)</p> <p><b>SLOVENIA</b></p> <p>ICC 2021 – International camp on Communication and Computers will return to Slovenia. The participants will be hosted by the Grammar school from Kranj.</p> <p>A follow-up of Opeye (Open and portable software library for rapid eye tracking), KA2 Erasmus+ project, called Open Eye Tracker Application for the multiple disabled visually impaired, coordinated by Institut pour Déficients Visuels from Luxembourg will start its work at the beginning of 2021.</p>
Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region	<p><b>CZECH REPUBLIC</b></p> <p>In the autumn of 2020, thanks to Covid 19, we lost the founder and the long-term director of services for the adults visually impaired, Dr. Josef Cerha, we miss him very much.</p> <p><b>HUNGARY</b></p> <p>ELTE BGGYK: research on the impact of COVID-19 on the population with VI; experiences of students with VI with online education (results shared at PRECIVIM conference – Univ. of Thessaly)</p> <p>Pilot research by Krisztina Kovács: Conditions of a successful university life – ongoing study among visually impaired university students</p> <p><b>POLAND</b></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>Library of scents</b> – project implemented by Owińska School for Learners with a visual impairment.</p> <p>„<b>KolejLOVE</b>” (<b>RailwayLOVE</b>) – platform for bringing potential travelers together. Persons with a visual impairment can find a sighted guide for the duration of a journey. The guide is entitled to 95% discount on train fare. Platform open to persons with other disabilities.</p> <p><b>Efficient foreign language users.</b> Project addressed at persons with a visual impairment. Age group 14 – 32. Organizer: The TRAKT Foundation. Funded by PZU – National Insurance Company.</p> <p><b>Rehabilitation of disabled children and young people in various types of institutions of the Society for the Care of the Blind.</b> Project implemented by the Laski school. Funded by PFRON. <b>Project duration:</b> 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2022.</p> <p><b>It’s really possible: a programme to support congenitally and late blind persons who have particular difficulties in their daily lives.</b> Project implemented by the Laski school. Project duration: 1.August 2020 – 31 March 2021. Funded by PFRON.</p> <p><b>Creative teachers for visually impaired children and young people.</b> Project implemented by the Bydgoszcz school for children with a visual impairment. Project duration: June 2019 – June 2020.</p> <p><b>Recitation contest for learners with a visual impairment.</b> Organized by the Dabrowa Gornicza school (online).</p> <p><b>Famous Poles seen through the eyes of children with low vision.</b> Project organized by the Kozminska special school (Warsaw)</p> <p><b>Mobile staff for successful school</b> – EU funded mobility project for teachers. Project implemented by the Hirszfeld school for learners with a visual impairment.</p> <p><b>ToTuPoint navigation system for persons with a visual impairment</b> – a Beacon based system installed in selected buildings at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań</p> <p><b>Towards a 21st century University</b> - a project aiming at accessibility for all. Project implemented at the Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań.</p> <p><b>Awareness raising events.</b></p> <p>„<b>Invisible street</b>” – exhibition in Poznań allowing sighted visitors to experience city traffic from the perspective of a blind person.</p> <p><b>Access to culture:</b></p> <p><b>Museum of the city of Lodz:</b></p> <p><b>Tactile guide to the museum</b> with Braille and raised graphics.3-D model of the museum.</p> <p><b>Multimedia exhibition:</b> Lodz in Europe. Europe in Lodz. The Promised Land yesterday and today Includes: 3-D model of pre-war Lodz, 3-D models of selected exhibits. Tactile floor plans. Website with audio description</p> <p><b>SLOVENIA</b></p> <p>A KA 1 Erasmus + EDUCARE project dealing with VI/MDVI pupils and students with behavioural challenges was recognized as an example of best practice in Slovenia by the National Agency within EU’s scheme finishing in 2020.</p>

This report is submitted by **Beáta Prónay** using the national reports from: Marketa Skalicka, Cz – Judit Gombás, H – Bob Marek and Grazyna Walczak, PL – Timea Hokova, CR – Marija Jeraša SLO national representatives.  
Date: 13 December 2020

## 4 Financial report 2020

<b><u>Balance</u></b>	<b><u>31/12/2019</u></b>
	<b>€ 44126</b>
Cash	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>€ 44126</b>
<b><u>Profit and Loss</u></b>	<b>31/12/2020</b>
<b>Income</b>	
Membership contributions	€ 15585.35
Conference fees	€ 780.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>€ 16365.35</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Administration Costs	€ 9962.46
Bank Fees	€ 171.55
Travel and Accommodation	€ 460.70
Conference costs	€ 1252.70
Other	€ 60.46
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>€ 11907.87</b>
<b>RESULT</b>	<b>€ 4457</b>
<b>Balance as per 31.12.2020</b>	<b>€ 48583</b>

## 5 Estimate 2021

<b><u>Balance</u></b>	<b><u>31/12/2020</u></b>
	<b>€ 48583</b>
Cash	0
Total	<b>€ 48583</b>
<b><u>Profit and Loss</u></b>	<b><u>31/12/2021</u></b>
<b>Income</b>	
Membership contributions	€ 8,100
Donations	€ 4,450
Conference fees	€ 1,500
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>€ 14050</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Administration Costs	€ 9,500
Bank Fees	€ 220
Travel and Accommodation	€ 1,380
Conference Costs	€ 2,900
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>€ 14020</b>
<b>RESULT</b>	<b>€ 30</b>
<b>Balance as per 31.12.2021</b>	<b>€ 48613</b>

## 6 Looking to the future

It is obvious that the first focus will be on a new date for our anniversary European Conference. Before the publication of this Annual Report the Israeli Host Committee has informed the board that it will not be able to organize the 10<sup>th</sup> ICEVI-Europe Conference in 2021. The board is investigating the possibility of the conference taking place elsewhere.

In the board's view, it is very important that once every four years members are given the opportunity to meet colleagues at the European level and to share new experiences and insights on the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments.

In addition, it is also required to hold a General Assembly to account for the policies pursued in the past period and the policy to be implemented in the coming period. At the same time, it is during the General Assembly that official elections take place for the positions of ICEVI-Europe President, Board Members & National Representatives.

For ICEVI-Europe, two elements are always of great importance. These are regional conferences and conferences of professional interest groups.

As far as regional conferences are concerned, following the 7th ICEVI-Balkan Conference that took place on 20-23 October 2019 at Hotel Ramada in Sofia, Bulgaria with the theme, "*Free access, real educational inclusion and unlimited technologies*", the first contacts have already been made to invest in the upcoming conference in Northern Macedonia. In addition, the possibilities for the 9<sup>th</sup> Conference of Eastern European Countries are being explored.

For a second time, a two-day ICEVI-Europe Conference in French for teachers and other professionals about inclusive education with the theme, "*Visual Impairment and Inclusive Education: What's New?*" is scheduled to be held on 10-11 May 2021 in Suresnes at INSHEA. For further information regarding the conference objectives, target audience, program, registration etc. please frequently visit the official conference website (<https://www.inshea.fr/fr/content/je2-deficience-visuelle-et-education-inclusive>) as it is updated when information becomes available.

As far as the ICEVI-Europe Professional Interest Groups are concerned, the 8th European Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment (VISION PRAGUE 2021) is already being prepared. It is scheduled take place online in July 2021. Further information may be found on the official conference website at <https://www.visionprague2020.cz/>. Hopefully in 2021 it will also be possible to organise the conference of professionals in Belgium on the theme of Early Intervention.

An important item to consider is the fact that the implementation of these plans and policies to be developed will depend on the control of the Covid-19 virus.

We would like to emphasize once again, that ICEVI-Europe members are strongly encouraged to take on a proactive role by taking the initiative to organize activities of

the association such as conferences of the professional interest groups and/or regional conferences, in cooperation with a member of the board. It is essential that fellow colleagues have a platform to exchange their knowledge and expertise with the goal of providing innovative services to the visually impaired, including those with additional disabilities, and actively partake in determining the course of action of ICEVI-Europe.

Let us hope for the best for each other and for ICEVI-Europe.

## 7 Members of the Board as of December 31st 2020

<p>Mr. <b>Hans Welling</b>, <i>President</i>  <a href="mailto:wellingja@yahoo.com">wellingja@yahoo.com</a></p>	
<p>Mrs. <b>Andrea Hathazi</b>, <i>Vice-President</i>  <i>representing the Balkan countries</i>  <a href="mailto:ahathazi@yahoo.com">ahathazi@yahoo.com</a></p>	
<p>Mr. <b>Steve McCall</b>, <i>Treasurer</i>  <i>representing the English speaking countries</i>  <a href="mailto:s.mccall@bham.ac.uk">s.mccall@bham.ac.uk</a></p>	
<p>Mrs. <b>Kathleen Vandermaelen</b>, <i>Secretary</i>  <i>representing the German and Dutch speaking countries</i>  <a href="mailto:kathleen.vandermaele@ganspoel.be">kathleen.vandermaele@ganspoel.be</a></p>	
<p>Mrs. <b>Nathalie Lewi-Dumont</b>,  <i>representing the French speaking countries</i>  <a href="mailto:nathalielewi@gmail.com">nathalielewi@gmail.com</a></p>	
<p>Mrs. <b>Dorthe Marie Degn</b>  <i>representing the Baltic and Nordic countries</i>  <a href="mailto:ab8e@kk.dk">ab8e@kk.dk</a></p>	
<p>Mrs. <b>Beata Pronay</b>,  <i>representing the Central European countries</i>  <a href="mailto:pronaybea@gmail.com">pronaybea@gmail.com</a></p>	
<p>Mrs. <b>Ana Isabel Ruiz López</b>  <i>representing the South European countries</i>  <a href="mailto:airl@once.es">airl@once.es</a></p>	

<p><b>Mr. Vladimir Ruchin</b>  <i>representing the East European countries</i>  <a href="mailto:r-vl@yandex.ru">r-vl@yandex.ru</a></p>	
<p><b>Mr. Francis Boé</b>          Advisor of ICEVI-Europe to GPEAA  <a href="mailto:francis.boe@free.fr">francis.boe@free.fr</a></p>	
<p><b>Mrs. Darija Udovicic Mahmuljin</b>          Advisor of ICEVI-Europe  <a href="mailto:Darija.Udovicic@Perkins.org">Darija.Udovicic@Perkins.org</a></p>	
<p><b>Mrs. Betty Leotsakou</b> †  <b>Immediate Past President</b>  <i>July 2013- January 6, 2017</i></p>	



Martha Gyftakos  
 Executive Assistant to the Presidency of ICEVI-Europe

[mgyftakos@yahoo.com](mailto:mgyftakos@yahoo.com)

## 8 ICEVI REGIONS of Europe

### *Baltic and Nordic Countries*

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Estonia Mrs <b>Monica Lõvi</b> , <a href="mailto:monica.lovi@tek.tartu.ee">monica.lovi@tek.tartu.ee</a>	
Finland Mrs <b>Päivi Toikkanen</b> , <a href="mailto:paivi.toikkanen@valteri.fi">paivi.toikkanen@valteri.fi</a>	
Iceland Mrs <b>Melissa Auðardóttir</b> <a href="mailto:melissa.audardottir@midstod.is">melissa.audardottir@midstod.is</a>	
Latvia Mrs <b>Ligita Geida</b> , <a href="mailto:ligitageida@inbox.lv">ligitageida@inbox.lv</a>	
Lithuania Mrs <b>Grita Strankauskiene</b> , <a href="mailto:grita.stran@gmail.com">grita.stran@gmail.com</a>	
Norway Mrs <b>Tonje Lundervold</b> , <a href="mailto:tonje.lundervold@statped.no">tonje.lundervold@statped.no</a>	
Sweden Mrs <b>Tina Björk</b> , <a href="mailto:tina.bjork@spsm.se">tina.bjork@spsm.se</a>	

## English speaking Countries

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United Kingdom, Wales Mrs <b>Sarah Hughes</b> <a href="mailto:qtvisarah@gmail.com">qtvisarah@gmail.com</a>	
United Kingdom, England Mr <b>Rory Cobb</b> <a href="mailto:rorycobb.view@gmail.com">rorycobb.view@gmail.com</a>	
United Kingdom, Scotland Mr <b>John Ravenscroft</b> <a href="mailto:John.Ravenscroft@ed.ac.uk">John.Ravenscroft@ed.ac.uk</a>	
Israel Mrs <b>Nurit Neustadt-Noy</b> <a href="mailto:nuritnoy@gmail.com">nuritnoy@gmail.com</a>	

## French speaking Countries

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France Mrs <b>Marie Renée Hector</b> , <a href="mailto:mrhector@noos.fr">mrhector@noos.fr</a>	

France Mrs <b>Michelle Collat (French speaking)</b> , <a href="mailto:michele.collat@orange.fr">michele.collat@orange.fr</a>	
Switzerland Mr <b>Lucien Panchaud</b> <a href="mailto:cphv@fa2.ch">cphv@fa2.ch</a>	

### **South European Countries**

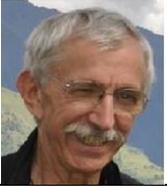
Italy Mrs <b>Maria Mencarini</b> , <a href="mailto:mencarinimaria@gmail.com">mencarinimaria@gmail.com</a> copy to <a href="mailto:archivio@irifor.eu">archivio@irifor.eu</a>	
Italy <b>vacancy</b>	
Portugal <b>vacancy</b>	
Spain Mrs <b>Elena Gastón López</b> , <a href="mailto:eql@once.es">eql@once.es</a>	
Spain Mrs <b>Ana Isabel Ruiz López</b> , <a href="mailto:airl@once.es">airl@once.es</a>	
Andorra Mrs <b>Mariona Carbonell del Castillo</b> , <a href="mailto:mariona.carbonell@gmail.com">mariona.carbonell@gmail.com</a> , school: <a href="mailto:eensm@andorra.ad">eensm@andorra.ad</a>	
Malta Mr <b>Francis Turchett</b> <a href="mailto:socblindmalta@gmail.com">socblindmalta@gmail.com</a>	
Monaco <b>vacancy</b>	
San Marino <b>vacancy</b>	

## German and Dutch speaking Countries

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<p>Germany Mrs <b>Elke Wagner</b>, <a href="mailto:wagnerluke@aol.com">wagnerluke@aol.com</a></p>	
<p>Germany <b>vacancy</b></p>	
<p>Germany <b>vacancy</b></p>	
<p>The Netherlands <b>vacancy</b></p>	
<p>Switzerland Mr <b>Christian Niederhauser</b>, <a href="mailto:c.niederhauser@blindenschule.ch">c.niederhauser@blindenschule.ch</a></p>	
<p>Lichtenstein <b>vacancy</b></p>	
<p>Luxembourg Mr <b>Frank Groben</b>, <a href="mailto:frank.groben@ediff.lu">frank.groben@ediff.lu</a></p>	
<p>South Tirol (Italy) Mrs <b>Elisabeth Gitzl</b>, <a href="mailto:info@blindenzentrum.bz.it">info@blindenzentrum.bz.it</a></p>	

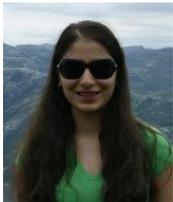
## Central European Countries

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<p>Poland Mrs <b>Graszyna Walczak</b>, <a href="mailto:grawal20@wp.pl">grawal20@wp.pl</a></p>	
<p>Poland Mr <b>Boguslaw 'Bob' MAREK</b>, <a href="mailto:forblindkids@gmail.com">forblindkids@gmail.com</a>, <a href="mailto:kulcan@kul.pl">kulcan@kul.pl</a></p>	
<p>Slovak Republic Ms <b>Tímea Hóková</b>, <a href="mailto:hokova@unss.sk">hokova@unss.sk</a></p>	
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### ***East European Countries***

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<p>Belarus Mr <b>George Losik</b>, <a href="mailto:georgelosik@yahoo.com">georgelosik@yahoo.com</a></p>	

Georgia Mrs <b>Mariam Mikiashvili</b> , <a href="mailto:Mariam.miki@gmail.com">Mariam.miki@gmail.com</a>	
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Moldova <b>vacancy</b>	
Russia - Central Region, North-West Federal District <b>vacancy</b>	
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Ukraine Mrs <b>Vira Remazhevskaya</b> , <a href="mailto:lewenia@hotmail.com">lewenia@hotmail.com</a>	
Tajikistan Mr <b>Tengniev Kholmakhmad Ahmadovich</b> , <a href="mailto:tbu-tajiknet@mail.ru">tbu-tajiknet@mail.ru</a>	

### ***Balkan Countries***

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<p>Bosnia and Herzegovina  <b>Mr. Azur Kuduzović</b>  <a href="mailto:azurkuduz@gmail.com">azurkuduz@gmail.com</a></p>	
<p>Bulgaria  <b>Mrs. Mira Tzvetkova-Arsova</b>  <a href="mailto:miratz@abv.bg">miratz@abv.bg</a></p>	
<p>Croatia  <b>Mrs Marijana Konkoli Zdesic,</b>  <a href="mailto:marijana@malidom.hr">marijana@malidom.hr</a></p>	
<p>Cyprus  <b>Mrs Maria Kyriacou,</b>  <a href="mailto:m.kyriacou@cytanet.com.cy">m.kyriacou@cytanet.com.cy</a></p>	
<p>North Macedonia  <b>Mrs Elena Hristova,</b>  <a href="mailto:hristova_e@yahoo.com">hristova_e@yahoo.com</a></p>	
<p>Greece  <b>Mr Vassilis Argyropoulos,</b>  <a href="mailto:vassargi@uth.gr">vassargi@uth.gr</a></p>	
<p>Montenegro <b>vacancy</b></p>	
<p>Romania  <b>Mrs Andrea Hathazi,</b>  <a href="mailto:ahathazi@yahoo.com">ahathazi@yahoo.com</a></p>	
<p>Romania <b>vacancy</b></p>	
<p>Turkey  <b>Mrs Songül Atasavun Uysal,</b>  <a href="mailto:songula@hacettepe.edu.tr">songula@hacettepe.edu.tr</a></p>	
<p>Turkey</p>	

<p>Mr. <b>Onder Islek</b>, <a href="mailto:islekonder@hotmail.com">islekonder@hotmail.com</a></p>	
<p>Turkey Ms. <b>Emine AYYILDIZ</b>, <a href="mailto:ayyildizemine@yahoo.com">ayyildizemine@yahoo.com</a></p>	
<p>Serbia Mrs <b>Aleksandra Grbović</b>, <a href="mailto:sgrbovic@ptt.rs">sgrbovic@ptt.rs</a>, <a href="mailto:alexandragrbovic@gmail.com">alexandragrbovic@gmail.com</a></p>	