



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

# **Annual report 2017**

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# 1 Preface

Herewith, the board of ICEVI-Europe presents the annual report 2017. This year was in many aspects a special year.

On January 6, 2017, the President of ICEVI-Europe, Panagiota Leotsakou, for everyone Betty, sadly and untimely passed away after a brief illness. This means for the board, especially for the Vice -President, additional efforts to the forthcoming European conference.

The 9th ICEVI-European Conference went well. We can look back to a successful conference in Bruges, Belgium. The Opening Ceremony Speech by Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President Emeritus of the European Council, as well as, the presentations of the Keynote Speakers, Prof. dr. Claudia Claes, Prof. dr. Bea Maes, Mrs. Kristen Layton, Dr. Elke Wagner, and Mr. Peter Verstraten were inspiring, thought-provoking and qualitatively good. In general, all the contributions were of a high level. The conference was well organized and well-received by participants.

It was somewhat disappointing that the number of participants was less than expected. The reason for this was the fact that more international conferences took place in the same period.

In the General Assembly, the elections/re-elections of the new Board of ICEVI-Europe took place. Unfortunately, some Board Members bid a farewell to the Board of ICEVI-Europe, announcing their inability to continue within their role. The Board of ICEVI-Europe, once again, wishes to sincerely and gratefully thank Tarja Hännikäinen, Patrick Temmesfeld, and Krisztina Kovacs for their tireless efforts and outstanding contributions to the organization and wishes them great success in their future endeavours. I was elected as President of the association. The following individuals were Elected as New Board Members: Anne Kristine Grosbøll- representing the Baltic and Nordic countries region, Kathleen Vandermaelen- representing the German and Dutch speaking countries region, and Beáta Pronay- representing the Central European countries region. The following Board Members were Re-Elected within their existing position: Steve McCall- representing the English-speaking countries region, Nathalie Lewi-Dumont- representing the French speaking countries region, Ana Isabel Ruiz López- representing the South European countries region, Vladimir Ruchin- representing the East European countries region and Andrea Hathazi- representing the Balkan countries region.

For a second consecutive year, the ICEVI-European Awards Ceremony took place during the General Assembly of the European Conference. Because of the special merit for people with visual impairment and the service providing to them in improving the quality of life of people with visual impairments, the ICEVI-European Awards were proudly awarded to: the late Panagiota (Betty) Leotsakou, Perkins International and Elizabeth Kate Chapman OBE. The ICEVI-European Award 2017 for Individuals was posthumously awarded to the late Panagiota (Betty) Leotsakou not only in recognition of her significant achievements as President of ICEVI-Europe, but also for the lasting impact of her work in breaking down the barriers for the visually impaired and the disabled and bringing meaning and opportunity to the lives of

children and adults with visual impairment, allowing them to achieve their full potential. The ICEVI-European Award 2017 for Organizations was awarded to Perkins International in recognition of the significant impact of its work over the years in developing competences for teachers and educators in the field of blindness and deafblindness, implementing actions and services, providing resources, training and advocacy with the aim to improve the lives of the 4.5 million children around the world without access to education due to blindness. Finally, the ICEVI-European President's Award 2017 was awarded to Elizabeth Kate Chapman, OBE, in recognition of her founding Europe's first Distance Education Programme to train teachers of the visually impaired, her outstanding achievements as a leading educator for children and young people with visual impairment and as the first female president of ICEVI-Europe.

Shortly, the conference was a nice European meeting place.

In the meantime, the board has had a meeting in November 2017 in Helsinki, Finland and has planned the activities for the coming years. Central issues are regional conferences and the realization of professional interest groups in the coming years. On the website of ICEVI-Europe, there is more information, including the portfolio holders from the board. It is the wish of the board that before the 10th European Conference in Israel there will be conferences or workshops of the different interest groups. The following Board Members were elected as Management of the association for the term 2017-2021: Vice-President: Andrea Hathazi, Treasurer: Steve McCall, and Secretary: Kathleen Vandermaelen.

The board is delighted to report that new members- both individuals and organizations- have joined our membership network. The more members ICEVI-Europe has, the more ICEVI-Europe can achieve in the improvement of services for people with visual impairment. We strongly encourage colleagues, schools, service centres, associations and institutions to participate in the ICEVI-Europe membership network.

The board hopes you will read the annual report with interest and also will take note of the activities that have taken place in various countries and sub-regions. It is our hope that this will inspire you to cooperate with fellow colleagues in and beyond Europe. Your feedback and suggestions are always happily received and greatly appreciated. We urge you to utilize the ICEVI-Europe website for acquiring further information or for publishing new information.

The board would like to thank you all who have contributed to ICEVI-Europe activities in 2017. We hope you will continue to participate in 2018.

This Annual Report was sent to all of the National Representatives, being that they are members of the General Meeting, asking for their agreement and it was approved by them.

On behalf of the Board,



Hans Welling  
President

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

## 2 Report from the board

ICEVI-Europe aims to support blind and visually impaired people achieve their desire to actively participate as full members of society. The organization of conferences is an integral part of the ICEVI-Europe 's networking and advocacy in order to achieve this aim.

2017 was entirely devoted to the organization of the European Conference in Bruges, Belgium. The conference was successful. The official Opening Ceremony Speech delivered by Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, President Emeritus of the European Council, was most inspiring. The presentations of the Keynote Speakers were stimulating and innovating but also the many presentations during the whole conference were of high quality. This conference would not have been a success without the time, energy and tireless efforts devoted by the 3 Belgian organizations in Flanders (BLL - Blindenzorg licht en liefde, Spermalie and Centrum Ganspoel) who combined forces to bring this event to fruition. parallel sessions, workshop sessions, social program and coffee/meal breaks facilitated networking and interesting professional discussions. The European Conference in Bruges successfully proved to be a meeting place where researchers, practitioners, specialists and academicians in the field of visual impairment, the individual person with visual impairment and his environment, as well as communities came together to exchange knowledge and expertise and share best practices.

In the year under review, ICEVI-Europe participated as well directly or indirectly in many committees:

Training and propagation of Braille. The purpose of this project was collecting good practices in the area of braille teaching as well evidence of the importance of braille literacy. After screening and analyzing the various situations and solutions in all Nordic countries during phase one in 2016, phase two was completed in 2017 wherein the project widespread the screening to Estonia, Austria, Italy and France. A workshop based on this project was organized during the European Conference in Bruges. The Final Conference of the Project was successfully held in Fredericia, Denmark, on November 21-23, 2017 at the Fuglsangcentret, Danish Association of the Blind, Training and Holiday Centre. The conference was attended by 24 specialist and proficient braille users from 9 participating project countries and the 6-member project steering group. The final report will be published at the beginning of 2018.

Another project was carried out together with the European Blind Union, the Erasmus+ Mobility of Students with Visual Impairment. The second phase of this common project on the accessibility of mobility programs for students with visual impairment in Europe was completed in 2017. A report based on the Pilot Survey among Erasmus+ and Disability Coordinators was produced in January 2017. The recommendations contained in this report were based on an online questionnaire that was prepared and distributed to disability coordinators and Erasmus+ coordinators at higher education institutions who deal with hosting or sending Erasmus+ students with and without disabilities. The survey focused on two aspects – the participation rate of students with visual impairment in the Erasmus+ programme, as well as the support services which universities can offer to these students during their

preparation and stays abroad. In February 2017, a report on the Accessible Universities for Erasmus+ Students with Visual Impairment was produced. This report was based on a summary of results from research and organization of meetings with two focus groups, one in Hungary and one in Slovakia. The participants were blind and partially sighted students and graduates of universities in Bratislava (Slovak Republic) and Budapest (Hungary), who had studied at foreign universities within the Erasmus mobility programme. The experiences and suggestions of these students were taken into account for this report.

ICEVI-Europe was a partner in the Erasmus+ project entitled BaGMIVI- Bridging the Gap Between Museums and Individuals with Visual impairment. The objectives of the project were the following:

- Enabling museum members to become more aware and update their knowledge regarding the disabling barriers that impede the access of visitors with visual impairments to museums
- Creating learning, cultural and social opportunities for individuals with visual impairments
- Promoting the collaboration between museums, schools and associations of individuals with visual impairments.
- Identifying and distinguishing the best practices and guidelines for the development of an accessible and inclusive museum for visitors with visual impairments.

In addition to having the leading role in designing and structuring the videos regarding the project museum staff training events and the development and implementation of differentiated and accessible programs of the museums for visitors with visual impairment, ICEVI-Europe participated in the dissemination of the project's findings through its website, newsletters and the ICEVI European Conference in Bruges. On August 31, 2017 the 36-month BaGMIVI Project came to an end.

The final reports of the first two projects have also been issued and published on the website.

In 2017, ICEVI-Europe attended as well the meeting of the European Coalition for Vision, a platform of organizations and companies that are involved in blindness and low vision and the services providing.

A Special Conference Newsletter Issue was disseminated in 2017, as a way of promoting the European Conference in Bruges and providing potential conference attendees with important information regarding the Keynote Speaker Presentations, Meetings of the Regions, ICEVI-Europe General Assembly and Elections, as well as, Membership in ICEVI-Europe. Moreover, three issues of the Newsletter were published in 2017. We encourage you to visit the website of ICEVI-Europe [www.icevi-europe.org](http://www.icevi-europe.org) for further information.

Two Meetings of the ICEVI-Europe Board were held in the year 2017. The first Board Meeting was held on April 20-22 2017 in Leuven, Belgium. This was the last board meeting before the European Conference, wherein the final preparations were discussed. The second Board Meeting took place in Helsinki, Finland on November 15-18, 2017. The meeting in Helsinki was very important given that it was the first

meeting with the newly elected board and the items that were discussed in the following: evaluation the European conference, election of Officers of ICEVI-Europe- Vice-President, Treasurer & Secretary, as well as, commencement of making a Plan of Actions for the upcoming years.

The President of ICEVI-Europe attended the meetings of ICEVI-World and has had a role as Regional Development Advisor of ICEVI-World in connection with the Regional Chairs/Presidents of the ICEVI regions, which entails discussing with the regions the process of making constitutions and registering themselves as legal entities. He attended the National Conference jointly organized by The ICEVI India and Sense India on December 8-10, 2017 in India.

### 3 ICEVI-Europe activities in 2017



#### Report from the Baltic and Nordic countries by Anne Kristine Grosbøll

**Region: Nordic-Baltic Sub-region**  
**Period: 2017**

**This report is submitted by** Anne Kristine Grosbøll and Dorthe Marie Degn, Denmark in cooperation with Päivi Toikkanen and Tarja Hännikäinen, Finland, Benjamín Júlíusson, Island and Anders Rönnbäck, Sweden

<b>Area of Reference</b>	<b>Description</b>
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	<p>A Baltic and Scandinavian Regional meeting was coordinated with the 7<sup>th</sup> ICEVI-Europe Conference in Bruges, Belgium.</p> <p>As Tarja Hännikäinen, Finland, after many dedicated years, resigned as our group repr., and new country representatives were present, the meeting focused at the election of a new Board repr. for the Nordic countries and the role of country representatives, expectaions and obligations.</p> <p>Anne Kristine Grosbøll, dir. at IBOS in Denmark were elected as the new ICEVI-Europe Board member.</p> <p>Participants had a possibility to share organisational and professional views among Nordic and Baltic countries. Key topics were: New initiatives and projects in the member countries, country topics for the next NOVIR newsletter on training of professionals working with VIP in the Baltic-Nordic countries.</p> <p>Inspiration from the ICEVI-Europe Conference speeches and workshops were shared.</p>

<p>Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period</p>	<p><b>Iceland:</b> On 25<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of October 2017 the National Institute for the Blind, Visually Impaired, and Deafblind in Iceland conducted a workshop about cerebral visual impairment (CVI) for teachers in mainstream schools and special units. The aim was to introduce teachers to the basic concepts of cerebral visual impairment. The main discussion points were ideas how we can work with children with CVI. 18 teachers and professionals from different schools and units participated at the workshop.</p> <p><b>Finland:</b> National training days for multiprofessional staff working with children with visual impairment was organized in January 2017. This annual meeting offers a great possibility for the specialists as teachers and rehabilitation workers and parents to hear the latest situation with the services and trends on the area and naturally discuss and change ideas.</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>Sweden:</b> The Tactile Reading Conference was held in Stockholm in April 2017. Over 300 delegates, speakers, and exhibitors from 28 countries participated at the conference for the exchange of experience and research about braille and tactile reading for children and youth. Topics for the conference were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of tactual understanding</li> <li>• Tactile reading and the brain</li> <li>• Braille and literacy</li> <li>• Tactile graphics</li> <li>• Universal design and tactile reading</li> </ul> <p><b>Denmark:</b> IBOS and Herlev Hospital have 2017 initiated a two year research project on the effects of IBOS' Neuro Vision Therapy, NVT, for adult persons with a vision impairment because of stroke, etc.</p> <p><b>Denmark, Lithuania (and Poland):</b> IBOS and Communication Centre Reg. Copenhagen, DK and Kaunas Center for Blind and Visually Impaired, LT, have joined the Institute for Regional Development Foundation, FIRR, Poland in a new EU Erasmus+ project called EchoProVIP, Dec. 2017 – 2019. 12 O&amp;M instructors will participate in echolocation teachings headed by DK. DK and Poland are responsible for writing a curricula and a compendium and Lithuania for giving recommendations on implementing echolocation into mainstream O&amp;M education and methods used. Project manager Mrs. Anna Rozborska, FIRR.</p>

<p>Awards, Recognition, etc., to ICEVI members from the region</p>	<p>We wish to thank Tarja Hännikäinen, Finland, for her representation of this Region and dedicated work for the ICEVI purposes.</p>
<p>Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website</p>	<p><b>EBU &amp; ICEVI-Europe Joint Project "Training and Propagation of Braille"</b>  <a href="#">EBU &amp; ICEVI-Europe Joint Project "Training and Propagation of Braille" for download, format docx, 17kB.</a>  <a href="#">EBU &amp; ICEVI-Europe Joint Project "Training and Propagation of Braille" for download, format pdf, 340kB</a></p> <p><b>Iceland:</b> The TEACH CVI project ended in October 2017. So all the material is available at the website <a href="http://www.teachcvi.net">www.teachcvi.net</a>. There you can find leaflets, guidelines, screening tools, assessments, teaching materials, terminology and more about CVI.</p> <p><b>Denmark:</b> The Danish Union for the Blind and IBOS have published a report (in Danish) about the findings and results from the project "Rethinking the Future", a collaboration between a civilian society org. and a public org., between research, voluntary members, study councillors and labour market councilors in identifying and motivating young VIP to a better future via education and/or job.</p>
<p>Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months</p>	<p><b>Iceland:</b> In March 2018 there will be a seminar for braille teachers. Gyntha Goertz from Visio in Netherlands will visit us and have a two day seminar in teaching braille, both children and adults.</p> <p><b>Denmark:</b> IBOS the 6.- 9.03.18 there is a seminar about how to implement the Pre-employment Program, PEP, in Denmark with Ph.d. Karen Wolffe, Texas. PEP is targeted at jobseeking VIP. An open seminar will be held the 9.03 at 9-10 o'clock focusing on methods to empower the jobseeker.</p>
<p>Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region</p>	<p><b>Sweden:</b> De Verdier, K., Fernell, E., &amp; Ek, U. (2017) "Challenges and Successful Pedagogical Strategies: Experiences from Six Swedish Students with Blindness and Autism in Different School Settings" in Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders.</p> <p>De Verdier, K., Ek, U., Löfgren, S., &amp; Fernell, E. (2017) "Children with blindness - major causes, developmental outcomes and implications for habilitation and educational support: a two decade, Swedish population-based study" in Acta Ophthalmologica.</p>



## Report from the English speaking countries by Steve McCall

Region: English speaking Countries  
 Period: 2017

Area of Reference	Description
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	Meeting of English speaking representatives in Bruges Belgium
Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period	<p><b>England</b> VIEW, the professional association for teachers of the visually impaired, held its annual conference for teachers of the visually impaired in Birmingham in March. Speakers included the American Educationalist Anne Swenson who spoke about braille. The conference was a great success and details of the 2018 conference can be found on</p> <p><b>Ireland</b> ChildVision the National Education Centre for Blind Children <a href="http://www.childvision.ie">www.childvision.ie</a> organised a series of training seminars and workshops on education and visual impairment for parents and professionals throughout 2017. For information on the 2018 programme see the May 2018 ICEVI newsletter or contact Audrey Farrely. <a href="mailto:AudreyFarrely@childvision.ie">AudreyFarrely@childvision.ie</a></p> <p><b>Israel</b> The 2021 ICEVI European Conference will be held in Israel. The Israeli Host Committee gave a presentation about their plans at the ICEVI Europe Conference in Bruges in 2017. Hans Welling, the president of ICEVI Europe has since visited Israel to meet with the host committee and a representative of the Host Committee will be attending the next ICEVI Board meeting.</p> <p><b>Scotland</b> John Ravenscroft (Professor of Childhood Visual Impairment, Institute for Education, Teaching and Leadership, University of Edinburgh) contributed to the programme of the ICEVI Europe conference in Bruges.</p> <p><b>Wales:</b> The Annual Wales Eyecare Conference was held in Cardiff and attracted a range of professionals</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	from health, education and rehabilitation. The Welsh Association of Vision Impairment Educators (WAVIE) group continued its role in keeping VI educators across the country informed and in touch with current national matters.
Collaborative activities and meetings with world bodies such as WBU, IAPB, UN, World Bank, and other organizations at the regional level	<b>England</b> The meeting of the European Coalition for Vision was held in London and attended by S McCall as representative of ICEVI. <a href="http://www.ecvision.eu/">http://www.ecvision.eu/</a>
Awards, Recognition, etc., to ICEVI members from the region	<b>England</b> Elizabeth Chapman, OBE, received the ICEVI European Award at the 2017 ICEVI Europe Conference in Bruges, Elizabeth was the first female president of ICEVI Europe, A video acceptance speech by Elizabeth Chapman was shown at the Conference.
Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website	<p>The UK Learning Media Assessment (UKLMA) resource, hosted by VIEW, was released in 2017. It is designed to help Teachers of Children with Vision Impairment and the team around the child to make informed, transparent and data-driven decisions about the learning and literacy media that will maximise individual children’s educational attainment. You can access a taster of this resource by visiting: <a href="https://view.lunsvle.co.uk/course/view.php?id=11">https://view.lunsvle.co.uk/course/view.php?id=11</a> and logging in as a guest.</p> <p>The NatSIP Eligibility Framework is used across England and Wales by Teachers of the Visually Impaired to calculate the level of educational support needed for each child with visual impairment. This tool has proved really helpful to services and is widely used in planning support and making arguments for increased resources. (<a href="https://www.natsip.org.uk/doc-library-login/eligibility-framework/vision-impairment">https://www.natsip.org.uk/doc-library-login/eligibility-framework/vision-impairment</a>)</p>
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	<p>7 th European Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment, 1-2 November, Thessaloniki.</p> <p>Meeting of the ICEVI Europe Board, Birmingham April 2018.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
<p>Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region</p>	<p><b>Israel</b></p> <p>Throughout 2017, Ofek Liyladenu, the Israel National Association of Parents of Children with Visual Impairments played a key role in the process which led to the acceptance by the Israeli Parliament of the Accessibility in Education Regulations, the final element of the Equal rights for Persons with Disabilities Act. The organization took the lead on voicing the needs of children and parents with visual impairments and ensuring integration of all their accessibility requirements into the regulations. The legislation defines the responsibilities of service providers and clarifies the enforcement and supervision powers by the relevant authorities. For example, the Commission for Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the Ministry of Justice can bring to court municipalities that fail to provide adequate services at their local schools.</p> <p>Among other things, the regulations cover school admission procedures and places an obligation on schools to meet the needs of children with VI in areas such as the provision of school books and materials in an accessible format, appropriate lighting and shading of playgrounds and classrooms, marking of paths and removal of obstacles, storage and support for assistive devices. And technology. The regulations provide detail on the schools' responsibilities to ensure the accessibility of school buildings, activities, outdoor trips, as well as training and guidance of staff for all aspects of the educational work.</p> <p><b>England</b></p> <p>VICTAR (the Visual Impairment Centre for Teaching and Research) at the School of Education, University of Birmingham lists on its website details of research carried out in 2017, The Centre was recognized as producing World Class research in the 2014 research Excellence Framework exercise conducted in all UK Universities.</p> <p><a href="https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/education/research/victar/index.aspx">https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/education/research/victar/index.aspx</a></p> <p>In 2017 it produced a number of academic publications in highly rated Journals:</p> <p><a href="https://www.afb.org/jvib/Newjvibabstract.asp?articleid=jvib110607">https://www.afb.org/jvib/Newjvibabstract.asp?articleid=jvib110607</a></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p data-bbox="563 271 1337 338"><a href="https://nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/jbir/jbir17/jbir070203.html">https://nfb.org/images/nfb/publications/jbir/jbir17/jbir070203.html</a></p> <p data-bbox="563 383 1337 450"><a href="http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cch.12462/abstract">http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cch.12462/abstract</a></p> <p data-bbox="563 495 1337 562"><a href="http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08856257.2016.1254971">http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08856257.2016.1254971</a></p>

**This report is submitted by:**

Steve McCall - ICEVI Europe representative of the English speaking region



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

Region: French speaking

Period: 2017

Area of Reference	Description
Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period	<p><b>Belgium:</b></p> <p><b>Oct 12<sup>th</sup>: 1<sup>st</sup> scientific day</b> organized by University Chair UCL-IRSA (Université Catholique de <u>Louvain-la-Neuve</u> – Ipsy faculté de psychologie et des sciences de l'éducation/ Institut Royal pour Sourds et Aveugles) about sensory impairments and learning disabilities.  <a href="https://uclouvain.be/fr/instituts-recherche/ipsy/journee-scientifique-chaire-ucl-irsa.html">https://uclouvain.be/fr/instituts-recherche/ipsy/journee-scientifique-chaire-ucl-irsa.html</a></p> <p><b>Oct 14<sup>th</sup> Mons 14/10/2017 Symposium about visual impairments among children (organized by the Amis des aveugles organization les troubles visuels chez l'enfant à Mons</b> (organisé par les Amis des Aveugles)  <a href="https://wal.autonomia.org/article/symposium-sur-les-troubles-visuels-chez-l-enfant-a-mons-le-14-octobre-2017">https://wal.autonomia.org/article/symposium-sur-les-troubles-visuels-chez-l-enfant-a-mons-le-14-octobre-2017</a></p> <p>- Oct. 14<sup>th</sup> <u>Namur</u> - conference RetinaPigmentosa 2017 : Gene therapy and visual prosthesis : medical approach and testimony  <i>« Thérapie génique et prothèse visuelle : approche médicale et témoignages. »</i></p> <p>Oct. 19<sup>th</sup>. Brussels <u>BrailleTech 2017</u>  <a href="http://www.braille.be/fr/a-propos-de-nous/agenda/2017/10/brailletech-2017">http://www.braille.be/fr/a-propos-de-nous/agenda/2017/10/brailletech-2017</a></p> <p><b>France:</b></p> <p>Jan. 26-27: Les entretiens des aveugles (blind people's talkings. Conference, FAF. UNESCO (Paris). Proceedings (downloadable in French)  <a href="https://www.aveuglesdefrance.org/actualites/les-actes-des-entretiens-des-aveugles-de-france-present-disponibles">https://www.aveuglesdefrance.org/actualites/les-actes-des-entretiens-des-aveugles-de-france-present-disponibles</a></p> <p>- May 8<sup>th</sup> Spring conference of Ariba. ("representative Initiatives in low vision francophone association"). Paris, Palais des Congrès: Childhood and VI  <a href="http://www.ariba-vision.org/sites/default/files/ARIBa%2008%20mai%202017_21e%20colloque%20printemps.pdf">http://www.ariba-vision.org/sites/default/files/ARIBa%2008%20mai%202017_21e%20colloque%20printemps.pdf</a></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>- March, 22-24<sup>th</sup>. Bordeaux Seminar AVJADV (daily living skills professionals organization): For a right place for assistive technology in daily life of people with VI: which recommendations? Pour la juste place des aides techniques dans la vie quotidienne des personnes déficientes visuelles: quelles préconisations?</p> <p>- May 8<sup>th</sup>, Paris/ Ariba's Congress</p> <p>- May 11 to 13<sup>th</sup>: Congress ALFPHV (psychologist organization for persons with visual impairment): "Et pour le désir, il reste une place?" "And for desire, is there still room? Marseille <a href="http://www.alfphv.net">http://www.alfphv.net</a></p> <p>- From June 6<sup>th</sup>: 8<sup>th</sup> audio described movies festival, organized by Valentin Haüy Association, <u>Paris and Lyon (new this year)</u></p> <p>- June 19<sup>th</sup>, Paris: European e-Accessibility Forum <a href="http://inova.snv.jussieu.fr/evenements/colloques/colloques/92_index_en.html#contenu">http://inova.snv.jussieu.fr/evenements/colloques/colloques/92_index_en.html#contenu</a></p> <p>- Oct. 6<sup>th</sup> : Brest. Visual impairment : Citizens Initiatives for Tomorrow <u>Déficiência visuelle: Initiatives citoyennes pour demain</u> !</p> <p><a href="http://www.ipidv.org/IMG/pdf/Flyer_colloque_3_.pdf">http://www.ipidv.org/IMG/pdf/Flyer_colloque_3_.pdf</a></p> <p>- Oct: 12 and 13<sup>th</sup>: Marseille GPEAA conference (teachers and educators for VI): School for everybody; Visual impairment and other specificities</p> <p>- Nov. 13-15 Language prébraille and representations, Paris, FAF <a href="https://www.aveuglesdefrance.org/actualites/journees-prelecture-langage-et-representations-2017">https://www.aveuglesdefrance.org/actualites/journees-prelecture-langage-et-representations-2017</a></p> <p>- Oct. 26 to 28<sup>th</sup> Typhlo &amp; Tactus Contest. Dijon (tactile children's book international award) <a href="http://www.tactus.org">http://www.tactus.org</a>; <a href="http://www.tactus.org/t&amp;t2017/Concours2017.pdf">http://www.tactus.org/t&amp;t2017/Concours2017.pdf</a></p> <p>- Nov. 13-15 Language, prebraille and representations, Paris, FAF</p> <p>- Nov. 17<sup>th</sup>. Paris. International Conference. Centennial of Livre de l'aveugle: «What future for Braille?» <a href="http://www.lolivredelaveugle.fr">http://www.lolivredelaveugle.fr</a></p> <p>- Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>, Nantes Ariba autumn conference, news about Preventing, medicating, supporting</p> <p>Déc. 4 &amp; 5<sup>th</sup>. Paris. Technologies for VI : <a href="https://www.aveuglesdefrance.org/actualites/6eme-edition-des-journees-detude-sur-les-ntic-le-4-et-5-decembre-2017">https://www.aveuglesdefrance.org/actualites/6eme-edition-des-journees-detude-sur-les-ntic-le-4-et-5-decembre-2017</a></p>
Policy	<p><b>France:</b> A new training and a new exam for the special teachers (starting Sept 17):</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><a href="https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/decret/2017/2/27/MC/CB1632092D/jo/texte">https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/eli/decret/2017/2/27/MC/CB1632092D/jo/texte</a></p> <p><b>Switzerland:</b> Certificate of advances studies (CAS) Pédagogie spécialisée: option "Défiance visuelle" (special education Visual impairment) This training is headed by the Haute école pédagogique of Vaud district (Lausanne) and focuses on children and youth with VI from 0 to 20. It started Sept 2017 and will last until 2019. Information on next session: <a href="https://candidat.hepl.ch/cms/accueil/formations-continues/formation-postgrade/offre-de-formations-postgrades/cas-certificate-advanced-studies/cas-devi-special-def-visuels.html">https://candidat.hepl.ch/cms/accueil/formations-continues/formation-postgrade/offre-de-formations-postgrades/cas-certificate-advanced-studies/cas-devi-special-def-visuels.html</a></p> <p>The blindlife association and website stopped but is replaced by step2blind <a href="http://www.step2blind.com/cms/">http://www.step2blind.com/cms/</a></p>
<p>Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website</p>	<p><b>Belgium:</b> Bragard, A. (ed.) <i>Premiers pas avec une personne déficiente visuelle - Boîte à outils</i> » (<i>First steps with a visually impaired person: tool kit</i>) Directeur éditorial– Presses Universitaires de Louvain <a href="https://pul.uclouvain.be/book/?gcoi=29303100481590">https://pul.uclouvain.be/book/?gcoi=29303100481590</a></p> <p><b>France:</b> Lewi-Dumont, N. <i>Exercices et jeux de lecture en braille</i>. Éditions de l'INS HEA (<i>Exercices and reading games in Braille</i>). Pedagogical book &amp; CD-Rom. <a href="http://www.inshea.fr/fr/content/exercices-et-jeux-de-lecture-en-braille-édition-2017">http://www.inshea.fr/fr/content/exercices-et-jeux-de-lecture-en-braille-édition-2017</a></p>
<p>Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months</p>	<p>- May 16 &amp; 17<sup>th</sup> : Paris. Maternity, parenthood and visual impairment mother <a href="http://www.anthea.fr/colloques?filter[]=1">http://www.anthea.fr/colloques?filter[]=1</a> June 26 &amp; 27<sup>th</sup>: Seminar FISAF Paris: Accessibility and sensory impairments <a href="https://www.fisaf.asso.fr/actus/articles/185-save-the-date-26-27-juin-2018-seminaire-national-fisaf">https://www.fisaf.asso.fr/actus/articles/185-save-the-date-26-27-juin-2018-seminaire-national-fisaf</a> Oct. 11 et 12<sup>th</sup>- Paris GPEAA Conference</p>

This report is submitted by Nathalie Lewi-Dumont and Juliette Boudru  
Date: April 4, 2018



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

Region: Southern European Countries of PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA & Spain  
 Period: 2017

Area of Reference	Description
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	<b>PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA:</b> Any regional and sub-regional committee meetings <b>SPAIN:</b> Not any regional or sub regional meetings
Global campaign activities, if any	<b>PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA:</b> Exchange days in May 2017 in the different areas of disability <b>SPAIN:</b> none
Human interest stories from the region as a result of ICEVI initiatives	<b>PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA:</b> In Andorra there are not too many initiatives <b>SPAIN:</b> none
Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website	<b>PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA:</b> No publications during the last year 2017 <b>SPAIN:</b> The <i>Spanish journal</i> on blindness and visual impairment; Issue num 70, a Monographic about the <i>Early Intervention for children with visual disabilities: professional conference</i> . June 2017 Issue num 71, December 2017
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	<b>PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA:</b> Internal meeting of the country with the employees of Escola de Meritxell for the exchange days this month of June 2018 <b>SPAIN:</b>
Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region	<b>PRINCIPAT D'ANDORRA:</b> None <b>SPAIN:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language improvement camps (English), CRE of the ONCE in Pontevedra. Total participants: 55 (50 Spanish students, 4 Italian, 1 Portuguese).</li> <li>- Exchange between ONCE and the NCBI of Dublin, Ireland. Total participants: 20 (11 Spanish students and 9 Irish students)</li> </ul>

Area of Reference	Description
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Program of deepening knowledge of the English language and culture in Bournemouth, United Kingdom. Total participants: of 13 Spanish students.</li> <li>- Meeting in Madrid between ONCE and the RNC of England. Total participants: 23 (11 Spanish students and 12 English students).</li> <li>- Provision of 7 scholarships for the realization of courses (educational program) in any country abroad, aimed at Spanish students: Total 7 participants.</li> <li>- Participation in the ONCE Physiotherapy University School Course 2017/18: DEGREE IN PHYSIOTHERAPY: 2 Students from Portugal MASTER'S DEGREE IN PHYSIOTHERAPY OF THE MUSCULO-SKELETAL SYSTEM: 1 Student from China 1 Student from Ecuador 1 Student from Poland MASTER'S DEGREE IN RESPIRATORY AND CARDIAC PHYSIOTHERAPY: 5 Students from Ecuador 1 Student from Paraguay 1 Student from Brazil 1 Student from Italy</li> <li>- Presentation and diffusion of Braitico, a new method of inclusive braille literacy, of the ONCE. It is developed in four modules, from 0 to around 12 years old children and uses, among other materials, ICT, for literacy.</li> <li>- Presentation and diffusion of Ebrai, a new braille transcriptor that will make it possible to speed up and facilitate adaptations in this reading-writing code. It is designed both for private users, who want to convert texts in ink easily to Braille, as well as for professional production centers, which require a more complex tool, without renouncing in any case the ease of use.</li> </ul>

This report is submitted by Ana Isabel Ruiz López, Elena Gastón and Mariona Carbonell del Castillo  
Date: April 10, 2018



## Report from the German and Dutch speaking countries by Kathleen Vandermaelen

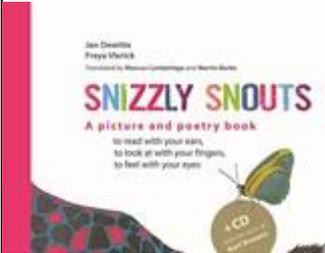
**Region: German and Dutch speaking region**

**Period: 2017**

Area of Reference	Description
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	<b>Austria:</b> Meeting in Brugge in July 2017
Global campaign activities, if any	<p><b>The Netherlands:</b> The VISION 2017 Congress in The Hague has been a global platform for many organisations to improve knowledge on VI.</p> <p><b>Austria:</b> The ICEVI 2017 Congress in Brugge was a possibility to speak personally to many of ICEVI. New ideas were exchanged.</p>
Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period	<p><b>Belgium:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Belgian organizing Committee: Centrum Spermalie-De Kade, Centrum Ganspoel, Blindenzorg Licht en Liefde, have organized, together with the ICEVI Board, the 9<sup>th</sup> ICEVI European Conference in Bruges. (July 2 to July 7 2017). All the staff members have made an important contribution to the program. Cfr the report of the Conference.</li> <li>- October 2<sup>th</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> 2017: Teacher Training days in Centrum Ganspoel.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Netherlands:</b> All three Dutch VI service providers (Bartiméus, Royal Dutch Visio, Robert Coppes Foundation) contributed to the programme of the ICEVI Europe conference in Bruges.</p> <p><b>Austria:</b> Contribution to the programme of the ICEVI Europe conference in Bruges. In Austria were specific in-service trainings held, especially CVBIO where we spread the name and possibilities of ICEVI</p>
Collaborative activities and meetings with world	<b>The Netherlands:</b> The Robert Coppes Foundation has become member of the WBU elderly working

Area of Reference	Description
bodies such as WBU, IAPB, UN, World Bank, and other organizations at the regional level	<p>group (being the only European partner in this working group).</p> <p><b>Austria:</b> We had the big congress VBS and ICEVI with Betty personally 2016 in Graz, Austria. There were no big activities in 2017.</p>
Awards, Recognition, etc., to ICEVI members from the region	<p><b>Austria:</b> The Golden Needle went to Gerti Jaritz in march 2018 from the VBS.</p>
Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website	<p><b>Belgium:</b> <u>Zieta!</u> is a tool developed for professionals working with young infants or children with VI or MDVI which have a developmental age up to 6 - 8 months. This tool allows to observe and map out the different aspects of visual functions and primary visual processing like visual awareness, fixation, visual tracking, eye contact and initial eye-hand coordination (reaching - grabbing).</p> <p>L.O.eKa is used to prepare toddlers and young children with VI or MDVI for optotype-testing (Lea <sup>TM</sup>, Kay <sup>TM</sup>). It consists of 3D and 2d materials and a manual.</p> <p><u>Get the Feel! "How to use the Sex Kit"</u> we developed a sex kit with clear visual and tactile materials. In addition to the sex-kit we also made a guidance on the use of the sex kit. The materials can be used during lessons, workshops or individual home support.</p> <p><u>Hocus Focus:</u> The black box is a primary method for visual stimulation. Fluorescent visual stimuli, powered by blacklight, can be showed in isolation. The main goal is to make parents integrate visual stimulation into the daily life of their child. So, we need a portable system that can be easily used by families and that have a modern, contemporary, accessible and attractive look. The Hocus Focus is a result of a cooperation with Thijs Bastiaan, Product development&amp; innovation University Antwerp, Belgium.</p> <p><u>Bookbox: a Story with 3D printed Tactile Plates:</u> The story contains elements that the children know in their daily life. It is an opportunity for children to experience the story which is enhanced through tactile input. The 3D printed plates give the opportunity to feel elements of the story that are hard to represent on</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>any other tactile way, like for example the 3D version of the fly.</p> <p>The box contains 5 plates and the story in a bookform. The child can also listen through an audio file on the accessory USB stick or the Daisy-cd with the story in 5 chapters. It makes the story a good activity to do independently.</p> <p>The bookbox is the result of a cooperation with Sofie De Leener Research and Design Oostend, Belgium.</p>
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	7th European Conference on psychology and Visual Impairment, 1-2 November, Thessaloniki;
Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region	<p><b><u>Belgium: Screening Characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) in Children with Cerebral Visual Impairment (CVI).</u></b></p> <p>Children with CVI often show behaviour that can also be attributed to ASD. This may be confusing for professionals as well as parents and the children themselves. This was the reason for the development of a screening list. The purpose is to provide a more objective base for referring children with CVI for further diagnostic procedures concerning ASD and therefore the child can be given the appropriate support.</p> <p>The screening list is meant for children with a developmental age of 5 till 12 years. The screening list is preferably completed by parents, assisted by a qualified professional.</p> <p>This screening list is a result of a cooperation between centrum Centrum Ganspoel and Spermalie, Belgium.</p> <p><b><u>The young blind Child: developmental Assessment, age 0-5 years</u></b></p> <p>Standardized developmental assessment instruments play an important role in early intervention. However, when you want to test blind babies and toddlers, problems arise finding those standardized assessment. We are making a dynamic observation list.</p> <p><b><u>How can I play with my blind child? A</u></b> box full of sensor-motoric materials to explore together with a young blind child! This box is a result of a cooperation between Accent-Centrum Spermalie and the High School for bachelors pedagogy in Ghent and Bruges.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p data-bbox="560 232 1134 264"><u>How can I play with my low vision child?</u></p> <p data-bbox="560 271 1305 349">A box full of visual materials to explore together with the baby!</p> <p data-bbox="560 383 1302 414"><u>Sensitization Box about Cerebral Visual Impairment</u></p> <p data-bbox="560 450 1331 568">Apps: for mobile devices, accessible and inaccessible apps, smartphones and tablets replace dedicated assistive devices.</p> <p data-bbox="560 577 1241 656">Transition from adolescence to early adulthood: testimonies, group meetings.</p> <p data-bbox="560 665 1305 743">Universal Design: assistive technologies, accessible text documents.</p> <p data-bbox="560 752 1342 949">Network Expertise Visus in Flanders, collecting the high specialized know how. One of the recent tasks is to coach regional regular services by outreaching specific expertise concerning the target group of visual impairment.</p> <p data-bbox="560 958 1342 1155">The small difference: working out ideas concerning the small target groups of sensorial impaired persons demanding a highly expertised offer in welfare – care and education, in order to give advices to the policy in the near future.</p> <div data-bbox="549 1211 874 1464" style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;">  </div> <p data-bbox="908 1205 1326 1384">RARE SNUITERS is an award winning 'inclusive' children's book (with audio CD) by JAN DEWITTE and FREYA VLERICK.</p> <p data-bbox="560 1429 1342 1570">The English version <u>SNIZZLY SNOOTS</u>, translated by <u>MARCUS CUMBERLEGE</u> and <u>MARTIN BURKE</u>, is published by Blindenzorg Licht en Liefde in cooperation with <u>NCBI</u> (Ireland).</p> <p data-bbox="560 1615 1331 1834">This book is equally fascinating and enjoyable to children with and without reading impairments. All of them get a multi-sensorial training, broadening their artistic experience and playfully introducing them to various worlds of experience. Three senses get equal attention: seeing, hearing and feeling.</p> <p data-bbox="560 1843 1342 1973">It received a 'White Raven Special Mention 2012' by the <u>International Youth Library</u>. It was also selected by <u>IBBY</u> for the travelling exhibition 'Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities 2013'.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>Austria:</b> The book “Gib mir Zeit und vieles wird möglich“ from the work with MDVI students. It is in German.</p> 

**This report is submitted by:**

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Peter Verstraten - ICEVI Europe contact person - The Netherlands

Gerti Jaritz - ICEVI Europe contact person - Austria

Eliane Bonamie - ICEVI Europe contact person - Belgium



## Report from East European countries by Vladimir Ruchin

Region: Eastern European Countries

Period: 2017

Area of Reference	Description
<p>Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any</p>	<p><b>Azerbaijan</b></p> <p>Conference on “Organization of work of social service enterprises: European standards and Azerbaijan experience” was held on 28.02.2017 by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population.</p> <p>Conference on “Azerbaijan's obligations on the implementation of the UN Convention "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities": achievements, challenges and perspectives" was held on 1 December 2017, by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population in cooperation with UN Children’s Fund.</p> <p>The 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Special boarding school №5 for children with special needs was held on 3 December – The International Day of Persons of Disabilities.</p> <p>Currently the British Council in cooperation with BP is implementing the Program on “Enhancing Employability Skills for People with Disabilities”. Within the framework of the program, the main purpose of the Conference was to bring together the relevant representatives, business companies and employers to enhance the employment prospects for persons with disabilities. At the conference, Expert Mark Gray made a presentation on the UK and the world experience in this area.</p> <p>Considering the importance of integrating persons with disabilities into the society and addressing their social and living conditions, as well as their involvement in education in Azerbaijan, the issues of protecting the rights of persons with disabilities are always on the agenda of the Scientific Research Institute on Human Rights of ANAS, which conducts relevant scientific research, regularly ensures the necessary publications and implementation of international events.</p> <p><b>Armenia</b></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>A mini city has been built to teach visually impaired children to navigate in a real urban environment</p> <p><b>Belarus</b> Conference «Psychology and Vision Impaired» in Minsk, October 2017.</p> <p><b>Russia</b> Analysis of experience in preparation and holding of the VII ICEVI conference in Tbilisi. Sub-regional committee discussion on the preparation of the VIII Eastern European Conference ICEVI: program committee members, the conference and the tasks of the forthcoming meeting. Preparation of the text of the information letter, web site of the VIII Eastern European Conference ICEVI in Saratov Project "Early Aid - a successful start" for a special "kid": internship for specialists from rehabilitation institutions for children and adolescents with disabilities.</p>
<p>Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period</p>	<p><b>Belarus</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The teachers of Special boarding school №5 for children with special needs have been involved in professional development courses in 2017.</li> <li>2. Open the Branch of the Institute of Psychology BSPU in Molodechno special school. Visits to Molodechno;</li> <li>3. Implementation the Belarusian speech synthesizes into the education process of Molodechno special school. (UIIP, June – December), 15 students from Special School take part in the excursion to the planetarium of Belorussian State Pedagogical University, the students were informed about the rules of the admission to BSPU;</li> <li>4. Interaction together with Institute of Special Education of BSPU (Gaidukevich Svetlana, Gordeiko Vlad);</li> <li>5. Activities together with Association of Parents of Vision Impaired children in Minsk (Kukhareva Luda);</li> <li>6. Organize the special GSM system with oral navigation through the smartphone in the cell phone for the Vision Impaired in Brest region.</li> </ol> <p><b>Russia</b> The work of NGOs from 12 regions of Russia with the public - the development of the acquired knowledge in practical work with different target groups (students of different specialties, the volunteer community, etc.) with constant methodical support of project specialists and active interaction of participants.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Preparation and dissemination of practical advice and methodological materials for NCOs on the designated topic, which will include general recommendations on the organization of work, a description of the various approaches, case studies, scenarios of individual events, visual materials for the target audience developed by experts, as well as descriptions of best practices NGOs submitted to the competition within the framework of the project.</p> <p>Pre-school department for blind and visually impaired children with visual impairment, including children with complex disabilities (children with multiple disabilities) in a boarding school. The work is carried out in two directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) preschool group for visually impaired children (age 3-7 years);</li> <li>2) early intervention group (age 0-3 years).</li> </ol>
<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>Azerbaijan</b>  A delegation of “Vocational Education and Employment Organization for Visually Impaired Persons” consisted of 8 people from Sri Lanka, have visited our country on April 16-22, 2017. The main purpose of the visit was exchange of experience between the countries, acquaintance with a situation regarding the education, occupation and employment of visually impaired persons.</p> <p>The Department of International Law of Disabled was established under the Institute of Law and Human Rights of ANAS in cooperation with Moscow State Humanitarian and Economic University. On the same day, the chancellor of Moscow State Humanitarian and Economic University, Vagif Deirishevich Bayramov was awarded a medal and certificate of "Prof.Rovshan Mustafayev". The activity of the department includes the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, the conduction of appropriate scientific research in this area, ongoing publications and organization of international events in this field.</p> <p><b>Armenia</b>  The Czech government financed the creation of a computer library and the opening of a class on social orientation for visually impaired children.  The Government of Poland funded the opening of a dental office for visually impaired children.</p> <p><b>Belarus</b>  International contacts with Dario Salerni (Italy) and George Dimitradopolos (Greece) specialists in Vision Impaired problems.</p> <p><b>Georgia</b></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>During 2017 a new generation of orientation and mobility specialists were trained and certified by German specialists in the West Georgia.</p> <p>Also during the reporting period German specialists trained early interventioners for children with multiple disabilities. Swedish Daisy system was introduced to the Georgian visually impaired persons. A group of Georgian persons were sent to be trained in Sweden. Some part of the trainings took place also in the regions of Georgia. It is planned to digitalize already existing audio literature that were previously recorded on CDs and even in the formats from the old times.</p>
ICEVI collaborative work with national governments within the region	<p><b>Russia</b></p> <p>Discussion with the Ministry of Education and Science of Russia the forthcoming VIII Eastern European Conference ICEVI.</p> <p>"Increasing the effectiveness of the work of the NGO on information support for the visually impaired", which is implemented with the support of the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation "Elite Group".</p> <p>The project "Expanding the Limits of Opportunities", within which works with people with simultaneous visual and hearing impairments. Employees of the organization work with volunteers (students of the Provincial College, the Ministry of Education and the University of Construction), conducted a training "Rules for accompanying the blind" on how to offer their help and how to help a person with a vision impairment.</p>
Awards, Recognition, etc., to ICEVI members from the region	<p><b>Azerbaijan</b></p> <p>The Taraggi medal was awarded to a teacher of Special boarding school №5 for children with special needs, by the President of Azerbaijan; In 2017, on the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the school, the school principal, the deputy school principal of education activity and deputy school principal of educational work were awarded the "Advanced Education Worker" medal.</p>
Human interest stories from the region as a result of ICEVI initiatives	<p><b>Azerbaijan</b></p> <p>Over the years, 14 graduates of Special boarding school №5 for children with special needs were enrolled in various universities, 3 graduates were enrolled at the National Conservatory, and 10 graduated from colleges. At the same time, 4 graduates of the same</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>school have been employed in the boarding school for the last three years:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A graduate from Sumgayit branch of the Azerbaijan Teachers Institute with a degree in history and geography, as an educator;</li> <li>2) A graduate from Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University with a degree in mathematics, as a librarian;</li> <li>3) A graduate from Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University with a degree in history and geography, as a history teacher</li> <li>4) A graduate from Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University with a degree in history and postgraduate degree in methods and methodology of teaching in primary school from the same University, as a primary school teacher.</li> </ol> <p><b>Georgia</b> After the ICEVI conference in Tbilisi in several parents of blind children got connected with the organizers of the conference and they enrolled their visually impaired children in the schools. They often consult with the specialists of Mariani who is a representative of ICEVI in Georgia and organizer of the ICEVI Eastern European conference in 2016.</p> <p><b>Russia</b> Webinar "Philosophy of independent life of people with disabilities" 14.03.2018.</p> <p><b>Kazakhstan</b> Charity events for visually impaired children. Master classes for professionals in making toys. Visiting the regional library for visually impaired children. A large musical competition among children with disabilities. By the beginning of the school year, fund-raising activities were conducted for low-income families with children with disabilities. In the Regional Children's Hospital with the help of individuals and their resources was equipped with a playroom for visually impaired children.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website	<p><b>Armenia</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching aids for professionals working for visually impaired children have been published.</li> <li>• The book "Guidelines for the development of spatial orientation and mobility for visually impaired children is published.</li> <li>• Textbooks on the Braille system have been published: the Armenian language and literature, history, geometry, natural history.</li> <li>• The publication of special notebooks for visually impaired children (2000 pieces).</li> </ul>
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	<p>One of the main purposes of the State Program on the Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2018-2024 is the issue of the Final Assessment (Attestation) to assess the knowledge of the studying general education subjects at general education institutions and taking necessary measures to ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in the final and admission exams to higher and secondary vocational education institutions.</p>
Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region	<p><b>Azerbaijan</b></p> <p>The State Program on the Development of Inclusive Education for Persons with Disabilities in the Republic of Azerbaijan for 2018-2024 was approved by the Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, dated from December 14, 2017, in order to ensure the inclusive education of persons with disabilities in general educational settings. The Action Plan for the implementation of the State Program for 2018 has been approved by an order of the Ministry of Education. At the same time, the Working group has been established by an order of the Ministry of Education to ensure the implementation of the issues related to the State Program, such as the preparation of draft documents, the discussion of conducted investigations and research results and preparation of relevant proposals.</p>

**This report is submitted by**  
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**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 21.03.2018**



## Report from the Balkan countries by Andrea Hathazi

**Region: Balkan Region**

**Period: 2017**

Area of Reference	Description
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	<p><b>Cyprus</b> The Board of the European Blind Union held its face to face meeting in Larnaca, Cyprus on October 21-22, 2017</p>
Global campaign activities, if any	<p><b>Bulgaria</b> New revision of the Ordinance for Inclusive Education by the Ministry of Education – October 2017</p> <p><b>Croatia</b> International child day – workshop about visual impairment in city parks; 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017, Zagreb, Croatia A small health fair – workshop about visual impairment in Kindergartens, Zagreb, Croatia, 30<sup>th</sup> May – 1<sup>st</sup> June 2017</p> <p><b>Cyprus</b> The Pancyprian Organization of the Blind actively participated in the campaigns of the European Blind Union and the European Disability Forum on: -European Accessibility Act (EAA), -The Marrakech Treaty</p> <p><b>Romania</b> On October 27, 2017, a meeting of young people with visual disabilities in Europe was held in Cluj-Napoca within the EMVISION Empowering Young Visually Impaired to Stand-Up for Inclusive Policy Reforms project ERASMUS +. EMVISION is an Erasmus + KA-3 project, funded by the European Union and developed by the Babilon Travel Association. EMVISION is raising the voices of young people who are concerned about the situation of young blind and visually impaired (YBVI) and empowers them to seek to improve inclusive youth policies dedicated to YBVI through a structured dialogue between young people and decision makers in this field. EMVISION encourages the involvement of civil society in the creation and implementation of inclusive youth policies, promoting transnational co-operation, better</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>knowledge of the European Union, equipping participants with soft skills such as working in an international environment, designing actions with impact on decision makers and increasing acceptability of participants to other cultures. Participants will learn to support and promote inclusive policy reforms that boost the mobility of YBVI, responding to the "Youth on the Move" component of the Europe 2020 strategy</p> <p><b>Turkey</b> As a member of Turkiye Beyazay Association, Emine Ayyildiz has contributed for advocacy and announcements for the national campaign activity called "Aşmak İçin Hareket-Move to Overcome". This campaign is aimed to bring people together by using the sports as a motivation factor. The main goal is to create an inclusive society which all different abilities are welcomed.</p>
<p>Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period</p>	<p><b>Bulgaria</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. National conference with international participation under Erasmus+ BaGMIVI project – held in January 2017 in Sofia – over 60 participants, the foreign participants were from Macedonia and Serbia.</li> <li>2. Seminar of resource teachers – held in April 2017 in Plovdiv – entitled "Interactions between the mainstream and the resource teachers" – 12 participants – supported by Perkins Int.</li> <li>3. Seminar of resource teachers – held in May 2017 in Plovdiv entitled "Strategies for successful inclusion of VI students in the mainstream class" – 10 participants – supported by Perkins Int.</li> <li>4. 10<sup>th</sup> national seminar of resource teachers entitled "New role of the special schools for VI in the inclusive education" – held in June 2017 in Varna special school for VI – appr. 50 participants – supported by Perkins Int.;</li> <li>5. Seminar of teachers of MDVI students from the two special schools for VI in the country entitled "Education of VI students with autism – peculiarities and challenges" – appr. 20 participants – supported by Perkins Int.;</li> <li>6. ICEVI European conference in Bruges, Belgium – July 2017 – eight participants from Bulgaria: 3 participants in 2 workshops and 1 poster presentation</li> </ol> <p><b>Croatia</b></p>

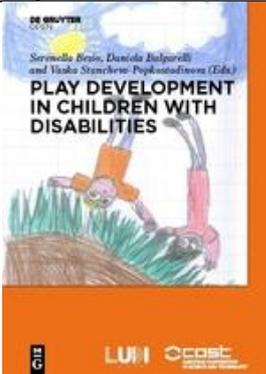
Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Mali dom-Zagreb organized Round Table on May 3, 2017 on the topic of Early Parental Support - Support to the parents of children with disabilities and Supporting parents with disabilities. The purpose of this Round Table was to talk about the necessity of supporting the parents of all three groups mentioned above, since these are topics that are often neglected and insufficiently present in society.</p> <p>On May 10, 2017, Mali dom-Zagreb in cooperation with the Faculty of Law, the Social Work Department and City Office for Social Welfare and Persons with Disabilities, organized a professional meeting entitled "Role of Social Workers in the Early Intervention Team - Challenges and Opportunities". The meeting was attended by 60 participants, most of them social workers, but also other Early intervention experts that are interested in the topic. The main aim of the meeting was to problematize the role of social work and social workers in Early intervention teams and to raise awareness of the importance and role of each member of the team as well as to encourage cross-sectoral and intra-sectoral co-operation between Early community service providers and social workers and other staff experts in the Centers for social welfare.</p> <p>Together with UNICEF Croatia, Mali dom-Zagreb has developed the project "Strengthening Expertise for the Development of Early Interventional Program "- Training program for employees of Special hospital for children's chronic diseases Gornja Bistra that has been conducted through Mali dom's Education center and involved 56 members of hospital staff in 2017. During reporting period Mali dom's Education Center educated a total of 66 experts within following education programs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Developmental Support - until 18 June 2017, was attended by 10 attendees.</li> <li>• Individual Educational Plan course – January 2017, 9 attendees.</li> <li>• Creating Goal oriented Activities - January 2017, 10 attendees.</li> <li>• Education of Occupational Therapy Fine motor skills – May 2017, 7 attendees.</li> <li>• Practical skills workshop on Natural Cosmetics Activity in the Educational Rehabilitation programs - May 2017, 9 attendants.</li> <li>• Implementation of Dance and Movement in Educational and Rehabilitation Work – November 2017, 12 participants.</li> </ul>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>• Enhanced Handling and Positioning in Early Infancy – December 2017, 9 attendees. Also 6 educations were held in other institutions in the region according to the offer (Banja Luka, Belgrade and Novi Sad) and overall 95 experts have been trained</p> <p><b>Rehabilitation Centre Silver</b> held 10 workshops about programs (orientation and mobility and daily living skills for visually impaired, assignment of assistance dogs, sensory integration therapy with therapy dog, etc.) In workshops is emphasized how to approach visually impaired and other persons with disabilities and role of assistance dogs in lives of persons with disabilities</p> <p><b>Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences University of Zagreb</b> 9th International Conference of the Faculty of Education and Rehabilitation Sciences University of Zagreb, 17 - 19 May 2017, Zagreb, Croatia; <a href="http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/">http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/</a> Symposium “Cerebral visual impairment”, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2017, Zagreb, Croatia; <a href="http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/additional-events/cerebral-visual-impairment-cvi">http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/additional-events/cerebral-visual-impairment-cvi</a> Symposia “Collaborating with families of children with disabilities – building positive relationships”, 16<sup>th</sup> May 2017, Zagreb, Croatia; <a href="http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/additional-events/collaborating-with-families-of-children-and-with-disabilities-building-positive-relationships-cfcd-bupor">http://www.conference.erf.unizg.hr/additional-events/collaborating-with-families-of-children-and-with-disabilities-building-positive-relationships-cfcd-bupor</a></p> <p><b>Cyprus</b> Two awareness workshops on visual impairments oriented towards the general public as part of the Erasmus Plus programme “ERASMUS4VIP” organized in January and April 2017. The workshops included informative sessions and interactive activities such as dinner in the dark and walk in the city blindfolded and sighted guide techniques. - A seminar organized by the Pancyprian Organization of the blind in June 2017 as part of the final dissemination activity of the ERASMUS4VIP project. The seminar was well attended by representatives of various NGOs and public-sector officers. The outcomes of the project were disseminated. Participant also took participated in interacting workshops on Braille, Sighted guide techniques, use off electronic devices and daily living skills. The title of the seminar was “Individuals with Visual Impairments: Who we are and how we can be included in social and</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>educational activities”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A seminar organized in June 2017 as part of the final dissemination activity for the Erasmus Plus programme IncluTech. The results of the project were disseminated and participants had the chance to experience the RoboBraille Service.</li> <li>- The School for the blind organized in November 2017 a seminar for elementary and high school teachers who teach students with visual impairments in regular schools. The seminar included plenary presentations as well as interactive workshops.</li> </ul> <p><b>Greece</b></p> <p>The consortium of the European project titled “Bridging the Gap between Museums and Individuals with Visual Impairments - BaGMIVI” conducted a workshop during the 9th ICEVI European Conference in Bruges (Belgium). ICEVI-Europe was one of the members of the consortium and the title of the workshop was “Museums, Access and People with Visual Impairments: the case of the BaGMIVI project” and aimed to support museums to develop various practices in order to enhance the access and inclusion of people with visual impairments into their context and content. This symposium attempted to describe networks which have been developed under the auspices of the BaGMIVI project highlighting the need for collaboration and interagency partnerships between museums, educational settings and individuals with visual impairments. In specific, five presentations constitute the backbone of this symposium.</p> <p>The 1st presentation focused on current and future trends which take place in the context of the contemporary museum regarding issues such as access, accessibility and equal participation of people with disabilities.</p> <p>The 2nd presentation described the Bulgarian network which was built through collaboration. The main representatives of this collaboration were: the Rakursi gallery, the Sofia University and the Bulgarian Association for Education of Visually Impaired Children. The content of the presentation refers to issues of access in providing alternative paths to ancient and contemporary art within the Bulgarian context.</p> <p>The 3rd presentation described the Hungarian network which focused on the cooperation of the main actors in designing and creating accessible museum programs for different age group of children with visual impairment.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>The 4th presentation described the Romanian network which aimed at key-issues in design and development of differentiated educational programs. The Romanian network put great emphasis on museum positive experience, notions of accessibility as well as on active participation during museum visits.</p> <p>The 5th and the last presentation of the symposium focused on the positive value of museum staff training which led to fruitful development of accessible museum material and inclusive museum-educational programs based on the principles of Design for All</p> <p><b>Romania</b></p> <p>On the occasion of the International Day of People with Disabilities, 3<sup>rd</sup> of December 2017, the Department of Special Education at Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca organized the Conference "Shared Experiences. Inclusive Experiences". During the conference, projects were presented on educational, social and cultural inclusion of people with disabilities.</p> <p>On 6<sup>th</sup> of December 2017, the Office for Students with Disabilities from Babes-Bolyai Universities organized the Evening Event for Disabled Athletes at BSD. The event was part of the series of events dedicated to the International Day of Disabled Persons.</p> <p><b>Serbia</b></p> <p>Seminar: Systems of augmentative and alternative communications, 21.-22.10.2017. in Novi sad.</p> <p>Lecturers was Martina Celizić and Diana Korunić from Day Care Center for Rehabilitation of Children and Young Adults, Mali dom – Zagreb</p> <p><b>Turkey</b></p> <p>Songül Atasavun Uysal was given two seminars in the Children with Visually Handicapped School of Gören Eller in Ankara. It was about postural problems in children with VI. Children and their family and school of teacher participated seminars.</p> <p>Songül Atasavun Uysal had actively participated on the development of educational curricula for visually impaired children.</p> <p>Songül Atasavun Uysal has worked her role as <i>vice president</i> in the Hacettepe University Disability and Research Application Center. She organized a seminar in her university and she presented her oral presentation, which was about educational life in people with VI on 4th of December. They showed a film with audio description.</p> <p>Emine Ayyildiz</p> <p>- With Selda Mansur, 14. Conventional IB Day Biennial, "Come, whoever you are: IB school</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>inclusion/SEN policy, diversity and differentiation, not just for the students but for the whole school community”, Workshop leader, 25 February 2017, Maltepe Üniversitesi, İstanbul.</p> <p>- Disabilities Rights and Healthy Life Symposium, “Multiple Disabilities”, Panelist, 15 May 2017, Istanbul Medeniyet University, Istanbul.</p> <p>- 3. Multiple Disabilities with Visual Impairment Awareness Day Panel, “Being a parent of a child with MDVI”, Organizer and moderator, 24 May 2017, Istanbul Medeniyet University, Istanbul.3.Seminer Seminars</p> <p>Current Situation and Approaches on Special Education, Cayirova Municipality Educational Seminars, 21 June 2017, Kocaeli.</p>
ICEVI collaborative work with national governments within the region	<p><b>Bulgaria</b> Erasmus+ project BaGMIVI – ICEVI-Europe together with partners from Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, Hungary.</p> <p><b>Croatia</b> Employees of <b>Rehabilitation Centre Silver</b> participate in the working group for drafting the law about using of assistance dogs</p>
Awards, Recognition, etc., to ICEVI members from the region	<p><b>Bulgaria</b> Prof. Vladimir Radoulov was appointed in 2017 and will be given in early 2018 the Badge of honor with blue ribbon of Sofia University – the highest honor for a professor in Sofia university</p>
Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website	<p><b>Bulgaria</b></p> <p>1. <a href="#">Play in Children with Visual Impairments</a> (Chapter 7), Tzvetkova-Arsova, M. &amp; T. Zappatterra. In: <b>Play development in children with disabilities</b> - Stancheva-Popkostadinova, V. &amp; S. Besio (eds.), DE GRUYTER OPEN publ., 2017, pps. 102-110.</p> <p>The whole book is available free on-line at: <a href="https://www.degruyter.com/viewbooktoc/product/4811">https://www.degruyter.com/viewbooktoc/product/4811</a></p> <p><a href="#">26</a></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	 <p data-bbox="580 640 1348 748">2. Radoulov, VI. History of Education of Visually Impaired, Phenomenon publ., Sofia, in Bulgarian language.</p> <p data-bbox="563 752 676 786"><b>Croatia</b></p> <p data-bbox="563 790 1326 1189">Mali dom - Zagreb participated as a project partner in project MINCE - <b>Model for Inclusive Community Education</b> from November 2015 until October 2017. The project was financed through Erasmus+ EU programme. The aim of the project was to strengthen the inclusion of people with severe intellectual disabilities in society. Project coordinator was <a href="#">Lebenshilfen Soziale Dienste GmbH from Austria and partners were different institutions and association from Bulgaria, Germany, Croatia, Poland, Portugal and Slovenia.</a></p> <p data-bbox="563 1193 1337 1592"><b>Project goals:</b> raising awareness in society about the needs of people with severe intellectual disabilities, removing of social barriers and discrimination, co-operation with peer mediators on issues related to the inclusion of people with severe intellectual disabilities as well as professional training of peer mediators on advocacy and inclusion, development of professional skills for disability care workers and support to the implementation of inclusive community education. During the duration of the project we have participated in the creation of 6 different intellectual outputs:</p> <ul data-bbox="612 1597 1321 1850" style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MINCE Curriculum for Peer Mediators</li> <li>• MINCE STEP UP - Guide for Peer Mediators</li> <li>• MINCE Curriculum for Disability Care Workers</li> <li>• MINCE Guidelines for Disability Care Institutions</li> <li>• MINCE Compendium</li> <li>• MINCE Movie</li> </ul> <p data-bbox="563 1854 1348 1962">Project products are available online in all 7 project languages on the official website of MINCE project, <a href="http://www.mince-project.eu">www.mince-project.eu</a></p> <p data-bbox="563 1966 1348 2029">On October 12, 2017. project and its results were presented on the Final conference in Graz, Austria.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>In Mali dom – Zagreb we also organized the presentation of the project and its products for our partners, network, City of Zagreb and other institutions. Alimovic S. (2017) Visual Stimulation Methods for Children with Perinatal Brain Damage. Eurllyaid Conference 2017. Early Childhood Intervention For meeting sustainable development goals of the new millenium. Belgrade, Serbi ISBN 978-86-6203-101-3. pp 77–83.</p> <p><b>Cyprus</b>  A catalogue of good inclusion practices and 12 guides on teaching blind and partially sighted students and students with dyslexia in math, music, foreign language and first language (for teachers in regular schools) available in English, Greek, Italian, Hungarian and Bulgarian. Available at: <a href="https://www.robobrace.org/Inclutech">https://www.robobrace.org/Inclutech</a></p> <p>Outcomes of the ERASMUS4VIP project in English, Greek, Rumanian, Bulgarian and Macedonian:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A survey for research on integration of youngsters with visual impairments and a recommendation paper based on the research we undertook;</li> <li>2. A training kit module;</li> <li>3. A brochure with 50 non-formal methods adapted for participants with visual impairments;</li> <li>4. A web - site for sharing information and the outputs of this project;</li> <li>5. An IT&amp;C panel that unites information on Apps and software used by persons with visual impairments and that can be also used by youth workers to adapt their work to the needs of the participants with visual impairments. Available at: <a href="http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/5eb07464-e2fc-42c5-a96f-600db1e7f961">http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/5eb07464-e2fc-42c5-a96f-600db1e7f961</a></li> </ol> <p><b>Serbia</b>  University of Belgrade, EASPD and Eurllyaid organized a conference about Early Childhood Intervention in Belgrade: October, 6 - 8th 2017  <b>Early Childhood Intervention: For meeting sustainable development goals of the new millennium</b></p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>PROCEEDINGS available on <a href="http://www.icf.fasper.bg.ac.rs/zbornici/20171103_2-Proceedings%202017.pdf">http://www.icf.fasper.bg.ac.rs/zbornici/20171103_2-Proceedings%202017.pdf</a></p> <p>Turkey</p> <p><b>Songül Atasavun Uysal</b> wrote a two chapter in the books. First one was named as physical education and sports in children with VI and hearing impaired in the book of PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS FOR SPECIAL REQUIRED STUDENTS. Another one was related to low vision rehabilitation in the geriatric that was published in the e-book on the physical therapy.</p> <p>Songül Atasavun Uysal presented her studied as named as Investigation of the relationship between functional vision and quality of life in persons with low vision. Another presentation names as Physical Activity Barrier Scale's Turkish reliability in blind or visually impaired individuals and its applicability.</p> <p>Songül Atasavun Uysal has published some manuscripts and organized some events and has continued on the development of educational curricula for visually impaired children.</p> <p><b>Emine Ayyıldız</b></p> <p>Publications</p> <p>Ayyıldız, E. (2017). Difficulties Experienced by Preschool Teachers Who Work with Children with Multiple Disabilites, Turkish Online Journal of Educational Technology-Special Issue for ITEC 2017, 177-182.</p> <p><a href="http://www.tojet.net/special/2017_12_1.pdf">http://www.tojet.net/special/2017_12_1.pdf</a></p> <p>Conference papers</p> <p>Ayyıldız, E. (2017). Difficulties Experienced by Preschool Teachers Who Work with Children with Multiple Disabilites. Proceedings of the International Teacher Education Conference-ITEC (pp. 395-398), 16-18 Ağustos, MA, USA (Oral Presentation).</p> <p>Ayyıldız, E., Bilici, H. S., Avcı, Z. (2017). "Knowledge and Opinions of Preschool Education Teachers' In Terms of Specific Learning Disabilities". 27. National Special Education Conference, 8-10 November 2017, Samsun, Turkey (Oral Presentation).</p> <p>Şahin, H. H. &amp; Ayyıldız, E. "Review of the Studies About Individuals with Multiple Disabilities in Turkey". 27. National Special Education Conference, 8-10 November 2017, Samsun, Turkey (Oral Presentation).</p> <p>Arıkan, S., Cihan, A., Akgün, Ö. E., Grudeva, P., Wltavsky, Z., Silva, A. Ural, B. D., Bilican, F. I., Ayyıldız, E. &amp; Güleç-Aslan, Y. (2017). "Training of</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	Supported Employment Specialists In Order to Support Inclusive Work Life after Special Education”. 27. National Special Education Conference, 8-10 November 2017, Samsun, Turkiye (Oral Presentation).
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	<p><b>Bulgaria</b> International conference in Istanbul, Turkey in May 2018, on Multiple disabilities and deafblindness, where as key speakers were invited prof. V. Argyropoulos, prof. A. Hathazi, prof. M. Tzvetkova-Arsova as well as other western European professionals in this area.</p> <p><b>Croatia</b> Cerebral visual impairment, symposium, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> May 2018., Zagreb, Croatia – the key note speaker: dr. Els Otribus. Symposia for special teachers, peditricians, child neurologists, ophthalmologists, speech and language pathologists, psychologists</p> <p><b>Serbia</b> ATAAC - 2018. Conference about Assistive technology (AT) and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), will held in Belgrade in 22-23 October</p> <p>Turkey Istanbul Medeniyet University, Ayse Nurtac Sozbir Gunebakan Association, and the Turkish Ministry of National Education are collaboratively organizing the calling meeting about multiple disabilities and deafblindness. This meeting will be held on 3-4 of May 2018 in Istanbul and <b>Emine Ayyildiz</b> is personally busy with all organization since she is both working at Istanbul Medeniyet University and Ayse Nurtac Sozbir Gunebakan Association.</p>
Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region	<p><b>Bulgaria</b> Erasmus+ project BaGMIVI – together with partners from Greece, Romania, Hungary.</p> <p><b>Croatia</b> Director of <b>Center Silver</b>, as chairman of the European Committee for Standardization of Assistant Dogs successfully organized and held meetings in Vienna and Zagreb, regarding standardization in the field of work with assistance dogs. Employees of the Center participated in the meetings as working group members. The Director of the Center is the president of the European Committee for Dogs Assistants CEN TC/452</p> <p>Erasmus + project “Building Bridges - Promoting Social Inclusion and Wellbeing for parents of children with special needs” – research about family wellbeing</p> <p><b>Cyprus</b> Best practice – Touch Tours (theatre) – For the past few years the touch tour programme of the St. Barnabas</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>School for the Blind is becoming more and more popular. Under the guidance of educator Ms. Eleni Kaoulla and in close collaboration with the Cyprus theatrical organization and other local theatre groups, a great number of adults and children with visual impairment get to enjoy a number of performances. The touch tour last for about 45 minutes and take place right before the performance. Participants are provided with the programme of the performance in the alternative format of their preference (Braille, large print, electronic). They also have access to the stage in order to feel the fixtures, fittings and textures of the scenery. They also get to meet the actors who give information about their characters in the play and their costumes. The participants and their accompanying persons enjoy the performance free of charge.</p> <p><b>Romania</b></p> <p>The Traveling Book Foundation ran from October to December 2017 FAN Caravan to you at school, where it designed films accessible to blind students in all schools in Romania.</p> <p>The Travel Book Foundation has accessed nearly 900 math and physical pages for the 6th grade in Mathematics. This was possible with funding from TELUS International Romania Community Board</p> <p>#CMUSenseability is a social integration project for visually impaired people by developing independent life skills, socialization and experimentation together with people without disabilities.</p> <p>CMU Senseability Interactive Workshops offer a unique approach - a contact space between visually impaired people and specialists in various fields: education, social services, architecture, design, culture and other professionals who want to take a first step towards the future #Inclusive Bucharest</p> <p>The goal of the Club is to increase the degree of social inclusion of visually impaired people who are struggling with the phenomenon of (self) social isolation and have a natural fear of exploring the local urban environment.</p> <p>SenseAbility Urban Mobility Club is an AMAis (Association of Alternative Methods to Social Inclusion) project, funded in 2017 by the Orange Foundation under the "World through Color and Sound" program.</p> <p>Between 2016 and 2019, the Special High School for Visual Deficiency Cluj-Napoca runs the project</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Erasmus + Project "VISTE - Empowering spatial thinking of students with visual impairment".</p> <p>*** Project</p> <p>In the period 2016-2017, the St. Mary Special School in Arad carried out the project "The Future Through Our Eyes" (2016-1-RO01-KA102-023596).</p> <p>Project objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Basis of practical knowledge - providing new information (specialized, needed to carry out the work of baker, pastor, ecologist and mechanic locksmith) in a structured, easy to follow and integrated way, folded on the psycho-educational needs of students with visual impairments, associated deficiencies, and ESCs.</li> <li>- Developing professional skills for 16 students with visual impairments and mental deficiencies in the food, mechanical and environmental industries by participating in practical activities and using state-of-the-art technologies in their field of activity.</li> <li>- Developing pedagogical skills by using student-centered methods for 12 teachers involved in the training of visually impaired students and ESCs participating in the training.</li> <li>- Transfer of skills acquired during the project's mobility by the cascade method to a total of 15 students.</li> <li>- Develop language and cultural competences for the European space of all teachers and pupils involved in mobility.</li> </ul> <p><b>Serbia</b></p> <p>ATAAC - 2018. Conference about Assistive technology (AT) and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), will held in Belgrade in 22-23 October 2018.</p>

**This report is submitted by:**

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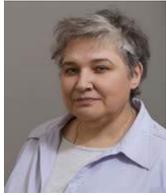
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**Zdešić - ICEVI Europe national representative for Croatia**

**Emine Ayyildiz and Songün Atasavun Uysal, ICEVI Europe national representatives for Turkey**

**Marian Padure, Romania**



## Report from the Central European countries by Beata Pronay

Region: Central Europe

Period: 2017

Area of Reference	Description
Regional and Sub-regional committee meetings conducted, if any	<p><b>Slovenia</b>            2017 was a very productive year for TIFLO section, a section within Association of Special Pedagogues of Slovenia, which is a group member of ICEVI and gathers professionals working in the field of education for VI/MDVI children and young people. There were four meetings: in January, July, August and November. Each meeting had its highlights like presentation of a new diagnostic tool, Braille music notation; the activities and cooperation with the Union of the blind and partially sighted of Slovenia were discussed, besides, their e-magazine Rikoss was presented and the members were invited to submit articles.</p> <p>A summary of the 9<sup>th</sup> ICEVI European conference in Bruges was given by the members who had attended the conference. The materials from the conference were shared and the members were invited to find more about the specific topics of interest. In the same way, the annual meeting of MDVI Euronet was discussed. In this way the main goal of the meetings of this association, which is to share knowledge and information, was realised. It is also the body where commissions within the association present their work.</p>
Global campaign activities, if any	<p><b>Hungary</b>            Eurochess tournament 2017; April 2017, Cegléd, Hungary            Eurochess Hungary was the organizer.            This is a social and sport event supporting inclusion in the society.</p> <p><b>Slovenia</b>            Active participation in several international projects:            - The final training event of Erasmus + EDUCARE project dealing with VI/MDVI pupils and students with behavioural challenges was hosted in Ljubljana in March. The project was finished in July and all the partners received very high evaluations by their</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>National agencies. More about the project can be read in December's issue of ICEVI Newsletter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- First Steps - Early intervention project which involved the Balkan countries, coordinated by Royal Dutch Visio with the goal to implement good practices in the field of early intervention was finished in spring 2017 with an international conference on early intervention (Ljubljana, May 2017).</li> <li>- Opeye (Open and portable software library for rapid eye tracking) Erasmus+, KA2 Erasmus+ project, coordinated by Institut pour Déficients Visuels from Luxembourg continued its work in 2017.</li> <li>- A preparatory meeting for a new Erasmus+ project dealing with the issue of social skills of the target group was held in Ljubljana in November. Application form was submitted in January by seven partner organisations from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Italy, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Croatia and Slovenia.</li> </ul> <p><b>Poland</b> "Discover a Kanthari in yourself" &amp; "Volunteers on a far-away continent" – a. workshops promoting 'Kanthari plus' and Braille without Borders volunteer training at KUL CAN, (Lublin) in co-operation with Morcegos em Ação (Brazil) and Solidarity Film Poland. (June 2017).</p>
Seminars, workshops, capacity building programmes, if any conducted during the reporting period	<p><b>Czech Republic</b> Participation in Vision 2017 Den Haag, ICEVI 2017 Bruges EDA conference for early intervention workers about the international experiences: Vision 2017 Den Haag, ICEVI 2017 Bruges</p> <p><b>Hungary</b> Participation in ICEVI 2017 Bruges School for the Blind: Erasmus + project meetings: EDUCARE project: March 2017, Ljubljana, Slovenia – closing meeting Express project: March 2017, Valladolid, Spain; September 2017 in Breda, the Netherlands; January 2018 Budapest - dissemination meeting SMILE project preparatory meeting: November 2017, Ljubljana, Slovenia</p> <p><b>Poland</b> May 2017 – Tactile graphics workshops for blind students at Jothi Seva, Bangalore (India). A volunteer project of a Polish ICEVI member.</p> <p>June 2017 – consultative meeting in Upper Silesia to discuss European disability strategy, with a focus on</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>problems of persons with a visual impairment. Organizer: Civil Initiatives Development Center (CRIS)</p> <p>August 2017- Tactile graphics workshops for VI Support Team from Chiryu Pedagogical University (Japan). Organiser: KUL CAN Lublin. Training connected with studio visits at Owińska and Laski schools for children with a VI.</p> <p>October 2017 – REHA for the Blind international conference organised by the Chance for the Blind Foundation. Conference theme: "Polish model of improving and empowering people with sight disabilities and equalizing their life opportunities".</p> <p>November 2017 – “A blind person in church” workshop for Catholic priests organized in Katowice (Silesia)</p> <p>November 2017 – conference “From white cane to audiodescription” conference, organized to celebrate 145<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the school for children with a visual impairment in Bydgoszcz</p> <p><b>Slovenia</b>  The government of Slovenia and especially the Ministry of education, science and sport recognised the need of teachers and other professionals working with SEN children and young people in inclusive forms of education to acquire more knowledge in order to enhance inclusion. Therefore, the Centre IRIS – Centre for Education, Rehabilitation, Inclusion and Counselling for the Blind and Partially Sighted, a partner in the project responsible for the field of visual impairment delivers knowledge in different forms e.g. one or several-day courses, workshops either at the Centre or at schools/pre-schools where VI/MDVI children are educated. There was even the first presentation for the staff of the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana where many VI students continue their studies. The project is financed by the Republic of Slovenia and the European Social Fund.</p> <p>- Annual conference of Association of Special Education Teachers of Slovenia presenting The News in the field of special teaching and rehabilitation and covering all important issues like inclusion, employment, new challenges in the field, etc. was also attended by professionals working in the field of visual impairment and some of them enriched the programme with their presentations.</p>
Collaborative activities and	<p><b>Hungary</b>  ENVITER conference 2017, BFW, Düren, Germany</p>

Area of Reference	Description
<p>meetings with world bodies such as WBU, IAPB, UN, World Bank, and other organizations at the regional level</p>	<p>School for the Blind: ENVITER board meeting: March 2017, Amsterdam, the Netherlands; January 2018 in Budapest, Hungary  Ms. Ágnes Somorjai is reelected as a board member.  MDVI Euronet meeting: May 2017, SWW Munich, Germany  Visit and professional discussion from Perkins International, May 2017:  Dennis Lolli and Darija Udovicic Mahmuljin (Mali Dom, Zagreb, Croatia)  Hungarian Federation for the Blind and Partially Sighted: VISAL (a key to civic engagement for the visually impaired in older age) Training Course for 11 participants (Partially Sighted)  For details on VISAL see EBU's website:  <b>Poland</b>  December 2017 – a Polish delegation of persons with a visual impairment and representatives of the Association for the Welfare of the Deaf-Blind took part in the 4<sup>th</sup> European Parliament of Persons with Disabilities (EPPD) in Brussels  <b>Slovakia</b>  ICEVI and EBU collaboration on a REC project: Accessibility of Erasmus+ Exchange Programmes for VI students (preparing recommendations for students and disability/Erasmus+ coordinators)  <b>Slovenia</b>  MDVI Euronet meeting: May 2017, SWW Munich, Germany</p>
<p>ICEVI collaborative work with national governments within the region</p>	<p><b>Poland</b>  July 2016 – June 2018- “Active Warsaw” Project funded by European Fund of Social Operational Program: Regional Operational Program of Mazovia. Organizer: Polish Association of the Blind (PZN)    November 2017 - conference organized to celebrate the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ratification by Polish Parliament of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Organizers: Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Policy, PFRON and the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin    November 2016 till April 2018: “Beyond Limits and Barriers” Erasmus Project. In cooperation with VIEWS (Belgium) and Austrian Association of the Blind. Three 5-day trainings: Poland, Austria, Belgium</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>October/November 2017: "Emvision 2017" – Erasmus Project organized by Asociacione Babilonia Travel Romania), Youth of Europe (Poland) and PZN. Project included young people from Lithuania, Macedonia, Poland, Portugal and Romania.</p> <p>January 2017 - December 2018 - Monitoring Administration Units of Mazovia in Terms of Complying with Recommendations of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Project implemented in cooperation with SYNAPSIS (Poland), Poland without Barriers Foundation and PZN.</p> <p>Parliamentary Team for supporting, rehabilitation and employment of persons with a visual impairment established in 2016 continued its activities throughout 2017.</p> <p>"Comprehensive rehabilitation of blind and visually impaired children with disabilities up to 18 years of age from the Silesia region" – Project co-financed by the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled People, Organizer: Regional Foundation for Supporting Blind Persons, Chorzów.</p> <p>"You see that it is worth" – project for supporting activities aimed at improving conditions for dignified ageing. Project co-financed by the Treasury of the Silesian Voivodship.</p> <p>Projects implemented by The Association for the Welfare of the Deaf-Blind:</p> <p>Series 1: We get to know our country:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel your power in Kashubia!</li> <li>- Psycho-educational workshops in Warsaw</li> <li>- City game "Feel Gdańsk"</li> </ul> <p>Series 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feel the music</li> <li>- Workshops for children, parents, young people and adults</li> <li>- Art therapy workshops in Łuczniczka</li> <li>- Sculpural landscapes in Orońsko</li> </ul> <p><b>Slovenia</b></p> <p>A nationwide campaign about early intervention was successfully brought to its end: the Act on Early intervention of pre-school children was passed in the Parliament in July, the Ministry must prepare all</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>documents needed to implement the Act until the end of this year and the law will be introduced in January 2019.</p> <p>A four-year national project of implementing Centres of expertise for different areas of SEN children and financed partially by European structural and investment funds started in September 2017. The Centre IRIS was selected for the field of visual impairment and specific learning difficulties.</p> <p>In this way inclusive forms of education are supported on one side by providing knowledge for the professionals and on the other by supporting all partners in the process: children or young people, their families and mainstream (pre)schools.</p>
<p>Awards, Recognition, etc., to ICEVI members from the region</p>	<p><b>Poland</b></p> <p>November 2017 – 3<sup>rd</sup> prize for a Polish book in the Typhlo &amp; Tactus competition</p> <p>December 2017 - Pro Juvenes – Polish Students' Parliament award for KUL CAN, The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin for support offered to students with special needs</p> <p>December 2017 - Bene Meritus Terrae Lubliniensi, award for B. Marek, ICEVI Member for developing university services for students with a visual impairment</p> <p><b>Slovenia</b></p> <p>Within Association of Special Pedagogues of Slovenia two awards were given to our members in 2017: one of the awarded members was Aleksandra Horvat, working as an itinerant teacher, the other was a group award for the commission which updated Slovene 6 dot Braille Code.</p>
<p>Human interest stories from the region as a result of ICEVI initiatives</p>	<p><b>Hungary</b></p> <p>Special day organized for professionals working with MDVI in Hungary, May 2017 The theme was wellbeing and quality indicators.</p> <p>Location: Budapest School for the Blind</p>
<p>Publications from the Region, that may be of interest to the viewers of ICEVI website</p>	<p><b>Czech Republic</b></p> <p>New material for vision stimulation associated with family of applications EDA PLAY: work sheets for graphomotoric training, distinguishing, orientation in the space etc., and widening of application EDA PLAY TOBY with new activities, and this application was developed also for Android technology, it is free on AppStore and Google Play, see edaplay.com.</p> <p><b>Hungary</b></p> <p>B. PRÓNAY (2017) Supporting individuals with disabilities for visiting museums in Hungary. pp. 49-50.</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>In Kárpáti A., Ed. (2017). <i>New landscapes in science and art - in focus: teaching Visual Culture</i>. Book of Proceedings. 1. ELTE Workshop for Arts Education, 23-24 June 2017, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest. ISBN: 978-963-284-911-9 URL: <a href="http://mpk.elte.hu/en/?pid=programme/book_of_abstracts">http://mpk.elte.hu/en/?pid=programme/book_of_abstracts</a> <a href="http://mpk.elte.hu/en/download/EWAE_2017_Proceedings_final.pdf">http://mpk.elte.hu/en/download/EWAE_2017_Proceedings_final.pdf</a></p> <p>B. PRÓNAY, K. KOVACS, J. GOMBÁS, Á. SOMORJAI (2017) Access for museum education for those with visual impairment. pp. 101. In Kárpáti A., Ed. (2017). <i>New landscapes in science and art - in focus: teaching Visual Culture</i>. Book of Proceedings. 1. ELTE Workshop for Arts Education, 23-24 June 2017, Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), Budapest. ISBN: 978-963-284-911-9 URL: <a href="http://mpk.elte.hu/en/?pid=programme/book_of_abstracts">http://mpk.elte.hu/en/?pid=programme/book_of_abstracts</a> <a href="http://mpk.elte.hu/en/download/EWAE_2017_Proceedings_final.pdf">http://mpk.elte.hu/en/download/EWAE_2017_Proceedings_final.pdf</a></p> <p>B. PRÓNAY, K. KOVÁCS, E. SZŰCS, Á. SOMORJAI (2017) The cooperation of university, museum and special school for adapting the environment and creating new educational opportunities for children with visual impairment in museums: the Hungarian case. Proceedings of the 9th ICEVI European Conference 2-7 July 2017 Bruges, Belgium. Empowered by dialogue pp. 36-37 <a href="http://www.icevi-europe.org/files/2017/empowered-by-dialogue/icevi-europe-2017-proceedings.pdf">http://www.icevi-europe.org/files/2017/empowered-by-dialogue/icevi-europe-2017-proceedings.pdf</a></p> <p>GOMBÁS, E.A. BARÁTH, B. PRÓNAY, J. ZALÁN, C. TÓTH (2017) The Benefits of Accessible Theatre Programmes of Students with Moderate and Severe Visual Impairment. Proceedings of the 9th ICEVI European Conference 2-7 July 2017 Bruges, Belgium. Empowered by dialogue pp. 98-99 <a href="http://www.icevi-europe.org/files/2017/empowered-by-dialogue/icevi-europe-2017-proceedings.pdf">http://www.icevi-europe.org/files/2017/empowered-by-dialogue/icevi-europe-2017-proceedings.pdf</a></p> <p><b>Poland</b></p> <p>Marek, B. (2017) Rola grafiki dotykowej w wyjaśnianiu pojęć opartych na wrażeniach wzrokowych. Implikacje dla edukacji osób niewidomych i głuchoniewidomych. (The role of tactile graphics in explaining concepts based on visual experience. Implication for education of blind and deaf-blind persons).W: Ewa Domagała-Zyśk, Grzegorz Wiącek,</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>Małgorzata Książek (red.). Świat osób głuchoniewidomych. Wyzwania współczesności. (26-41). Wydawnicrwo EPISTEME.</p> <p>Magazines:  “A blind patient in hospital;” – a guide for hospital staff published by the Louis Braille Foundation in Lublin (language – Polish).</p> <p>Polish Association of the Blind publications:  “Pochodnia” – bi-monthly magazine in Braille, large print, digital (RTF) and CD  “Promyczek” and “Światełko” – monthly magazines for children in Braille large print and digital (RTF)  “Nasze dzieci” – quarterly magazine for parents and teachers in large print and digital (RTF)  “Dłonie I Słowo” – a bi-monthly magazine published by the Polish Association for the Welfare of the Deaf-Blind</p> <p>“International Journal of Pedagogy, Innovation and New Technologies” – bi-monthly magazine published by the Maria Grzegorzewska University</p> <p><b>Slovakia</b>  Recommendations of the joint ICEVI and EBU REC project mentioned above – completed recommendations on the mobility of Erasmus+ VI students designed for VI students and disability/Erasmus+ coordinators; to be published on <a href="http://www.euroblind.org">www.euroblind.org</a>  Toolkits for young leaders and youth workers completed within the Youth Activation – Long Term Ambition project – everything available on <a href="http://www.unss.sk/yalta/yalta-in-english.php">http://www.unss.sk/yalta/yalta-in-english.php</a></p> <p><b>Slovenia</b>  Recommendations for transition between levels of education or different institutions produced within EDUCARE project:  <a href="http://center-iris.si/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Osimo-TRANSITION-GUIDELINES-PROTOCOL.pdf">http://center-iris.si/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Osimo-TRANSITION-GUIDELINES-PROTOCOL.pdf</a></p>
Forthcoming events from the region for the next six months	<p><b>Czech Republic</b>  Change of the seat of the EDA- cz. to new offices, Haptic exhibition on the regional Museum Rostoky u Prahy for the blind and low vision visitors February 2017 till May 2018.</p> <p><b>Hungary</b>  School for the Blind: MDVI Euronet meeting June 2018, Lega del Filo d’Oro, Osimo, Italy</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p><b>Poland</b>  March – June 2018 “Typhlo stories about history of Lublin” The John Paul II Catholic University project financed by the city of Lublin. Planned outcome – a series of publications with tactile illustrations  April – May 2018 a series of tactile graphics workshops for schools in Australia and Singapore to be delivered by a Polish ICEVI member  May 2018 – active participation of a Polish ICEVI member in the Round Table Conference on Access to Information for People with Print Disabilities (Sydney)  May 2018 – conference on rehabilitation of persons with a visual impairment. Organizers: Parliamentary Group for Visual Impairment and Polish Association of the Blind  June 2018, Lublin - “The night of culture” – art exhibition accessible to persons with a visual impairment  October 2018 16<sup>th</sup> edition of REHA for the Blind. Organizer: Chance for the Blind Foundation.  November 2018 – Typhlology conference. Organizer: Maria Grzegorzewska University, Warsaw.</p> <p><b>Slovakia</b>  October 2018 international RoboBraille conference in Slovakia – more details to be communicated</p> <p><b>Slovenia</b>  In the second half of 2018 the events celebrating 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Centre IRIS – Centre for Education, Rehabilitation, Inclusion and Counselling for the Blind and Partially Sighted, (ex Institute for the Blind and Partially Sighted Children Ljubljana) will start.</p>
<p>Any other information such as research, best practices, etc., from the region</p>	<p><b>Hungary</b>  Leadership team-building retreat: October 2017, Mali Dom (Zagreb, Croatia), Ritmeyer Institute, (Trieste, Italy)</p> <p><b>Poland</b>  October – December 2017 “Invisible city” The John Paul II Catholic University project sponsored by the Ministry of Culture. Accessible tours of Lublin followed by an exhibition of tactile art – blind participants’ impressions of their hometown.  2017 (all year) “A classroom with no blackboard” - permanent exhibition and workshops about visual impairment for sighted school children. Venue: The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin  2017 – 2018 Research on recognizability of tactile drawings made by congenitally blind persons (The John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, and Marie Skłodowska- Curie University (Lublin). Results to be</p>

Area of Reference	Description
	<p>presented at the Round Table Access to Print Information conference: Sydney May 2018.</p> <p><b>Slovenia</b> Good cooperation of the Centre IRIS with organisations in the region (Zagreb, Budapest, Prague) continues in various forms: cooperation of professionals, children and young people taking part in sport events or art camps, etc.</p>

This report is submitted by the contribution of: the national representatives of our region: Marketa Skalicka Czech Republic, Judit Gombás Hungary, Grazyna Walczak-Boguslaw(Bob) Marek Poland, Tímea Hóková, Slovakia, Marija Jeraša Slovenia – and by Beáta Prónay Hungary  
1<sup>st</sup> March 2018

## 4 Professional Interest Groups

For the second time after the 2013 ICEVI-European conference in Istanbul, a meeting place of the ICEVI-Europe Professional Interest Groups took place during the European conference in Bruges. In general, the meetings were successful and the board decided to stimulate the realisation of professional interest groups as much as possible. Knowing colleagues at the European level and thus creating independent networks are important elements for the outcome of this initiative.

During the November Board Meeting in Helsinki, the Board continued its discussion of the professional interest groups and decided to form the following interest groups:

- **Early Intervention:** Managerial Responsible Persons: Ana Isabel Ruiz López ([AIRL@once.es](mailto:AIRL@once.es)) & Elena Gastón López ([EGL@once.es](mailto:EGL@once.es))
- **Teaching and Teacher Training** (Advisory Teachers, Subject Teachers, Classroom Teachers, & Teacher Trainers): Managerial Responsible Persons: Nathalie-Lewi Dumont ([nathalielewi@gmail.com](mailto:nathalielewi@gmail.com)) & Hans Welling ([Wellingja@yahoo.com](mailto:Wellingja@yahoo.com))
- **Rehabilitation** (Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Speech Therapists, Orientation & Mobility Instructors, Daily Living Skills and Low-Vision): Managerial Responsible Persons: Beata Pronay ([pronaybea@gmail.com](mailto:pronaybea@gmail.com)) & Hans Welling ([Wellingja@yahoo.com](mailto:Wellingja@yahoo.com))
- **European network for psychologists and related professions working in the field of Visual Impairment, ENPVI:** Chairperson: Peter Verstraten ([pverstraten@robertcoppes.nl](mailto:pverstraten@robertcoppes.nl)); Managerial Responsible Person: Beata Pronay ([pronaybea@gmail.com](mailto:pronaybea@gmail.com))
- **Vocational Training and Employment Rehabilitation:** Managerial Responsible Person: Anne Kristine Grosbøll ([akg@ibos.kk.dk](mailto:akg@ibos.kk.dk))
- **ICT:** Managerial Responsible Person: Steve McCall ([s.mccall@bham.ac.uk](mailto:s.mccall@bham.ac.uk))
- **Parents Interest Group:** Managerial Responsible Person: Andrea Hathazi ([ahathazi@yahoo.com](mailto:ahathazi@yahoo.com))

Each member of the board oversees one or two interest groups in their portfolio. As the Managerial Responsible Person (portfolio keeper), the board member not only serves as the contact person between the entire board of ICEVI-Europe and the specific interest group that he/she oversees, but also is co-responsible for creating the conditions that a Meeting, Workshop, or Conference of the Professional Interest Group is organized. The aim in the coming year is to organize a conference of each interest group, as a way of stimulating the structural network of these Professional Interest Groups. The next conference will take place during the European conference in Israel in 2021.

We strongly encourage you to join a Professional Interest Group of your choice and engage in the exchange of knowledge and sharing of best practices with fellow professionals and practitioners in your same field of interest. To do so, please contact directly the Managerial Responsible Person(s) of an ICEVI-Europe

Professional Interest Group of your choice, in order to register yourself as a member of that Professional Interest Group. In the coming years, efforts will be made to invest vocational conferences prior to the European conference 2021 in Israel.

## 5 Financial report 2017

<b><u>Balance</u></b>	<b><u>31-12-2016</u></b>
	38,910.73 €
Cash	0.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,910.73 €</b>
<b><u>Profit and loss</u></b>	<b><u>31/12/2017</u></b>
<b>Income</b>	
Membership Contributions	13,101.00 €
Donations	4,217.26 €
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>17,318.26 €</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Administration Expenses	7.200.00 €
Bank fees	287.63 €
Travel and Accommodation	3,189.25 €
Other Costs	1,117.00 €
Project Expenditure	6,925.00 €
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>18,718.88€</b>
<b>RESULT</b>	<b>1,400.62 €</b>
<b>Balance as per 31.12.2017</b>	<b>37,510.11€</b>

## 6 Estimate 2018

<b><u>Balance</u></b>	<b><u>31-12-2017</u></b>
	37,510.00 €
Cash	0.00 €
<b>Total</b>	<b>37,510.00 €</b>
<b><u>Profit and loss</u></b>	<b><u>31-12-2018</u></b>
<b>Income</b>	
Project Funds	3,218 €
Membership Contributions	12,100 €
Donations	4,200 €
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>19,518 €</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>	
Administration Expenses	7,800 €
Bank fees	300 €
Travel and Accommodation	3,400 €
Other Costs	500 €
Project Expenditure	3,225 €
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>15,225 €</b>
<b>RESULT</b>	<b>4,293 €</b>
<b>Balance as per 31.12.2018</b>	<b>41,803 €</b>

## 7 Looking to the future

Professional Interest Groups of ICEVI-Europe were established with the purpose of bringing together scientists, academics and professionals who work in the same specific field in order to exchange knowledge and experiences about the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments. ICEVI-Europe Board recognizes the necessity of professional interest groups and embraces the cooperation between professionals working in the field of visual impairment, promoting the necessary framework for full participation.

Looking to the future, the Board of ICEVI-Europe will follow the process of implementation of its professional interest groups policy, which is to realize strong European networks of professionals. In this instance, a small committee serving the purpose of a steering group will be formed which will plan future meetings, thematic conferences and workshops organized by the Interest Groups.

Moreover, several regional conferences will be organized in the coming years. Initial discussions and preparations are underway for a conference for East-European countries in Saratov, Russia, and a conference for the Balkan countries in Sofia, Bulgaria. Consultations are ongoing with the VBS and GPEAA regarding conferences for the German speaking countries and for the French speaking countries. Regional conferences present a unique opportunity to not only organize conferences based on the mutual goals that promote the full participation of people with visual impairment, but also to exchange knowledge and expertise and share best practices with fellow colleagues and professionals in the field of the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment.

In this way, the Board hopes to give substance to art. 4 of the constitution:

1. ICEVI-Europe is an association of individuals and organisations that promotes equal access to appropriate education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment so that they may achieve their full potential.
2. In endeavouring to achieve this aim, ICEVI-Europe shall, among others,
  - a. establish and maintain sub-regions and supporting their activities;
  - b. convene a General Assembly at the end of each term of four (4) years;
  - c. promote the cooperation with local, national, sub regional; European and global governmental and non- governmental organisations active in or related to the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment;
  - d. influence governmental and European Union agencies to promote and support activities with respect to the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment;
  - e. promote a positive image of people with visual impairment; and

- f. promote the involvement of persons with visual impairment and their families in educational and rehabilitation policy and planning.

ICEVI-Europe is not able to continue with its ambitious work and idealistic aims without the full support and activity of its members. The board of ICEVI-Europe recognizes the importance of its membership network and would like to take this opportunity to extend its sincere gratitude and appreciation to its members for their continuous support and invaluable membership.

Please encourage your colleagues, motivate schools, services, centres, associations and institutions to join ICEVI Europe and become a member of a network of professionals in the field of visual impairment across Europe, striving to strengthen knowledge and research in the field of education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment. Further information on the benefits of membership in ICEVI-Europe can be found on our website.

## 8 Members of the Board as of December 31st 2017

<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>Anne Kristine Grosbøll</b>  <i>representing the Baltic and Nordic countries</i>  <a href="mailto:AKG@ibos.kk.dk">AKG@ibos.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. 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

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## 9 ICEVI REGIONS of Europe

### *Baltic and Nordic Countries*

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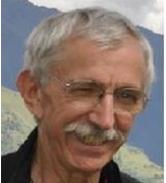
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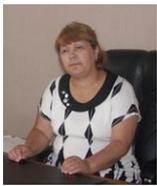
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