

European Newsletter

1 • 2006

New challenges and strategies for changes

During the programme of the conference in Kuala Lumpur Regional Focus, papers and regional meetings were held. During the Regional Focus meeting two presentations were held. Brian Allen, director of St. Joseph's Services for the Visually Impaired in Dublin held a lecture with the title „From School to Resource Centre“. An interesting story for many persons, because everyone is somehow involved in a transformation process. Francis Guiteau, director of the institute Montéclair in France and Gaëtane Leroux, technical assistant for elderly persons held a presentation with the title „The setting up of a European Standard for a basic training in Visual Impairment“. They reported about a European project, in which several countries in Europe are involved in order to reach a standard education for professionals in the field of education and rehabilitation of visually impaired and blind persons. An important development. Unfortunately this programme was not visited as well as hoped for. The same goes for the regional meeting.



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William Stuart of St. Joseph's held an enthusiastic presentation with the title „Irish Eyes Smiling 2009“. The presentation was an invitation to visit the next ICEVI-European Conference from 5 till 9 July 2009 in Dublin. After this presentation Brian Allen and Hans Welling signed a cooperation agreement to prepare this conference. Very important on the agenda of the regional meeting were the articles of association of ICEVI-Europe. These had been placed on the website before with the request to make comments. No remarks followed.

During the meeting was explained, why it is important for ICEVI-Europe to have a legal status. Also the role of the General

ICEVI EUROPE
International Newsletter

Volume 12 number 1
November 2006

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Assembly and the general meeting were discussed. The general meeting is new within ICEVI-Europe and consists of the contact persons of the European countries. This general meeting is among other things necessary, because each year the financial report has to be approved. The composition of the members of the board will remain the same. Formally the members of the board have voting rights and have advisors. After the explanation by the chairman the articles were approved, including the bylaws. The bylaws contain the number of contact persons per country, related to the number of inhabitants and the voting rights. Concerning the proposal of the European Committee the contribution was raised. You will find this in another article of this newsletter.

As soon as the articles have been formalized they will be placed on the website, as well as the bylaws.

This is an important step forward, which provides ICEVI-Europe a formal, legal status to present itself.

Hans Welling, Chairman ICEVI-Europe

The mission of our International Council

Conference in Kuala Lumpur

Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues
The International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI) is a global association of individuals and organisations that promotes equal access to appropriate education for all visually impaired children and youth so that they may achieve their full potential.

An impressive mission, but what does it actually mean?

This will become evident when we look at the goals which ICEVI hopes to reach in the next years:

1. To ensure access and full participation in education for all children with visual impairment and youth by 2015.

To make this a reality, ICEVI is

- **Changing public attitudes**
- **Encouraging community participation**
- **Facilitating NGOs support**

2. To promote and assist in building of local capacity to develop curriculum, to provide training and to identify and provide equipment and materials to children and youth with visual impairments and their parents, teachers and others in their communities.

ICEVI is initiating programmes at all levels to strengthen local capacity by

- **Facilitating training for professionals**
- **Facilitating access to equipment**
- **Developing distance education courses**

3. To collaborate with and make use of networks to ensure that substantially more children with visual impairment and youth receive quality and comprehensive education.

This is being done through

- **Specialized ICEVI working groups**
- **Representation of ICEVI in various forums**
- **Promotion of inclusion / integration**

4. To ensure that ICEVI initiatives are based upon current evidence of best practice, ICEVI is

- **Facilitating innovations**
- **Formulating (and disseminating information on) best practices**
- **Promoting research**

5. To provide information on ICEVI and its services through all possible and appropriate media to all target groups.

This is being achieved by

- **Establishing better communication with world organisations**
- **Launching international campaign**
- **Disseminating strategic plans**
- **Developing public awareness materials**

6. To build an appropriate and sustainable organizational structure for ICEVI, to include the required financial base. When I look at the information I received the past year I come to the conclusion that Europe wants to cooperate to reach these goals. Early intervention is very actual for many of us. How do we realize this and what is the best way to interest the government? How professional and well trained do the employees have to be? How do parents have to cooperate? And last but not least, what does this mean for our schools and institutes?

This also brings up the question how to register the visual possibilities of the children, which means assessment and diagnostics with children and young adults. We have to investigate the possibilities of families to take care of the education of the child, the possibilities of day care for young children, the possibilities and willingness of regular schools to integrate children with special needs in their classes. In all countries inclusive education is an actual issue. For some of us inclusive education has become a principal issues to provide service to children and parents and naturally also to regular services they use. Others, knowing that civil society is a challenge, wonder if inclusion is the best way to prepare children and young adults for their future participation to society. The number of children with special needs is growing: children who are also auditive disabled.

The number of children with cognitive and motoric and/or emotional impairments is growing, and this is not only a matter of diagnostics.

In order to find all the answers we, being professionals, always are partners of parents and look after their needs in contacting institutes, government, etc.

We have to act proactively to these developments.

During their next meeting, the European Committee will discuss in which way we can reach the goals within ICEVI-Europe. Herewith I would like to introduce several

thoughts which are open for discussion and after that have to be made concrete per country or sub region.

It concerns our aims for the future:

- To ensure access and full participation in education for all children
- To promote and assist in building of local capacity to develop curriculum, to provide training and to identify and provide equipment and materials
- To collaborate with and make use of networks to ensure that substantially more children with visual impairment and youth receive quality and comprehensive education

I think it is worthwhile to reflect upon a few items:

- How can we improve the professionalism of our institutes in order to improve early diagnostic, also for children with additional needs?
- How do we develop a vision at inclusion and how do we develop possibilities to act as a consultant for regular schools and authorities which are occupied with our clients?
- How can we prepare members of the staff of regular schools to provide children with special needs?
- I think it is also advisable to think about the question how the position of ICEVI is concerning adults and elderly persons. If we share our thoughts, the next step is the question how to involve the government in order to realize the new policy. The answer to these questions could mean for ICEVI-Europe:
 - Offering special modules at universities to train future workers in the field of education and rehabilitation.
 - The special Teacher Training, which is being prepared at the moment to consider the possibility of a European Master degree for teachers.
 - Supporting bilateral cooperation between institutes, based at an agreement for cooperation with clear goals and appointments from both sides.
 - Offering mutual consultation and coaching for institutes and professional groups.

- Supporting of conferences for members of the board of regular schools and/or regional governments.

I mention this item as my last item, because it is necessary to have a clear point of view how to realize. These are my thoughts. It is obvious that a lot of work has to be done. Work that only can be done if we make efforts together to realise the mission of ICEVI. I count at you all, at the efforts of staff members of institutes to support international cooperation and offer their employees the possibilities to explore their knowledge and expertise to the European programme. I gladly keep you informed about the programme by means of our website and our newsletter, but I would appreciate very much if you would support the European Committee with all your ideas and criticism.

Hans Welling, chairman, at the Conference in Kuala Lumpur

Plenary thoughts about the 12th ICEVI-Conference in Kuala Lumpur 21 July 2006

The job of the plenary speaker in a major conference such as this is a frightening and lonely one. My task is in 40 minutes to reflect upon a conference which has had 1200 participants from 96 countries, nearly 300 presentations. Apart from anything else, it has meant I have had to pay attention, attend every session and make tons of notes. I couldn't sneak off in case I missed something important.

There's a film I like which stars the famous British actor Peter Sellars. Peter plays a reporter for a local newspaper in a small town in Wales. One of his jobs is to write reviews of plays at the local theatre. He is asked by his newspaper to report on the first night of a play that the local dramatic society is performing. But he has a problem. He has just met a new girlfriend and has arranged to take her for a meal and doesn't want to break his date. So he writes the review of the play before he sees it and sends it in to the newspaper.

He takes his girlfriend out for a meal instead of attending the play – he doesn't think anyone will notice. This review is published in the paper the next day and when he goes into work he is immediately dismissed – he gets the sack he loses his job. The reason – just before the play started, the theatre burnt down. Well thank God this Hall has not burnt down – come to think of it has never even got warm. Like Peter Sellars, I was tempted to write my reflections and to look looking back on the conference before the conference began. I wanted to be prepared leave nothing to chance. Well, you can see the logic – it is a lonely place out here on stage in front of a thousand people when you have nothing to say and you haven't even got a bright shirt on. Maybe I thought, no one will notice – you can usually predict what people will say. I had the themes, I can tell everyone what I think the contributors should have said. If I am wrong I only have to worry about the English speakers - I can tell everyone else that what I actually said was a brilliant but sadly the translators got it all wrong. Well, am I glad that I didn't do that. I'm glad waited to hear what people had to say before reflecting on the conference. I waited until last night before writing this speech. Doing thing at the last minute this is something that I am very good at – I get plenty of practice – ask anyone who knows me. Just ask Dr Mani about *The Educator* our ICEVI journal – I'm the editor and I give him heart attacks because I leave things so late. So I didn't write this review until I had seen the play from beginning to end. The title of the play „Achieving equality in Education: new challenges and strategies or change“. Let me talk you through the play:

ACT ONE: The New Challenge.

Education for all children with Visual Impairment

The curtains opened to reveal a president, a minister and a Professor. The president of ICEVI Larry Campbell, the Minister of Education of Malaysia, and professor Ismail Saleh the chair of our hosts the MAB.

It says so much about the status of Prof. Saleh that not only is he able to get the Education Minister of the country to open the ceremony but he can also take the opportunity to remind The Minister what he needs to do in respect of the visually impaired of Malaysia. Never misses a chance – he told the Mayor too about the parking in Brickfields.

Breathtaking!

Larry's new challenge was a big one. Education for all children with VI by 2015. One of the Larry's themes was aspirations – that if we want to achieve equality in Education for children with a visual impairment by 2015 we have to create a demand for education among parents and families of children across the world.

One part of this process is the promotion of the good role models for children with visual impairments and their families. He quoted the example of Professor Ismail Saleh. If we want other examples of outstanding role models we have them in abundance with us – Sabriye for example. Act One ended in style with the spectacular and very loud launch of the EFAVI campaign.

ACT TWO – Equality

The opportunity to be equal and the right to be different

The Curtain rose to reveal Paul Ennals, Fred Schroeder and Charlotte McLain-Nhalpo. Their theme: attitudes and policies.

You remember Monday morning – seems like an age ago now to me.

Fred Schroeder – my hero. Fred said that after missing a lot of school with illness during which he lost his sight he went to his local school without support – he was never taught to read braille. One thing he said stuck in my mind. He said that „it was as if people thought that by just being there I would pick stuff up”

When Fred himself eventually got to a position where he could influence the education of blind children in a mainstream setting he started with the belief „that blind children should be sent a strong message

of independence and equality”. You remember that Fred talked about Vince a blind boy who became frustrated playing tag with sighted children other children because he was always IT.

Vince complained to Fred because Fred had told him he was equal – and clearly when it came to playing Tag he was not equal.

What was the solution - yes - it was a jar with stones in it. Whoever IT was had to rattle the jar. I thought this story became very significant for this conference. In a strange way it predicted a number of themes that were going to come up again and again in this conference.

To achieve equality for the person who is blind the rules of the game sometimes have to be different, adapted. To quote Fred „The lesson was that Vince knew he was able to grow up doing things differently but this does not mean he could not be included.”

Vince needed adaptations. It does not matter whether it was a game of tag or a mathematics lesson, without appropriate adaptation Vince could not participate equally. Saying that some children have needs that are distinct and sometimes unique does not mean that you are against inclusion. The opposite is true. Children who use braille do have different needs in relation to development of literacy, needs that are unique to touch readers. They also need to learn distinct mobility and independence skills and some may need to be taught interpersonal skills such as humour. (I hope you were able to catch Paul Pagliano, Pat Kelly's and Alana Zambone's presentation on this topic.) Differences need to be recognised and valued, distinct skills must be developed and adaptations to learning must be available.

Charlotte McLain-Nhalpo told us about the moves towards EFA in South Africa. She was clear that „Education for All” does not mean we need „the same education for all”. A truly inclusive system is one that allows for individual difference. I'll come back to Charlottes

point in the last act. The second point about Fred's story that struck me was that the solution came from the child - from the young person actually faced with the problem. It was a warning to us: Let's not assume we know all the answers. Listen carefully to what children have to tell us about what they need. „Nothing about us without us“, we have been told throughout the week. We have heard from Larry and Christian Garms yesterday about the importance of evidence – research data on which to build the EFAVI campaign. One of the things that we must not forget in this research is that we need to capture the voice of the child and the voice of the child's family - a new challenge and not an easy one - but the research which be enriched for it.

ACT THREE: Preparing the professionals Problems and virtual learning environments

Act three starred Paul pagliano, Gregorio Alonso and Bhushan Punani.

We cannot provide equality in education unless we the professionals who work with children understand their needs. I work at the School of Education at the University of Birmingham in England and with my colleague Dr Mike McLinden, I train teachers of the visually impaired so this topic of personnel preparation is dear to my heart. To achieve our goal of equal education in the future we need professionals who can promote the education of children with Visual Impairment – we will need a lot of them and we need them quickly. As Bhushan Punani said we don't just need teachers we need arrange of other professionals too with an understanding of the needs of children with VI and skills in meeting them. He is quite right but I'm sure he'll forgive me if I talk about what I know. Gregorio Alonso gave us a clear insight into the sweeping reforms to the training of teachers that are supporting ONCE's sophisticated strategy for inclusion in Spain. He talked about the need for training at three levels: basic training for all educators in mainstream

schools, training for SEN specialists and training for VI specialists in visual impairment.

If education for all VI children is to be achieved, we need to think radically about training. In the USA and the UK we are facing a crisis - professionals who work with children with VI are getting old. The people like me who train them are getting even older. I attended Cathy Huebner's presentation about developments in the USA, 60% of the fulltime University teachers in Faculties that specialise in training teachers in visual impairment are over 50 and a quarter of them planned to retire last year – the reason they didn't retire was that they knew that there was no one around with PhDs and experience in visual impairment who could replace them. Once university departments close the specialism is lost, the books on education and VI don't get written, the research doesn't get done - the way forward becomes unclear. This is not just a problem for the developed world. It is a big problem for us all.

I'm pleased to say that Cathy and her colleagues are addressing this area with a unique collaborative funded Phd leaders programme in VI that might just save the day. But hang on a few years yet Cathy just in case.

Keeping our training institutions open is not enough. We also need look at new modes of delivery. Traditional programmes for teachers of the visually impaired that require full time attendance at Colleges or Universities centres are too expensive and don't produce enough teachers. Another of the new challenges we have is to how harness the emerging communication technologies to train the professionals we need in the quantities we need them. Distance Education training programmes offer a much more flexible and cost effective method of training and as we heard in this ACT have been adopted around the world . But DE has its drawbacks. Working on your own is not fun it can be very isolating. People learn

best when they have the opportunities to work in groups and learn from each other, people need the feedback and motivation you get from learning with others.

These days people don't have to be in the same room to work together effectively in groups, they can work together through the internet using Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) either synchronously through chatrooms or asynchronously through Bulletin boards. Synchronous and Asynchronous – I bet that had the translators reaching for their dictionaries. We need to explore the power of the internet — the use of chatrooms where people can talk together or the use of bulletin boards where groups can post messages for one another.

I know what you are thinking – this is a dream. It will work fine in the UK but in our part of the world we will never have the resources to do this. It won't be any help in our plan to achieve Education for all children.

I'm not so sure, I was lucky enough to attend a conference in South America organised by Lucia Piccione our wonderful South American regional chair. A very enthusiastic young teacher was demonstrating the use of technology – I think it was a something like a screen reading programme. Hey that's all very well for you in the cities but we in the rural areas this is a dream – we'll never be able to afford this.

Hey do you have a mobile phone? Yes of course the man said. Ten years ago did you ever dream you would have a phone like this? No the man said and fell silent. You see she said in ten years time you never know.

Well I have a mobile phone here. I have been doing my emails on my computer in Birmingham with it this week. It has full internet access; it has all the same facilities as my desktop computer. I got it free with my rental agreement. Soon all phones will have this facility and they will become even more powerful. Could that be a possible way forward in our training?

Ten years is a long time in the world of technology. You never know.

What kind of professionals do we need? If my judgement of what has been said at this conference is right, we need people who can think for themselves, who can solve problems and who can work collaboratively with others. The importance of collaborative effort on a macro and micro level was highlighted by Christian as a key to the success of the Vision 20/20 programme.

Those of you who attended the session given by my colleague Mike McLinden and I will know that we talked about our belief in the importance of giving people the opportunity to take control of their own learning. We said that standing up in front of people and lecturing to them is not the best way of helping people to learn.

Dangerous talk when you are standing on a stage lecturing to people like this. Problem Based Learning (or enquiry based learning as it is sometimes known) assumes that people learn best when they work together in groups to solve a problem that they all have an interest in. We can apply this approach to training teachers of children with a visual impairment. Give them a problem to solve based on what they are doing on a day to day basis. Give them a scenario that they are familiar with, something that happens in the classroom or in school that is difficult to deal with. But don't give them the answer – let them take responsibility for finding out an answer or maybe several answers. It is a powerful way of learning that is used widely in the training of medics such as doctor and physiotherapists. We believe it could be usefully applied to training professionals in education and visual impairment and we have the technology to adopt this approach online – all our teachers at the University use this method for part of their learning. Use it as a method for doing this session saved me staying up till 4.00 am.

ACT FOUR: Strategies for change
All must mean all – Half must mean half
In this act we had five characters Jill Keefe,

Wilfred Maina, Lucia Piccione and Peng Xianguang and Christian Garms.

Jill started with some bad news for our new challenge. We already know that 6 out of the ten regions in the developing world are likely to miss their Millennium Goals one of which is Education for All children. EFA children is an aspiration rather than a confident prediction. UNESCO has already identified countries where they know there is no chance of it being achieved – we know that. Should we give up? No and here I want to return to the point that Charlotte raised in ACT ONE. ALL must mean ALL. The point about equality.

You remember the title of the play „Achieving Equality in Education“. We may need to accept that education for all children with VI in some countries in ten years is not an achievable goal. Maybe we should say HALF MUST MEAN HALF. What we could mean in reality is that mean is that in a country where only 50% of all children go to school we want at least 50% of children with VI in school. Although it would be great to have a hundred percent of children with VI the key thing as Christian keeps telling us is to be clear about our aim and it may well be that we have to aim at equal education by 2015 rather than education for all.

When setting goals it is tempting to pretend to ourselves that education for all means simply getting children to school. The scenes in this ACT took me back to research in Uganda that ICEVI undertook – I was lucky enough to visit children with visual impairment in schools in the countryside in rural Uganda – a country that has done more than most to promote the needs of children with visual impairment. My thinking to that point had been something like „the main thing is that we get blind children into school. Even if they are not able to participate properly in lessons because there is no one to teach them braille, it must be better than being isolated at home. At least you are getting some social benefit from being at school.“

Now it seems to be is that the argument

about social benefit may not be as convincing as I thought.

If you are later going to school than other children, as most blind children seem to be, if you are in a class where you are three, four or five years older than most of the others, if you have to repeat the same class year after year because you can't pass the examination because no one has taught you braille, then you drop out. Blind children can be more socially fulfilled doing household chores, looking after younger children, digging in the family vegetable patch. Let's be careful when we talk about the social benefits of education – they come if you are successful.

So the challenge is not just getting children to school – it is keeping them there. Wilfred talked about the acute shortage in the Africa region of even the basic tools children require such as slates and stylus to write braille. One thing that struck me about the research in Uganda was the vulnerability of children who were blind in particular. It seemed easier for children with some sight to be successful to some degree where there was little or no support. We could find no evidence in Uganda of children who were blind and who needed braille succeeding with little or no support. Wilfred talked about poor resource allocation and the importance of focussing the resources where the needs are greatest. Getting the best value from limited resources. Christian Garms told us about vision 20/20 success was a result of carefully targeted approach. This raises some uncomfortable questions. If we have limited resources should we try to target them at all children with VI or at then most needy? We have seen how difficult choices had to be made for vision 20/20. The same questions will no doubt face us in our campaign. Should we focus our efforts on all children with VI? Should we focus on the ones who are easiest to support because this will improve our figures most quickly? Should we focus the scarce resources on the children who need it most?

Our play is drawing to the close. But we don't have an ending yet. How does the play end? You'll have to wait until the next conference. Thank you .

Steve McCall

Result of a co-operation between two countries

From 1998 until 2006 there has been a co-operation between the Dutch Visio, national foundation for blind and visually impaired people and the Moldovan Blind Union (MBU), based in Chisinau, the capital of the republic of Moldova.

The final project has ended in the beginning of this year. It concerned the contribution of Visio by connecting other foundations to the reconstruction of a building with 48 apartments, mainly for persons with a visual impairment, and the foundation of the first Association of Owners in Moldova. This might sound a strange kind of project for a Dutch foundation with the main focus on education and rehabilitation. But the situation in Moldova is not a usual one and Visio had reasons to commit to the MBU.

Other countries that once belonged to the Soviet Union alike, Moldova is undergoing a transition period. Economically the situation is very hard and vulnerable groups on the labour market, like people with visual impairment, suffer. The Moldovan Blind Union owns factories and workshops for blind and visually impaired people and traditionally provides housing as well. Also these factories are going through a rough time, trying to survive and adapt to the new market situation. The MBU is constantly trying to find new markets, new possibilities of producing in order to provide the members with work, an income and perspectives for the future. Several projects for cooperation with foreign organisations have had some positive results.

One of the buildings, an old hostel with 215 rooms, had been neglected due to lack of financial resources. It badly needed full restoration. The MBU started some years

ago collecting funds based on a fully documented project plan. Financial help came from local and foreign sources: the Moldovan government, the Municipality of Chisinau and, through mediation of Visio, several Dutch foundations, like the Bosch foundation, the Rotterdam foundation for the blind, the „Wild Geese” and the „Zienderogen” foundations that contributed significantly. The foundation „Werken aan wonen”, meaning „working on residence” has provided quite a special service. Based on the project plan from the MBU, together with a visit from a Dutch specialist this foundation not only donated a substantial amount of money, but transferred knowledge that was needed in order to establish a practical Association of Owners. The concept of which was not new in Moldova, but a new version of it complying to a new way of exploration of a building was introduced.



New in the exploration of this building was the combination of users: people with visual impairment working at the factory and paying an amount of money per m², people with visual impairment, mostly youngsters without income and buyers „from outside”. The selling of an amount of apartments on the free market provided

the necessary means for the houses of the people that needed financial support. Based on a visit in Moldova by an expert advisor from the Netherlands a course was developed for members of the MBU and carried out by specialists in Chisinau as well as in the Netherlands. They learned how to set up an association of owners, „new style”, fitting to the changed society and market. This way, good maintenance of the building, a very important issue, is made possible. This example of exploitation and association of owners could be useful for other countries in transition as well.

On May 12th, the official opening took place in the presence of the Mayor, the chairman of the Parliament and the Minister of Health and Welfare and the proud owners were given the key to their new, modern apartment.

D. Sclifos, President of the MBU

A. Feelders, project coordinator Visio

Visually impaired people set to work in Bulgaria

„It is my dream to run my own business”

Young, visually impaired Bulgarians find a job, supported by Bartiméus Sonneheerdt (T: (0341) 498 414, E: international@sonneheerdt.nl, W: www.sonneheerdt.nl)

The project has been running for a few years now. The statistics show that it is going well, but exactly what does it mean in practice? Who are these visually impaired people, how do they live and what are their dreams? Nikolay, Stoyan and Georgi tell their story.

Nikolay (20) and Stoyan (29) are visually impaired young men who are taking an upholstery and woodworking course at the training centre for the blind in Plovdiv. At nine thirty in the morning, the teacher begins with some theory on upholstering couches, chairs and other furniture. How do you remove the old fabric from the seat without damaging the piece of furniture? What standards should the material meet?



How do you stretch the new fabric neatly and how do you fix it on? The teacher demonstrates the assignment of the day and a group of five students get down to practical work. In the meantime, they have plenty to talk about, as they come from different cities and get on very well. At half past one in the afternoon, the school day ends.

Different students, one dream

Nikolay lives with his mother in Targovishte, a beautiful city in the woody north-east of Bulgaria. He has no brothers or sisters and his parents are divorced. Nikolay has a congenital eye disorder. In Varna, he went to the secondary school for the visually impaired. After graduating, Nikolay took a massage course. „When I finish my upholstery course, I hope to have a better chance on the labour market”, says Nikolay. „My dream is to run my own business. To me, having a job means meeting people and feeling good.”

Stoyan comes from a family of three children. He has an older and a younger sister. His father is unemployed and his mother receives a pension. He lives in the village Dabene, in the middle of Bulgaria.

Before Stoyan became visually impaired as a result of a car accident in 2002, he graduated from the secondary school for railway transport, in Karlovo, and graduated as a sergeant from the Secondary Military Artillery School, in Shumen.

When he has completed the new course, Stoyan is going to find out whether he can take out a loan to start his own upholstery business. „A job will make me feel a useful member of society”, he says smiling.

Working in practice

Georgi is 39 and still single. His parents are no longer alive and his family consists

of a sister and two nephews. Until about three years ago, he lived in Kazanlyk, in the south of Bulgaria, where he worked in the Arsenal Factory.

After his secondary school, he completed several courses: „Registration and management of a small firm” and „Computer literacy”, Georgi has a congenital eye disorder, which will finally cause complete blindness. He knows the city Plovdiv from his student years and he knows that there are a lot of chances to find a paid job.

He himself is the living proof of it. A year ago, he passed the upholstery and wood-working course. He found a job at Rego, a private enterprise that manufactures high quality doors. Georgi is proud of his business: „With six men we manufacture 120 doors per month. Because we’re a private enterprise, high quality is essential. We have a reputation to keep up!”

He is very satisfied with the choices he has made so far. After the fall of Communism, his salary at the Arsenal Factory was reduced to the minimum income. His new job pays a normal income. This means that he is not dependent on anybody. But Georgi still hasn’t finished studying. „My biggest wish is to study psychology at university”.

Blind or visually impaired in Bulgaria

There is still a lot to do for the blind and partially sighted in Bulgaria, especially in relation to public opinion. In large cities such as Sofia and Plovdiv, some matters are well organised; for instance, disabled people can make use of financial subsidies such as free transport and benefits, pedestrian crossings are equipped with so called ‘tickers’ and there are potential employers. However, in the smaller cities and villages, many businesses have been closed since the revolutions of the early nineties. Employers are reluctant to employ disabled people and the people themselves know little or nothing about their chances and possibilities.

Working on the future together

The ‘National Rehabilitation Center for the Blind’ in Plovdiv joins forces with the Bulgarian Union of the Blind to achieve social

awareness and opportunities for the blind and partially sighted throughout the country. Teachers, psychologists and trainers are developing vocational training courses, employment-finding and – if necessary – coaching in daily life situations. They are doing this in collaboration with associated institutes from Romania and Moldavia and with Bartiméus Sonneheerdt, the Dutch partner organisation, who gladly deploys its knowledge and experience for projects in Eastern Europe, Africa and the Antilles. The Union of the Blind in Bulgaria (UBB) is the national organisation of the visually handicapped in Bulgaria. The union has over 19,000 members. 95% of the blind and visually impaired labour force in Bulgaria is unemployed. Until 1992, almost 90% worked in sheltered workshops, but nowadays about 200 people do. The transition to a free market economy meant that these workshops had to compete with regular businesses.

The National Rehabilitation Center for the Blind (NRCB) is a non-profit organisation for the rehabilitation of blind and partially sighted people. The upholstery course has existed since 2002. At the beginning of 2006, the NRCB set up an official training centre, which provides courses for professions such as upholsterer, masseur, social worker, gardener and secretarial employee. Candidates for the vocational training are graduates of the special schools for the visually handicapped in Sofia and Varna and other blind and partially sighted people in search of employment.

Hanneke Jongeling, Bartiméus Sonneheerdt International Department, Ermelo
Photo: *Veronika Kertikova, National Rehabilitation Center for the Blind, Plovdiv*

III – European Workshops of Early intervention for Visually impaired children

The necessity of early intervention to support the development of impaired children is widely accepted. Today there are no

doubts whether such support should be organised but different activities are applied to disseminate such support for the child and his family.

In Poland the first attempts to apply early intervention took place in the 80-ies, but in 90-ies there could be observed the dynamic development of different forms of such support offered by various institutions but mainly by social organisations. At the same time the first training courses for the early intervention specialists were organised (G.Walczak 1995, 2000, 2000a). III European Workshops of early intervention for Visually Impaired Children, organised from 10.10. – 15.10. 2005, were mainly devoted to improvement of itinerary teachers' skills.

The previous two took place in Prague (2003) and Budapest (2004). The idea of the workshops emerged as the outcome of long lasting co-operation between the Institute For The Visually Impaired SENSIS (former Theofan) in Grave near Nijmegen in Holland and people and institutions dealing with early intervention in Budapest, Prague and Warsaw.

During the II World Conference ICEVI - International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment - in Noordwijkerhout, Holland, April 2002, there took place a meeting on which the above mentioned co-operation was summed up. The participants of the meeting were: Carina Poels (SENSIS-Grave), Krisztina Kovacs (ELTE University, Barczi Faculty of Special Education-Budapest), Terezie Hradilkova (Association for Early Intervention, Prague), Grazyna Walczak (Academy of Special Education, Warsaw).

During their discussion the participants decided to apply activities whose aim would be the exchange of experience of those dealing with early intervention for the visually impaired children. Workshops were agreed to be the most effective way to reach this aim. So far all the workshops have been sponsored by The Institute for The Visually Impaired – SENSIS in Grave near Nijmegen.

III Workshops were organised by the M. Grzegorzewska Academy of Special Pedagogic in Warsaw. There were 23 participants of the workshops, namely: 2 from Austria, 5 from Czech Republic, 4 from Holland, 1 from Spain, 3 from Hungary and 8 from Poland.

The object of the workshops was:

- exchange of experience
- common way of solving problems emerging in the process of early intervention
- establishing a network of co-operating people and institutions dealing with early intervention.

Following the formula of the former workshops, the participants of the III workshops presented:

- State reports about the realisation of early intervention for visually impaired children, with the aim to inform about the state of early intervention in certain country (who and to what extent organises the support).
- Selected key problems within early intervention.
- Case study of selected children undergoing the programme of early intervention.

Basing on the presented reports it was concluded that in Austria, Czech Republic, Holland, Spain, Poland and Hungary there is no common system of early intervention services for the visually impaired children. The services are offered by non-governmental institutions (Czech Republic), private institutions and associations (Holland, Austria), state institutions (Hungary), or all above mentioned (Spain, Poland). In Holland and Austria almost all children in need get the relevant support. However, in Czech Republic, Hungary, Spain and Poland more and more visually impaired children and their families are supported, unfortunately for many of them such form of support is still not available.

The reports also clearly show that the most popular form of intervention is the „combined” method; which means that the co-operation with a child and his family takes place both in home environment and in the centres of early intervention. Only in Hol-

land early intervention is mainly realised in home environment.

Within the presentation of key issues the following was discussed:

- the forms of co-operation with a family (Hungary, Holland)
- Methods of functional assessment of a child (Spain, Poland)
- Therapeutic methods (Austria)
- Constructing the toys (Czech Republic)

Ad. Forms of co-operation with a family

Klara Svobodova /Association for Early Intervention, Czech Republic/ discussed the forms of co-operation of this institution with parents of visually impaired children. The organisation was established in 1990 and since its beginnings emphasises the supportive services for the parents. Since 2000 parents have got the opportunity of regular meetings, whose aim is decided by the parents themselves. They can take their children with them as there are volunteers who look after the off-springs. About 10 families participates regularly in such meetings.

The early intervention team in Budapest applies music therapy to tighten the ties between parents and the child. According to Ms. Eva Lantos the therapy takes place once in two weeks, lasting about 60 minutes. During the therapy different activities are applied – for ex. singing, dancing, music plays. The structure of the therapy is flexible depending on the activity and preferences of parents and the children. During the discussion after the presentation, the necessity to seek different forms activating and encouraging parents to co-operation was emphasised. Especially relevant seemed those activities which combined the elements of movement, music, singing and drawing, as while playing with children parents might be easily instructed how to train different abilities.

Annemieke Mulders from Holland also presented the forms of co-operation with parents. They established the supporting group for 6 families with blind and partially sighted children in the age 1-3 years. A team of specialists (itinerary teacher, psy-

chologist, voluntary) had regular meetings with the families in order to ease the parents' contact with a child and to start the co-operation. After 3 months it turned out that the parents better understand their children and are eager to be with them, which was assumed to be the first symptoms of a child's acceptance.

Ad. Assessment Methods

Monika Orkan - Lîecka (The early Intervention Team „Rainbow”, Warsaw) presented the programme entitled „The Beginning”, which allows to assess the functioning of visually and multi-handicapped children as well as working out the individual programmes of revalidation.

Merce Leonhard (ONCE, Barcelona) presented the scale T.B. Brazelton, which is a very good method to assess the premature babies. Using this method it is possible to differentiate all spheres that require revalidation. That's why it is very useful both for the specialists and the parents who participate in the assessment.

Ad. Therapeutic Methods

A good example of new forms of working with a child was the silhouette theatre presented by Gisela Dressel Reckenthaeler, Austria. Applying a very interesting arrangement of the scenery, she proved that such a theatre might be very therapeutic. Wisely used might improve the concentration, vision, cognitive skills as well as emotional and social ones. The performance was widely applauded which proves that this form of work with small children was strongly approved.

Ad. Constructing the toys

Eva Dohnalova from Czech Republic presented how using simple materials you can construct a „bell ball”. A self-made toy is a source of joy not only for the child but also for the constructor (parents, care takers) giving them a feeling of making something useful for their child.

Case study

The invaluable source of knowledge about the methods of working with a visually impaired child and dealing with the problems emerging during the process of rehabili-

tation was the case study. Basing on the earlier agreement the participants from each country could present 1-2 children. The aim of these presentations was presenting problems of diagnosis, constructing the programmes of revalidation, selecting the means, as well as methods of co-operation with a family. All presentations had the same structure, namely:

- presenting a short profile of a child, his needs and possibilities as well as the environment conditions including the family situation.
- establishing the problems while working with a child
- presenting a video film showing the child in question.

All presentations were very interesting, provoking for discussion and exchange of experience.

It's impossible to present them all but as an example, I'd like to describe one of them. Daniel – 4-year-old, blind with additional impairment – has no fingers in his right palm. Daniel doesn't walk without support. He has been rehabilitated since his 6 month of age, and is supported by a physiotherapist. The aim of his rehabilitation is to encourage Daniel to use his left hand. In the first stage of rehabilitation the boy was reluctant to explore the environment. His left palm was fistled and raised up – he was closed to the environment- the video showing him at the age of two. Later on, at the age of 4, Daniel is much more interested in the environment exploring. However, there emerged the stereotype behaviour- Daniel explores each object by moving it to his mouth, which is practically impossible to eliminate. There is also a question of how to improve the way Daniel plays with objects.

Remarks (proposals) conclusions:

- The stereotype behaviour shouldn't be eliminated as the mouth being very sensitive allows him to know the object better
- To improve his fine motor, daily activities should be introduced – for ex. eating with a spoon. As the boy consumes only

liquids, new food can be introduced like pudding to be eaten with a spoon.

- To improve his gross motor the boy must be sat at the table while eating. It will develop his upright position and if dressed in for ex. a heavy vest filled with beans, will improve his body awareness.
- Stronger audio stimulation might be done by dressing him in a vest with some sound producing objects attached to it and if the objects are of different fabrics they can encourage him to tactile exploration.
- As the child seems not to be very interested in contacts with other children another child or a group might introduced into the activities.
- It would be advisable to increase Daniel's interest in the external world, for ex. playing the game stimulus-reaction, the therapist introduces a new stimulus and waits for the child's reaction if evoked, the therapist reacts in the same way.
- The child should be given more freedom to choose the game, so the therapist tries to introduce a new game with a gesture or a word and waits for the child's reaction who himself decides whether he wants to play or not.
- The child's mother is too passive during the activities, she ought to participate actively and the therapist needs to explain her what and why he is doing something
- Daniel suffers from sleep disorders, which might be caused by the fact that the mother doesn't walk with the child fearing the reaction of the others. A thorough discussion with parents might help as well as introducing a rigorous daily scheme. The mother may also try to write a diary for a week, which would help to differentiate the problems.

All the remaining 6 presentations were presented similarly. The accompanying activities were: the display of resource materials, toys, books brought by the participants and the visit to the centre of early intervention for the visually impaired children - „Rainbow” in Warsaw. To commemorate the workshop the Polish Post

introduced a special date stamp. Did the workshops come up to the expectations? Basing on the results of the survey conducted at the end we can conclude that the workshops did come up to the expectations. Generally they were highly evaluated by the participants, who had a feeling of expanding their knowledge and experience about early intervention in different countries. They got acquainted with different opinions and approaches to the problem. All of them highly complimented on the co-operation having the feeling of belonging to one team and despite being from different countries constituting an international team of specialists dealing with early intervention of visually impaired children. The useful rehabilitation tools presented, which can be made the family members or teachers themselves were also praised. The participants also expressed their satisfaction with a well-prepared and interesting social programme. All of them supported the idea of continuing such form of improving their knowledge and skills. The next European workshops will be organised by SENSIS in Holland.

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Dr Grazyna Walczak

M. Grzegorzewska Academy of Special Education in Warsaw

IBSA (International Blind Sports Federation) takes 2006 UEFA Monaco Award

At an Executive Committee meeting held last month in Berlin, UEFA, the govern-

ing body for football in Europe, decided to grant its 2006 Monaco Award to IBSA for the development of blind futsal in Europe over the next three years.

The 2006 Monaco Award is worth one million Swiss Francs and will provide a major boost to football for the blind in the Old Continent. IBSA has been given the sponsorship for a three-year project aimed at developing a series of coaching and refereeing seminars all over Europe, supplying countries with the equipment needed to develop the game nationally and editing a series of teaching DVDs focussing on specific aspects of the game.

UEFA support confirms IBSA's leading role in developing football and other sports for the blind and partially sighted and the federation's position as one of the most active players in sports for people with disabilities.

Michael Barredo, IBSA President, said of the news: „This is a great moment for football for the blind in Europe and around the world. UEFA's initiative will enable IBSA to further develop and promote blind futsal in the continent where football was born.

“It sends an encouraging message to other continents and we are hopeful we can boost the sport globally with the support of other regional football organisations and offer visually impaired footballers the chance to play the most popular game in the world.”

Carlos Campos, IBSA Futsal Subcommittee Chairman, was delighted with the news. He added: „UEFA support over the last year has made it possible for us to do so much work with many countries, and this added backing will go a long way to enabling us to truly roll out the game Europe-wide. We are very grateful and I would like to thank UEFA most sincerely for its vote of confidence.”

The cheque for the Monaco Award will be handed over to IBSA in the centre circle prior to the 2006 UEFA Supercup match between Barcelona and Seville in Monaco on Friday the 25th of August.

Blind Man Becomes Newspaper Owner!

John Perry, formally Editor of „disabilities.afreepress.com“ becomes owner of www.allincluded.org a free worldwide online newspaper covering local, national and international issues its aim is to reach out and involve all sections of the community, promoting social and economic inclusion for those who may or may not feel excluded.

I am a Blind person, Disability Trainer/Consultant and owner of a free online newspaper! I believe that equality, whilst being difficult to implement in practice, is important in my life and other people's lives, so just because it is difficult this should not be an excuse for not trying to achieve equality for all! My ultimate personal and professional goals are to work for social and economic justice for people with disabilities and for others facing social and economic exclusion. I hold the view that rights and legislation along side education are needed. I feel that the tendency towards a „them and us“ situation is more harmful and a recognition that we all have our place and rights is what should be striven for. I also consider that we should look to be involved with and support other groups who have common problems and indeed strengths, skills and knowledge which we can tap into. We are looking for individuals and organisations to submit material that they feel may be of interest to others. Topics that you could write about to include: *Arts and Entertainment, Breaking News, Business, Cartoons, Community, News, Opinions/Columns, Promotion, Humour, Special reports, Sports.* These suggestions are just that so if you have a topic that is not mentioned here please feel free to discuss your idea with us. Do you have a web site or have you found a web site that you think might be of interest? Let others know about it through our newspaper! Are you organising or holding an event why not let people know about it via the newspaper. If you would

like to advertise in or sponsor our newspaper why not get in touch?

For further Information please contact:

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Mobile: 07903 931943

E-Mail: info@jkpenterprises.org.uk

Website: www.jkpenterprises.org.uk

4th Workshop on Training of Teachers of the Visually Impaired (First Announcement)

Spring 2007 in Bratislava, Slovakia

How to move away from traditional lectures towards facilitating small group, interactive learning as a way of training teachers for the visually impaired:

Steve McCall and Mike McLinden, School of Education University of Birmingham, UK

Info: hanswelling@visio.org

Low vision driving in the Netherlands: some practical research

For many people, driving a car is both 'the key to independence' and means to promote social integration. However, many visually impaired people cannot drive or may not drive anymore. The 'AutO-Mobilititeit'-project launched by Visio, the University of Groningen and the CBR (Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen, is the Dutch statutory body responsible for the administering of driving tests) targets those with low visual acuity but without a reduced visual field, studying the fitness of visually impaired subjects to drive using a bioptic telescope. One consequence of this project which is unique in Europe might be to rejust the Dutch traffic legislation.

Vision

European countries do not allow driving people if they have binocular visual acuity below 0.5 or horizontal visual fields less than 120 degrees. However, those with central vision impairment but good peripheral vision could benefit from using a monocular telescope (bioptic). Operational traffic task can be done with a visual acu-

ity of 0.2, a better visual acuity is required for reading road signs. Research into 'bi-optic driving' shows that visually impaired drivers could use a monocular telescope following formal training in visual skills. Furthermore there is a very low causal relation between visual acuity and traffic accidents. Little reason, therefore exists why some visually impaired people should not drive.

Methods

Out of 243 persons volunteered for participation 36 subjects (visual acuity between 0.16 and 0.5) were assessed: low vision, neuropsychological functioning, orientation and mobility skills and a driving observation. Twenty-one subjects were included, two decided not to participate. The final 19 subjects were trained in the use of monocular telescopes (3X magnification), were given driving lessons by selected professional driving instructors to integrate the use of the Biopic telescope in driving. Finally subjects took a driving examination by an expert of the CBR took an driving examination and were judged by the official protocol of the CBR.

Results

Eight persons passed the Practical fitness to Drive test, eight person were excluded after a number of driving lessons, three withdrew at own initiative and two people are still in the training process. Over 50% of the selected subjects fulfilled the inclusion criteria. So far, 42% of the subjects who entered the training programme passed the final Fitness to Drive test.

Conclusion

It is worth emphasising that this is the first practical test in Europe to prescribe Biopic telescopes for driving and to train Biopic drivers. People with a visual acuity between 0.16 and 0.5 can drive safely using a biopic telescope system. The outcome highly suggest and may indicate to change the Dutch traffic-legislation. Recently the Advisory committee Kooijman published a report for the Secretary of State for Transport to ask to change the traffic-legislation.

The results will be presented in an international magazine for Low Vision and Blindness in spring 2007. Contact the author for a reference list about 'AutO-Mobiliteit':

geertvandelden@visio.org.

Geert van Delden, neuropsychologist
Royal Visio, National Foundation for the Visually Impaired and Blind in the Netherlands, www.visio.org.

Tactile Books, fun and integration for visually impaired children

Royal Visio is the Dutch contact for Typhlo & Tactus, the only European competition promoting the design and production of tactile illustrated books for visually impaired children. Every year, two prizes are awarded in two categories: fantasy and fiction based on a story from each country's cultural heritage for readers aged 3 to 12. In the autumn, a jury of sighted and visually impaired members meets in Dijon to judge the entries. This year's Dutch entries are by teachers, rehabilitation workers and occupational therapy students who attended a workshop on blind children and tactile books. Tactus was launched by Les Doigts Qui Rêvent, an organisation which produces tactile books. Funding from the EU and the participating countries enables the books to be produced fairly cheaply.

Who benefits? Visually impaired children and their families, and blind family members of sighted children. Printed in ink as well as Braille, the books look and feel attractive, helping to integrate visually impaired and sighted children. In April 2006 Visio jointly organised an international tactile book exhibition enjoyed by blind and sighted visitors.

The competition rules will appear on the Tactus website in the languages of the participating countries. Addresses for information and buying books:

The Netherlands:

Royal Visio, Anneke Blok,
annekeblok@visio.org

France:

Les Doigts Qui Rêvent, Philippe Claudet,
ldqr@wanadoo.fr

Belgium:

Oeuvre Nationale des Aveugles (ONA),
Monique Clette, monique.clette@ona.be

United Kingdom:

Clear Vision Project, Marion Ripley,
info@clearvisionproject.org

Finland:

Celia Library for the visually impaired,
Päivi Voutilainen,
paivi.voutilainen@celialib.fi

Germany:

Grenzenlos, Anja Strobach,
a.strobach@grenzenlos-ggmbh.de

Italy:

Federazione Nazionale delle Istituzioni
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riale tiflodidattico. Pietro Vecchiarelli,
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Poland:

Hungry Fingers, Boguslaw (Bob) Marek,
bobmarek@hungryfingers.com

A Review of Chooseit Maker 2

Chooseit Maker 2 takes Switchit Maker one giant step forward! I've been using it now for around a term in my class of MDVI pupils at the Royal Blind School. It moves beyond the simple cause and effect of moving one page forward in response to a switch press, by allowing questions to be posed and answers to be right or wrong.

It comes with the familiar interface of Switchit Maker 2 which meant that we didn't have to go to the trouble of learning a new system, so we just put the disk in and away we went. There is a good instruction manual which takes you through building an activity, and the programme comes with its own built in clip art, sounds PCS and Rebus symbols etc. This is well worth reading as it points out features and ideas which you might otherwise miss and is very user friendly.

As with Switchit Maker, the programme comes with a range of ready made activi-

ties in the sample folder which allow the user to get started straight away. This collection of samples also allows one to see some examples of the range of potential uses which the programme has.

Making up a quiz or activity is, as with Switchit Maker, a simple process as the user is led through a series of guided steps frame by frame. Activities can cover any area of the curriculum, from language to environmental studies to PSE or number work and can be as complex or as simple as the user needs. The first page poses the question, a range of answers are then displayed, which may be as simple as „Point to the cow.” And a selection of from two to six items will then be scanned. Sequencing tasks can also be set with up to six pictures on the screen to be arranged in the correct order, it is also easy to do odd one out or matching exercises. Questions posed can also be sound based, eg. What makes this noise? or the other way around, „Which is the noise that a cow makes?” with a selection of sounds being scanned until the correct one is chosen. There is a huge variety of possible uses of differing levels of complexity.

It is easy to import sounds, video, pictures and clip art into the programme and the voices used are those of the user or someone known to him or her.

For the visually impaired user, the built in auditory scanning which can be set to one or two switches, touchscreen or mouse access is just great. For those with some useful vision, the scanning can be set on a different background, with the frame coloured in the most suitable way. Our only slight criticism is the lack of a negative response when an incorrect answer is given. For visually impaired users, silence is not a strong enough negative. The built in rewards of flashing frames and sounds were however really popular, and these can also be adapted or your own rewards built in.

Adapting an activity is also easy and as with Switchit maker2, it is simply a case of using a sample or new activity, duplicating

it then making slight changes so that a quiz can be set up which is theme related or personalised for each individual pupil. This saves a huge amount of time for school staff or other users.

We have particularly enjoyed the fact that at last there is a family of software titles becoming available which have basically the same interface. Using Switchit Maker 2 and Chooseit Maker 2 in the classroom is very easy as once you have learned to use one, the other is straight forward, in fact we were so pleased when we got hold of Chooseit Maker 2 we only latterly realised there was a (very good) instruction manual! We thoroughly enjoy using Chooseit Maker 2 and look forward to the next member of the family.

Sally Mair

A teacher at the Royal Blind School, Canaan Lane Campus, in Edinburgh, Scotland

Working with parents of the visually impaired (age 6 – 25)

The target group is advisers, teachers and other staff members at local schools, regional and countrywide services, who are working with visual impaired students.

Arguments:

We often see that visual impaired students, despite personal abilities and a functioning support system, fails to succeed in life in a broad way of understanding (quality of life). Our assumption is that some of the explanation is to be found in the individual approach to visual impairment. We argue that the implementation of the social model of disability would change some the factors in the development of the VI student. The outcome of the theoretical change of approach would develop the ability of the VI to cope with life issues. Therefore it is our main goal to visualize and to work with the social model within the specific context of professionals working with parents.

Objectives:

To be able to analyze the dynamics in the

families of the disabled children.

To be able to analyze how the meeting with the professional system, provides empowerment and not dependence.

To be able to understand the social model

To be able to plan, to carry out and to evaluate the use of the social model in their daily work.

To be able to work with parents in the transitions years

To be able to understand and use the changing relationships during ages. What are basic methodologist strategies of this work?

To be able to relate inclusive thinking to the corporation with the parents.

The Consortium consists of:

- Utrecht University, The Netherland
- University Dortmund, Germany
- Institute for Blind and Partially sighted, Denmark
- CVU Sønderjylland, University College, Denmark
- Center Vinko Bek, Croatia

Deadline for registration: 15/10/2006

Finance:

It is very important that candidates for the course seek funding at their national EU office. More information on <http://ec.europa.eu/education/trainingdatabase>
Bodil Gaarsmand and Peter Rodney

Contribution for ICEVI-Europe starting 2007, as we discussed in the business meeting in Kuala Lumpur at 17th July 2006

- individual member 25 Euro per year / 100 Euro for 4 years
- individual member from Central and Eastern Europe 10 Euro per year / 40 Euro for 4 years
- corporate member without own budget 200 Euro per year
- corporate member with less than 100 employees 350 per year
- corporate member with between 100 and 200 employees 500 per year
- corporate member with more than 200 employees 800 per year

OUR Website: ICEVI-Europe.org

We try to improve our website continuously. Recently we opened a map with countries, which however has not been filled yet. There is work to be done by the contact persons of the European countries. The contact persons can collect the necessary information about their country and send this to the member of the European Committee of their region. It would be good if we could have all information on the website before the end of this year.

In order to collect similar information we could use the following format:

- Short description about the status of education and rehabilitation in the country and actual themes in the country.
- Name of the organisation / Association / Centre / School. This could be more than one per country
- Telephone / fax / email / webpage
- Director
- Contact person
- Short description of the place and if they are offering any programmes, they should be listed
- Actual themes in the organisation

Dear Colleague, subscriber of the European Newsletter of ICEVI

Earlier this year we sent you a letter about the digital version of the Newsletter. We asked you, if you wanted to receive the Newsletter by e-mail, to send us your e-mail address. In the same letter we asked you if you wanted to become a member of ICEVI-Europe. Only about 300 of the 1700 subscribers sent in their e-mail address. We understood this small number of responses, because many of you thought that only members of ICEVI should receive the Newsletter. This was not our intention.

Therefore here is a new, but last opportunity to fill in this form with your name, address and e-mail address, and send or mail it to

Herman Gresnigt
Bovensteweg 30
6585 KD MOOK, The Netherlands
herman.gresnigt@wxs.nl

who will complete the list of e-mail addresses and update the addresslist for all subscribers.

If you have sent in the form already earlier, then it is not necessary to do it again. Looking forward to your response,

With best regards,
Hans Welling, Chairman ICEVI-Europe

Please fill up in clearly legible block letters:

Family Name First Name
Address
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City Postal Code Country
E-MAIL ADDRESS

For sale!

Tactual Profile & In-Sight

Did you see both instruments in Kuala Lumpur? You can still buy them. Please send an e-mail to: tactualprofile@visio.org and/or in-sight@visio.org



Further Educational Courses for Teachers Including Visually Impaired Pupils

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