

**ICEVI European Newsletter
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Edited by *Mary Lee* <mailto:ml@icevi-europe.org> and
Hans Welling <mailto:hw@icevi-europe.org>
Designed by *Martina Koblková* <mailto:webmaster@icevi-europe.org>

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Content:

- Preface: [From the Board](#) by *Hans Welling*
- [General Assembly](#) on July 10th 2009 in *Dublin*
- [7th European Conference of ICEVI](#) in *Dublin, Ireland 5-10 July 2009*
- [Inclusive Education: Experience and Prospects](#) - International Scientific Practical Conference for representatives from East European Countries, 14-17 November 2008

Attachments:

1. [Requirements for publication material](#)
 2. [Form of application](#)
- [MAVI: the development of a European Master's Degree for professionals working with people with Visual Impairment](#) by *Hans Schuman*
 - [International Summer School for the Families of Blind Children](#) by *Liliya Plastunova*
 - Upcoming [4th ICEVI Balkan Conference, 22-26 October 2008, Istanbul \(Turkey\)](#) by Betty LEOTSAKOU and *Feyzullah GULER*
 - [Career Awareness & Goal Setting programmes in Greece](#) by *Betty Leotsakou*

From the Board

In the past few months the Board have not had a meeting. Nevertheless, during these last few months a lot has been done and many things are still to be done.

In July the VBS conference was held in Hannover in Germany. 800 participants attended the conference and the theme was Participation. There were a number of good presentations on the theme. The conference also created the opportunity to discuss further cooperation between ICEVI-Europe and VBS. The new chairman of VBS, Dieter Fezer, promised to come back to this.

In August the International Conference on Early Intervention took place in Budapest. 70 participants from 20 countries actively took part in the conference. It was a great pleasure to see the many young participants from each country and every contribution was relevant.

The Balkan Conference in Budapest will follow in October and preparations for the ICEVI-Europe Conference in Dublin are under way. It is important to visit the website www.icevidublin2009.org where you can find the latest information. In particular - now it is time for the Call for Papers. We have had many queries about the conference and we are sure that there is a lot of interest in it.

Something quite different is the question of the Target Group of ICEVI. The programme committee for the Conference 2009 have also discussed this matter and come to the conclusion that the conference should be open for everybody who is working in the field of education and rehabilitation for people with visual impairment. This means that there will be a variety of presentations.

The Target Group has also been discussed in the EXCO meeting of ICEVI, which encourages this development.

During the past few years, the desire was expressed more than once, in meetings with contact persons from the East European countries, that people would like extra training. Recently there was a meeting with the University of Saratov in Russia. We are trying to make a start and the first themes will be ICF and Inclusive Education.

In the newsletter you can read about the first steps that have been taken to develop a European Masters programme. This is in the interest of the EU countries, but also outside the EU. Developing such a programme demands much time, but also therefore guarantees quality.

This is what is happening within ICEVI-Europe. The most important business is of course what happens daily in our association with persons with

visual impairments. ICEVI is the platform to share experiences, knowledge and visions together about education and rehabilitation.

I hope you all have had a good vacation and I wish you a good start to the second half of 2008.

Hans Welling
Chairman

General Assembly on July 10th 2009 in Dublin

In the previous newsletter, a lot of attention was paid to this subject. I herewith refer you again to the newsletter of April 2008. I would like to ask you to acquaint yourselves with the issues, because of the importance of the matters that will be discussed in the General Assembly.

The topics were and still are:

- Appointment of contact persons per region and the number of contact persons
- The appointment of the board members of the European Committee
- Nomination and appointment of the chairperson of ICEVI-Europe

For further information you can contact the chairman Hans Welling [hanswelling at visio.org](mailto:hanswelling@visio.org)

7th European Conference of ICEVI 5-10 July 2009, Trinity College, Dublin (Ireland)

ICEVI (International Council for the Education of People with Visual Impairment) promotes educational opportunities and support for children and adults with a visual impairment and additional disabilities, throughout the world. ICEVI is a professional non-government organization that welcomes any member who supports its aims.

St Josephs Centre for the Visually Impaired, Dublin are pleased to announce that they will host the next European Conference of the International Council for the Education of the Visually Impaired in Dublin 2009. This event will run **from the 5th through 10th July in Trinity College, Dublin** and will welcome over 500 international delegates involved with the education and support of the visually impaired.

An exciting social programme will also take place around the conference facilitating our delegates to sample the best of Irish hospitality, scenery and culture.

The venue for the conference is Trinity College, one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in Europe, with its 14 hectare campus located right in the heart of Dublin city.

The campus is an ideal location for conferences, with well equipped lecture theatres, accommodation, banking, travel agency, shopping and tourist attractions. Trinity's lawns and cobbled quads provide a pleasant haven in the very centre of the city. Trinity College holds the world renowned attraction of the Book of Kells. The main conference building will be the Arts Building with all the conference hotels within walking distance of Trinity Conference Centre.

The conference theme Living in a Changing Europe will provide a welcome challenge to all professionals in the education and support of the Visually Impaired and warmly invites all those involved in this field to attend.

The conference website www.icevidublin2009 is a wealth of information with on line access regarding venue, transport, registration, supported places and abstract submissions.

Who can you expect to meet at ICEVI 2009?

- Educators and teachers
- Psychologists and therapists
- Rehabilitation workers and other practitioners
- Trainers of the above
- Parents, families and carers
- Researchers and innovators
- Policy makers
- Representatives from Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs)
- Representatives from Advocacy Groups
- Exhibitors including manufacturers and publishers

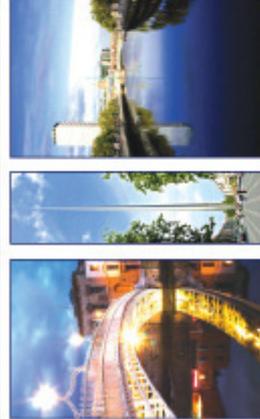
What do we promise you?

- Superb conference facilities with excellent accommodation and leisure facilities
- High quality and well respected international speakers
- Quality interactive poster sessions in an appropriate area
- A choice of high quality parallel sessions with a focused international flavour
- A parallel session specifically devoted to the issues of your ICEVI region
- An excellent social, cultural and tourism programme
- Opportunities to network, socialise and meet in 'interest groups'
- Regional ICEVI meetings
- The services of your local and international ICEVI officers

Living in a Changing Europe



ICEVI 7th European Conference



On-line Registration now open

**7th European Conference
of the International Council
for the Education of the
Visually Impaired**

'Living in a Changing Europe'

**5th - 10th July 2009,
Trinity College Dublin, Ireland**

www.icevidublin2009.org

Inclusive Education: Experience and Prospects

International Scientific Practical Conference for representatives from East European Countries, 14-17 November 2008

Conference will be held on base of the Faculty of Correctional Pedagogics and Special Psychology of Pedagogical Institute SSU under the support of International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment(ICEVI) and Saratov State University named after N. G. Chernishevsky(SSU)

Programme

The programme of the conference contains *two main themes*:

- International Classification of Functioning, Disabilities and Health (ICF), the base for education and rehabilitation of Children with Visual Impairment
- Inclusive Education: Experience and Prospects

This conference will be the beginning of a cycle of more conferences on *problems of special Psychology and Correctional Pedagogics*, where subjects will be discussed like:

- Positive and negative sides of educational integration of children with limited abilities
- Foreign and native experience of children education with different problems of development in common school
- Problems of education and development of children with multiple disorders
- Psychological accompaniment of inclusive education
- Preparation of staff for inclusive education
- Technologies of inclusive education: profile – visually impaired children
- Early intervention as condition of successful inclusive education of children with development disorder
- Supporting parents in the system of early intervention
- Assessment of visual functioning

During the conference the participants can exert an influence on themes that will be discussed during the next conference and which University will prepare it together with the International Council for Education of people with Visual Impairment (ICEVI - Europe).

The structure of the conference includes:

- **Reports** of foreign and native specialists in the sphere of education of people with limited abilities
- **Workshops** on base of educational establishments of Saratov and Engelsk cities realizing inclusive education of children with visual disorder
- **Educational courses** on organization and technology of inclusive education of children with visual disorder
- Presentation of **certificates of taken courses**
Each conference a certificate will be given to the participants. However, it

will be the intention that the participants will also visit the next conference.

Participants: professors of universities that train specialists in the sphere of education and rehabilitation of visually impaired children, teachers, psychologists, specialists and heads of establishments that work with untypical children.

Venue of the conference:

It will take place at Pedagogical Institute of Saratov State University

Address: 410028 Saratov city, 92 B Mitchurina Street

How to get there:

The route for foreign participants can be organized through Moscow.

Trip from Moscow to Saratov:

- by **plane** from *Domodedovo Airport*, 2 flights a day (140 Euro)
- by **train** from *Paveletskiy Railway Station*, 3 times a day (50-100 Euro)

From Saratov Railway Station one can get to the Pedagogical Institute by trolleybus 15, bus 79, destination bus stop - Beloglinskaya

Organizing committee is ready to help with the choice of the *most suitable route*.

Conference fees

Conference fee is 1 500 rubles (40 Euro). It includes providing the participants with programmes of the conference and coffee-brakes.

Financial Identification:

Personal account – 6452022089,

MFT in Saratov region (Pedagogical Institute SSU named after N. G. Chernishevsky account number 06073093450)

Account number 40503810800001000431 in SPCC CM Bank of Russia in Saratov region, Saratov city

Destination of payment: code of profit 07330302010010000180. Destination means on holding the conference Inclusive education: experience and prospects.

Possibilities for accomodation:

In the **hostel** - 350 rubles per day (€10)

On personal demand, the **hotel** can be reserved from 2000 rubles per day (€55)

Approximate *food cost* is 500-1000 rubles per day (€15-30)

On the results of the conference the publication of collection and dissemination of electronic materials are supposed. One page of publication costs 150 rubles (€4).

Important dates

One needs to send the following materials **till the 15th of October 2008** for participation in the conference:

1. **Text of reports** in electronic variant (see [attachment 1](#)), volume must not exceed 4 pages. One page of publication costs 150 rubles (€4).
2. **Application for participation** (see [attachment 2](#))
 - on *e-mail*: [edusgu at gmail.com](mailto:edusgu@gmail.com), [r-vl at yandex.ru](mailto:r-vl@yandex.ru)
 - or by *post*: 410028 Saratov city, 92 B Mitchurina Street, Pedagogical Institute SSU named after N.G. Chernishevsky, faculty of Correctional Pedagogics and Special Psychology (with mark Organizing committee of the conference)

Phone: +7 (8452) 77-10-53, 8-927-122-92-72

E-mail: [edusgu at gmail.com](mailto:edusgu@gmail.com), [r-vl at yandex.ru](mailto:r-vl@yandex.ru)

Project coordinators:

Welling Hans

Chairman of International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment in Europe

Plastunova Liliya

Representative of International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment in East-European region

Staff of organizing committee:

Ruchin V.A. – head of the committee

Udovichenko N.A. – deputy of the head

Sedov K.F., Ragimova O.A., Sayapin V.N.

Vavilina E.S.-secretary

Staff of programme committee:

Konovalova M. D., Myasnikova L. V., Plaksina L. I., Kruchkov V. P.,

Bilinkina O.V., Skvortsova V.O. Selivanova U. V., Shipova L. V.

Attachment 1. Requirements for publication material

(Materials should be given in the format MS Word with extension *.rtf)

1. Page format A-4; left, right, upper and lower margins – 2 cm; type- Times New Roman; type size of main text – 14; line spacing – 1,5 cm.
2. Pictures, graphics, diagrams, tables must not be used! Avoid hand folding!
3. Materials must have the following editing information: (1) the title of the article(in the centre of the sheet with caps, without point in the end of it); (2) on the following line in the centre symmetrically – surname and name of authors (for every author the surname must be put first); (3) on the next line in the centre – the full name of organization and city; (4) on the next line in the centre symmetrically – e-mail address.
4. References of literature are formed in the following way. Surname and name of the author must be in round brackets in the text, then the year of publication must be after comma. For example: (A.G. Litvak, 1998) or (B.G. Ananov, 1968). The list of the literature must be put at the end of thesis in accordance with State Standard demands.

Attachment 2. Form of application:

<i>Surname</i>		
<i>Name</i>		
<i>Position</i>		
<i>Organization</i>		
<i>Mail address</i>		
<i>Chosen direction at the conference</i>		
<i>Form of participation (choose and underline)</i>	<i>Direct: presentation of material at the conference, participation at workshops , visiting of educational establishments, exchange of electronic material, publication of the material in the collection</i> <i>Non-direct: publication of the material in the collection</i>	
<i>Theme of report at section meeting</i>		
<i>Materials for participation in workshops (presentation, video material, poster)</i>		
<i>Presentation of projects, organizations</i>		
<i>Title of article for publication</i>		
<i>What do you need for presentation of your materials (choose and underline)</i>	<i>Computer, printer, Xerox , DVD,TV, multimedia projector.</i>	
<i>Reservation of place for staying(choose and underline)</i>	<i>Hotel</i> <i>Hostel</i>	
<i>E-mail</i>		
<i>Phone numbers</i>	<i>Home</i>	
	<i>Work</i>	
	<i>Mobile</i>	
<i>Fax</i>		

MAVI: the development of a European Master's Degree for professionals working with people with a visual impairment

Introduction

Research indicates that adults with a visual impairment have more difficulties in finding and keeping a job than people from other disabled groups. Visually impaired adults are often in jobs which do not challenge their competences. Education and the deployment of expertly trained teaching and rehabilitation professionals seem important to reduce the disadvantage and barriers people with a visual impairment face on a daily basis and which may prevent their inclusion in society.

Teachers in primary and secondary education and lecturers in higher education should be able to develop, manage, and support adequate educational services for a very diverse student population with varying degrees of visual impairment. Social workers, early intervention staff, job coaches and rehabilitation workers often require additional training to provide professional support to people with a visual impairment and their families. For example learning to cope with impairment and disability, developing the competences they need to reach their full potential, being successful in the workplace, engaging with their peers, spending leisure time and participating at all levels in society. Key transition stages or specific age groups challenge professional workers to specialize at master's level.

Current situation

In many EU countries the number of students with a visual impairment in compulsory education is relatively small, for example in the Netherlands about 2300 currently. These students are educated in regular schools, general special schools or special schools for students with a visual impairment. Several EU countries run part-time in-service training courses for teachers who work with students with a visual impairment. These teachers have often graduated at Bachelor level and are looking for further specialization at advanced level.

The specialist courses for these teachers, in general, contain a limited number of modules focusing on the education of visually impaired students, which often implies that, on the one hand they have to take less relevant modules to qualify for a complete Master's Degree, while on the other hand in many areas they may still lack the necessary knowledge and skills which therefore prevent them from delivering a high quality educational provision for visually impaired students.

The same seems to apply to, for example, social and rehabilitation workers, early intervention staff, psychologists, and occupational therapists who want to specialize at advanced level.

Due to the successful inclusion of students with a visual impairment in mainstream schools in many EU countries, and therefore the relatively small number of remaining specialist teachers in the special schools, students with a visual impairment and their parents face the risk of a decline of quality of educational and rehabilitation services.

At the moment it seems that quite a few Higher Education Institutes in EU countries find it difficult to enroll enough teachers and itinerant professionals on a regular basis, let alone to run the courses annually. It seems even more difficult to enroll students from outside the teaching profession, for example students who want to work in the field of rehabilitation or early intervention. Therefore it may also be a challenge for these institutes to up-date their courses regularly, that is to keep their in-service training up to standards.

The first step

Innovation of the in-service training of teachers, social workers, and rehabilitation staff who work with people with a visual impairment at Master's Degree level in the EU therefore seem to depend on the strengthening of European collaboration of Higher Education Institutes, the stimulation of joint initiatives to develop, share and disseminate knowledge which is up-to-date, relevant and evidence-based and the development of a shared and viable curriculum at Master's Degree level.

Initiated by ICEVI Europe chairman Hans Welling a small group of people from different countries started exploring the opportunities for collaboration and, eventually and hopefully, delivering a joint programme at Master's level. The participants were: Krisztina Kovacs from Hungary, Bodil Gaarsmand from Denmark, Leonor Moniz Pereira from Portugal, Ingrid Zolgar Jerkovic from Slovenia, Hans Welling from the Netherlands and Hans Schuman from the Netherlands. Except for Hans Welling they all work in Higher Education and are involved in the in-service training of teachers who work with students with a visual impairment. They realised that additional funding by the EU would be a critical factor in the process.

From 18-21 May 2008 they met in Lisbon for a Preparatory visit, funded by the Life Long Learning Erasmus programme of the EU. This visit focused on meeting each other, getting acquainted, exploring the preparedness for sustained collaboration and preparing an application for an Erasmus Intensive programme.

We realized that we were at the early stages of a very ambitious project with many uncertainties and without guarantees for successful completion. We therefore decided to go step by step, starting small, and trying to gain support from colleagues whenever we can. We acknowledged that within ICEVI and within the special schools and rehabilitation services throughout Europe expert-knowledge and experience are at hand. And we all had experienced that

many colleagues in the field were prepared to share these and hopefully act as critical friends.

This article may therefore be considered as a means both to inform the professionals in the field about this initiative and an invitation for collegial support.

The first ideas

The programme should celebrate diversity amongst its students and should therefore provide ample opportunities for individual students to exercise choice, thus gaining a sense of ownership regarding their study programme. Students should be encouraged to choose topics and themes which best fit their current needs and the challenges of their professional practice and which connect to prior learning, study and work experience.

The entrance qualification for the programme would be the first graduation level (Bachelor or License Degree), depending on each European country's first graduation level. The degree which guarantees access to this master's programme is not necessarily a degree in education, because, as mentioned previously, we would like to enroll students from other disciplines as well. The modules and some of the literature would be in the English language, supplemented by literature in the first language of the student. Students would be expected to undertake visits to other EU countries, for example to follow lectures, visit schools, or do research.

Key aspects which we identified to establish a provisional framework were: Master's Degree, visual impairment, multiple disabilities, a holistic or ecological view of the individual, the social model of disability, ICF, inclusive education, participation, empowerment and advocacy, interdisciplinary team work, cooperation, distance learning and life-long learning, celebration of diversity, the professional worker at master's level as a critically reflective practitioner, innovator and change agent, and, practitioner research.

A 90 ECTS points programme at Master's level would imply a three year part-time study. Such a programme should provide the students with opportunities to study intensely (say for two times a period of one or two weeks in each academic year) a particular subject at different universities in different EU countries and, subsequently, visit mainstream and regular schools and rehabilitation centres in those countries. Most of the work would be done through distance learning however, and studying in one's home country on a part-time basis.

The next step

We have embarked on a challenging journey. In Lisbon we established a firm basis for further collaboration. We also identified the values we consider important for a successful project: partnership and collegiality, commitment, sustainability, trust and responsibility, professional development, and knowledge generation and knowledge sharing.

We intend to apply, firstly, two or three times for an Erasmus Intensive programme to develop a number of units of study, strengthen our collaboration and learn how things work and what works well. Secondly we want to apply for a Curriculum Development project and thirdly for the establishment of a Thematic Network.

The first Erasmus Intensive Programme course we hope to have in September or October 2009, provided we get the grant. During this course we intend to explore two topics thoroughly with, both, workers from the field, who are currently studying visual impairment, and lecturers from the participating Higher Education Institutes. These topics are: Early Childhood and Visual Impairment and the Support of Profound and Multi-disabled Visually Impaired People.

The aim is to jointly develop two complete units of study at Masters Degree level with supportive theory, literature, assignments, presentations, modes of teaching and learning, etcetera. We think that it is possible to

The project partners are thinking of ways to involve and inform experts from the field on the progress of this project. The ICEVI newsletter and the ICEVI networks may play an important role here. Other contacts may develop more spontaneously.

Contact Person: Hans Schuman
Hogeschool Utrecht, Seminarium voor Orthopedagogiek
hans.schuman@hu.nl

International Summer School for the Families of Blind Children giving parents the building blocks for new feelings

The Ukrainian project with international participation Mama school - July 2008, Crimea, Alupka city.

Families *Since* 2008 Friendship

**BLIND CAMP
INTERNATIONAL**



The Purpose of the Project: improvement of the quality of life of families who bring up visually impaired children, through the development of a model of innovative social service - the exit school of parenting skills Mama school.

The Tasks of the Project:

- Development of a model of exit school of parenting skills for families of blind children;
- Exchange of experience in the education of blind children from different regions of Ukraine;
- Establishment of international partner communications on the problems of early help for blind children.

Target group of the project - families who are bringing up children with severe visual disturbance.

Two weeks of learning for families with visually impaired children.

Summer school, which develops the parenting skills of families with blind children, is a creative program that provides opportunities for families of sensory impaired children to learn about blindness and visual impairment, to share their experiences with other families and learn how to communicate more fully with each other in a warm, caring atmosphere.

The two week long program provided room, meal and entertainment at no cost to the families. Transportation to and from the program was reimbursed by the Ukraine National Fund.



We have had more than 50 participants at our Summer Camp, including parents, professionals, and children from 19 months to 8 years-old, including both blind/ visually impaired, deafblind and their siblings.

A wealth of information is presented by various specialists in the field, including psychologists and special teachers, physical therapist, speech therapist, orientation and mobility specialists, and most importantly - parents. It is our hope that all participants benefit from the opportunity to get to know one another and share their ideas and experiences.

Students-volunteers were part of the Project Program. They also were trained in orientation and mobility.

Parents participated in different activities from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. The Program included: lectures from the experts, master-classes, practical employment, training, art-therapy, fairy tale therapy for parents and children (different), creative workshops, making tactile books.

The day started with attending morning exercises. Every evening experts shared experiences from their work.



In addition to the above, structured leisure and recreational activities were provided. This included such activities as outdoor activities, swimming, a variety of sight seeing tours for all, such as: Crimea's National Park and Palaces; Ajpetri Mountain; Fairy Tale's town.

The Summer School programs provided an effective and enjoyable opportunity for blind and visually impaired children to improve their competence in independent living skills and to expand opportunities for socialising between families.

Welcome to our Summer School next year!

*The material is prepared by Liliya Plastunova
ICEVI-Europe, representative of East-European Region
[plastunova at yandex.ru](mailto:plastunova@yandex.ru)*

Upcoming 4th ICEVI Balkan Conference

The upcoming **4th ICEVI Balkan Conference**, which will take place in **Istanbul** on **October 22-26, 2008** is organised by Turkan Sabanci School for the Blind. The main aim of the conference is to stimulate critical discussion about what kind of educational opportunities or difficulties are faced by the visually impaired and multi disabled children with visual impairment in the Balkan Countries, also to point out how important inclusive education and pre-vocational and vocational training is for VI and MDVI children. Through keynote lectures, parallel sessions, workshops, paper and poster presentations, we hope to address some basic questions about the education of visually impaired and MDVI children in the Balkan Region of Europe.

We are expecting more than a hundred participants from the Balkan countries and Turkey. Around 50 presentations will be given, including workshops and posters.

The City on Seven Hills, Istanbul is ready to host you in a warm and nice atmosphere. We will be more than happy to meet with and share knowledge with all our colleagues from the Balkans.

Betty LEOTSAKOU, *ICEVI- EUROPE Balkan Countries Representative*
Feyzullah GULER, *Conference President*

Career Awareness & Goal Setting programmes in Greece

The Employment Rehabilitation Counsellors who work in the Ministry of Education in Greece, in order to promote new employment “roads” for visually impaired youth, decided to organise a career awareness programme.

This programme was designed to help students explore the variety of careers available to them. Students may find the avenue that will lead to success in life for them.

Standards:

Foundation Proficiency IV: Students will develop an understanding of career options and the process of preparing for employment. Grades 6-8: Students will explore careers to determine potential interest.

Goal:

1. To help students become aware of different careers.
2. To open communication between parents and students about prospective careers.
3. To help students become aware of the many details that different careers involve.
4. To help students set some possible career goals.

Materials:

Career resources from the library or media centre. Dictionary of Occupational Titles. Internet access.

Procedure:

1. Have students work together in pairs and make a list of all the careers or jobs that are available to them.
(In the end, each student will have researched 4 careers)
 - a. A description of the career.
 - b. How much education is needed?
 - c. How much would this person be paid?
2. Have students discuss the different careers they have explored. Especially point out things that they did not know about the careers such as job responsibilities and how little or how much the jobs paid.

Home Connections:

1. Students could ask their parents or guardians about their careers. One question could be, "If you were to choose a career other than the one you are working at now, what would it be?"
2. The same questions could also be asked of their teachers.

Internet Use:

Students will use the Career awareness sites as a fun way to explore different careers. The sites contain activities that the students can use to find careers they may not have even known existed. The Department of Labour site may be accessed to find information about different jobs.

Betty Leotsakou
[bettel at otenet.gr](mailto:bettel@otenet.gr)