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Content:

The President's Message

Dear Members and Non-Members of ICEVI-Europe,

I am pleased to present a series of impactful initiatives reviewed in this document, highlighting significant strides in inclusion and accessibility for individuals with visual impairments.

Firstly, the "Employment on the Horizon" initiative by Ofek Liyladenu showcases the transformative power of summer jobs for visually impaired youth. By equipping teens with essential skills and experiences, this program challenges perceptions and fosters independence, despite regional adversities.

I am pleased to present this insightful document, "Mirror of Vision: The Collapse of the Visual System Following Neuro-Visual Disorders," by Dr. Roxana E. Cziker. As a renowned specialist in vision stimulation and training, Dr. Cziker offers an in-depth exploration of the intricate nature of visual perception and the profound challenges posed by neuro-visual disorders.

The work meticulously details the sophisticated processes underlying visual information processing and highlights the vulnerabilities of the visual system to various neurological disorders. Dr. Cziker's comprehensive approach not only elucidates the complexities of visual dysfunctions but also underscores the importance of personalized assessment and targeted interventions.

By integrating modern advancements in neuroscience and optometry, this document advocates for holistic and innovative strategies to restore visual perception post-injury. It serves as an invaluable resource for professionals committed to improving the quality of life for individuals affected by visual impairments.

In another inspiring effort, Dr. Mateja Maljevac at the University of Primorska has led innovative adaptations at the Dina Centre on Large Carnivores. This project exemplifies how collaboration can create meaningful educational experiences for blind and partially sighted individuals, setting a standard for inclusive cultural engagement.

Additionally, the Opeye for MDVI project under the Erasmus+ initiative delivers a groundbreaking eye-tracking application. This tool offers new opportunities to assess and train visual skills for individuals with multiple disabilities and visual impairments, enhancing their quality of life.

These initiatives collectively illustrate the transformative potential of dedicated efforts in education, technology, and employment, paving the way toward a more inclusive future for our community and I encourage all members to delve into these studies and consider its implications for our continued efforts in vision education and re/habilitation.

I am delighted to announce that the **abstract submission deadline** for the **10th ICEVI European Conference in Padova, Italy** has been **extended** to **October 31, 2024!**

Finally, can I draw your attention to the three important conferences that have abstracts open:

Our https://icevieurope2025-hollman.it/welcome/ is closing for abstracts at the end of October

The Tactile Reading Conference 2025 https://tactilereading.yellenge.nl/ is closing soon

And the Low Vision Research and Rehabilitation Conference https://vision2025florence.com/

It is going to be a busy and engaging 2025.

Warm regards,

President, ICEVI-Europe,

Prof John Ravenscroft

Mirror of Vision: The collapse of the Visual System Following Neuro-Visual Disorders.

Roxana E. Cziker, MSc, PhD

Specialist in vision stimulation and training

Competencies in optometry, neuroscience and sound healing therapy

Reyjavík, Iceland

Visual Perception. The Construction of the Visual World.

When the light catches our eyes, it generates within the visual system a vast and complex array of information about the external environment. This information undergoes sophisticated classification, organisation and processing by a diverse network, process which is continuously refined through learning and experience, culminating in a vivid and colourful perception of reality. However, a couple of questions arise: *1) How do we manage this enormous influx of information without feeling overwhelmed?* and *2) When actually the visual system starts to become overwhelmed and collapses?*

Vision and visual perception, *through its outside receptor and internal components of the visual system*, create within the brain a*n internal visual representation of the external world, functioning as a "Black Box".* According to the Black Box principle, the brain processes visual information received from the eyes, shaped by the body's homeostasis and data from various sensory channels and cognitive functions. Consequently, the brain then generates predictions about the external environment. *In other words, this results in a mirroring effect that produces an internal visual reflection, upon which the brain bases its visual feedback about the perceived reality.* The direction *the eye, as the external receptor,* points, combined with internal feelings, personality, experience, individual aims, sensations and body homeostasis, allows the visual system to reflect and display diverse realities, each distinctive and unprecedented, forming an individualized *"Story of Vision"*. Specifically*, the visual information processed by the system creates the visual-feedback loop, and flow, which in turn influences the quality of vision and foster a balanced exchange and communication between the individual and the external world.*

However, not all information displayed in the environment is captured and brought within the "Black Box". Contrary, for protection mechanism reasons, the visual system and the brain employ selective information processing, guided by *task-oriented* and *salience-based attentional mechanisms*, to filter a few stimuli from the vast array of available information. This process, known as *visual-motor coupling*, involves both *visual and motor selection*. Ocular tracking, which combines *visual saccades* and *smooth pursuit*, along with selective visual attention, helps direct our focus towards certain stimuli of interest while ignoring others. The brain accomplishes visual selection using various mechanisms influenced by a) the observer´s intention and objective, known as *voluntary control*, a *top-down process*, and the inherent salience of visual stimuli, known as a *passive-automatic, bottom-up*, *exogenous control* (Souto, 2021).

The visual system is a sophisticated engine that, as mentioned before, orchestrates appropriate responses to both external stimuli and internal parameters, based on selective principles. Thus, the visual receptor, *the eye and the retina*, carries visual information from the outside world. The intermediary component, *the optic nerve*, *optic*

chiasm, *lateral geniculate nucleus* and *optic radiations*, transmit the visual information to the visual relay into to the visual cortex and visual association cortex in the brain for visual information processing. Beside the hierarchical models, the visual system applies the simultaneous processing of different qualities of stimuli such as colour, motion, shape, size, spatial and depth features, called parallel processing. The two visual parallel systems suggest processing visual information into two distinct routes in the brain: *dorsal-magnocellular visual stream (DMVS - vision-for-action)* and *ventral-parvocellular visual stream (VPVS - vision-for-perception)*. Thus, the sense of vision results from a multidimensional and contextual information processing within the visual system. Furthermore, the integrative functions of the visual system, combined with the assimilation of multisensory information within the neuronal networks, are indispensable for a multiple of essential psychological and cognitive functions. These include *motor coordination*, *balance*, *regulation of the endocrine system and circadian rhythm*, *intellectual and social interaction*, *emotional regulation*, *visual acuity and clarity of vision*, and *sustained visual attention*, among other vital functions.

Due to its complex structure and its central role in processing external sensory information, the visual system is conspicuously vulnerable to a range of brain injuries and neurological disorders (Simpson-Jones et la, 2019; Helvie, 2011; Ciuffreda et al, 2007; Felleman et al, 1991; Berryman et al., 2020; Padula et al, 2017; Crampton et al., 2021). Among the medical conditions contributing to visual dysfunction encompass *traumatic brain injury*, *concussion, stroke*, *multiple sclerosis*, *Parkinson's disease*, *cerebral palsy*, *Lyme disease*, *muscular dystrophy*, and visual processing disorders including *autism spectrum disorders*, *ADHD*, and *learning disabilities*.

Considering the complexity and broad consequences of visual dysfunctions, a rigorous and individualized assessment approach, as well as the design and implementation of oculomotor and neuro-visual training programmes are essential. Early and personalized interventions can reduce the impact of these dysfunctions by promoting modulation and re-organization of neural networks. Such targeted strategies not only enhance functional outcomes and skill development but also significantly contribute to improving the overall quality of life for affected individuals.

The Visual World: From Construction to Collapse.

In a routinely daily functioning condition, the brain creates narratives from the multitude of selected sensory inputs received from the outside environment, integrating and continuously comparing and modulating them with data stored in the long-term and biographical memory, shaped by prior experiences and knowledge. This process of searching, modifying, combining, comparing and reconstructing internal information is crucial for learning and adaptation to the perpetually changes within environment.

Subsequently to a congenital or acquired brain injury, the brain and visual system may undergo varying degree of structural or functional deterioration in the neuronal pathways responsible for selecting and processing visual information. This can lead to less coherent and meaningful visual narratives, requiring the restart of the learning process. This deterioration can cause the visual system to collapse, resulting in inaccurate interpretation and understanding of visual reality. This can make the visual environment appear crowded, unfamiliar, distorted, and challenging to organize, as described in *table 1*.

table 1. Dysfunctions Associated to VPVS and DMVS

Dysfunctions associated VPVS	**Dysfunctions associated DMVS**
Visual identification difficulty related cognitive processing.	**Searching-detection difficulties association to attention processing disorders.**
– Poor language and comprehension skills – reading, writing and math difficulties. – Behavioural problems. – Difficulty standing still and inability to maintain concentration. – Reduced functional field of vision. – Disorganization of eye-hand coordination. – Difficulty of objects, forms, colour, size, face, scene recognition. – Poor visual discrimination. – Difficulty in recognizing objects which are incomplete or partially seen.	– Convergence insufficiency. – Reduced accommodation and range of clear vision. – Reduced speed of focus change (accommodative facility). – Poor eye movement control (pursuits and saccades). – Poor motion coherence. – Reduced fusional reserves and reduced functional field of vision. – Difficulty orientation in space. – Visual sequential memory. – Difficulty with visuomotor integration such as eye-hand coordination or eye-body coordination.

(adapted and reorganized after Shayler, 2015; Breitmeyer, 2014; Kristensen et al., 2016; Aleci et al., 2016).

Altered functional vision constitutes *neuro-visual-* or *visual processing disorders,* which result in an overload of visual information in the visual system, making it difficult to process due to either the absence or even damage of certain neural pathways. Neuro-visual and visual processing disorders are particularly common after brain injury, with reported incidence rates between 35% and 80%, due to severity and impact of the injury of the visual system and neural network responsible of visual information processing. Consequently, a brain injury or the onset of visual dysfunction can significantly transform an individual's visual experience leading furthermore to a variety of *cognitive*, *motor*, *sensory*, *perceptive*, and *psycho-social challenges*. Therefore, reconfiguration and reprogramming of the visual processing mechanisms become imperative in order to adapt to these changes and develop a new way of selecting, processing and understanding of visual information.

Visual Restoration: Overcoming Collapse and Rebuilding Visual Perception.

With over 25 years of experience in vision impairment, cerebral visual impairment, and visual processing dysfunction, I have developed a comprehensive program of visual functioning assessment and training designed to: a) provide a deeper insight and understanding of the characteristics of functional vision post-injury; b) bring evidence about the impact of brain injuries or visual dysfunction on individual´s visual efficiency and perception; c) facilitate individuals understanding of the vital role of vision in daily life; d) provide a comprehensive and person-centered assessment and training approach; e) re-train and re-organize the functional vision post-injury.

The stimulation and training programme adopts a holistic assessment and therapeutic approach grounded in the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF). The ICF framework considers the impact of medical conditions, such as

brain injuries, on the functioning of the visual system, thereby limiting the individual's capacity to plan and execute daily life activities. Additionally, these limitations can lead to restrictions in social participation. Therefore, in designing assessment and training protocols for vision, it is important to integrate a multi-layered hierarchical model of visual perception and visual information processing. This model encompasses, among the others, primary visual functions such as selection, scanning, and fixation, progressing to visual recognition, visual cognition, and ultimately, adaptation to the environment. A few examples of vision training employing both vision therapy and computer-based-training might be, among others:

- Oculomotor training encompasses a variety of techniques aimed, among others, to enhance visual efficiency, clarity of vision, efficient selection of relevant information and ignoring the visual noise[1], management of visual information at different distances and of various complexities.
- The integration of light and colour stimulation within training protocols serves to modulate the nervous system, fostering balance equilibrium and re-organization of the visual system.
- Visual-motor integration training such as drawing, visual-guided activities, motor balance, body posture and visual training. These activities are structured to refine the relationship between visual perception and motor control, facilitating the integration of sensory and motor processes within cognitive and communication functions.
- Computer-based interventions offer a platform for visual stimulation and training, targeting key components of visual function such as attentional control, gaze stability, depth-perception, visual-motor speed, spatial awareness, visual discrimination, visual recognition, figure-ground perception and so forth. These modalities hold considerable potential for enhancing the functional capacity of individuals with neuro-visual- and visual processing disorders.
- Evaluation and re-organization and re-adaptation to the visual environment both at home and at work, in case the person can continue the professional activity.

Conclusions.

Vision is a fundamental aspect of human experience, serving as a gateway to understanding and interpreting the world. However, the visual information processing, while seemingly straightforward, is a complex interplay of physiological, cognitive, personal characteristics, and environmental factors. By unravelling the intricacies of the visual system, we gain a deeper appreciation for the remarkable capabilities of the human mind and the challenges inherent in perceiving and interpreting the visual world.

[1] *Visual noise* refers to any element in the environment that distracts the viewer from relevant and targeted information. It can arise from an excess of visual stimuli, competing colors and patterns, or disorganized visual information. Visual noise can create a sense of chaos and overwhelm, often affecting individuals with vision impairments, neuro-visual disorders, or visual processing disorders.

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Learning about large carnivores for people with vision impairments

By dr. Mateja Maljevac, University of Primorska, Faculty of Education and Centre IRIS – Centre for Education, Rehabilitation, Inclusion and Counselling for the Blind and Partially Sighted, Ljubljana

Introduction

In recent years, the accessibility of cultural institutions for vulnerable groups of visitors has become an increasingly common issue in Slovenia. In this context, the networking of partners from the scientific and professional fields, as well as the end users, plays an important role. News about the numerous adaptations to museum access implemented by the students of Inclusive Pedagogy at the University of Primorska, reached the ears of the curator of the Centre on Large Carnivores Dina, who initiated the new project.

Over the academic year 2023/2024, students of Inclusive Pedagogy have developed a unique set of adaptations to give more access to people with vision impairments to knowledge of the large carnivores of the Dinaric region. For this purpose, they have partnered with the Dina Centre on Large Carnivores, managed by the Pivka Tourism Institute, and with the Inter-Municipal Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted in Nova Gorica. In the course 'Methods of Working with People who are Blind and Partially Sighted', six adaptations of the exhibition centre were prepared to help blind and partially sighted visitors to learn about and interactively experience the large carnivore content.

What are the main adaptations of the Dina Centre?

The students made all the products and adaptations themselves, with advice from their mentors at the Faculty of Education and the Dina Centre. When designing the ideas and products, they made sure that the adaptations were safe and easy to use, followed the graphic image guidance of the Centre and took care to make the content look as professional as possible. Throughout the preparation process the adaptations were tested by members of the Inter-municipal Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted of Nova Gorica. Based on their feedback, the students refined them and then put them into use.

The following products were created:

1. A tactile floor plan of the exhibition centre, which makes it easier for visitors to find their way around the space.

2. A tactile map of Slovenia, which provides information on areas where large carnivores are present in Slovenia.

3. The contents of the interactive Zverbook stations, which we have transferred into a Flipbook format, through which visitors can learn about each representative of a large carnivore species, their habitat and diet.

4. The "What to do if you meet a bear?" station, where different responses are identified through a tactile presentation and Braille.

5. Interactive glasses content, which we have turned into an audio description that offers a special experience. Through detailed descriptions of the environment, the senses and the perception of the surroundings, visitors are immersed in the forest and experience it on a completely different level through audio descriptions.

6. We have developed a customised memory game – »Zveromin«, which invites people to find pairs and discover beast-related content (conifers, deciduous trees, mushrooms).

Visitors can borrow personalised products at the info point and then explore the Dina Centre on their own.

The project has attracted a lot of public attention and media coverage. The photo below shows the filming of the programme on national television, where the adaptations were presented to the viewers of the Good Morning broadcast.

Conclusion

Over the last decades, there has been a major shift in mindsets and attitudes towards people with disabilities. The process started first in inclusive schools and kindergartens, and then continued into all areas of people's social lives. If there was any question a few years ago about the advisability and economic viability of adaptations, this kind of mentality is rarely seen anymore. This means that as a society we are growing and becoming more inclusive and sensitive to vulnerable groups.

The next step we want to take is to think about vulnerable groups at the very planning stage of public services. On the other hand, we also need to teach vulnerable groups to visit cultural institutions and to use the adaptations as often as possible.

Project Opeye for MDVI – Open Eye Tracker Application for Individuals with Multiple Disabilities and Vision Impairment

By Ana Golob Mohorko, Centre IRIS – Centre for Education, Rehabilitation, Inclusion and Counseling for the Blind and Partially Sighted, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Introduction

Opeye for MDVI is an Erasmus+ project and is a follow-up to the project Opeye. Opeye for MDVI started at the end of December 2020 and finished at the end of June 2023.

The project is a collaboration betweenprofessionals in four partner organizations from four European countries:

- CDV – Centre pour le Développement des compétences relatives à la vue, Luxembourg (coordinator of the project),
- Fundacion Aspaym Castilla y Leon, Spain,
- Lega del Filo d'Oro, Italy,
- Center IRIS - Center za izobrazevanje, rehabilitacijo, inkluzijo in svetovanje za slepe in slabovidne, Slovenia.

The aim of the project was to develop an open application for training basic visual skills using eye-tracking solutions for users with multiple disabilities and vision impairment (MDVI).

Eye tracking technology detects users' eyes and follows their eye movements during tasks. Eye movements are converted into a data stream that contains information from the gaze point. The technology decodes eye movements and translates them into insights that can be used in a wide range of applications.

The project organizations were already connected in the field of visual impairment. Slovenia and Italy shared knowledge and ideas based on work in special educational programs for pupils with vision impairment (VI) and MDVI. Luxembourg and Spain contributed with their *information technology expertise* - developing applications and adjusting the eye-tracking solutions to the specific needs of the MDVI.

Goal of the project

The project focused on the use of commercially available eye-tracking systems and the development of specific software to enable the assessment and training of basic visual skills – including smooth pursuit and saccades.

The goal was to create an application for professionals to collect instant and objective feedback on the users' functional vision as well as training basic and perceptual visual skills. The software is designed to automatically detect whether a user is visually perceiving the objects that appear and, if so, whether they are able to track these objects and how they track them. An advantage of using an eye-tracker, is that the user requires no gross motor skills to carry out the visual task on the screen. In

addition, results are stored and can be compared to previous training sessions. This allows the professional to follow up the client's visual progress more accurately.

The target audience for the application is people with MDVI. However, by adding more levels and paying attention to specific colours and contrasts, people with VI and cortical visual impairment (CVI) are also able to use the software.

Opeye2 Application

As a result of the collaboration of the partner organizations an application called Opeye2 was created. The main menu of the application offers 5 options:

- Info (Information about the evaluation and training options)
- Smooth pursuit (with the additional instruction: Track the visual target as long as you can!)
- Visual field (Find the presented visual target as fast as you can!)
- Saccades (Shift from one visual target to another as fast as you can!)
- Exit

We have tested the application with two different eye trackers attached alongside the computer screens (Tobii 5 and GazePoint GP3 HD) with young users with VI and MDVI, and designed a form for professionals about the user's vision to gather information in advance about eye and any additional conditions that may have an impact on the efficient use of eye tracker system. Also two key documents were created that show how to install and use the application – the technical and user documentation.

Smooth pursuit app

The Smooth Pursuit app starts with an evaluation element in which the user visually tracks the moving target at slow, moderate or fast speeds against a static background. The app measures how precise and smooth the eye tracking is. Contrast, the direction of the target movement, the shape and size of the target can all be modified in the settings. Additional practice opportunities are created for the further training of the visual skills, from static backgrounds with slow movements of the target to complex color backgrounds with fast movements of the target. The last practice includes eye tracking of a moving target, which changes shape and the user has to count the number of shape changes until the end of the practice. The number (1 – 15) of shape changes can also be modified in the settings.

Figure 1 : The light ring is the spot of user's gaze while tracking the moving smiley.

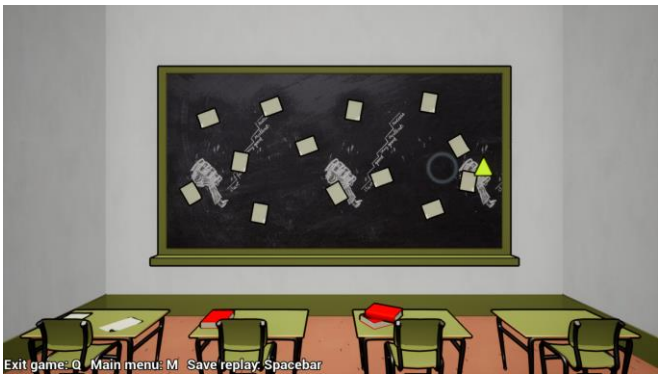

Figure 2: Tracking the moving shape and counting how many times shape changes.

Visual field app

The visual field app contains only the Evaluation element, since its aim is to obtain information about the possible limitations of the central visual field (it is limited to the central visual field because of the size of the average computer screen). In the first app the user looks at the central target, while other peripheral targets appear randomly on the screen (similar in concept to thevstandard visual field measurements used in medical assessments). At the end of the exercise the results section displays all of the detected peripheral targets in green and all the undetected targets in red. In the second app, the user again looks at the central target, while other peripheral targets start moving from the edge of the screen towards the central target. The app evaluates the extent of the central visual field. Contrast and peripheral targets can be modified in the settings.

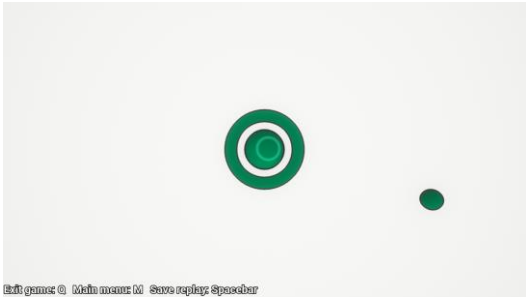

Figure 3: While looking at the central target, a peripheral target appears.

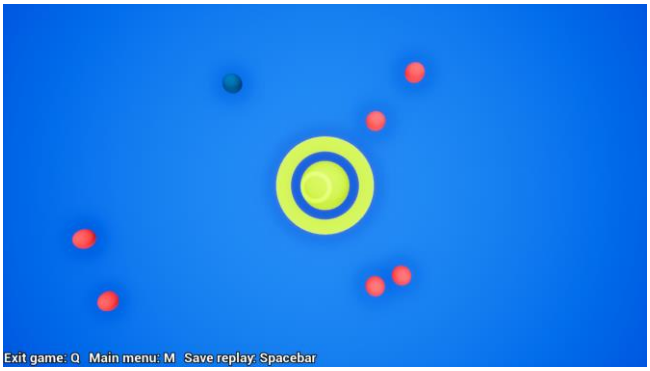

Figure 4: Results show detected and undetected peripheral targets.

Saccades app

The saccades app also includes an Evaluation element, in which the user has to shift eye movements from the left to the right of the visual target at a shorter or longer distances. Results show if the user's eye movements are fast and precise. Further exercises for training saccades include interesting puzzles for the user to solve, for example: watching the two fish in a pond ensuring they don't escape; or guiding a frog to jump from one water lily to another to get to the end of the path (the path goes in the direction of reading); shifting from one star to another to reveal letters and read the whole word; seeking for a particular piece of clothing or piece of fruit in a realistic cartoon environment background, either with lights on or with a hand lamp in the night.

Figure 5: Guarding the two fish with eye shifting from left to right, so they don't escape the pond.

Figure 6: Finding a pineapple on a market stand with a hand lamp.

Conclusion

Project Opeye for MDVI has created a connection between information technology (IT) and VI by developing a new option for the evaluation and training of vision skills utilising eye-tracking technologies. The application can be used as an additional tool in regular functional vision assessment, enabling a professional to compare results within a certain time period. The application provides a training of the basic visual skills –including smooth pursuit and saccades and constant feedback of the user's progress through the checking of results and video recordings (recordings of the user's visual paths during training sessions is available afterwards).

Eye conditions like ptosis, nystagmus, loss of central vision, strabismus, and other factors such as compensatory head and eye positions, tinted or filter glasses can affect the eye tracking systems in a way that interferes with the process. Users often tend to lean towards the screen which causes the eye tracker to lose the eye focus of the user. The calibration of the eye trackers (Tobii or GazePoint) is not adjusted for people with visual impairment, and as a result, the dots are often too small and users may need additional guidance towards the dots for successful calibration. Most of the practices for developing or improving basic visual skills can be used without the eye tracker device and the collection of results (using the keyboard or mouse).

Developing visual skills is an essential part of support programs for the population of people with vision impairment both with or without multiple disabilities. The outcome of project Opeye for MDVI provides excellent materials that can be used for that purpose in a modern way. We have created a number of exercises with detailed instructions that will encourage professionals working with pupils with VI and MDVI, to include them in their individual professional sessions.

The project was led by the CDV – Centre pour le Développement des compétences relatives à la vue and with the help of all project members, including professionals from both technical and educational fields, it achieved its goal.

You are kindly invited to visit website opeye.eu for more information about the project.

Summer Jobs for Youngsters with Visual Impairments

At the end of June, forty-five excited teens with visual impairment gathered for two days of training organized by Ofek Liyladenu, the Israel national association of parents of children with visual impairment. The training marked the start of the annual summer program "Employment on the Horizon". The aim is to put sight-impaired youth on a par with their friends, and enables our youth to see themselves—and be seen—as independent and productive young adults who can strive towards full participation in their lives and communities.

The opportunity to work in a summer job can make a transformative difference in the lives of teens who are blind or sight impaired. A summer job, whether it is working in a bank, retail chain, or library, is a first step toward self-sufficiency and independence. Hundreds of teens throughout Israel have successfully participated in Ofek Liyladenu's groundbreaking "Employment on the Horizon" program. This program, which began as a modest initiative more than 20 years ago, is now recognized as a game-changer and a model for inclusion. It begins with preparatory workshops, learning to travel independently, and taking on meaningful tasks at jobs and earning a first paycheck. This experience is a springboard which encourages them to strive for volunteer military and civic service, higher education, and independent adulthood. Our youth are especially enthusiastic and appreciative of this vital opportunity.

The ongoing war in our region poses singular challenges for people with sight impairments, limiting their mobility and independence due to sirens, threats to safety, displacement, and restrictions in public places. The spirits of our teens were renewed by the invitation to attend training workshops at the new state-of-the-art headquarters at one of our long-term partners, Bank Discount. They gained insight into protocols of the workplace, were supported by young adults who were past participants in the program and listened to guidance from coaches and industry leaders. The program included practical workshops such as self-presentation at a job interview and a talk about the impact of artificial intelligence on the 21st century workplace.

Ofek Liyladenu's team of social workers and educators supports the youngsters and the employers throughout the year, and employers and teens are recruited thoughtfully (a process honed over time). The team interviews the young people before placing them in summer jobs which best match their interests and talents. Their work ranges from physical labour to industrial assembly lines, clerical posts, computer related tasks, and counselors in summer camps for children with visual impairments.

Our teens are now at work at their jobs in offices, bank branches, clothing stores, toy chains and bookstores in cities and suburban centers throughout the country.

Over the years, we have seen the program's impact on combating prejudice among employers about the capacities of visually impaired young adults and empowers participants in the eyes of their family, friends, and the community at large. We were able to maintain the program even during the COVID pandemic, and it is a flagship initiative to promote economic and social independence among youth who are blind or visually impaired.

Yael Weisz-Rind, Executive Director & Guila Seidel, Chairperson


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Announcement: Abstract Submission Deadline for the 10th ICEVI European Conference in Padova has been extended to October 31, 2024!

Dear Colleagues,

With great pleasure we announce that the abstract submission deadline for the **10th ICEVI European Conference in Padova, Italy** has been extended to **October 31, 2024!**

This extension provides an additional opportunity for professionals and practitioners to share their latest findings and focus on the need for a multidisciplinary approach in offering support aimed at ensuring the best quality of life for children and young adults with visual impairment.

Don't miss this chance to contribute with your valuable work and insights to our conference's scientific programme and join us in celebrating our Anniversary Conference, as it marks the 10th European Conference of ICEVI-Europe, in the historic city of Padova.

Submit your abstract now and be a part of the discussions shaping the Key Principles Project whose goal is to provide professionals with a document of Key Principles for supporting their work with children/young adults with Visual Impairment (VI) and their families.

You can submit your abstract **until 31 October 2024, through the online form at the following link**: https://icevieurope2025-hollman.it/abstracts.

Your valuable support in widely disseminating this announcement to professionals and practitioners who are interested in its content and would like to present their scientific work, as well as, promoting our 2025 European Conference within your countries will be sincerely appreciated.

The Board of ICEVI-Europe and the Robert Hollman Foundation look forward to your active participation and having you join us in Padova!

Best Regards,

Dr John Ravenscroft

Professor and Chair of Childhood Visual Impairment

President of ICEVI-Europe

The **Board of Directors of ICEVI-Europe** and the **Robert Hollman Foundation** would like to inform you that **the abstract submission deadline for the 10th ICEVI European Conference: "Supporting children and young adults with visual impairment: What can we do? What can be done?" (Padua, 15-17 May 2025) has been extended**.

It is therefore possible to submit your abstract **until 31 October 2024, through the online form at the following link**: https://icevieurope2025-hollman.it/abstracts.

The secretariat of the Scientific Committee of the ICEVI Conference will contact you by 20 December 2024 to officially communicate the acceptance of your proposal.

The Conference program and other useful information will be made available within a few days. You can find all latest updates on the ICEVI-Europe website: www.icevi-europe.org and the official conference website www.icevieurope2025-hollman.it.

We look forward to welcoming you and building together the 2025 European ICEVI Conference in Padua!

Don't miss this opportunity and spread the word in your network.

Your valuable support in widely disseminating this announcement across your networks with your colleagues, members, partners and stakeholders who are interested in its content will be sincerely appreciated.

Thank you in advance for your contribution and cooperation.

Dr John Ravenscroft
ICEVI-Europe President

Dr Maria Eleonora Reffo
RHF General Director