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# EBU Members' Newsletter 2021

## Number five, May 2021.

## OUR CAMPAIGNS

### Creative Europe/MEDIA

We have continued to collect and call for feedback from our members in the EU, about the practice of national film funding agencies, on the basis of the questionnaire we have provided.

We have started to prepare the ‘right of access to culture’ component of the PARVIS project, in particular our related awareness raising twitter campaign in September, which connects to our campaign to promote responsible funding to the film industry.

### Miscellaneous

We engaged in contacts with MEP Miriam Lexmann (EPP Group, Slovakia) for an interview in the upcoming edition of our ‘Focus’ newsletter, on the European Disability Card. Incidentally, this led us to be consulted by her on amendments to the opinion of the EMPL committee for the PETI report on ‘The protection of persons with disabilities through petitions: lessons learnt’.

On 10 May, on Twitter, we launched the first of a series of 10 awareness-raising videos, focusing on the right to accessible health for blind and partially sighted persons, based on article 25 of the UNCRPD, as part of the European Commission-funded PARVIS project, together 10 EBU member organisations. On 27 May, we repeated this communication, this time jointly with our participating members and with the video also available in 9 other languages.

On 31st May, ideas for advocacy were brought to the PARVIS e-workshop on accessible healthcare.

### Events

We attended the following events:

 The EDF-Facebook roundtable on the European Accessibility Act (20 May). Our contribution, by way of intervention ‘from the floor’, concerned implementation through defining standards, and consisted in stressing that DPOs don’t necessarily have the technical expertise on accessibility, yet they have an interested to be consulted about the needs of persons with disabilities, to ensure that their lived experiences are translated into standardisation language with user-friendly standards; and that currently the work of standardisation bodies itself is insufficiently inclusive. In what became a pretty central point of the roundtable, the Commission’s representative argued that any legal process is complex and requires expertise, but acknowledged that the process needs to be more clear and inclusive.

 The EDF European Year of Rail 2021 conference “Towards independent and spontaneous rail travel for all” (27 May). This event essentially was a stock-taking exercise of the legislation in place, of the remaining gaps and problems and the challenges ahead. The current revision of TEN-T Regulation was put forward by the European Commission’s DG MOVE as particularly relevant to address inclusive mobility (all transport modes), with a focus on city nods.

 The International Transport Forum 2021 Virtual Summit (17-28 May), represented by Thierry Jammes (CFPSAA) and Erwin Denninghaus (DBSV). Our participation focused in particular on the following moments: the Focus session: ‘Looking towards the 2022 Summit: Transport for Inclusive Societies’; the Fishbowl session: ‘Modern travel and the digital divide: Bridging the gap’; and the Virtual Ministers' Roundtable: ‘Regulatory challenges of automated and connected driving’.

## PARVIS - 1st video now available in 10 languages and other updates

We are thrilled of the positive response the [video on the right to accessible healthcare](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kEqaBC2QmcE) has received from EBU members since airing! The translated versions in [Slovak](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=frJCNvMie2o), [Montenegrin](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tkavl-L8C0), [Swedish](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OymkzJyZ_fI), [Lithuanian](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mj2hj3Lu_6E), [Portuguese](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1PZgjdUebcs&t=17s), [Spanish](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xa5nAQg2kiI), [Dutch](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vxJeNoOTSA), [German](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ONs0_BETWXU) and [French](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SeZSH1O1qwI&t=11s) are also now available on the [PARVIS Youtube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBLKX-DklJI98RHUjODP3KA/featured). The second mini-video on the right to accessible information will air by the end of June.

We were glad to see different members participating in the first e-workshop on how advocate for the right to accessible healthcare, held on May 31st and facilitated by Cecilia Ekstrand from SRF.

In other exciting news, we are currently in the planning phase of the ‘A day in the life of a visually impaired person' compilation video, highlighting rights-related obstacles a visually impaired person faces going about a normal day. Once the synopsis has been developed, it will be circulated amongst the EBU membership so as to identify contributors.

We will inform you more about that later and keep you posted on the latest developments!

[Mariem Sene](mailto:mariem.sene@euroblind.org)

PARVIS Project Coordinator

## Portal of the Government of Montenegro accessible to blind and partially sighted persons

The new [portal of the Government of Montenegro](http://www.gov.me) is fully accessible to visually impaired persons. The Union of the Blind is happy with the fact that creators and decision makers in the Government of Montenegro recognized the real needs of all citizens and that on this occasion they were guided by the principles of universal design.

In the past, the Union of the Blind had a very constructive cooperation with the competent Ministry in solving the problem of accessibility of state administration sites, so in 2020, in joint cooperation, the monitoring of the application of guidelines for creating electronic documents was carried out in accordance with e-accessibility standards, the recommendations of which led to the creation of a Rulebook on the standards of accessibility. As an example of good practice, the Union have an active participation in mapping the problem, preparation process and testing, which shows that the involvement of target groups can lead to adequate and good results.

The portal meets the requirements of e-accessibility and a special menu for improved accessibility of content with control of contrast, font size, text spacing, animation, then a visual guide for easier reading, highlighting links, compatibility with screen readers through page structure, as well as a special font that makes it easier for people with dyslexia to read.

For the first time, for the needs of this platform, the studio recording of audio sequences in the Montenegrin language was made, which, in addition to machine learning, are used to generate a sound recording of any text on the portal. Now, by clicking the "Read me" button, users can listen the content of the article.

The importance of seeking, receiving and disseminating information has been recognized by this positive example, thus enabling the full inclusion of visually impaired persons.

## Germany promotes gender equality with the support of EBU

In the project Gender Equality Awareness Raising (GEAR) of the EBU with support of the European Commission the German Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted (DBSV) is promoting the participation of women in its federation and society in general.

In these times activities are conducted virtually of course. So DBSV offered two workshops for women on presenting themselves – one to present themselves when they run for an office within the organization, such as a board member of an association and one for presenting a project.

The female participants learned in a zoom meeting with a blind coach that often women say: ”Maybe I could try to manage this task” while most men say: ”Yes, sure I can do this” Or women feel ready to apply for a job when they believe they meet 50% of the requirements while men apply at only 20%. Participants also learned to start a presentation of a project in the following way: ”Now I tell you the story of one person and her problem ... This is a problem that many other persons have ... My project solves this problem ...”

With such simple advice and techniques women with visual impairments learn to present themselves and their idea in a more self-confident manner and in a convincing structure.

Besides these workshops DBSV plans to create an action plan of promoting the participation of women within DBSV. These activities are not very complex to organize and with financial support of the EBU quite effective to realize. DBSV encourages other associations to take part in 2021 in the GEAR project and promote women’s rights with smart measures.

**Eva Nilsson**, GEAR project leader can give you further information: [eva.nilsson@srf.nu](mailto:eva.nilsson@srf.nu)

## The Polish Association of the Blind has existed for 70 years!

**Key dates:**

16,17 June 1951 – the first unifying convention of the two organizations of Polish Blind Soldiers and Polish Association of Blind Workers was held in Poland. From that moment, the Polish Association of the Blind (PZN) was established, which functions under an unchanged name until now.

1952 – the Association founded the Central Library of the Polish Association of the Blind (PZN), which catered to the reading needs of the blind in Poland.

1952 - the Department of Tyflography of the PZN of began printing textbooks in Braille for elementary and secondary school students.

1956 – the seat of the Central Centre for the Blind was established at ul. Konwiktorska 9 in Warsaw. It is the seat of the management of the Association to this

day and also found here: the Typhlological Institute, the Library, the print shop and Tyflogallery, as well as the concert hall, which serves for cultural events, conferences and meetings of representatives from all over the country.

1956 - the first Rehabilitation Center was established in Muszyna in the mountains for 82 people.

1961 – a recording studio was established in the PZN and recording of spoken books on reel-to-reel tapes began.

1965 – the Department of Basic Rehabilitation for persons newly darkened is established in Warsaw in the day system.

1966 – guide dog training began.

1966 – the Magazine „Pochodnia”began to be published in enlarged print. Already in 1948, the first issue of the Magazine Pochodnia was published in Braille and „Pochodnia” is published until today in three versions, incuding an electronic one.

1968 – PZN established a Scientific Council to develop rehabilitation for the blind and partially sighted .

1972 – the recording of books on cassette tapes began.

1978 – PZN undertook comprehensive activities for families with blind children aged from 0 to 6 years. It published parenting quides and developed early rehabilitation programs.

1982 – the Main Board of the Polish Association of the Blind created Clubs for Parents of Blind Chiildren, which in time gave rise to Independent Associations of Parents of Blind Children.

1983 – since that year „Przegląd Tyflologiczny”, „Zeszyty Tyflologiczne”, „Materiały Tyflologiczne” and other non-periodical publications have been published until today.

1983 – in cooperation with the Higher School of Special Education in Warsaw, the development of a model of sight rehabilitation for the partially sighted was started in Poland, which consisted of issuing rehabilitation programmes, training specialist instructors in vision improvement.

1988 – PZN undertook complex activities for blind diabetic patients – registry, rehabilitation stays, diabetes education, publishing, specialist clinics and clubs for blind and partially sighted diabetic patients.

1989 – the first in Poland Outpatient Clinic for Vision Rehabilitation of the Partially sighted was estatblished. PZN undertook activities for the benefit of deaf-blind people-registering this group, organizing rehabilitation stays, cooperation with the Perkins Institute in the USA. On the initiative of PZN the first experimental Therapeutic and Rehabilitation Center of the Day Stay in Warsaw started its activity. It was organized mainly for blind children with additional disabilities. This Center is still in operation today.

1990 – PZN created the Rehabilitation and Training Center in Bydgoszcz and started basic rehabilitation training for newly blinded people from all over the country. Two-week training sessions are still held here today. We also train specialist staff here.

1990 – a complex Residential and Rehabilitation Centre for the Blind and Partially sighted in Olsztyn in Masuria was opened. Currently there are:

- Social Aid House for 110 people

- 3 Daily Residence Centers for 170 people

- Vocational Activity Center where 56 blind people are employed and prepared for work on the open labour market.

There are 150 blind and partially sighted people with their families who have housing problems living in the Center permanently. There is also a therapeutic clinic with rehabilitation, a shop, a chapel, a laundry and a tailor’s unit. There is a gym and a large common room, rehabilitation stays also take place. It is the biggest multifunctional complex in Poland for people from all over the country. The Center is surrounded by a beautiful, large garden with walking paths for the blind and partially sighted .

1991 – Medical and Rehabilitation Centre was opened in Ciechocinek. Currently it functions as a sanatorium for 100 people.

1992 – The Centre for blind and partially sighted Children was opened in Rudołtowice, Silesia. Currently, the facility is called Polish Association of the Blind Educational,Treatment and Rehabiliation Center for Children and Youth.

1992 – another success. Medical and Rehabilitation Centre was opened by the sea in Ustronie Morskie. Currently it functions for 180 people.

1993 – The 4th EBU General Assembly took place in the Therapeutic and Rehabilitation Centre „KOS” in Ustroń Zawodzie in mountains. It was attended by representatives of blind organizations from 45 countries. Among other things a resolution was passed that October 15 be celebrated as International White Cane Day.

1993 – since 1993 until today, the editions of magazines for children and young people („Promyczek” and „Światełko”) appear in enlarge print.

1993 – Social Aid House was established in Kielce. Currently if functions for 50 blind people.

1995-2001 – In those years PZN opened Vocational Therapy Workshops for the blind in Toruń, Słupsk and Włocławek. These workshops prepare these people for work on the open labour market. Later three more Vocational Therapy Workshops were established, run by provincial units.

2001 – PZN set up a Special School and Educational Centre for blind and partially sighted Youth in Chorzów for children and young people.

2004 – the process of digitizing of the Library’s collection began.

2005 – Pope John Paul II was honoured with a gold badge of the PZN. Blind and partially sighted people received a blessing from the Pope conveyed in a letter to PZN.

2006 – another Vocational Activity Center was established, run by the regional unit of the Association for 60 people.

2007 – an online lending library of spoken books was launched at the Central Library of the PZN.

2008 – PZN hosted the President of WBU, Dr. William Rowland, who visited our facilities.

2009 – The International White Cane Day was celebrated under the patronage of the President of the Republic of Poland – Lech Kaczyński. The blind were honored with state decorations at the Belvedere Palace by the First Lady of the Republic of Poland – Maria Kaczyńska. The guest of honour was EBU President Lord Collin Low.

2010 – the publishing of PZN magazines „Promyczek”, „Pochodnia”, „Światełko” and „Nasze Dzieci” in an electronic version has started. These magazines are for adults, children and teenagers.

2011 – the publishing in electronic version of the biweekly „Biuletyn Informacyjny Pochodni”has started.

2011 – the Pope Benedict XVI was honoured with a gold badge of the PZN. The leadership of the Association, along with a group off 40 people, participated in a direct audience at the Vatican.

2011 – for the first time ever blind people were able to vote using various facilities for the blind (a Braille overlay on the ballot paper).

2014 – a new Scientific Council was established at the Typhlological Institute of the PZN.

2015 – a workshop for sighted people of all ages called “Laboratorium Ciemności” began at the PZN Typhlogallery. It is a specific form of social education on how blind and partially sighted people cope and how to help them.

2015 - President of the Republic of Poland – Andrzej Duda and the First Lady of the Republic of Poland – Agata Kornhauser-Duda participated in the reading of “Lalka” in Braille at the PZN Typhlogallery as part of the national reading.

2016 – on the initiative of PZN, for the first time in history, The Parliamentary Team for People with Vision Impairment Impaired Persons was created.

2016 – in the Presidential Palace under the patronage of President of the Republic of Poland – Andrzej Duda and the First Lady of the Republic of Poland, celebration were held on the occasion of the International White Cane Day, as part of the 65th anniversary of the PZN “W służbie pokoleń” and the 70th anniversary of the Union of the Blind Movement in Poland. State decorations were presented to many activists and employees of the Association.

2016 – The President of the Republic of Poland appointed the President of the PZN to the National Development Council, Section for Social Policy and Family.

2017 – the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, appointed the Committee for the National Celebration of the 100th Anniversary of Poland’s Independence and handed the nomination to the President of the PZN.

2018 – at the request of the Prime Minister, the National Accessibility Council was established. Its member is the President of the PZN. The Council works until today. It is an expert and advisory body inspired by the US Access Board and working together for accessibility.

2019 – as part of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of Poland’s Independence, PZN organized a concert and was awarded the diploma of the President of the Republic of Poland.

2019 – PZN in partnership with the Bank organized 11 concerts in the dark throughout the country to sensitize sighted people to the needs of partially sighted people.

2020 – for the first time in history, a blind person has been appointed the Government Plenipotentiary for Disabled People.

Since March 2020, many of our specialist institutions have been closed due to the pandemic. We were forced to develop new forms of support with the use of modern technologies. Many training courses, seminars and conferences are held online.

In 1951, the blind in Poland created a membership organization (PZN), which is the largest in Poland until today. They also manage it. The organization is a spokesman for the blind and partially sighted people. It currently has 40,000 members. About 1,000 people join the organization annually.

We are a very important employer. We employ blind and partially sighted people as well as rehabilitation specialists - 1100 people all over the country.

We obtain financial resources for our operations from grants. We run a business ourselves. We have no direct help from the government or other institutions.

**We will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the PZN in the following ways:**

Due to the pandemic, the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the PZN this year must be adapted to the sanitary regime. We cannot organize a gala live concert or a large conference. We cannot ask the President to grant state decorations or union decorations. Mass events are prohibited. We will use our magazines, the Association’s website and Facebook to celebrate the anniversary.

1. From the beginning of the year, a large illuminated sign with the logo of the Association „2021 – 70 years of the Polish Blind Association” was installed on the PZN building.

2. At the entrance to the building of the Association, we have placed a large poster, with information about all the structures of our Association: 16 provinces and 340 districts as well as specialized institutions throughout the country.

3. We prepare exhibitions on rehabilitation, employment, trade union publications, the creation of the Library, the most important events as well as archive photos.

4. We also plan to honour the memory of selected people - artists with visual disabilities, social activists, specialists who have contributed to the improvement of the quality of life for blind and partially sighted people in Poland;

5. We are preparing a short publication containing the most important information, referring to the 70th anniversary of the activity of the Polish Association of the Blind.

6. We are preparing 7 short films in which partially sighted people will play, giving practical advice to other people who have not yet been in the environment of persons with visual impairment. The themes of these films will be, for example: the reading of partially sighted people, safety at home and at work; safe travel etc.

7. The First „Euro Low-Vision Song-Contest”; we have joined as a Partner is also dedicated to the celebration of the 70th anniversary. The organizer of the festival is the Belgian organization VIEWS and the German Association of the Blind.

8. We are preparing a publication about people who were key figures in the Association - a reminder of their profiles.

9. An article about our publishing achievements over these 70 years (Typhlological publications, rehabilitation programs) will be published in our magazine “Pochodnia”.

10. The guide for parents will include historical materials reminiscing about the creation of this publication (37 years ago) and what has changed in the approach to children's rehabilitation and education, in the approach of parents

11. A tab will be created on the main website of the Association, which will contain materials prepared by various departments of the Typhlological Institute (eg calendar of events).

12. We announced a competition for teenagers in children's magazines entitled "Me in 20 years." The authors of the three best works will receive prizes. We will publish the winning texts in a children's magazine.

## Laura Diepstraten from Spain wins the first edition of the International Low Vision Song Contest (ILSC)

Laura Diepstraten did it. Her song 'Another vision', composed by herself to explain to the world how blind people see, prevailed in the votes in which 17 European countries participated in the first edition of the International Low Vision Song Contest, the Eurovision for blind artists. The young woman from Pulpí (Almería - Spain) conquered the hearts of all of Europe with the beauty of her voice and the soul of her song. The “Diamond Eye” designed by Felix Baumgart was presented virtually to Laura as the ILSC trophy.

Diepstraten had been unanimously chosen by the jury to represent Spain among 30 other candidates. The freshness and naturalness of it, the depth of her message and the beauty of her music, stripped of any type of arrangement or production, captivated the European voters who, en masse, chose the Spanish song.

Laura wanted to present her naked song of arrangements and technical adjustments, only with her voice and her piano, to focus on the strength of the message: *“You have to dream, fly, imagine to be able to observe what others can see just by looking”,* she sings in his main verse.

Miguel Carballeda, President of ONCE, congratulated the brand-new winner immediately after announcing the results.

This European final was attended by the Italian singer, musician, producer and writer Andrea Bocelli and the British singer-songwriter Andrea Begley while Europe voted electronically.

We invite you to watch, again or for the first time, the [whole final audiodescribed](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcZyjphBkqE)

For full Results and the final show listen to: [www.dbsv.org/ilsc](http://www.dbsv.org/ilsc)

A [play list](https://m.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLgF6aLSyCYBSTrU2ZF4BIadvsPUYfq6Ms&fbclid=IwAR3wmWgXpiPsUaAIVIAnicjqu2reokHS-Ii8Mi3V6aInY-Ew4XRGvDcvYJU) contains not only the 17 finalist songs but also some from the national preselections:

Together with [VIEWS International](http://www.viesinternation.eu), the [DBSV youth club](http://www.jugend.dbsv.org) organized the contest with 17 songs from all over Europe. The story of the Low Vision Songs will go on: there will definitely be an ILSC again. When, where and how will be decided. But blind and partially sighted song writers can share their songs in the [offsight forum of the DBSV](https://offsight.de/viewtopic.php?f=21&t=227).

## The 30th number of the EBU Access Cast is available!

Welcome back to [the 30th episode of the EBU Access Cast](https://ebuaccesscast.libsyn.com/ebu-access-cast-30), the big THREE ZERO! In a great new development, the team has made it possible for all episodes to be accessible via a [dedicated youtube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi_2rkvtg7lrs3mHz1w8qcg/videos)!

In this episode, Hlynur makes his debut as a lead host, joined by the always charming Tanja, Mario and Pawel. We covered a lot of current issues... everything from binaural recordings of a volcano in Iceland to an audio version of an IKEA catalogue.

Pawel told us about his new gadget, the [Sennheiser Ambeo Smart Headset](https://www.amazon.com/-/pl/dp/B073TTRB9F/ref=sr_1_1?__mk_pl_PL=%C3%85M%C3%85%C5%BD%C3%95%C3%91&dchild=1&keywords=Sennheiser+Ambeo+Smart+Headset&qid=1618088345&sr=8-1) and we even get to hear some recordings he created for us and let us take a peek into his daily adventures.

Hlynur told us about the [Dark Reader Chrome Extension](https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/dark-reader/eimadpbcbfnmbkopoojfekhnkhdbieeh?hl=en), which enables users to customize the way webpages look, turn light theme pages into dark theme, increase colour contrast etc.

There were some news we covered, like [Microsoft's acquisition of Nuance](https://www.bbc.com/news/business-56722862), who are most famous for the much-loved Siri, the [Accessibility Mousepad from Iceland](https://github.com/UKHomeOffice/posters/tree/master/accessibility/dos-donts), that was based on a design from UK Home Office and has been shared in GitHub for others to use, translate and produce and the ongoing issue with external bluetooth keyboards not working with many special characters if using both Android 11 and Talkback together. We also discussed how a normal user can get in touch and report bugs and errors to the Android staff.

We took a close look at [Accessible Overlays,](https://pneumasolutions.com/the-fast-food-approach-to-web-accessibility/) what they are and what they are meant to do and how they are really not working and often [making matters worse than fixing them](https://adrianroselli.com/2020/06/accessibe-will-get-you-sued.html). We also discussed some companies who are offering these overlays as a paid-for service and also how you, as a user, can get rid of them. There are many articles and podcasts who have covered this issue, for example a deep-dive [3 hour podcast of Mosen at large](https://mosen.org/episode-105-the-accessibe-controversy-can-ai-make-the-web-fully-accessible-in-a-few-short-years-or-might-it-make-matters-worse/), especially covering it. For those who wish to read more about this, here is a link to an extensive [Fact sheet on accessibility overlays](https://overlayfactsheet.com/).

We also talked about how audio-only media seems to be on the rise with large platforms like [Clubhouse](https://www.joinclubhouse.com/) growing rapidly and huge companies like [IKEA releasing their catalogue as an audio book](https://coolblindtech.com/ikea-replaces-its-print-catalog-with-an-audiobook/).

The [Sight City 2021 conference](http://www.sightcity.net/en/visitor/infos.php), that was supposed to take place in Frankfurt in May, will be hosted as a virtual-only event. We discussed how that might affect the conference as a whole, the number of companies showcasing their products and more.

Finally, Mario shares a piece of his limitless brilliance and expertise, giving us a demo of how you can easily transfer audio from your smartphone to a PC via bluetooth.

We really hope you enjoy this landmark episode and will join us next time. Should you have any questions, remarks or content you would like to contribute, you can reach us by email at [ebuaccesscast@euroblind.org](mailto:ebuaccesscast@euroblind.org) or [twitter!](https://twitter.com/ebuaccesscast)

As always, you can also explore the [transcript](https://ebuaccesscast.libsyn.com/ebu-access-cast-30-transcript) of this episode.

## WBU-ICEVI General Assemblies

World Blindness Summit Monday, June 28, 2021 to Wednesday, June 30, 2021 Online

**World Blindness Summit Madrid 2021** is a global meeting, with Madrid as the virtual epicentre and the whole planet as the leading character, which is organised by the **ONCE Social Group** and will include the **General Assembly of the WBU** (World Blind Union) **and of the ICEVI** (International Council of Educators of Partially sighted People).

This is a **cutting-edge, disruptive and innovative event** that embraces the benefits of technologies, creating the **first global and accessible online conference** aimed at addressing the significant challenges faced by blind and low vision people resulting from the severe crisis that has arisen from the COVID 19 pandemic.

**Over 1,000 blind and severely partially sighted people from nearly 190 countries over the world will participate in the World Blindness Summit Madrid 2021** to share their experiences and practices developed over the past five years, and especially those implemented to cope with the effects of the pandemic in all spheres of life of blind and low vision people throughout the planet.

The achievements and challenges experienced will be analysed, priorities will be set in this new era beginning by working hard to prevent blind and low vision people from being left behind in the digital revolution that has made such great progress in the past months. On the other hand, new strategies will be worked on to give visibility to the reality of our group of people, and, above all, to promote everything that contributes to the substantiation of a central goal: to create a new vision of blindness, to enable these people to fully participate in any aspect of vital progress.

Please [register asap](https://www.worldblindnesssummit.com/en/inscription), visit the [assembly website](https://www.worldblindnesssummit.com/en/) for more information.

## haptiBOOK International Online Meeting 2021

**Exchanging experiences and promoting the production of tactile children books worldwide**

The German Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted (DBSV) is organizing the haptiBOOK International Online Meeting 2021, which will be held on ZOOM on Saturday 12th June 2021.

The meeting aims to exchange experiences and good practices in the production of tactile books for blind, visually impaired and sighted children and to promote the production of this kind of books worldwide.

The program of the meeting will consist on the one hand of short presentations by the participating organizations that would like to share their experience in specific aspects of tactile book production and on the other hand of cooperative sessions in open space format, in which all participants will be encouraged to contribute with their good practices, questions or ideas to the development of this field.

The goal is to promote mutual learning and networking and to encourage countries that do not yet have tactile books to get started in the production.

The DBSV would like to welcome representatives from organizations that want to share their experiences and also learn from the good practices of other participants, as well as organizations from countries with no experience that would be interested in getting started in this field.

**Background**

Picture books are very important for the development of children. They spark their imagination, stimulate their curiosity, help them develop their ability to understand words and to focus and they introduce them to new concepts and the world around them.

However, there are hardly any picture books worldwide that enable participation for blind and partially sighted children.

Tactile books help children with a visual impairment to explore the world with their sense of touch, promote their concept formation and prepare them for reading in a very playful way.

These books combine braille and large print texts with haptic pictures and this is what makes their production so laborious and costly and causes the supply to be so scarce around the world.

Nevertheless, there are some organizations in different countries that have been working for years on the production of tactile illustrated books and trying to make up for the lack of inclusive books.

The DBSV has been producing haptic books since 2013. These books contain tactile elements that are interactive and made of different materials. Most of the work is handmade, so each book is a unique piece.

Information about the DBSV books and activities on how to use tactile books to learn about the world can be found at: [www.kinderbuch.dbsv.org](http://www.kinderbuch.dbsv.org) (only some content is available in English).

**Key information**

haptiBOOK International Online Meeting 2021

Event Date: 12th June 2021, 10 am – 4 pm (Central European Time)

Registration deadline: 04th June 2021

This event will be held on the plattform ZOOM, which is available for both mobile and desktop users. Participants can also attend the meeting directly from a Web browser. The registration for the meeting is free of charge.

Contact and registration: Eva Cambeiro Andrade, [e.cambeiro@dbsv.org](mailto:e.cambeiro@dbsv.org%20)

The haptiBOOK International Online Meeting 2021 will take place within the framework of the project “Ein Buch für jeden Tag” (“A book for every day”), which is sponsored by the SKala-Initiative. SKala is an initiative of entrepreneur Susanne Klatten in partnership with the nonprofit analysis and consulting company PHINEO.

ENDS.

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## News from the International Blind Football Foundation

IBF Foundation selects 8 international fixtures to be covered by NCCS, supported by Santen grant programme.

The IBF Foundation Blind Football Neighbouring Countries Challenge Series (NCCS), supported by Santen grant programme, invites national teams worldwide to apply for financial support to hold international friendly matches with neighbouring countries as they reinitiate activities after the global pandemic.

At the meeting of the IBF Foundation Board of Directors, grants were approved for 8 friendly international matches. The grant program was open for applications from January 2nd to January 15th2021, and we received 12 applications in total from national teams.

The selection committee was made up of four IBF Foundation members. Criteria for selecting the matches were pitch condition, transportation, accommodation, broadcasting, budget, blind football experience, and feasibility to organize properly. After deciding on the five matches that received the best evaluations, members selected three more matches after confirming the availability of budget and the conditions for accepting visitors from overseas.

The list of matches to be supported by the IBF Foundation NCCS is as follows

* Austria - Switzerland
* Argentina - Colombia (Women's national teams)
* Nicaragua - El Salvador
* Niger - Ivory Coast
* Nigeria - Ghana (both men’s and women’s national teams)
* Malaysia - Thailand
* Iran - Russia
* Oman - India

Grants of up to 10,000 US Dollars were made available for projects involving air transportation, while projects involving travel by land were eligible for a grant of up to 5,000 US Dollars. All projects must be finalized by November 30th, 2021.

Please check out all the information:

[www.ibf-foundation.football](http://www.ibf-foundation.football)