

Special European Newsletter - Issue 40, Volume 15 number 2, June 2009

for General Assembly 7th ICEVI-European Conference in Dublin, Ireland

Edited by *Mary Lee* ml@icevi-europe.org and
Hans Welling hw@icevi-europe.org
Designed by *Martina Koblková* webmaster@icevi-europe.org

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From the Board

Dear members of ICEVI-Europe

I am pleased to invite you to the General Assembly on Thursday 9 July 2009 at 16.00 – 17.30.

It will be the first General Assembly since ICEVI-Europe has had the official status of an association. I hope that all members will have the opportunity to be present, so we will be able to discuss the annual report and appoint the candidates for the Board and Contact persons for the European regions.

Hopefully the regional meetings on Monday 6 July from 16.00 – 17.30 will set the building blocks for the coming years.

Naturally the Dublin Conference is of great importance. The theme is challenging and invites reflection.

I would like to cordially invite you to the conference as well as to the General Assembly.

During the conference an INFO DESK will be open during the presentations. The function of the info desk will be:

- Giving information about ICEVI
- Education for All programme
- Membership and payment of contribution
- Handing out the voting cards for the elections
- Handing out brochures of the 13th World Conference of ICEVI in Jomtien, Thailand 8 – 13 August 2010

In this newsletter you will find the schedule for the INFO DESK.

Welcome and hopefully we will meet in Dublin!

Hans Welling, Chairman

INFO DESK

When	NAME OF BOARD MEMBER
Monday morning	Peter Rodney, Karsten Hohler
Monday afternoon	Betty Leotsakou
Tuesday morning	Peter Rodney, Karsten Hohler
Tuesday afternoon	Ana Isabel Ruiz López
Wednesday morning	Mary Lee
Thursday morning	Liliya Plastunova
Thursday afternoon	Catherine Thibault
Friday morning	Terezie Hradilkova

Agenda of the General Assembly

Thursday 9 July 2009, 16.00 – 17.30 in Dublin, Ireland

1. Opening
2. For approval
 - Annual report 2008, enclosure
 - Budget 2009, enclosure
3. Elections
 - Election of the chairman, enclosure
 - Election of the Board members, enclosure
 - Election of the country representatives, enclosure
4. Presentation of countries for the European Conference 2013
5. Looking to the future
6. Any other business
7. Closure

Annual report 2008

1 Preface

As you will read in this report, 2008 has been a year with many ICEVI activities.

Several conferences have taken place and for the second time the European Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment.

In this way ICEVI-Europe has stimulated the international exchange of knowledge and skills in the field of education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment.

The new brochure provides publicity for the European section of ICEVI and many new members have subscribed.

In the report you can read detailed information about activities in the several sub-regions in Europe.

The Board hopes that you will read the report with interest and is open to your suggestions and remarks.

The Board would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the activities of ICEVI-Europe.

This report is approved in the General Assembly of ICEVI-Europe on 9 July 2009 in Dublin, Ireland.

Huizen, The Netherlands, April 2009
On behalf of the Board,
Hans Welling, Chairman

2 Report from the board

In 2008 the Board had one meeting in Huizen, The Netherlands.

The most important theme during this meeting was the preparations for the European conference in July 2009 in Dublin, Ireland. The theme of the conference "Living in a changing Europe" was discussed and the meaning of this for people with a visual impairment, professionals and professional organisations.

Concerning the structure of the conference, interactive sessions were advocated, aimed at reflection. At the end of the year the scientific committee was very active evaluating more than 200 abstracts. The members of the scientific committee were Mary Lee, Heather Mason and Peter Rodney.

During the report year many conferences took place.

The European Conference on Early Intervention for Families with Children with Visual Impairment (Hungary), the International Scientific Practical Conference Inclusive Education (Russia), the 4th ICEVI-Balkan conference (Turkey) and the Conference -Quality of Education (Lithuania) and the 2nd Conference on Psychology and Visual Impairment (The Netherlands). In addition conferences were attended, like the conference on Participation, organised by VBS in Germany. You can read more in the report.

With the support of the EU, a second meeting was held of the committee that is occupied with the development of a European Masters Degree for those, who are working in the field of education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairments.

In the coming years more conferences will take place to develop the curriculum.

The curriculum will be based on the International Classification of Functioning, Disabilities and Health.

During the report year the European Newsletter was published three times. For budgetary reasons it was decided to discontinue the printed version of the newsletter. The Board is pleased that the newsletter is also available in Russian. For many members from the East European countries the information has become more accessible.

The Target group of ICEVI has been thoroughly discussed by the Board. It was concluded that ICEVI should develop into an organisation of professionals and professional organisations for people with visual impairment, regardless of age i.e. an organisation for the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment.

The Executive Committee of ICEVI (EXCO) approved of the idea to continue this way.

This wider target group and wider area for special attention, namely the education and rehabilitation of people with visual impairment will find expression in the European Conference 2009.

During the report year, together with the chairman of ICEVI-West Asia, Tajikistan was visited. Thereafter a programme was developed to improve the quality of life for people with a visual impairment in Tajikistan.

In the EXCO of ICEVI it was decided that Tajikistan should remain within the sub region West Asia. At the same time the possibility was opened up for organisations from Tajikistan to take part in European activities.

At the beginning of 2008 a new ICEVI-Europe brochure was produced. During the conferences in Europe many new members subscribed.

3 The sub regions

French speaking region

During the past year, no specific meeting of ICEVI took place in the French speaking countries, although some activities encompassed European matters and meetings.

In Luxembourg, the Institute for Visually Impaired People is acting as coordinator of a Comenius project: "Vision and visual perception in learning processes - the classroom situation". 3 Universities and 9 schools and Institutes will participate: Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Portugal, Romania, Ireland, Luxembourg, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, Slovenia and Switzerland. Unfortunately, despite the information being passed on, no French school was interested in participating in this project.

In France, from October 16th to 18th 2008, in Lyon, GPEAA had a great success with its conference. The theme was new research in the visual neurosciences and their pedagogical implications and it was organized with the University Lyon II. Many institutes and services are concerned with this question and are trying to find better answers for children with such disabilities. Special trainers from Belgium, Switzerland and France were present.

A delegation of psychologists from ALFPHV (the French language association of psychologists working in the field of visual impairment) took part in the conference in Huizen, Holland, in March 2008. They want to take more part in ICEVI conferences in order to exchange ideas and practice. In their subsequent congress, they planned time for exchanges with European contacts. Some of them will be present at the Dublin Conference.

In August, a small group from Belgium and France participated in the Early Intervention Conference in Budapest. A report has been sent to the ICEVI contact person for the French speaking countries.

Catherine Thibault

English Speaking Region

Representatives for the English speaking regions have been busy preparing for the conference in Dublin this July. A meeting of the programme committee was held in Dublin in February 2009 and preparations are well under way. The

abstract choices were finalised and a draft programme drawn up. The venue is in the beautiful setting of Trinity College Dublin, close to the city centre. The programme promises to be interesting and stimulating and very relevant across a diverse range of interests.

Contact persons

Audrey Farrelly has returned from maternity leave and has resumed her post as contact person for Ireland. Paul Lynch has taken over from Mike McLinden as contact person for England. Nicola Crews has acted for Wales. Vacancies exist for contact persons for the UK.

Mary Lee

The Report of the German and Dutch speaking region

I will not be running for a further legislative period. Therefore I will leave the board in the summer. Over the last year I have been thinking about improvements in the work of the region.

I have analysed the situation together with Hans Welling and Eberhard Fuchs. We asserted that work in the field of education for the blind in our region is very strongly connected with the work of the VBS (Verband der Blinden- und Sehbehindertenpädagogen). For this reason, we agreed that the future board-member of ICEVI Europe should also be a board-member of VBS.

Dieter Feser, the new chairman of the VBS and successor to Eberhard Fuchs, has agreed to run for the board. Following that, I have sent an enquiry to the contact persons of the region in agreement with Hans Welling, asking whether they would support the candidacy of Dieter Feser. The contact persons of the Netherlands and Austria have spoken positively; no message has come from the others.

Dieter Feser will run for the board of the German and Dutch speaking region in Dublin.

In July 2008 the VBS-Kongress meeting of nearly 700 people working with blind and visually impaired took place in Hannover. Inclusion was one of the main discussion points at the conference. A very important input on inclusion came from the people of ICEVI-Europe.

Karsten Hohler

East-European Region

The list of countries of the East-European region consists of: Belarus, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine.

This list can be filled up with five further countries: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. As you will remember at our previous meeting, we are increasing the work with Tajikistan. Since geographically Tajikistan is in the Asian region, Mr. Bhushan - ICEVI-Asian president was involved in this process as well. In August a business meeting took place in Tajikistan. As a result of this meeting some projects have developed. Active work with Tajikistan is beginning.

The annual International Festival of Arts for children with health problems took place in March in St.-Petersburg - this project also was held under the umbrella of ICEVI. More than 200 children from 6 countries participated. The purpose of the project was:

1. socialisation of children with health issues;
2. development of tolerance in society.

Teamwork between ICEVI and the school for v.i. children in Tolyatti City (Central Russia) took place in May, 2008. The Fund of Tolyatti has organised a trip for children to France. Under the support of ICEVI, children have visited the Rehabilitation Centre in Anjou. Parents and teachers thank colleagues of the Rehabilitation Centre and especially Kethrin for their organisation of a warm meeting for the Russian children. It was a good experience of work for teachers and children. The Russian children have invited the French children to visit Tolyatti City.

For a long time, together with ICEVI, we have been preparing a project on the organisation of coursework between the Universities of the East-European Region. In July we have started the project " XXI century - a century of open society for all". The purpose of the project:

the creation of a network of services for v.i. children and students in the East-European and Asian regions.

The first conference has taken place in November in Saratov State University (Central Russia). Themes of the conference:

1. International Classification of Functioning, Disabilities and Health (ICF), the base for the education and rehabilitation of children with visual impairment.
2. Inclusive Education of Children with Visual Impairment, responding to student diversity.

There were more than 150 participants from 6 countries. The 2nd conference will take place in Moldova in October, 2009. The themes:

1. Socialisation of v.i. children.
2. Low vision.

In July, 2008 In The Crimea, Alupka City, a Ukrainian project was organised with the international participation of experts from Poland and Russia and the support of ICEVI. The purpose of the project:
development of an innovative model of social services - organisation and carrying out of courses for parents at "Mama school".

One more project: the paper-bag for the International project «TEMPUS» has been prepared. The consortium consists of 10 universities and ICEVI is the coordinator of this project.

In August experts from Armenia, Russia and Ukraine participated in the International Conference on "Early intervention" in Budapest, Hungary.

We have more than 20 new ICEVI members from the East-European Region and 1 from Tajikistan.

We actively cooperate with the ICEVI Newsletter. In 2008-2009 3 articles were published. We have a Russian version of the Newsletter and Brochure.

Wishes:

1. In ICEVI there are many people from the East-European region, especially Russia. Therefore the members of ICEVI kindly ask the Board to consider this when granting supported places for the conferences.
2. Colleagues from Belarus who make the Russian version of the Newsletter, kindly ask that the newspaper have a Russian translation; and again kindly ask the board to consider an opportunity to receive payment for the translation.
3. Concerning the website - there is an offer to expand the Home Page, to make it more informative and to translate it into Russian.

Liliya Plastunova

Central Europe region

Czech Republic (Ema Gallova, contact person)

The new contact person was established – Mgr. Ema Gallová, Bc. from the Jan Deyl Conservatory and Secondary School for Visually Impaired in Prague.

Activities:

The group of institutions and individuals from the special education and social field of visual impairment were informed of ICEVI - Europe organisation, the Dublin conference and other future plans. The translation of the bulletin gave the possibility for all to become members of ICEVI-Europe. There was the National meeting of Education and Rehabilitation of Visually Impaired in November 4th 2008, where the proposal for cooperation in the Czech Republic was declared and the ICEVI material on integration was distributed. Their translation was also a part of materials for the conference on integration during the "Week for inclusion" in September.

Legacy:

Czech Republic ratified the OSN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Ministry of Education declares its concept of inclusive education and edits conceptual material about education, the so called "White Book".

The Ministry of Social Affairs declares a single valued target – social inclusion and equal opportunities.

Early Intervention:

The Association for Early Intervention in Czech Rep. cooperated on the organisation and realisation of European Early Intervention conference „Theory meeting practice“, in Budapest, Hungary, August 2008. Six Czech early interventionists took active part in the conference. The early intervention interest group of ICEVI – Europe was established.

Hungary (Krisztina Kovács, contact person)

1.) Early Intervention

In August, 2008 we held a European meeting of early interventionists. There is a new regulation concerning early intervention in Hungary. There has to be 2 times 2 hours direct service to the child with special needs to get financial support from the state. This is too rigid and does not support the needs of the family.

2.) School aged children

The Kettesy School for Low Vision Children in Debrecen has less and less children even if they accept blind and multiply impaired children as well. The municipality withdrew the permission to serve integrated children at local schools in the county. There is a danger that the school will be closed. Inclusion is the leading form of education for children with blindness and low vision in Hungary but itinerant services are not sufficient (low number of services, low number of itinerant teachers, missing regional services, low financing, etc.)

3.) Rehabilitation

Good news: the first 26 trained rehabilitation teachers of persons with visual impairment have finished their training and got their diplomas. I supervised 10 persons in the East part of Hungary. They are doing a good job. Now we have 8 different regional rehabilitation services in Hungary. The training will be continued from September 2009.

Slovak Republic (Elena Mendelova, contact person)

Legislation

In Slovakia the new Educational Act has been voted through. It is valid since September 2008 (Act No 245/2008). Institutes of itinerant teachers and resource centres have been included for the first time and can be used in the education of pupils with disabilities with support from the government.

Most important activities in education of visually impaired and people/ staff working in this field

Activity in the education of visually impaired pupils and students and people working in this field increased as well as the number of institutions and organisations providing education, training and meetings of experts.

Department of special education - Comenius University, Faculty of Education

- organised national and international scientific meetings
- conference (Via Lucis "Integration – chance for all", June 2008)
- workshop ("Early intervention of visually impaired children in Slovakia", November 2008)
- 1st International special - educational conference (2008)

Special primary school for pupils with visual impairment in Levoca

Organised special training for teachers and parents focused on guidance for children with VI;

Special primary school for pupils with visual impairment in Bratislava

The number of multi-disabled pupils with visual impairment increased.

Slovak society for special and therapeutic pedagogy

- organised national workshops and events for experts, special teachers and children with visual impairment
- International conference on Angelman syndrome (June 2008, Lucenec)
- National workshop on re-education of vision (June 2008, Siar nad Hronom)
- International exposition - work of VI children (November 2008, Banovce nad Bebravou)

Support Centre for Visually Impaired Students at Comenius University

- Two trainings for blind secondary school pupils and two special workshops for mainstream teachers of scientific subjects (mathematics, physics, informatics) were organised. Experiences of using mathematical editor for the blind LAMBDA were presented in several national and international events (Bratislava, SR; Lins, AT; Milan, IT).
- New lecture about accessible programmes for students of applied informatics was developed and a pilot course was introduced at Faculty of Mathematics, Physics and Informatics in 2008.

Most important projects

Department of special education, Comenius University, Faculty of Education

Project Via Lucis finished: focused on

- disability studies for people working with persons with disabilities in different institutions and organisations (secondary schools, universities, counseling)
- preparation of secondary school students for university.

Special primary school for pupils with visual impairment in Levoca

The project Training for teachers of visually impaired finished in 2008

Non-profit organisation for visually impaired in Levoca

To provide continuity of Matra project the organisation employed itinerant teachers for pupils with visual impairment with the financial support of Ministry of Education SR.

Support Centre for Visually Impaired Students at Comenius University

- Within the TEMPUS project Access_VIP (Access to university for visually impaired people : 2007 - 2008; http://cezap.sk/access_vip) a support centre has been built "Without barriers" at Moldova State University in Chisinau, MD according to the similar centres at the Technical University in Karlsruhe, DE and at Comenius University in Bratislava, SR.
- Within the @science project (<http://www.ascience-thematic.net/en>) an international scientific workshop Access to Scientific Sources for the Blind was organised (October 2008). The Society will celebrate the 40th anniversary and will organise an international conference Perspectives in special and therapeutic pedagogy.

Poland, Slovenia – no reports

Teresie Hradilkova

South European region

During 2008 ONCE has published two educational multimedia games for blind and visually impaired children between the ages of 4 and 7, useful also for sighted children - the reason why they are having a lot of success in ordinary schools: "Leocadia the flea" and "The magic word tree". These two games are available on our web in English and in all the Spanish languages.

<http://educacion.once.es/home.cfm?id=176&nivel=2&orden=2>

Italy has led a European project, Lambda, an innovative system to ease access to Maths for blind students. Spain has also participated in this project, together with some other European countries.

<http://www.lambdaproject.org/default.asp?sec=115>

The **Spanish** ACCEDO Group from ONCE, devoted to accessibility of educational content on the computer, for visually impaired children, has been awarded the Handinnov Prize that recognizes organizations that have introduced exemplary practices in Europe in favor of young disabled people.

<http://www.onisep.fr/handinov/>

Spain has celebrated the International exhibition of Assistive Technology for People with Visual Disabilities (Tifloinnova, 21-23 November 2008), organized by ONCE, with a large participation of national and international manufacturers and an attendance of more than 3.000 visitors.

ONCE celebrated, under the auspices of the World Blind Union, from 16th to 20th June 2008 the First International Congress for Blind and Partially Sighted Children. Under the theme "Listening to the Children", the conference gathered together more than 20 blind and partially sighted young boys and girls from 18 different countries from 14 to 16 years old. They discussed education and visual disabilities.

As usual, we have offered some places for children from Italy and Portugal to come to our summer camps, though this year it hasn't been possible for them to find any students to come.

As every year, we have offered a scholarship for blind students to study in ONCE's Physiotherapy College

Our contact person in Portugal is working together with Hans Welling, trying to organize a European Masters on Education for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

ONCE is in touch with ACAPO (Portugal) trying to organize a training seminar for Portuguese teachers who work with blind and partially sighted children.

ONCE has also organized several activities with schools and resource centers from Bulgaria, exchanges with students from France and the United Kingdom...

Unfortunately we don't have any more information about the countries in our sub region. We haven't been able to have any meeting with our contact persons this year, though we have been in touch with them through e-mail. It's very difficult for us to find any contact person in Malta, Andorra, and San Marino.

ONCE will continue promoting activities in its sub region and will try to improve contacts with Malta, Andorra and San Marino.

Ana Isabel Ruiz Lopez

Nordic and Baltic

From Denmark

Institute for the Blind and Partially Sighted

Curriculums are ready to be tested

Throughout the summer the curriculums for the courses developed in KnowProVip EU project have been finished and are now ready to be tested. The aim of the courses is to give a brief but highly informative introduction for professionals who are going to work in a new area within the field of visual impairment. The content is Refugees/immigrants Ages 60 and over / Acquired deaf blindness

Seminar on Echolocation

In the spring, IBOS hosted a seminar on **Echolocation**. The speaker was Daniel Kish, a blind O&M instructor from USA. Another seminar was held on accessibility in the public domain.

European network for psychologists

In March Peter Rodney and Peter Verstraten from Sensis joined a meeting in Vilnius to prepare the 3rd conference for the European network of psychologists and related professions working in the field of Visual Impairment. The conference will be held on the 30th and 31st of March 2010.

News from synscenter Refsnæs

During 2009 - 11 we are participating in a MDVI Comenius project called Sound and Picture together with Sweden, Norway, Finland, Latvia, Luxembourg, Italy, Ireland and Northern Ireland. The RoboBraille-service is an ongoing success and continues to win prizes. To check out the latest news and features of the service go to www.robobraille.org and try it out. It is free of charge to all non-commercial users.

From Finland

A series of lectures on CVI has been carried out in Oulu (Uleåborg) in 2007, in Tampere in 2008, Åbo was this year's effort and next year they will take place in Joensuu. We hope that in time they will have been delivered in many more venues in Finland and especially that we will learn to better understand the problems with visual information that these children face and how their brains are equipped to deal with them and what we can do to help this process.

From Sweden

The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools was established on 1 July 2008 for the purpose of coordinating the government's support for special needs education. The agency takes over the former functions of the National Agency for Special Educational Support, the Swedish Institute for Special Needs Education and the National Agency for Special Schools for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing.

From Lithuania

In February, 2008, Mrs. C. van Gendt, Child psychologist of Visio (the Netherlands) and Mr. H. Welling, Chairman of the ICEVI Europe in the Ministry of Education of Lithuania presented a report about Early Intervention and Inclusive Education in Lithuania "FREEDOM TO CHOOSE".

20th - 29th July, 2008, 3 teachers and 3 students from Kaunas District Training Centre for Blind and Visually Impaired participated in the 5th International Tandem Camp for blind and visually impaired young people organized by Tandem-Help's project (Germany).

16th - 17th October, 2008, the international conference "Quality education - the accepted right of blind and visually impaired people" took place in Vilnius.

From Estonia

The Estonian Ministry of Education has launched a three-year project on creating a system of educational counselling for children with special needs. There will be counselling centres established in every county and in addition two special centres – one for hearing disability and the other for visual impairment created in Estonia.

From Norway

The project ADL performance in society and social perspective for children and youth with visual impairment is a joint venture between Assistanse and Tambartun National Recourse Centre for the Visually Impaired. Assistanse is a Non-Government organisation (NGO) for parents of children and youth with visual impairment in Norway. The project is supported by the foundation "Health and Rehabilitation" and the project duration is between January 1st, 2007 and December 31st, 2008.

Peter Rodney

4 Financial report 2008

Balance		
	31-12 2008 (EUR)	31-12 2007 (EUR)
Cash	675,24	0
Equity	17.959,18	16.153,52
Total	18.634,18	16.153,52

Profit and loss		
	2008 (EUR)	2007 (EUR)
Income		
Contributions	7.162,25	11.170,00
Interest	-	-
Other income	1.369,43	-
Total income	8.531,68	11.170,00
Expenditures		
Website costs	1.400,00	1.044,15
Printing costs	4.527,64	3.500,00
Travel and accommodation	570,00	-
costs meetings	27,00	81,25
Postage costs	10,25	131,25

Profit and loss		
Bank costs	86,13	11.30
Total expenditures	6.051,02	4.767,95
Result	2.480,66	6.402,05

Estimate 2009	
	2009 (EUR)
Income	
Contributions	9.500,00
Interest	-
Other income	-
Total income	9.500,00
Expenditures	
Website costs	1.400,00
Printing costs	250,00
Travel and accommodation	2.500,00
Costs meetings	-
Postage costs	-
Bank costs	90,00
ICEVI World	4.000,00
Total expenditures	8.490,00
Estimated result	1.010,00
Equity as of 31-12-2008	16.634,18
Available for other projects	-

5 Looking to the future

The sharing of knowledge in the field of Education and Rehabilitation of people with visual impairment is the most important activity of ICEVI-Europe.

For the coming year we will hold the European Conference 2009 in Dublin, Ireland with the theme Living in a Changing Europe. During this conference there will be a possible meeting of European service providers, who cooperate with organisations in developing countries. It is important to exchange information, but at the same time we can investigate if connections can be

made with the Education for All Children with Visual Impairment programme in order to realise the goal of the UN.

The International Scientific Practical Conference Inclusive Education: Experience and Prospects for representatives from East European Countries in Saratov (Russia) will be followed by a conference in Moldova and maybe by another further conference somewhere else.

Preparations will be made for the Teacher Training conference in 2010, possibly in Austria.

In order to develop the curriculum for the European Masters programme a first conference of teachers and lecturers from the participating European universities will take place in 2009 with the support of the EU. This conference will be held in The Netherlands.

In the coming year a meeting will take place with Enviter and MDVI. It is important to intensify and formalise the cooperation between both organisations, in order to achieve synergism and a clear image inside and outside Europe.

During the Dublin Conference the General Assembly will take place. The annual report will be discussed, the (re) elections of the chairman, the Board members and the country representatives.

This conference will also offer the opportunity for regional meetings.

Members of the Board as of December 31st 2008

- Mr. **Hans Welling**, chairman
- Mrs. **Terezie Hradilkova**, vice chairman, representing the Central European countries
- Mr. **Karsten Hohler**, treasurer, representing the German and Dutch speaking countries
- Mrs. **Mary Lee**, secretary, representing the English speaking countries
- Mrs. **Catharine Thibault**, representing the French speaking countries
- Mr. **Peter Rodney**, representing the Baltic and Nordic countries
- Mr. **Juan Carlos Puig Costa**, representing the Southern European countries
- Mrs. **Liliya Plastunova**, representing the Eastern European countries
- Mrs. **Betty Leotsakou**, representing the Balkan countries
- Mr. **Eberhard Fuchs**, past chairman

Advisors

- Mr. **Herman Gresnigt**, past chairman
- Mr. **Harry Svensson**, representative of ICEVI (principal officer)

ICEVI-SUBREGIONS within Europe

Baltic and Nordic Countries

- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- Iceland
- Latvia
- Lithuania
- Norway
- Sweden

English speaking Countries.

- Ireland
- United Kingdom + Israel

French speaking Countries

- Belgium
- France
- Luxembourg
- Switzerland (francophone)

South European Countries

- Italy
- Malta
- Portugal
- Spain
- Andorra
- Monaco
- San Marino

German and Dutch speaking Countries

- Austria
- Belgium (Dutch speaking)
- Germany
- Netherlands
- Switzerland (German speaking)
- Lichtenstein

Central European Countries

- Czech Republic
- Hungary
- Poland
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia

East European Countries

- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Georgia
- Kazakhstan
- Moldova
- Russia
- Ukraine

Balkan Countries

- Albania
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Bulgaria
- Croatia
- Cyprus
- FYROM Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
- Greece
- Montenegro
- Romania
- Turkey
- Serbia

Candidate chairperson

Mr **Hans Welling**
 Present chairman,
 16 June 2009



Candidate Board members

Baltic and Nordic Countries	Mr Peter Rodney-Jensen	
English speaking Countries	Mrs Mary Lee	
French speaking Countries	Mrs Catherine Thibault	
South European Countries	Mrs Ana Isabel Ruiz López	
German and Dutch speaking Countries	Mr Dieter Feser	
Central European Countries	Mrs Terezie Hradilkova	

Candidate Board members

East European Countries	Mrs Liliya Plastunova	
Balkan Countries	Mrs Betty Leotsakou	
Past chairman	Mr Eberhard Fuchs	

Candidate Contact persons

Sub region	Country	Candidate Contact person	Photo
Baltic and Nordic Countries	Denmark	Mr Peter Rodney-Jensen	
	Estonia	Mrs Anne Koiv	
	Finland	Mrs Tarja Hännikäinen	
	Iceland	Huld Magnusdottir	
	Latvia	Mrs Ligita Geida	
	Lithuania	Mrs Grita Strankauskiene	
	Norway	Mrs Toril Loe	

Sub region	Country	Candidate Contact person	Photo
	Sweden	Mr Anders Rönnbäck	
English speaking Countries	Ireland	Mrs Audrey Farrelly	
	United Kingdom	Mrs Nicola J. Crews	
		Mr Steve McCall	
		1 Vacancy	
	Israel	Mrs Nurit Neustadt-Noy	
French speaking Countries	Belgium	Mrs Violaine Van Cutsem	
	France	Mrs Michele Collat	
		Mrs Annie Lamant	
		Mr Francis Boe	
	Luxembourg	Mr Frank Groben	
Switzerland (francophone)	Mrs Isabelle MATHIS		
South European	Italy	Vacancy	
	Malta	Carmen Cascun	

Sub region	Country	Candidate Contact person	Photo
Countries	Portugal	Mrs Leonor Moniz-Pereira	
	Spain	Mrs Ana Isabel Ruiz López	
		Mrs Elena Gastón López	
	Andorra	Mrs Mariona Carbonell del Castillo	
	Monaco	Vacancy	
	San Marino	Vacancy	
German and Dutch speaking Countries	Austria	Mrs Gerti Jaritz-Tschinkel	
	Belgium (Dutch speaking)	Vacancy	
	Germany	Vacancy	
	The Netherlands	Vacancy	
	Switzerland (German speaking)	Vacancy	
	Lichtenstein	Vacancy	

Sub region	Country	Candidate Contact person	Photo
Central European Countries	Czech Republic	Mrs Ema Gallová	
	Hungary	Mrs Krisztina Kovacs	
	Poland	Mrs Grazyna Walczak	
	Slovak Republic	Mrs Elena Mendelova	
	Slovenia	Damijana Dusak	
East European Countries	Armenia	Vacancy	
	Azerbaijan	Vacancy	
	Belarus	Mr Vladimir Gordeiko	
	Georgia	Vacancy	
	Kazakhstan	Mrs Klara Rakisheva	
	Moldova	Mrs Larisa Celan	
	Russia	Mrs Natalia Belyakova	
		Mrs Irina Zarubina	

Sub region	Country	Candidate Contact person	Photo
	Ukraine	Mrs Evgeniya Synyova	
		Vira Remazhevskia	
Balkan Countries	Albania	Mrs Tatjana Cadri	
	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Vacancy	
	Bulgaria	Mr Vladimir Radoulov	
	Croatia	Mrs Marijana Konkoli Zdesic	
	Cyprus	Andreas P. Hapoupis	
	FYROM	Mrs Daniela Dimitrova-Radojicik	
	Greece	Vassilis Argyropoulos	
	Montenegro	Vacancy	
	Romania	Mr Vasile Liviu Preda	
		Andrea Hathazi	
	Turkey	Mrs Hale Aksuna (Ergenc)	
		Mrs Emine Ayyildiz	
Serbia	Mr Tihomir Nikolic		

Background information for the General Assembly Friday July 10th 2009 in Dublin

As you know ICEVI-Europe has, since the beginning of 2007, had legal status as an association. This had been decided during the General Assembly in Kuala Lumpur.

Because of this, ICEVI-Europe has a better, more concrete structure both now and in the future.

According to the articles of association, The General Assembly, which will be held during the conference, is the most important organ of ICEVI-Europe.

In the two intervening years, matters will be handled in the general meeting, which consists of the contact persons of the various countries.

During the General Assembly the annual report of 2007 will be discussed, and also elections will take place.

Contact persons for each sub region

According to the articles of association, retirement by rotation will take place. Since the association was only founded at the beginning of 2007, the board assumes that each contact person may be re-elected.

Each contact person will receive a letter in which they will be asked if they are willing to be re-elected. In addition to this, other people may present themselves as a possible contact person. The board wishes to invite people to come forward since there are also vacancies.

You will find enclosed a job description for the contact person and the number of contact persons required for each country.

Current contact persons and new candidates should inform the chairperson before March 15th 2009 hanswelling@visio.org

On the basis of the information received, the board will make a proposal for the General Assembly.

Job description of contact persons in Europe

Tasks

1. The contact person is a member of the general meeting of ICEVI-Europe, conform article 16.2 of the articles of association.
2. The contact person takes part of the meeting in the sub region, which is led by the member of the board.
3. The contact person observes and points out special events and activities that could be important for the European Board, European chairperson and for the European Newsletter, such as conferences, workshops, anniversaries.
4. The contact person communicates with the sub regional member of the board and/or European chairperson about needs and demands in his or her country and about possible twinning contacts.
5. From time to time, the contact person supplies copy for the European Newsletter about what is happening in his or her country.

6. The contact person supplies agenda items for the meeting of the European board.
7. The contact person improves and updates information for the member of the Board and for the website.

From the contact person is expected:

1. He or she has to be employed in the field of education and rehabilitation of the visually impaired.
2. He or she should have a good network of contacts in his or her country in the field of the education and rehabilitation of the visually impaired.
3. He or she has time to fulfil the function and is able to attend the meetings.
4. He or she is able to communicate in English (or by means of someone else).

Appointment

1. Membership of ICEVI-Europe
2. The nomination has to be done with a written letter of support from the representative organisation in the country or sub region.
3. The appointment takes place by the General Assembly and the duration is 4 years. Reappointment is possible.
4. Before the official appointment the board can decide to appoint under the condition of approval of the General Assembly.
5. The appointment will be confirmed in writing.

Contact persons per country

1 contact persons:

<20 milj inhabitants

2 contact persons:

>20 milj <50 milj inhabitants

3 contact persons:

>50 milj inhabitants

This means that all countries have 1 contact person, except

2 contact persons:

Belgium, Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Spain

3 contact persons:

France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Turkey, United Kingdom

Board members

For the board members matters are the same

- According to the rotation by retirement (start 2007) all board members can be re-elected (art 13.2)
- The appointment takes place at the nomination of the sub region (art 11.4)

Also new candidate board members have to take care of nominations to the chairperson before March 15th 2009 hanswelling@visio.org

With more candidates, even so as for contact persons, elections will take place during the General Assembly.

Chairperson of the board

For the function of chairperson another procedure counts.

The Board of ICEVI-Europe shall have a Chairperson elected and appointed by the General Assembly (art 11.2) and sometimes can be re-elected for a period of 4 years.

Profile of the chairperson:

- International experience concerning rehabilitation and education of people with visual impairment
- Managerial experience
- Availability at least one day a week
- Ability to travel
- Availability of a secretariat
- Working knowledge of English
- Availability of financial support to do his/her work

Candidates also have to contact the present chairperson before 15th March 2009.

European Conference 2013!!

Many persons probably will remember the ICEVI-conference in Chemnitz.

During the question where the next conference was going to take place, suddenly we had two candidates. This is good for an association.

The board would like to invite each organisation or country to think about organizing the conference 2013.

It concerns the following matters:

- composing an organising committee
- having suitable conference and hotel accommodations, the number of participants varies per conference, but is above 500 persons
- Taking care of a healthy budget, taking in consideration the supported places. Having sponsors is always necessary
- Taking part to the programme committee of ICEVI, which is responsible for the contents of the conference

The possibility exists that during the General Assembly several organisations, countries will present themselves and the General Assembly will take the final decision.

Interested organisations are asked to send a request before March 15th 2009 to the chairperson, when they are willing to do a bit during the General Assembly. hanswelling@visio.org

For further information please contact the chairperson as well.

ESPERANTO BACK TO SCHOOL

by Arvo Karvinen, Honorary member of EBU

To ICEVI conference in Dublin 5 to 10 July 2009

Dear Mr Hans Welling, President of ICEVI,
dear teachers, participants of ICEVI conference

Visually impaired persons, leaders of their national organisations have been able to attend international meetings and congresses during a hundred years. Necessary capability was provided to visually impaired in their schools. Thank you so much, dear Teachers!

The Braille system was introduced into international use particularly through Esperanto, the international language. In the first half of the last century the working language of meetings and congresses was Esperanto. From the international Esperanto congresses leaders and members of national blind organisations brought home useful experiences on services to blind people. Esperanta Ligilo, the magazine of the International Esperanto Association of the Blind (Ligo Internacia de Blindaj Esperantistoj, LIBE) since 1904 distributes information. Esperanto was taught in the schools for the blind. Although the living conditions and access to information significantly developed during the last decades, the significance of Esperanto still continues. International Esperanto congresses with cultural programs have been arranged regularly since 1921. This summer the congress will take place in Poland, Muszyna 18 to 25 July with 100 participants from 16 countries. The international art evening always is the event most looked forward to at the congresses.

Esperanto as a study item

Dear Teachers, dear representatives of education, we still need your help. Could you, please find space for Esperanto in the education program in the schools for the blind children, adults and youth groups. Communicative ability in Esperanto can be rapidly acquired, so it provides an ideal introduction to foreign-language study. Teaching of Esperanto in many countries at the same time will offer an ideal opportunity for contact by letter between students in the early stages. In Finland the Jyväskylä School for visually impaired pupils is studying the possibilities of starting an Esperanto circle.

The international association of Esperanto teachers (Ligo Internacia de Esperantistaj Instruistoj, ILEI) promotes the teaching of Esperanto by arranging training, examinations and publishing of modern study materials. The congress of ILEI will take place in Cracow 18 to 25 July. The President of ILEI is Radojia Petrović, rade@ikso.net

Textbooks in Braille and on CD are available from Esperanto-associations and libraries of the blind.

Nowadays Esperanto study courses and materials are even in electronic form, e.g. a course in 35 language versions in www.lernu.net.

Please give your young people a chance to take part in intercultural relationships!

Wishing good success to the ICEVI conference, yours sincerely

Theodor Speckmann,
Honorary President of Ligo Internacia de Blindaj Esperantistoj
Trierer Strasse 45, D-50674 COLOGNE, GERMANY
theo.speckmann@t-online.de

Arvo Karvinen,
Delegate of Ligo Internacia de Blindaj Esperantistoj in EBU,
Honorary member of EBU
Piikintie 22 as. 10, FI-00680 HELSINKI, FINLAND
steleto@pp.inet.fi

Conference held in Novi Sad, March 2009



report by Jelena Mazurkievic,
President of the Special education teachers of VI Association of
Serbia

New programs in the education of children with multiple disabilities and the implementation of Augmentative and Alternative communication methods

The International Conference that was held at Milan Petrovic School in Novi Sad on the 28th of February was a great success for both speakers and the numerous members of the audience. The audience that attended this event mainly consisted of Special education teachers, Speech therapists, Occupational therapists, Kindergarten teachers and other Elementary and High School teachers. It was our honor to have representatives from the Governmental institutions, Universities, Professionals' Associations and Parents' Associations. There were 150 professionals that were present at the conference and they came from different educational institutions and schools mainly from Serbia but also different countries in the region: Macedonia, Croatia, Montenegro, Slovenia and Hungary including Bulgaria, the U.S.A. and Austria. The translation during the conference was by Tihomir Nikolic and Jelena Mazurkievic, members of ICEVI and Svetlana Panic.

It is our job to continue with the work now and help teachers start using the new methods and different kinds of assistive technology in their classrooms. Our speakers had an opportunity to become more familiar with programs and laws in special education in Serbia which opens the door to further cooperation and exchange of knowledge and mutual projects involving students from Serbia, Bulgaria, countries from the region and the U.S.A.

Goals of the project:

- Presentation of legislation in Special education in the USA
- Presentation of programs in the education of children and students with multiple disabilities

- Implementation of methods of Augmentative and Alternative Communication and work with children with autism and multiple disabilities
- Introduction of new programs, methods and assistive technology in work with children

Lecturers at the conference were:

Sharon F. Salter , Assistant Director of Special Education at State College Area School District, State College, PA
30 years of work experience in Special education.

Education: BA and MAE from Ball State University, Muncie, Indiana. PhD. Candidate at Penn State University

Certification: Deaf Education; Serious Emotional Disturbance; Guidance Counselor; Special Education Supervisor; Principal

Karen Yanak, Speech/Language Specialist working as Assistive Technology Consultant at State College Area School District, State College, Pennsylvania U.S.A. 16 years of working experience with School aged children.

Education: B.S University of California at Los Angeles, M.S. Pennsylvania State University

Certification: American Speech and Hearing Association Certificate of Clinical Competence, Assistive Technology Certificate from California State University at Northridge,

Mira Tzvetkova-Arsova, working as Associate professor at Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridsky", Faculty of Primary and Preschool Education, Department of Special Education. Working since 1991 for Sofia University in the fields of Education of VI; Education of Deafblind; Education of VI multiply impaired; Orientation and Mobility; Activities of Daily Living; Programs and Plans for VI and VI multiply impaired etc.

Education: University degree in Special Education, PhD in 1998,

Certification: Specializations in 2000-2001 in Perkins school for the blind and in 2003 under Fulbright scholarship in Boston college

Projects: Professionally involved in many International projects such as Erasmus Mundus, Socrates etc.

Mag. David Hofer, General manager of "Lifetool – Computer aided communication" from Austria. Six years of working experience in the field of assistive technology and Board Member of Alliance for Technology Access - USA

Education: Master of Science studies completed at Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration in the field of Business Administration and Paedagogics.

Projects: Involved in projects for developing new, patented, internationally recognized products and special needs software and networking with 100 partners and 35 countries

www.lifetool.at ; www.resursnicentar.ns.ac.yu

It was our pleasure to host our guest speakers in Serbia and enjoy their stay in Serbia. During their stay we arranged sightseeing to interesting historical places and traditional cultural happenings. Our guests experienced the historically and socially multicultural community of Novi Sad, enjoyed the sites from the Petrovaradin Fortress and visit to Sremski Karlovci. We did not miss the opportunity to serve them with traditional food on a Farm in Chenej in the beautiful countryside. The visit to Belgrade, the Capital of Serbia was a typical sunny Sunday on the Danube River, we walked through Kalemegdan park and did lots of shopping in Knez Mihajlova Street. Our guests also tasted the best Serbian pleskavitza and delicious reform tart at Ruski Car (Russian Tzar), the old famous coffee shop in the centre of the city.

The Institute of International Education and Department of State, U.S.A. sponsored the conference as the introduction to the project of Jelena Mazurkievic through Alumni Impact Award 2008-2009 on "**New Programs in Education of Children with multiple disabilities and Implementation of AAC methods**" The Conference and the project are financially and professionally supported by several other institutions:

- School for primary and secondary education Milan Petrovic
- Regional Secretariat for Education of Province of Vojvodina
- Board of education of Novi Sad Association of Special educators of Serbia
- Serbian Autistic Association
- Hilton-Perkins program for Eastern Europe

The Conference is recognized by:

- Ministry of Education of Serbia
- Institute for Curricular development at the Ministry of Education of Serbia

Preannouncement of an International Conference within Eastern Europe

In November 2008 a conference for the Eastern European countries took place in Saratov, Russia.

The central theme was **Inclusive Education: Experience and Prospects and the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF)**.

It was decided to continue the conference.

The next conference will take place on October 2nd, 3rd and 4th in Chisinau, Republic of Moldova.

The State Pedagogical University "Ion Creanga", Moldova Blind Union and ICEVI-Europe are preparing the conference.

The central theme will be **People with Low Vision, Education, Rehabilitation and Social Participation**.

Please note down the dates. www.icevi-europe.org will inform you further.