

# European Newsletter

3 • 2005

## ICEVI-Europe Committee Meeting in Copenhagen, 05-06 November, 2005

On 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> November the newly composed European Committee held its first meeting at the Institute for the Blind and Partially Sighted in Denmark.

Naturally we looked back at the Conference in Chemnitz, which has been very successful for participants. Financially the conference has been successful too. The Committee did not come to a final decision about the country in which the next conference will be held. St Joseph's School for the Visually Impaired, who would like to organise the conference in 2009 in Dublin, has been asked for further information. The structure of ICEVI-Europe was discussed in detail.

Several functions have been divided:

Chairman: *Hans Welling*  
Treasurer: *Peter Rodney*  
Secretary: *Mary Lee*  
Vice-chairman: *Terezie Hradlikova*

The Committee also decided to change ICEVI-Europe into an association, with board

members, advisors, commissions and general meetings. In the coming months proposals will be finalised in order to

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extend the website, which means more information about national news. Also the newsletter will be changed. This year the newsletter will be in writing for the last time. From 2006 the newsletter will only be available on the internet.

In order to achieve a proper European programme, meetings will be planned between the chairman and each member of the European Committee and the contact persons in each region. These meetings will show the needs and wishes within ICEVI-Europe and will lead to the exchange of knowledge and experience. The European Committee will have a meeting in April 2006 in order to prepare the world conference in Kuala Lumpur.

To be informed about ICEVI, please contact [www.icevi-europe.org](http://www.icevi-europe.org) or [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org)

Hereby I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy 2006.

*Hans Welling, Chairman*

## ICEVI EUROPE International Newsletter

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### Editors

Eberhard Fuchs  
Dr. Wolfgang Drave  
Blindeninstitutsstiftung  
Ohmstr. 7  
D-97076 Würzburg  
tel +49 931 20 92-119  
e-mail:  
[w.drave@blindeninstitut.de](mailto:w.drave@blindeninstitut.de)

### address for correspondence

Hans Welling, Visio  
Amersfoortseweg 180  
NL-1272 RR Huizen  
tel: +31 35 6985711  
e-mail: [HansWelling@Visio.nu](mailto:HansWelling@Visio.nu)

### Printing and Distribution

edition bentheim Würzburg  
Dr. Wolfgang Drave  
tel +49 931 20 92-115  
e-mail:  
[w.drave@blindeninstitut.de](mailto:w.drave@blindeninstitut.de)

### website:

[www.icevi-europe.org](http://www.icevi-europe.org)



## Members of the Committee of ICEVI - Europe 2005-2009



*Hans Welling*

as you know in Chemnitz I was elected as chairman of ICEVI Europe. Before that time I was a member of the European Committee.

Till the first of November I was chairman of the Board of Directors of Visio, the national organisation for rehabilitation, education and some of visually impaired people in the Netherlands.



*Mary Lee* is currently active deputy head at the Canaas Lane Campus of the Royal Blind School in Edinburgh, Scotland. She specialises in the education of children with visual

impairment and additional learning needs. She is involved in delivery training both within the U.K. and further afield.



*Catharine Thibault*

I'm working for 15 years in the field of visual impairment in the Institute Montclair, in Angers, as head of department. My initial training is "specialized

educator" (which is not in France specialized at all! but allows to work with inadapted or handicapped children). Today, after having been in charge of boarding-school in Montclair, I'm responsible for a service which support young children and teenagers from 6 to 20 years, in mainstream schools. I'm also taking part in various projects in my Institute: research, European projects meeting and collaborations, participation in different seminars and conferences ....



*Luz Laine Mouliá*

My name is Luz Laine. I come from Spain and I work for ONCE, the national Organisation for the

blind in Spain. At the present time I am the director of all the programs and activities ONCE runs in Spain dealing with the education of blind and partially sighted children and adults, both in special schools as well as in integrated settings.



*Herman Gresnigt*

born 1933 in Utrecht, in Netherlands, clinical Psychologist. Director of Theofaan (new named Sensis), Centre

for Education and Rehabilities of people with visual impairment, 1977–1997. Coordinator of Theofaan international 1994– 1999. Active in ICEVI since 1987, European Chairman 1992 – 2002, since that time past past chairman.



*Peter Rodney*

For the past 10 years I've been working at the Institute for the Blind and Partially Sighted as educational consultant. Here it is my job to plan and carry out socio-

psychological courses and initiatives to integrated visual impaired students between the age of 15 and 22.

In Denmark I also manage the Nordic Visual Impairment Research group. Besides that I am responsible for the special teacher training program in Denmark.



*Steve McCall*

Vice-President ICEVI International



### **Further Educational Courses for Teachers Including Visually Impaired Pupils**

Handout for professionals conducting further educational courses in the area of inclusive special education for the visually impaired.

english version. 2003. DIN A4 + CD-Rom, 29,50 Euro

ISBN 3-934471-38-2

edition bentheim Würzburg: [info@edition-bentheim.de](mailto:info@edition-bentheim.de)



*Eberhard Fuchs,*  
past chairman of ICEVI  
Europe, Chairman of VBS  
Germany. Principal of the  
Institute for the blind and  
visually impaired children  
and youngsters (Blinden-  
institutsstiftung in Würzburg/Germany)



*Karsten Hohler*  
Senoir Manager of the SFZ  
Sächsisches Förderzentrum  
Chemnitz gGmbH (Germany)  
departments:  
- vocational training  
- low vision center

- sheltered workshop
- boarding schools
- employment for blind and visually impaired



*Betty Leotsakos*  
working in the frame of the  
Ministry of Education  
Athens, Greece



*Terezie Hradilková*  
She graduated at Charles  
University, the Faculty of  
Pedagogy where she was  
studying special  
pedagogy and typhlo-  
pedagogy. Now she is the

director of The Association for Early  
Intervention, organization providing  
services for families with children with  
visual impairment, (from seven EI Centre) all  
around the Czech Republic. She is involved  
in ICEVI from 1994 as an active member of  
group with special interest on Early  
Intervention; she organizes EI workshops in  
Central Europe.



*Liliya Plastunova*  
St.-Petersburg,  
Russia. Work as a  
psychologist in the  
State Consulting  
Center for v.i.  
children and en-

gaged in research work at the St.-Peters-  
burg State University. Area of scientific  
interests - early intervention.  
In ICEVI since 1995.



## World Conference ICEVI 16 – 21 July 2006 in Kuala Lumpur

The European Committee has disposal of  
a small sponsorship budget for partici-  
pation at the conference. This budget does  
not include travelling expenses. During the  
recently held meeting, the committee  
stated the following criteria for eligibility:

- Membership of ICEVI-Europe
- Living in Central or Eastern Europe or the Balkan States. An equal division will take place.
- Having had a paper accepted for the conference
- Speaking the language of the conference
- A letter of recommendation from the European Committee member of the applicants sub region





## Marianna Buultjens

### Final Plenary Session – A personal appreciation of the ICEVI European Conference

#### Education – aiming for excellence



Dear colleagues, thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my thoughts on the conference with you. There will be two parts to my overview.

First of all, what attracts someone to apply for a place at a professional conference? For myself, I can say that, first and foremost, both the topic and the expected quality of the presentations are the deciding factor. The title of this conference: ***Education – aiming for excellence*** must certainly have raised expectations! When the European committee chose this title, we did so in the belief that that is what most colleagues in the field of vision impairment are aiming for in their professional work. As a committee we did not discuss what is meant by 'excellence'. Nor should we have done so, because the conference itself: that is, the Keynote speakers, the presenters, the participants and the whole process and experience of working, discussing and enjoying together, are the means by which we will come to an understanding of what this term must mean to us and for us.

Throughout this conference, Keynote speakers and the presenters in the different theme areas and poster sessions worked together on defining what 'excellence' might

excellence can only be achieved by teamwork and networking and only by those who *care* about what they do. We must build on existing strengths, prioritise the challenges facing us and consistently pursue solutions to these challenges.

On Monday Michael Brambring in his Keynote address on Assessment, told us how he and his team of researchers had clarified why young blind children achieve some developmental norms at a later or earlier age than sighted children. By analysing the complexity of the tasks and the environmental conditions in which they had to be carried out, rather than the seeming deficits in the children, they identified the tasks that involved increased conceptual and sensory demands for children who cannot see compared to those who use sight to carry them out.

Gordon Dutton talking on Low Vision, demonstrated how vital it is for us to know the visual thresholds of children with whom we work, so that we can ensure appropriate pedagogical and environmental learning experiences for them. Keeping up with research outcomes and new medical and psychological developments *must* form part of our search for excellence.

On Tuesday Natalie Lévi-Dumont gave us an overview of the range of provision in Europe for the professional preparation of teachers of the visually impaired and the challenges faced by the training providers in fostering and developing Professionalism. Natalie told us that ICEVI Europe has supported these training providers through the four Teacher Training Workshops which offered an opportunity for collaborative working towards excellence in this field.

Kevin Carey challenged us in his Keynote on ICT by suggesting that we may well have the wrong priorities for educating blind and visually impaired children and young people. We should be thinking of today's world as a 'communications network' and ensuring that our students are involved in content



mean for us. In the opening Keynote address Sven Degenhart told us that excel-

*creation* not just content *reception*. These young people can only compete and succeed through teamwork, or as Kevin put it, they need 'syndicate not solo learning'. Kevin also suggested that as far as ICT is concerned, some of us need to make the leap from 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, bypassing the 20<sup>th</sup>! In pursuit of excellence this may be a necessary leap!

On Wednesday Mira Tsetkova took us through the history of Orientation and Mobility. There were many surprising revelations including the fact that O & M was introduced to Bulgaria, her country, by two Bulgarians who came to study O & M in Chemnitz! Mira told us that 'excellence' has many faces and the road to achieving it demands research, dedication, *care* and a balance between old and new.

Nina Hummel illustrated for us the current struggle of professionals involved in the field of Activities of Daily Living (ADL) instruction. They are involved in defining their profession and getting it recognised in Europe through achieving the European Quality in Rehabilitation Mark. This recognition will be a benchmark for these professionals in their pursuit of 'excellence' in enabling young people with vision impairment and blindness to develop problemsolving skills and 'to thrive – not just survive!'

This morning, Sietske Brandenburg, on the topic of Social Competence, started on a high note: being socially competent sets you free and promotes positive relationships. She then took us through the competencies necessary for the professionals involved stressing the importance of positive expectations in shaping a child's capabilities. Once again we heard about the importance of *learning cooperatively* as this model promotes 'social cooperation'. Sietske recommended that we bear in mind that of all the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for a teacher of VI in the pursuit of 'excellence',

attitude is the most important and the most difficult to change. To help us she offered the mantra: 'social competence sets you free; competent professionals set you free!'

It was fitting that the final Keynote Address was on 'Family'. Renate Walthes posed some direct questions: are we as 'excellent' in dealing with families as we are in O&M? Families are a special social system, defined through their tasks of providing care, well-being, love, strong bonds, common history and managing the diversity of daily life. Is there a standard of family 'excellence'? By means of images of families relaxing, playing and discussing during holidays organised by and with professionals and quoting thoughtful reflections from parents and from research done on the helping strategies, Renate showed how only families themselves can decide what excellence means for them. She suggested as a way forward: families making this 'excellence' available to professionals in order to strengthen it.

In the parallel sessions, poster sessions, videos and exhibitions we were able to see and share in examples of research and practice, carried out with *care* and reported and evaluated honestly and openly. The process of reporting to colleagues, is in my view, as much a part of the pursuit of excellence as the work itself. Ultimately, each one of us has to examine where *we* are in our pursuit of excellence and to where, and in which way we wish to make progress. This conference will have been a success for us if it has helped us in this process.

One thing missing from the conference was enough time for indepth discussion after each Keynote and parallel presentation. It is a sign of how the ICEVI European conferences have matured, that there was a palpable and expressed need for this form of intellectual exchange. It is no easy matter to provide this in a conference with so much content and so many different languages! Perhaps in planning future conferences, our new ICEVI-Europe committee will consider a range of models of programme where more indepth discussion is possible for those who wish it.

Now to the second part of my appreciation

*Vladimir Radoulov, Bulgaria, past vice chairman and Eberhard Fuchs, Germany, past chairman*



of this conference! As one of the important messages of this conference has been teamwork, it would have been remiss of me not to have had help from colleagues for this overview. Many of you have contributed to my thoughts, knowingly or unknowingly, through discussions we had, or comments I overheard!

What else makes us give up holidays and spend money to come to a conference? Catching up with old friends (many of us now share a life history of meeting at conferences!) - and making new ones? Visiting new countries and cities like Chemnitz, Dresden and Meissen? The chance to see the latest technology and resources in the exhibitors stands? Enjoying good food, good

wine, beer and the occasional mineral water? Happy evenings spent at SFZ? Personally, I love all these things and an added spice is the 'Tower of Babel' aspect – 34 countries represented and nearly as many languages! All these experiences have been provided here in Chemnitz, safe in the TLC (tender loving care) of 50 members of the Sächsisches Förderzentrum (SFZ) staff. Karsten, you are lucky to have such charming, helpful and patient staff – but maybe they are a reflection of their boss? Finally, to sum up for myself, and I hope for all of you, this conference has been a friendly and joyful exchange of news, information and mutual encouragement so that together we can continue to pursue excellence.

### **www.ICEVI-Europe.org membership**

#### **Dear friends,**

please allow us once again to advertise for *becoming members of ICEVI Europe*. Just now, with the following about to take place, it becomes more and more relevant to have many members!

#### **• 6th European Conference**

ICEVI Europe is on a promising way in to the future

- regarding its acceptance
- delivering support to all European Countries
- as a platform for staff development
- as a coordinating central address for activities in the field of the education for vi children and youngsters
- and with its ambitious plan to reach equality in the education for vi children in all European countries

All of this is based on our ongoing work in

- publishing the European Newsletter
- organising workshops and international conferences
- providing a website as an informative platform

To enable us to do so we still need your support! ICEVI Europe is improving its membership system which is unique within ICEVI International and which will

create a solid financial basis for climbing all the necessary steps to reach our aims. These are the benefits you will have in joining ICEVI Europe:

- You will be part of ICEVI Europe's idealistic aims in improving educational systems
- You will receive all issues of the Newsletter free of charge
- You are invited to contribute to the ICEVI Media
- You will receive The Educator free of charge (Non Members will have be charged in the future)
- As a personal member for a period between the European conferences You receive a discount of 10 % regarding Conference fees
- Corporate members receive discounts for up to 3 persons

ICEVI Europe has idealistic aims and You are invited to support this ambition. Therefore please encourage your colleagues, motivate schools, services, centres associations and institutions to join ICEVI Europe! Find *forms for the application* in our website [www.icevi-europe.org](http://www.icevi-europe.org) or in case you have no web access just fill in the membership application form in this Newsletter p 8.

August 11, 2005

to: *Eberhard Fuchs*,  
Regional Chairperson  
**ICEVI** Europe

from: *Larry Campbell*, President

re: My greetings to those  
gathered for the **ICEVI**  
European Conference



Three of our strongest supporters are in Europe and I want to use this opportunity to ask you to join me in extending a special work of thanks to Christoffel Blindenmission, Organizacion Nacional de Ciegos, Espanoles and Sight Savers International. Their contributions have allowed us to secure \$500,000 in matching

Dear Colleagues:

I am deeply disappointed that I am not able to be with you in Chemnitz for the 6<sup>th</sup> **ICEVI** European Conference, due to a longstanding family obligation. I do send you my warmest greetings and am very happy that Steve McCall is there with you this week representing the **ICEVI** principal officers. It hardly seems possible that in less than one year this quadrennium will come to a close. This has been a very exciting and productive time for **ICEVI** and, I believe, a prelude to the growth and development of our organization can anticipate in the years ahead.

The many accomplishments of **ICEVI** Europe are well known to all of you so let me say a few words about what is happening in other regions.

As I believe you know, the situation of children with visual impairments in our developing country regions of Africa, Latin America and East and West Asia is still very difficult. On average, less than 10% of these children have access to any form of education. Therefore, we have devoted considerable energy and resources to these regions during the past three years and we are beginning to see the results of that effort. In addition to the thousands of children, teachers and parents in these regions who have benefited from **ICEVI** awareness and capacity building programs we have also made very positive progress during the past year with The World Bank, UNESCO and UNICEF; progress you will see reflected in a "Global Campaign on Educational Equity" that we will launch in 2006. An important research project in Uganda, directed by Steve McCall and M.N.G. Mani, that will assist policy makers and planners is nearing completion.

None of these activities would be possible without the very generous support of many loyal supporters throughout the world.

funds from the Drs. Charles and Esther Yewpick Lee Charitable Foundation that has supported much of our work in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Speaking of 2006, I hope that many of you will be with us in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia next July for our 12<sup>th</sup> World Conference and General Assembly. The Malaysian Association for the Blind has been doing a wonderful job in planning for this event and they have managed to keep costs affordable. To date, **ICEVI** we has raised over \$150,000 in "scholarship support" to assist those from developed and emerging market countries to participate who might otherwise be unable to do so Europe's own Heather Mason has once again agreed to Chair the program committee and she and her team are putting together a great program. While the program committee has already received a large number of abstracts, they are hoping that more of you will make submissions before the September 15, 2005 deadline. You will find everything you need to develop and submit your abstract on the **ICEVI** website [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org). I really hope we will have a strong European turnout in Malaysia and I look forward to seeing many of you there, if not before then.

My sincere thanks to Eberhard Fuchs for his leadership over the past four years and for everything he and his team have done to prepare for this conference that I am sure will be both enjoyable and professionally rewarding. Once again, I apologize for not being with you this week but in this case I really did need to put family first and I hope you understand. Have a great week!





1st Committee Meeting of ICEVI Europe  
in Copenhagen Nov 2005



## Application form for membership of ICEVI-Europe

Print Name:

Street, No.:

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e-mail:

Organisation:

Organisation - Street, No.:

Organisation - City, State:

**Yes, I ask for membership.** Please mark your membership group:

- ☐ individual members 25 Euro a year / 100 Euro for 4 years
- ☐ corporate member without own budget 100 Euro a year
- ☐ corporate member with less than 100 employees 200 Euro a year
- ☐ corporate member with between 100 and 200 employees 350 Euro a year
- ☐ corporate member with more than 200 employees 500 Euro a year

**You may fill in this form on-line at**  
**[www.icevi-Europe.org](http://www.icevi-Europe.org)**  
**or send this application to the**  
**Office of ICEVI-Europe:**

ICEVI-Europe  
Hans Welling, Visio  
Amersfoortseweg 180  
NL-1272 RR Huizen  
tel: +31 35 6985711  
e-mail: [HansWelling@Visio.nu](mailto:HansWelling@Visio.nu)

### *Method of Payment*

The international bank account number (IBAN) is DE86790900000003318400 Swift-Code/BIC Code: GENO DE F1 WU1 VRBank Wuerzburg. Please make sure that all the transfer costs are covered by yourself and that ICEVI does not have to pay bank fees. If you can afford it, please transfer the membership fee for 4 years, at 100 Euros (individual member) to keep the transfer expenses as cheap as possible. Members from Eastern European countries will receive a letter which clarifies the transfer procedure in Eastern Europe.