



News from across Europe

News selected by the AAATE National Contact Persons
2020-21



News from Austria

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AAATE-SIG on Standardisation

Austrian AAATE members promote a SIG on standardisation

- Comment, annotate and influence standards in process of updating
- Cross-referencing eAccessibility and AT in existing standards
- Online-platform for access and cooperation
- 2 to 3 annual meetings in the Austrian Computer Society

Web Accessibility Certificate Austria

An independent certificate for promoting web accessibility

- www.waca.at
- Hosted and run by the Austrian Computer Society
- Supported by industry and accessibility experts
- Cooperation with TuV



Web Accessibility Expert Certificate

A certification for experts in Web Accessibility for quality consulting, development and evaluation

- <https://www.incite.at/de/zertifizierungen/certified-webaccessibility-expert/>
- Launched and offered by Incite, a company of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce
- Certificate provides access to publicly supported consulting on accessibility in industry and administration



DigiComp Framework Accessibility

- Analysing, annotating and expanding the DigiKomp Framework for AT and Accessibility
- Recommendations for Schools for online meeting and online learning systems
- Developing Train the Trainer Courses

International Camp for Communication and Computers

ICT – AT – Accessibility – Peers - Studying – Work - Social Skills – International Exchange – Advocate for your own interest - FUN!!!

- 10 days summer event for blind and low vision youngsters aged 16-20
- 26 countries
- 30+ 3h workshops on important and cool topics
- Online due to pandemic 21/22
- <https://www.icc-camp.info/>



IKT-Forum 2018/19

Annual German spoken event on AT, eAccessibility and Inclusion

- 300+ participants
- Johannes Kepler Universität Linz
- 50+ presentations and workshops
- A unique place for exchange for users, practitioners, policy makers, administration, experts, researchers, ...
- <https://www.iktforum.at>
- Cancelled 2021/22 due to COVID

ICCHP-AAATE Cooperation 2022

- Joining efforts after the pandemic: www.icchp-aaate.org
- Science & Research meets with all stakeholders in one eve
- Lecco, Italy, July 11-15
- **Proceedings ICCHP 2020:** ([LNCS 12376 - ICCHP 2020, Part I](#)) ([LNCS 12377 - ICCHP 2020, Part II](#))



Smart Home – Domestic Appliances

- Initiative of the University for Applied Sciences Vienna, Technikum
- Cooperation to work on standards and interface concepts for accessible smart home interaction



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News from Belgium

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SKATE: Digital solutions to support inclusion in education

More and more young children with disabilities are enrolling in regular childcare or preschool. Although many technologies already exist that can promote inclusion of people with disabilities, there is still little knowledge about how to use technology for inclusion of children between 0 and 6 years old. In addition to the lack of knowledge about assistive technology, educators and teachers of young children indicate that they still do not feel competent in the area of technological applications. By developing learning programs, we want to break through this technological barrier.

Want to know more? Visit skateerasmus.be

I'M IN TALES: Making stories interactive with talking objects

With this project we want to increase the learning potential of students between 4 and 10 years old and strengthen inclusion in the classroom group. We do this with interactive stories, which we develop by linking objects and digital multimedia to them.

Want to know more? Go to www.imintalesproject.eu

Modem developed an accessible website with possible solutions when you suddenly can't talk anymore

There you are in the hospital with a tube down your throat and suddenly you can't speak, can't say what you need. This has happened to many patients at the intensive care unit in the last few years. Modem, the expert network for assistive technology at Thomas More, University of Applied Sciences, developed a free website to solve this problem: ikkannietpraten.be. The project received support from the Koning Boudewijnstichting

REVALUTION CENTER: Continued therapy after rehabilitation using technology

In 2016, the post rehabilitation center REVALution opened in Herentals, Belgium. Here, people who have finished rehabilitation are still welcome to continue exercising. Our team continues to provide support mentally and physically. In doing so, we use the latest technologies.

Visit mobilabandcare.be/en/revalution-center/ to find out more.

OUR MISSION

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Applied
Sciences



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News from Bulgaria

Maurice Grinberg

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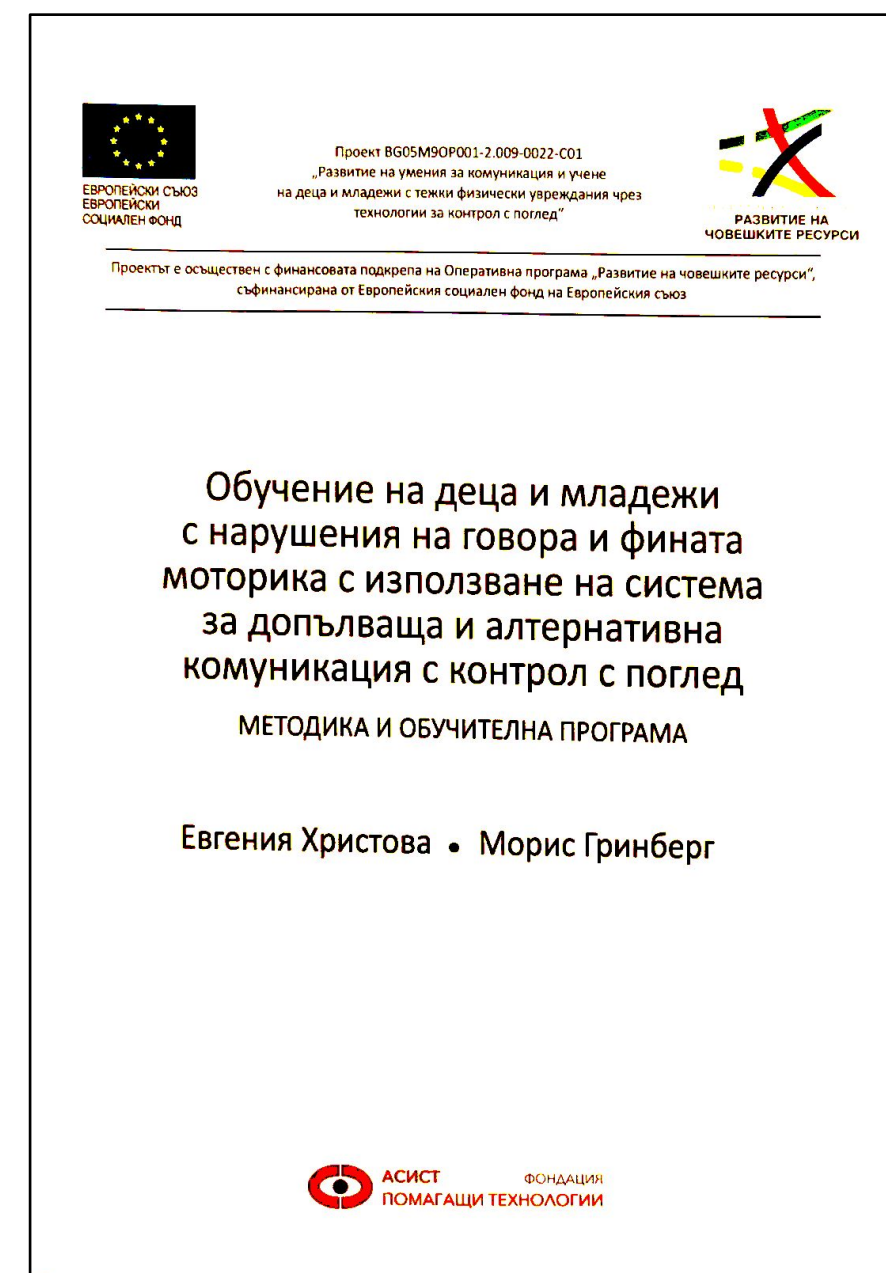
13th ECER AAC Conference

ASSIST – Assistive Technologies hosted the 13th Eastern and Central European Regional Augmentative and Alternative Communication Conference (eceraac2021.assistfoundation.eu) which is a major event in the field of AAC. The organization was supported by the Bulgarian Ministry of Education and Science and the UNICEF office for Europe and Central Asia. More than 900 participants were registered from various countries. A preconference event was organized together with UNICEF ECARO with invited participants from European and Asian countries making their first steps in AAC – Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova and other countries.



Educational Program for Children with Severe speech and motor Impairments

ASSIST – Assistive Technologies (assistfoundation.eu) successfully completed the project „Development of communication and learning skills for children with severe motor impairments using eye control“, 2018-2021, funded by the European Social Fund of EC. More than 1 700 training sessions were carried out with 34 children in 6 family-type residential centers in Bulgaria. During the project, an innovative educational methodology and program with more than 700 interactive activities covering basic categories, relations, and literacy was developed. A companion handbook has been published which is distributed freely among professionals using AAC and families.

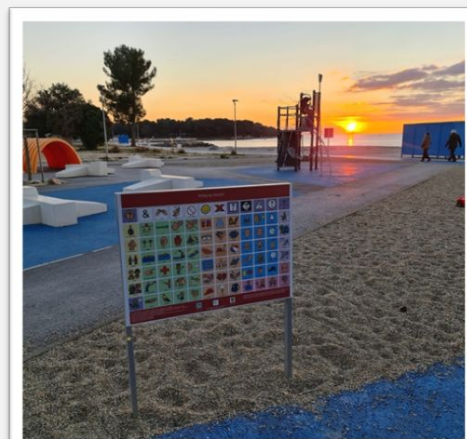




Project „Pula Talks In Pictures”

The project "Pula Talks in Pictures" by the Veruda Pula Daily Rehabilitation Center, realized in cooperation with the City of Pula, has set up communication boards for augmentative communication in public areas and public institutions in Pula to support non-verbal children and adults. Communication boards were made and placed on the children's playgrounds, the city beaches, within the courtyard of the Public Institution DV Mali svijet (also a symbol of friendship and mutual assistance) and near the amphitheater Arena (the panel contains short information about the Arena itself and its history). In addition to important public areas, the idea is to symbolize all public institutions in Pula whose services are used by children (city swimming pool, libraries, hospitals etc.) Thus, every pediatric and dental practice in the city, as well as OB Pula, have received communication boards and booklets with appropriate and carefully selected social stories. With this project, the city of Pula becomes a pioneer in the symbolization of the entire city. Veruda Pula Day Rehabilitation Center has the first specialized office for assistive technology in Croatia with its program goals and international recognition. Everything planned for the city of Pula is intended to be transferred to the entire Istria County and thus become the only fully symbolized county in this way in the world.

<https://www.total-croatia-news.com/lifestyle/59168-augmentativ-e-communication-boards-in-pula>



Enhanced Tools For Creating Equal Opportunities In Education For Pupils With Disabilities – ATTEND

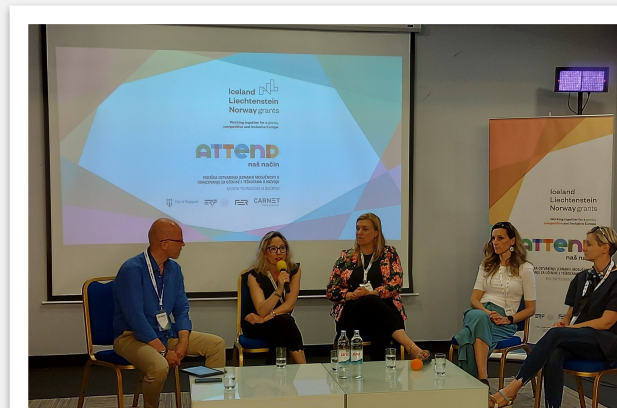
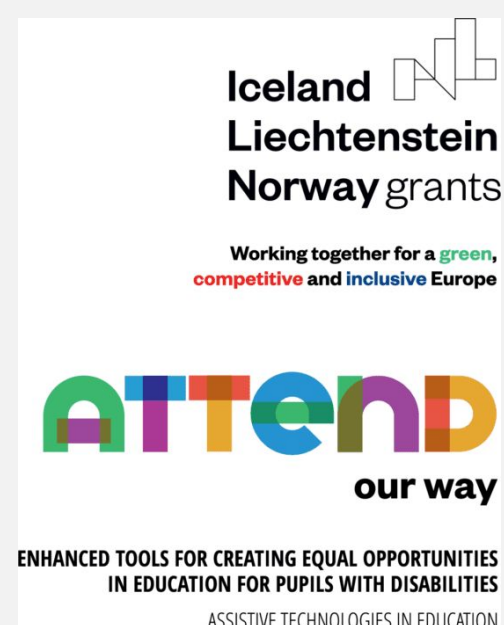
Priority task of the **Enhanced Tools For Creating Equal Opportunities In Education For Pupils With Disabilities – ATTEND** project is to equip the project beneficiaries – Centres for the upbringing and education of students with disabilities in the Republic of Croatia – with assistive technology.

The project objective is to provide high-quality education to students and training to employees of the project beneficiary institutions for using assistive technology.

Centres for upbringing and education (CUE) are special educational institutions for children with disabilities who are unable to attend regular schools due to the degree of their disability and special educational needs.

The development of assistive technology for children with disabilities provides more opportunities for better day-to-day routine and achieving better success in education. Digital assistive technology include hardware and special software developed to help people with disabilities.

<https://www.carnet.hr/en/projekt/attend/>



ATAAC- Assistive technology and communication

Conference on the advanced technology for people with disabilities

Sep 29th - 30th 2022

ATAAC conference brings leading world experts and users of assistive technology (AT) and augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) to Zagreb to present their knowledge and share their experience with you.

<https://www.ataac.eu/>



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News from Cyprus

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Research on accessibility and assistive technology in Cyprus



The Assistive Technology, Disability and Inclusive Education Research Unit of the SoSocieAtH Centre of Excellence at EUC is involved in a number of AT projects focussing on digital inclusion, and the development of digital competences

Examples of Projects



SKATE: kills & Knowledge on Assistive Technology in Early childhood inclusive education: To foster new skills and knowledge of teachers and educators for the appropriate use of technology and digital solutions for inclusive education.



I'M IN TALES: Inclusive Methodology for Technology Aimed at Learning and Enhancement of Storytelling: to present a ready-to-use-methodology for storytelling educational practices that **integrates tangible and multisensory materials** with digital reality, namely Tangible User Interfaces (TUIs).



DIG-i-Ready: Digital Readiness of Vocational Educational Institutions in an Inclusive Environment: To provide innovative approaches **for VET stakeholders** on the educational environment and accessibility for inclusive digital education

Digital Education Policies

In December 2020 The Ministry of Education, Culture, Youth and Sports, launched The Digital Learning Initiative in which the development of the digital education policy is anticipated. Targeting inclusive education, the policy will also include the development of digital competences for all, using among other the Entelis+ Competence Framework



Legislation

The Accessibility of Websites and Applications for Mobile Devices of the Public Sector Organizations Law of 2019 (50 (I) / 2019)

In 2019 Cyprus put into force The Accessibility of Websites and Applications for Mobile Devices of the Public Sector Organizations Law of 2019 (50 (I) / 2019), which was developed with partial consultation with Disability Organizations. The Law is an effort to comply with the EU Directive (2016/2102) and for now does not extent to the private sector and individual websites, neither in learning content on schools' websites.





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News from the Czech Republic

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Living Laboratories at VSB-TU Ostrava

VSB – Technical University of Ostrava opens new Living laboratories

– like real-world living environments with wide configurable monitoring systems

- Telemedicine
- Assistive Technologies
- Home Automatization and Energy Independence

Testing and development of new technologies

Clinical studies



CIIRC at Czech Technical University at Prague

Smart home laboratory - testbed for research and development of new technologies and systems in the area of assistive technologies, rehabilitaton, home care, neurodegenerative diseases and biomedical engineering in general

- collaborative research
- long-term and intensive links with university hospitals, clinics, medical research institutions, social care organizations, and companies
- clinical studies
- national and international research projects

Assistive Technologies Education in Czechia

New bachelor study branch focused on Assistive technologies at Ostrava

- VSB – Technical university of Ostrava in cooperation with University of Ostrava opens Biomedical Assistive technologies study branch
- International cooperation in education welcome

Master study specialization Assistive technologies (in Biomedical Informatics study program) at Prague

- International cooperation in education welcome

Ph.D. studies in the field of Assistive technologies at Prague

- Faculty of BME together with CIIRC Prague opens a Ph.D. study programme Assistive technologies
- International Ph.D. positions available



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News from Estonia

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News 1- ATS qualification system



Estonian Occupational Qualification Council

Estonian Qualifications Framework (**EstQF**) started in 2005, established for implementing European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) ideas and to link Estonian 5-levels occupational qualifications framework to the EQF.

Assistive Technology Specialist (ATS) Qualification standard and occupational exam system were established on 2013. Qualification Authority is Estonian Occupational Therapists Association. Currently there are 220 qualified ATS, with qualification certificate according to Europass criterias. Specialist working on AT companies, health care facilities etc. Assessment of need of AT devices is based on EB methods and customers are more effectively delivered devices, adjustments and other services.

<https://www.kutsekoda.ee/en/>

News 2 – ICF based assessment implementation



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
SOCIAL INSURANCE BOARD



2020 SOCIAL INSURANCE BOARD started mapping the bottlenecks in the field of rehabilitation and assistive technology services, one of which is the lack of a holistic view of a person when moving between different services. One of the development activities was the testing and implementation of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) in rehabilitation, social and occupational rehabilitation, and the assessment of the need for AT. The purpose of this activity is to implement and adopt a nationwide methodology for ICF that provides comprehensive and proactive support to those in need, regardless of where their first contact with the health, employment or welfare system takes place. In order to achieve this goal, it is planned to use the ICF methodology to identify the severity of disabilities across Estonia, assess work capacity and describe the situation of a person's coping in rehabilitation treatment, social and occupational rehabilitation and the system of technical aids.

<https://sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/en>





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News from Finland

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Reform of healthcare, social welfare and rescue services

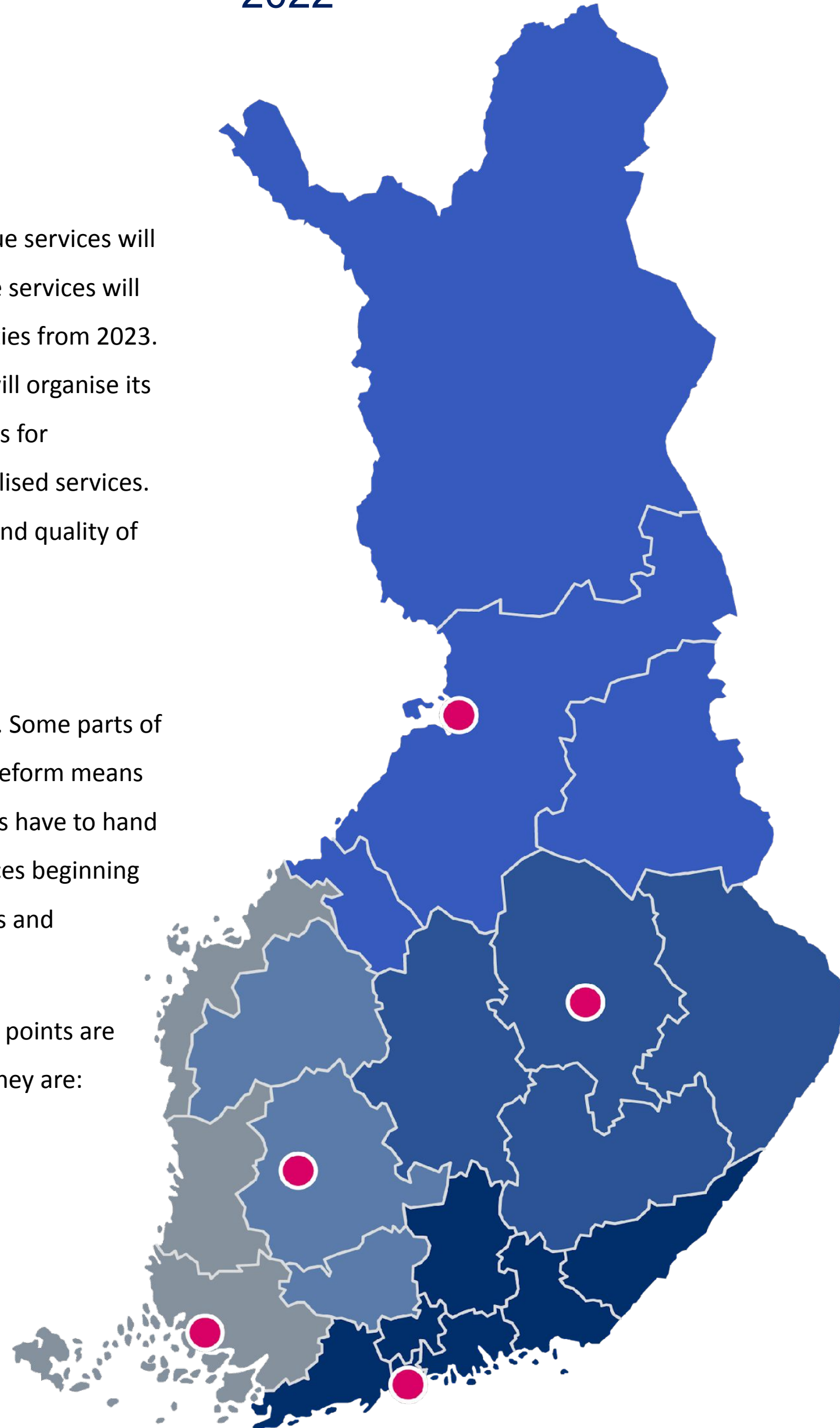
The organization of public healthcare, social welfare and rescue services will be reformed in Finland. The responsibility for organizing these services will be transferred from municipalities to wellbeing services counties from 2023. There will be 21 wellbeing service counties and Helsinki city will organise its own health, social and rescue services. Five collaborative areas for healthcare and social welfare will be created to secure specialised services. The key objective of the reform is to improve the availability and quality of basic public services throughout Finland.

Assistive Technology Service centres

Assistive Technology Service centres will be part of this reform. Some parts of Finland already have county wide service, but rest of the don't. Reform means that if they don't have county wide services, the municipalities have to hand over the AT services to the county, which takes over the services beginning of 2023. It is also to reorganizing the social and health services and integrating social and health care AT services

On the map are the new counties and collaborative areas, red points are the cities which have university hospitals from north to south they are: Oulu, Kuopio, Tampere, Turku and Helsinki.

[You can read more about this reform here](#)



National conference for AT specialist will be held in Joensuu 27th and 28th September 2022

National conference is usually held every year, but during the covid-19 pandemic there wasn't any conference. Now we are looking forward to meet face to face.

National Guidelines for Ground Rules to Lending Assistive Technology Devices in Healthcare

AT Experts and users of assistive technology have been updating together National Guidelines for Ground Rules to Lending Assistive Technology Devices in Healthcare. This guideline gives some advice for assessment or needed expertise to do the assessment. Guidelines are classified by ISO 9999 Assistive products for persons with disability -- Classification and terminology. Updated version will be published in December 2022.

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News from Dom <d@up8.eu> *France*

Acknowledgement :
This slide was prepared with the help of
G rard Uzan, president of **IFRATH**



Most French laboratories working in the field of AT are members of the IFRATH association (*“Institut F d ratif de REcherche sur les Aides Techniques pour les personnes Handicap es”*). After 2 years of interruption due to COVID, IFRATH started again the day workshops which had been organised regularly 3 times a year since 2000. IFRATH is involving more and more partner scientific associations to co-organise events (Cortico, Arpege,...).

<https://ifrath.fr>

Handicap 2022 French Speaking Conference

Organised by IFRATH, University Grenoble Alpes and University of Lorraine, the 12th French speaking conference Handicap 2022 took place in Paris last June. Research works about Assistive Technologies have been presented to about 100 participants : characterisation and modeling of situations of autonomy loss, development of technologies for autonomy and health, methodology (re-education, stimulation, ...), ergonomics of AT, Humanities and Social Sciences, and more.

Next is planned for June 2024 ! Hopefully



The chair H N (Disability-Education-Digital technology) was labelled “UNESCO Chair”. The chair H N aims to produce, develop and evaluate innovative digital resources that promote the objective of a more inclusive education and society in France and internationally. Throughout its development the Chair will jointly mobilize knowledge and know-how from the world of research, businesses and public institutions, and will share knowledge and feedback.

<https://inshea.fr/fr/chaireHEN>

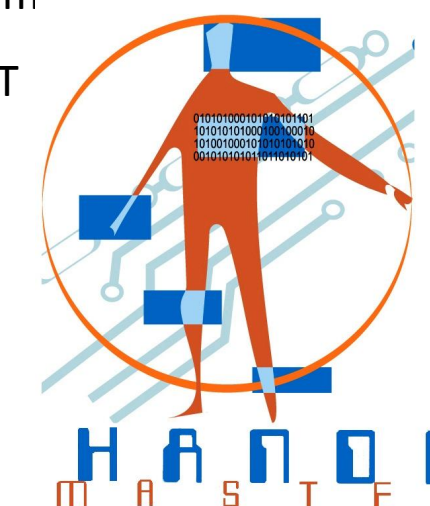
Resp. : Pr Isabelle Queval

Master Technologies and Disabilities

The Master MIASHS “Technologies and Disabilities” started 21 years ago.

Based on series of lectures and conferences about disabilities and their consequences on life, on one hand, and on practical teaching of technologies development (including mobile, electronics, web), and on accessibility, the Master trains students to different kind of professional activities from research to software development, but also specialists of digital accessibility or AT specialists.

Teaching language is French, and we hope to open an English speaking group in 2023/24 (at level Master 2).





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News from Germany

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RehaCare International 2022

the world's largest trade fair for rehabilitation and care with all important companies in the RT industry takes place in Düsseldorf from 14-17 September 2022.



www.rehacare.de

Internationale Fachmesse
für Rehabilitation und Pflege

DÜSSELDORF,
14. – 17. SEPTEMBER 2022

Member of  MEDICAlliance

After the pandemic pause it is a great opportunity to meet again – and in person!

- International product show
- Innovative solutions for all areas of life and every disability
- Exciting forums and lectures
- Sport, culture and entertainment

<https://www.rehacare.com/>

Upower WAD

Users with disabilities know the most about barriers to accessibility. And they have the power to make the websites and mobile apps they use more accessible, by giving feedback. This is much more effective, if the users know how to explain the barriers they face in a constructive way. This is the idea behind the EU-funded (ERASMUS) UPower project.

The project develops a survey and a toolkit on dealing with the empowerment of end-users for using feedback mechanism and enforcement procedures in the context of the EU Web-directive.

Website in preparation:

upowerwad.eu

eQualification 2022

took place in February 2022 with a focus on digital education and inclusion.

A particular interest was on vocational education using digital media, VR and AR solutions. Some of the national projects (e.g. miTAS and LernBAR) will be presented during the ICCHP AAATE.

The conference summary is online and summary can be downloaded (in German)

<https://equalification.de/>

Digital Accessibility in Higher Education

Initiatives for the improvements have led to projects dealing with access in higher education

- Shuffle: promotes equal opportunity participation in digital teaching for students with individual needs. <https://shuffle-projekt.de/en>
- Degree 4.0: Accessible videos in teacher education
<https://degree.tu-dortmund.de/>
- All-Inclusive: workshops on digital events and accessibility:
<https://mitas-app.de/navs/all-inclusive-projekt>

 Qualification

 technische universität
dortmund





Web portal www.amea.gov.gr on air

The first universally accessible web portal of the Greek government, part of the Unified Digital Portal of Public Administration, is available since December 2021. The portal provides resources, at the national level, related to Persons with Disabilities (including information on the National Action Plan on PwD, the National Accessibility Authority, related legislation, monitoring bodies, etc.). The portal was designed and developed by FORTH-ICS.

GAATO consultation

Experts from FORTH-ICS and the Hellenic Association of Assistive Technologies, as well as motivated professionals and individuals, provided input for Greece for the GAATO global consultation on AT Outcomes and Impact (consultation for Europe) on 23 & 27 September 2021.



News from Greece

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Policy & Legislation - Key developments

EU directives enacted as national law

- [The Law 4727 of 23.09.2020](#) on “Digital Governance” made EU directives “2016/2102 - Accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies” and “2019/1024 - Open data and the re-use of public sector information” part of national legislation.

National Accessibility Authority

- The [National Accessibility Authority](#) was appointed in 2021. It is an advisory body of the State, with the mission to constantly monitor issues related to the rights of access for persons with disabilities and the formulation of proposals for related public policies and legislation.

UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

- [Reference Points](#) responsible for monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention have been appointed in all Ministries, Regions and Municipalities of the country.

Codification of National Legislation regarding Persons with Disabilities

- Codification of national legislation regarding the rights of People with Disabilities has been completed. All related laws and legislative measures are available online through: <https://www.amea.gov.gr/legislation>





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The [DATA Project and Digital Support System](#) by
the [Hungarian Autism Society](#) &
the [HAS-ELTE „Autism in Education” Research Group](#)

Funded by European and Hungarian tax payers, the DATA project (2018-2021) created [a digital assistive system for individuals on the autism spectrum](#). Its main components are

- an assistive mobile application (the DATA app, both for Android and IOS), used by the user with autism;
- a browser-based content management and monitoring service (the Content Planner), used by a supporting user;
- a set of manuals, training materials, helpdesk services to support users and supporting users in learning to use and in using the DATA system.

The system was created by a consortium of the [Hungarian Autism Society \(AOSZ\)](#) and the [HAS-ELTE „Autism in Education” Research Group \(MASZK\)](#).

The system is now freely available (in Hungarian), and is maintained by the [Hungarian Autism Society \(AOSZ\)](#).

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Digitális autonómia-támogatás
az autizmus spektrumon

News from Hungary

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[Virtual Enviroments and Applied Multimedia Research Laboratory](#)

A Colour-blindness simulator was develeoped.

Image projected with (A) normal colour vision, after it the 3 types of simulations: (B) protanopia, (C) deuteranopia, and (D) tritanopia.



COST Action
CA19104



a-STEP
ADVANCING SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH
TECHNOLOGY AND EMPOWERMENT

www.a-step-action.eu/project/



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News from Iceland

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Icelandic Health insurance

Health professionals receive authority to grant specified helping aids

- Distribute assistive devices to users without the involvement of our staff
- Fill out forms via our website where they can obtain availability of products in different warehouses and assign these to users. They gain access to:
 - Our warehouse; our employees collect the items and send to users
 - Our warehouse, stored within their own premises and deliver devices directly to users for example after having received therapy in site

This Authorization applies to for example bathroom aid, reachers, stocking aids, walking aids, wheelchairs and medical beds.

International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) have been implemented in application for Assistive technology

- The ICF has been included in the application forms online
- It is still optional whether the health professionals fill in the code, but as people begin to adopt this method, registration with the ICF may be required



National Contact Person



Júlíana H. Aspelund



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News from Israel

Alon Kimhi

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Azarim – the Israeli Database for Assistive technology

We added a new layer language in Arabic. As well as a new area that is dedicated to companies and organizations that give services to people and families such as lawyers, rehabilitation companies and accessibility experts.

Milbat- sheba Medical center

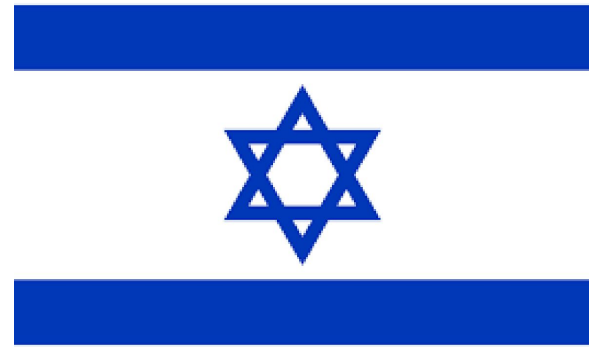
Milbat connects rehabilitation experts with technical volunteers in order to develop tailor-made solutions for disabled people. In 2021, over 400 unique solutions were created and handed to people for which readymade solutions were not appropriate.

Beit Issie Shapiro

Published a template regarding technologies and applications to be used in mental health rehabilitation. The template contains examples and guidelines for the implementation of assistive technology for people with mental disabilities.

Yad sarah

There are 119 Yad Sarah Branches throughout Israel, including dedicated branches in all public hospitals, offering free assistive technology devices to every person who is in need.





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News from Italy

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GAATO Initiatives - Italy contribution



In 2021 **GAATO** (Global Alliance of Assistive Technology Organizations) organized a **global initiative on AT Outcomes Grand Challenges**. Consultations were organized in each of the WHO regions. Italy contributed in the organization of the European consultation and among the 50 participants, experts in AT field (professional, researchers, users and caregivers), **13** were **italian**.

Law on disability



On December 2021 the law n.2475 delegating the Government on disability was approved. The preparation of the law saw the involvement of the Associations of people with disabilities. The Government has twenty months to issue legislative decrees aimed at simplifying and reorganizing the legislation on disability (procedures for ascertaining the condition of disability, procedures for accessing the facilities, inclusion of persons with disabilities).

rATA project (rapid Assistive Technology Assessment)

The Access to AT in Italy

How AT are used in Italy? To what extent is the provision adequate

to the real population needs? To answer these questions, the rATA Survey promoted and financed by WHO - UNICEF, with the collaboration of Istituto Superiore di Sanita' (ISS), took place in 2021.



The survey, coordinated by Aias Bologna Onlus with the support of the CENSIS Foundation and the National Network of AT Centers (GLIC), involved **a sample of about 10,000 people** randomly chosen among the Italian population to collect data at national level on: how to access aids, user satisfaction, issues related to supply routes.

Preliminary data show a good ability of the service system to meet the needs of AIDS of the sample involved. **The most popular aid is eyeglasses**, used by about 10% of the sample, followed by **pillboxes, magnifying glasses, sticks** and – surprisingly – **tablets or smartphones** that are rapidly spreading as AT.

First available analyses were disseminated at the EXPOSANITA seminar that **paved the path for an institutional Observatory on AT in Italy**.

The results are shown in the WHO – UNICEF Global Report on AT



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News from Norway

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Digitalization of the Norwegian assistive technology system



The Norwegian Labour and Welfare service, NAV, is working to digitalize provision of assistive technology in Norway. Our ambition is to provide the devices quick and easy when the citizen needs it and make it efficient for the Assistive technology centers and the municipality to fulfil their responsibilities.

So far, they have provided solutions that make it possible to apply for the most frequent assistive devices and services digitally. The citizen can follow the status of the application process and has digital access to information about their assistive devices.

SMILE- The Smart Inclusive



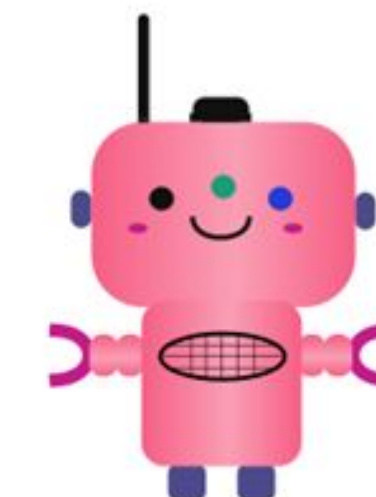
Living Environment

SMILE is developing and testing novel eHealth solutions that enable ageing in place. SMILE is a European – Canadian collaboration, involving 13 partners coordinated by Innlandet Hospital Trust. The aim is to create Smart Inclusive Living Environments (SLE) with novel eHealth solutions that enable ageing in place. SLE pilot sites will be established in Norway, Denmark, The Netherlands, and Canada. SINTEF is leading the development of a digital assistant. <https://smileehealth.eu/home>

ROSA - Robot-supported Education for children with autism spectrum disorder

The ROSA project aims to use social robots, which are embodied and can bridge the digital and real world in ways that other learning technology cannot, to teach language skills combined with social and communication skills to children with ASD. The Norwegian Computing Center (NR) is coordinating the project funded by The Research Council of Norway.

<https://nr.no/en/projects/robot-supported-education-for-children-with-asd-rosa/>



I Hear You2 – Inclusive Hearing Service for Children in School

I Hear You2 aim to assist children with hearing loss to attend school and participate in society by using game-based hearing screening and developing local hearing services in school for low-and middle-income countries (LMIC). SINTEF is coordinating the project with collaborating partners from Norway, Tanzania and Ethiopia funded by The Research Council of Norway.

<https://www.sintef.no/en/projects/2017/i-hear-you/>

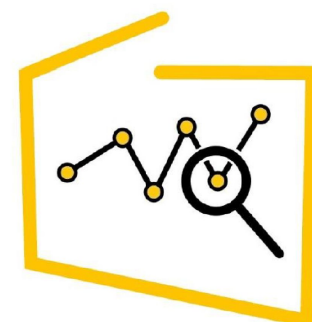




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Monitoring the state of accessibility

The Polish Government regularly reports on the state of accessibility for people with special needs to the Ministry of Funds and Regional Politics (MFIPR). The [last report](#) was published in November 2021.



Dostępność Plus

Learning Without Barriers

The primary objective of the project, implemented under the auspices of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, is to increase the accessibility of academic education and science for people with disabilities. The main element of the campaign is the educational and information platform www.naukabezbarier.pl. It is the first of its kind in Poland and the most important tool dedicated to academic communities - including people with disabilities - and businesses

News from Poland

K. Dobosz

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Accessibility as a chance for development - an offer for business

As part of the government's Accessibility Plus program, the [Polish Agency for Enterprise Development](#) (PARP) has prepared opportunities for businesses to subsidize projects that will take into account the needs of older people and people with limited mobility or perception. The goals of the campaign are to activate companies in the area of technologies adapted to people with disabilities, e.g. to implement a product innovation on the market to meet the specific needs of people with functional limitations or to find operators who will provide businesses with training on introducing accessibility.



National Contact Person



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Infoline for the Deaf from Ukraine

The Polish Association of the Deaf has launched, on behalf of the Ministry of Funds and Regional Policy, a video infoline that removes the barrier to communication with deaf people from Ukraine and is helpful in providing support and assistance to these people. This form of support is used not only by deaf people from Ukraine, but also by institutions that provide them with assistance.

Skype: DeafUkraine



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News from Portugal

Pedro Encarnação

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Legislation

National Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025

On August 31, 2021, the Portuguese government published the [National Strategy for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2025](#), aimed at reinforcing the inclusion of persons with disabilities toward a fairer, coherer, solidary, and more respectful of the difference society.



CRID – Resources Centre for the Digital Inclusion

The CRID of the [Instituto Politécnico de Leiria](#) has been recognized as a “brand ambassador” of the Leiria – Portugal region. This Resources Centre for the Digital Inclusion has been accumulating national and international awards for its work toward a more inclusive society.

Among the portfolio of initiatives are the first Braille library in higher education, the first in the world multiformat guide for a monument ([Mosteiro da Batalha](#)), the edition of several adapted children's books, and the development of pictogram communication grids with COVID19 vocabulary.



National Contact Person

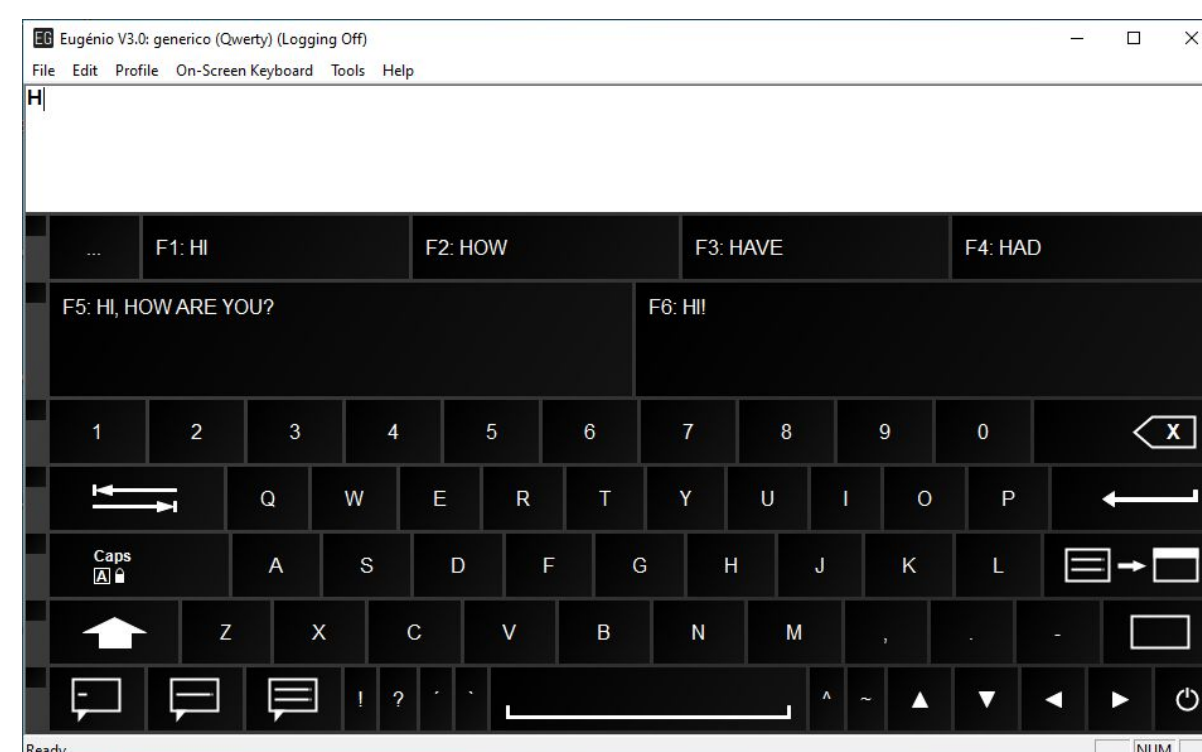


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EUGENIO – The Genius of Words

Version 3 of the free system for research in AAC

EUGENIO is a free Portuguese system for research in Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) that can also be used as a day-to-day communication solution. Version 3 is now a complete AAC system featuring context-aware word, sentence, and pictogram prediction, thus incorporating the latest research results by the developing team.



English language is available in Version 3, and more languages will be added in the future.

More information, downloads and contacts:

<https://eugeniov3.herokuapp.com/>



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20 years of supporting services for students with special needs at the Technical University of Kosice (TUKE)



*Access centre TUKE celebrated 20-th anniversary as it was
established on July 1st 2000 (output of the TEMPUS project)*

Several activities were organized in 2020 including seminar and professional workshops for coordinators supporting students at Slovak Universities. Unfortunately an International Conference had to be cancelled due to situation with Covid.

Access Centre (AC TUKE) plays not only local role at TUKE Kosice and regional educational institutions but also **Methodical, Coordinating and Training centre for all Slovak Universities since 2013.**

Important events in Slovakia

- **Strategy for Inclusive Approach in Education, 2021**
- **Action plan for the implementation of the Strategy for Inclusive Approaches in Education and Training for the years 2022 – 2024.** Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of Slovak republic
- **Deinstitutionalization of facilities for social services in Slovakia.** National Project financed by the European Social Fund and European Fund for Regional Development. Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family
- **Support of the Universal Design.** National Project financed by the European Social Fund and European Fund for Regional Development. Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family
- **New Program for Erasmus+ 2021-2027 with orientation on Digitalization, Inclusion, and Participation.**

News from Slovakia

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Assistive Technology available for students with SN at the AC TUKE reached in 2022 **115 items**

Access Centre TUKE has been continuously completing its own laboratory by the advanced Assistive Technology to empower students with better access to education and daily life activities. We offer them for presence use at the Centre facilities, and if necessary we loan them to students during their studies at TUKE. The AT database is also regularly used for **trainings organized for the Coordinators supporting students at Slovak Universities, and offices at the social services** in our region.

To see our AT, please visit AC TUKE web page <https://accesscentre.tuke.sk/en/technology/>

For example, the latest contribution to our AT database and services contains:

- NuEyes Pro 3
- GlassOuse V1.4 Bundle
- OrCam MyEye 2
- Scanner Bookeye-5 V3 Automatic A3+

Digitalization programme for higher level of Inclusion at Slovak Universities

Technical University of Kosice systematically develops an inclusive environment

TUKE covers a wide range of educational needs and in many fields is the only center of science, research and education not only in Slovakia but also in the Central Europe. It **systematically develops an inclusive environment** by removing architectural and information barriers as well.

Actual developmental projects at TUKE financed by the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic and EU Structural Funds build a **better inclusive environment offering new accessible digital services** that will be **available also for public use online**, and/or at TUKE facilities.

Similar projects devoted to Inclusion are solved also by other Universities in Slovakia.



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News from Slovenia

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New prescription possibilities for light-weight wheelchairs

Light-weight wheelchairs can get additional front-wheel drive attachment or wheel-assisted drive; they can be foldable and equipped with joystick, covered by Slovenian national Health insurance.



photo source: © Add-on handbike by BATEC



photo source: © e-motion drive wheel by ALBER

Improved program for AAC for adults

In October 2019 an improved program of Alternative and Augmentative Communication was adopted that enables renting AAC device (and switching to another AAC device whenever health conditions require that), a possibility for hospitalization for two weeks for training and individually adapting AAC device (besides other therapies) for users and their carers. A new clinical path was introduced for this program, together with translation and adaptation of Information and Communication Needs Assessment Tool (*slo.* Ocena potreb sporazumevanja).



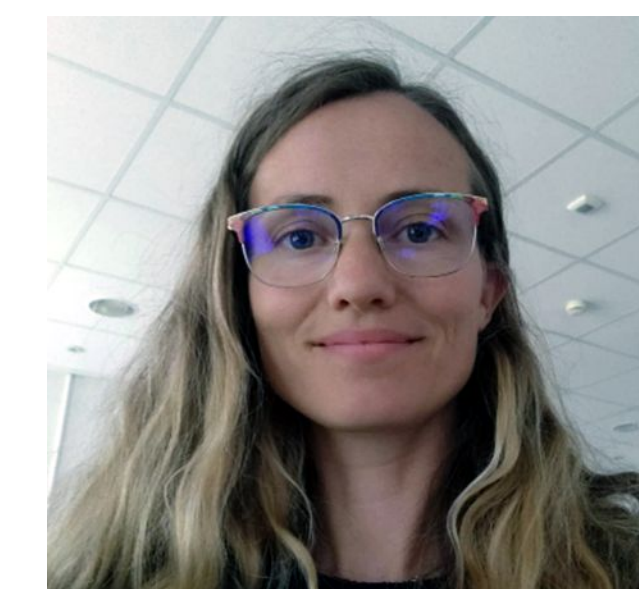
photo source: © TobiiDynavox AAC devices

More rights for people with disabilities for gaining various AT

Regulations on technical aids and adaptation of vehicles was updated to include more users and more various AT for them.



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News from Switzerland

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CYBATHLON - moving people and technology in 2020 and again in 2024



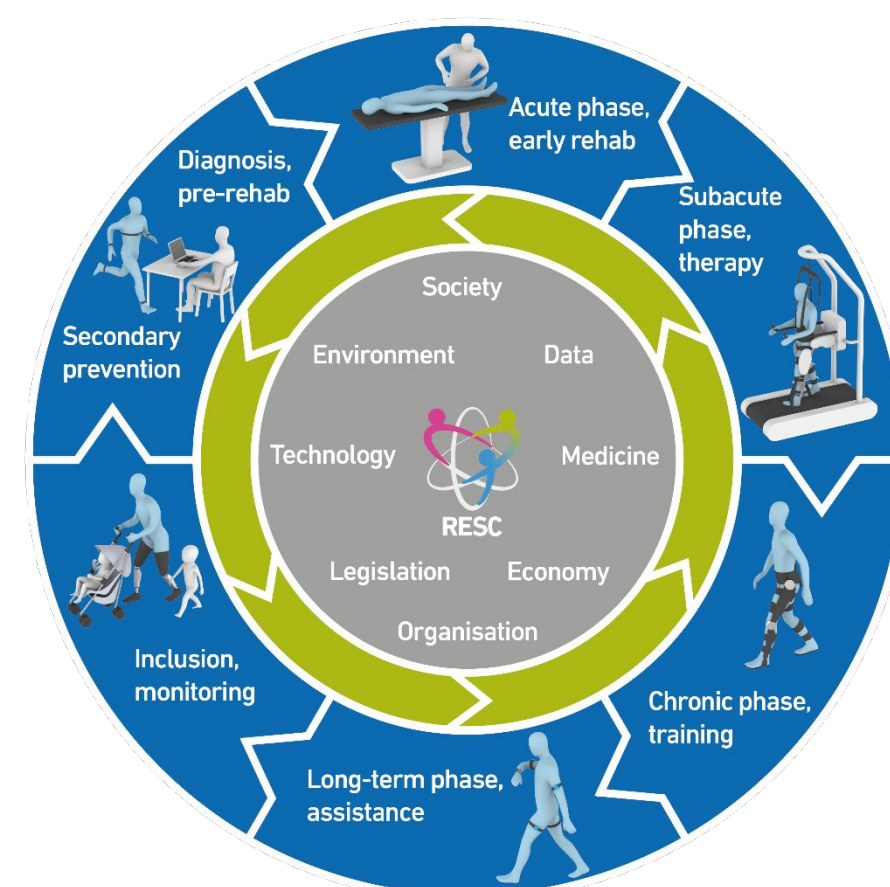
Copyright: ETH Zurich/Alessandro Della Bella

In 2020, for the 2nd time after 2016, technology developers from universities, companies, or NGOs from all over the world together with a person with disabilities participated at the CYBATHLON. In this competition, everyday tasks are solved with the latest assistive technologies in various disciplines.

Do you research and develop AT and want to work towards a world without barriers? [Then become part of CYBATHLON now!](#)

The next edition will take place on 25-27 October 2024.

ETH Zurich implements Competence Centre for Rehabilitation Engineering and Science (RESC)

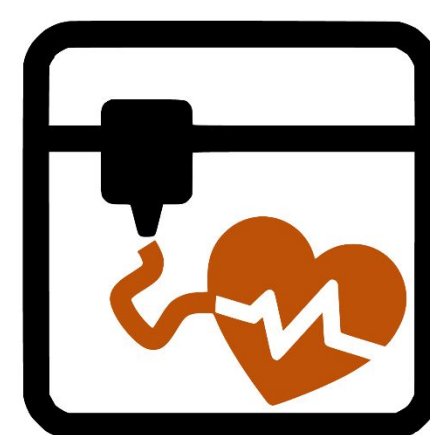


Copyright: RESC/Stefan Schneller

The RESC evolved through the ETH Rehab Initiative and aims to fill gaps along the continuum-of-care by hosting and further developing a strong network in the vast field of rehabilitation and inclusion.

In the previous two years since its foundation, RESC focused on expanding its network, establishing core chairs, new research labs, funding programmes, and on-boarding of promising partners for its mission.

HackaHealth organizes annual AT-hackathons in Geneva and Zurich (and more!)



HACKAHEALTH

HackaHealth is a community that supports the development of personalized solutions for people with disabilities in order to improve their daily living. Since 2018, the association has organized five [assistive technology hackathons](#) (4x in Geneva, 1x in Zurich), an [assistive technology course](#) at EPFL Lausanne and has enabled [various other projects](#) together with and personalized for individuals with disabilities.

Join this year's Hackathons in Geneva (7-9 October 2022) or Zurich (4-6 November 2022) and help overcoming obstacles through inclusion and cultivate sharing, openness, and designing with a purpose!

The Interactive Usability Toolbox for wearable robotics is now online!



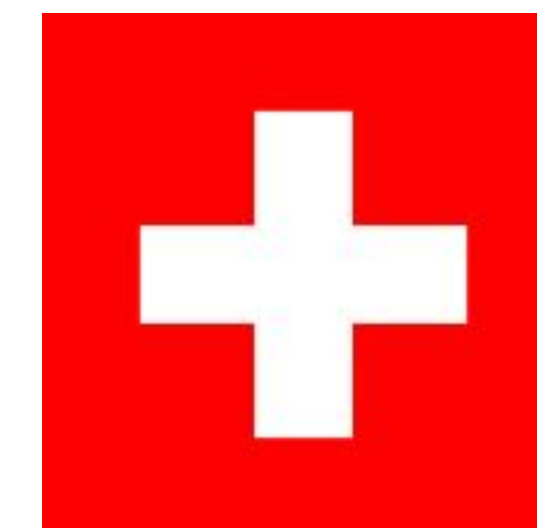
Copyright: ETH Zurich/Rehabilitation Engineering Laboratory

Presented at the AAATE conference 2019 in Bologna as a conceptual framework, the *Interactive Usability Toolbox* is now online and openly accessible, tackling the issue of inadequate usability limiting technology acceptance of wearable robotic devices.

The toolbox enables a structured, well-balanced and fair usability evaluation by offering:

- A database with >150 user research methods classified with >40 usability attributes
- A wizard tool to find and select research methods according to the intended context of use
- A wiki introducing concept and terminology of usability according to ISO 9241-11, -210 & ISO TR 16982.

Further, every developer of wearable robotics is invited to [contribute](#) to help improve the website!



National Contact Person



Roger Gassert (top),
Olivier Lamercy (bottom)

News from The Netherlands

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Establishment of Academic Centers for Assistive Devices

From July 2022, the Dutch Organization for Health Research and Development will support **5 networks in the Netherlands to become Academic Centers for Assistive Devices**, in order to increase research into (cost) effectiveness of assistive devices. Each network involves knowledge/research centers, client organizations and care organizations. Involvement of users of assistive devices in all phases (development of project ideas, execution of projects) is regarded as a high priority. Output of these academic centers include knowledge, as well as tools, training or other means to support professionals or users, as well as educational material for schools/universities.



Focus on implementation of proven technology

The (new) Dutch government pl, as an answer to significant problems on the labour market. Care organizations face a lot of emphasis on fast(er) implementation of proven care technology/devices many challenges with higher care demands and lower availability of trained staff; care technology is regarded as an important answer. Care organizations expect to have less autonomy in spending their innovation budget and to be imposed to implement care technology that have shown to be effective in other care organizations, and to organize implementation in regional networks.

Quality standard for provision of assistive devices

In January 2020, a quality standard for provision of assistive devices was presented as a result of discussions among governmental and professional bodies, client organizations, insurance companies and entrepreneurs aiming for **improvement of the accessibility to and provision, use and maintenance of assistive devices**. The standard intends to remove barriers as experienced by clients as well as foster collaboration between all stakeholders involved in the process. Although it has been in place for more than two years now, client organizations ask clients to request municipalities to sign and implement the standard.



Impact of MDR

The Medical Device Regulation (MDR), active from May 2021, is causing many challenges for European companies, care organizations, clients and research centers. Care organizations struggle to understand the implications of these regulations when making customized assistive devices for clients. To support them in this process, an **MDR-proof workflow** was developed during a **project about 3D-printed assistive devices**. This workflow, which was developed in collaboration with occupational therapists, engineers and researchers, was based on the Dutch standard guideline for the provision of assistive devices¹ and includes accompanying templates for documenting the design process as required by the MDR. [Wetgeving medische hulpmiddelen | Medische hulpmiddelen en technologie | Rijksoverheid.nl](#)

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News from the UK

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UK Research and Development Roadmap calls out AT



The updated GOV.UK policy paper “UK Research and Development Roadmap” set’s out the government’s long-term objectives for research and development (R&D) to:

“invest in the science and research that will deliver economic growth and societal benefits across the UK for decades to come, and to build the foundations for the new industries of tomorrow. “

It explicitly mentions investment in assistive technology as a challenge to be tackled.

“We will tackle some of the big challenges of today and tomorrow, including achieving net zero carbon emissions, **investing in world-class assistive technology**, building resilience in our economy, environment and society, and improving security, productivity and quality of life for all.”

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-research-and-development-roadmap>

British Assistive Technology Association virtual conference



BATA’s **Disability Confident in Action - Unlocking potential and building inclusion** virtual conference was designed to support people with disabilities in the workplace.

Attendees learnt how to attract, develop and retain a diverse pool of talented people. It consisted of a series of short and lively presentations designed to help employees and staff understand how to remove a variety of barriers in the workplace.

In particular it enabled the process of putting into place strategies and assistive technologies to help create a disability confident organisation.

The recordings are available:

<https://www.bataonline.org.uk/articles/disability-confident-action-recordings>

