

Georgios Kouroupetroglou (Ed.)

# Enabling Access for Persons with Visual Impairment

Proceedings of the International Conference ICEAPVI  
Athens, Greece, February 12-14, 2015



National and Kapodistrian University of Athens  
Department of Informatics and Telecommunications  
Speech and Accessibility Laboratory



International Council for Education and Rehabilitation  
of People with Visual Impairment - Europe Region



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<http://access.uoa.gr/ICEAPVI-2015/>

Organized by :

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Co-organized by:

**International Council for Education and Rehabilitation  
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## Forward

This book contains the proceedings of the Conference **ICEAPVI-2015** (<http://access.uoa.gr/ICEAPVI-2015/>), the **International Conference on Enabling Access for Persons with Visual Impairment**, held in Athens, Greece, from 12 to 14 February 2015, organized by the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (Department of Informatics and Telecommunications, Speech and Accessibility Laboratory), and co-organized by the International Council for Education and Rehabilitation of People with Visual Impairment - Europe Region.

ICEAPVI-2015 received 43 submissions from 27 countries. Each submission was reviewed by two or three members of the Scientific Program Committee consisted by 28 internationally recognized experts. The proceedings include the 26 papers accepted for oral presentation (acceptance ratio 61%) and the 7 papers accepted as poster papers (acceptance ratio 16%).

Firstly, I must thank the authors, whose research and development efforts are recorded here. Secondly, I thank the members of the scientific program committee for their diligence and expert reviewing. Last but not least, I thank the keynote speaker as well as the invited speaker for their invaluable contribution and for taking the time to synthesize and deliver their talks.

February 2015

**Georgios Kouroupetroglou**, University of Athens  
*Conference Chair*



## Welcome to ICEAPVI-2015

**Distinguished Guests,  
Respected participants from all over the world,  
Dearest colleagues and friends,**

On behalf of The International Council for Education and Rehabilitation of people with Visual Impairment, European Region, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to welcome all of you at the **1st International Conference on Enabling Access for Persons with Visual Impairment**. ICEVI – EUROPE is a sub region of the International Council for Education of people with Visual Impairment, ICEVI International, which is a worldwide organization, recognized by the Commission of Social Services in the United Nations. ICEVI-Europe is an association of professionals- individuals and organizations- whose mission is to promote education and rehabilitation opportunities for people with visual impairment through sharing, networking, cooperating, and advocating, among its members and stakeholders. Its target group are people who are totally blind or who have low vision, including those with additional disabilities.

ICEVI-Europe's main purpose is to help blind and visually impaired people achieve their desire to actively participate as full members of society. It does so by sharing and disseminating information and knowledge about education and rehabilitation, in collaboration with governments, national and international institutions and academics.

It has been a little over a year since I had a conversation with Dr. Kouroupetroglou in regards to the laws, regulations and policies that our country has to establish, since as GREECE, we signed and ratified the CRPD from the United Nations and thus, the idea of hosting this conference was born.

The implementation of the convention is the main subject of this conference since accessibility enables people to be independent and autonomous. On the fundamental issue of accessibility (Article 9), the Convention requires countries to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers and ensure that persons with disabilities can access their environment, transportation, public facilities and services, and information and communications technologies.

Article 20 specifically mentions that persons with disabilities must be able to live independently, to be included in the community, to choose where and with whom to live and to have access to in-home, residential and community support services. Also, personal mobility and independence are to be fostered by facilitating affordable personal mobility, training in mobility skills and access to mobility aids, devices, assistive technologies and live assistance.

Within this framework, the Department of Informatics and Telecommunications of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, in collaboration with ICEVI-Europe, organized a joint International Conference regarding the full accessibility of individuals with visual impairment. The theme of the Conference is **"Enabling Access for Persons with Visual Impairment."** The Conference offers the opportunity for professionals to share knowledge and experiences concerning improving the accessibility for persons with visual impairments, which plays a vital role in increasing their independence, productivity, and participation in society.

We, at ICEVI-Europe, are committed to ensuring the development and dissemination of knowledge and expertise on Education and Rehabilitation in order to promote the full participation in society of persons with visual impairment throughout Europe. Both blind and people with visual impairments feel most fully engaged in society when they are participating in the labour market, making a real contribution. Amongst the critical roles of ICEVI-Europe are the organization of training courses, seminars, and conferences, as

well as, offering expert advice and linking members with leading world practitioners. The visually impaired can be trained to learn the route to work and geography of the workplace, whereas employers can be advised on how to create the right conditions and adapt the workplace via layout, lighting, computer, software, etc. ICEVI-Europe strongly promotes the need for an effective rehabilitation programme, aimed at allowing people with visual impairments to find a job and activate their full potential.

One of the main core values of ICEVI-Europe is the belief that children and youth with visual impairment have the basic human right to a quality and comprehensive education. They should be included in the educational programmes of their communities, which should be of a high standard and conform to best practices. Appropriate educational materials and methods should be available to meet each child's needs and their teachers and other professionals supporting them should be properly trained. Moreover, parents should be supported in choosing the right type of school for their child.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Kouroupetroglou for his contribution to this conference, as well as, to all the members of the program committee and the the local arrangements committee, and last but not least, to all the individuals who volunteered their time and service in making this conference come to fruition.

ICEVI-Europe will continue to work diligently in promoting the participation of visually impaired persons as full citizens in Europe, allowing them to become integral members of society and use their full potential to live, learn and work independently. With this said I would like to thank you all very much for being here today and advocating a world fully accessible for persons with visual impairment.

Sincerely,

**Panagiota (Betty) Leotsakou**

*President of ICEVI-Europe & Conference Finance & Publicity Chair*

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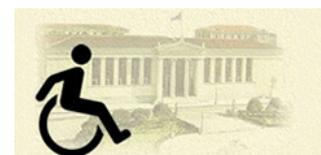
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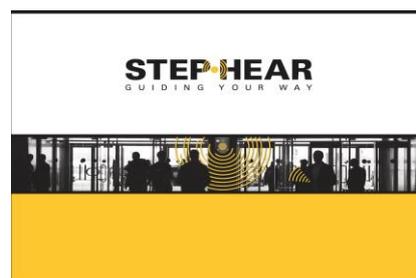
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