Visual Impairment Social Inclusion ON
Bonn, May 17th, 2017

Contract number: 2014-1-BG01-KA201-001555
• A shared vision of a world where visually impaired young people enjoy the same opportunities and quality of life as those who are sighted …
... brought partners from 5 EU countries in a joined effort for supporting **visually impaired children and young people** by developing their physical and vocal confidence, raising their aspirations and promoting individual abilities.
Where it all started ...
The VISION partners...

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Association “Hope for all”, BG
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V.I.S.I.ON received substantial support from our official associated partners

- European Blind Union

- Unione Italiana dei Ciechi e degli Ipovedenti
The key issues identified by visually impaired young people, which we wanted to approach in VISION, include:

- How to communicate through ‘sighted’ means (e.g. using body language)
- Difficulties in making, and staying, friends with other young people
- The need for adequate support both from peers and adults
Our objectives

- To develop physical and vocal confidence, raise aspirations and promote individual abilities of visually impaired young people by using specialised participatory performance arts training.

- To challenge the public perception of the capabilities of visually impaired young people and positively influence policy and behaviours affecting young blind and partially sighted people in Europe.
In order to achieve those …

• We created a training programme for "teaching self awareness and consciousness of the space around" through the expressions of theatre and verbal and corporal interactions with stage, music, sounds and we were as visual, open and explanatory as possible.
• The creation of this programme went through several preparatory phases (research of existing good practices & experiences – inward and outward – and gathering our groups of v.i. children and young people and drama experts), followed by elaboration phases, which included local workshops in partner regions:
• ... an initial one week testing in Palermo with 10 local visually impaired children (Nov 2015)

And finally ...

sort your clutter

Too many things make it hard for someone with visual impairment to see:

• Clutter on a page makes it hard to find information

• Clutter in a room or cupboard makes it hard to find equipment

• Clutter on the floor makes it hard to move around.
• ... and finally a closing international testing, during a second week in Palermo with v.i. children and young people from all involved countries (March – April 2016)

• http://vision-erasmusplus.eu/pages/pictures_gallery.php?gal=44
The training programme

Intro to the program - who we are, what we have been doing and why

1. Visual impairment – presenting various conditions and different types of sight loss

2. Basic elements to consider when shaping up a VISION workshop: Number of v.i. participants; Number of facilitators/trainers and requirements concerning their skills; Duration of the entire workshop and of each session (meeting); Setting (the place where things should be happening) & materials (if necessary); Objectives of the workshop; Tools for monitoring the process and evaluating the achievement.

3. Blocks of the VISION training programme – exercises with guidelines: Building the Ensemble; Skills building; Sharing ideas, playing and creating; Presenting; Reflection and closure.

4. Evaluation

Annexes: “Chaperon guidelines”; “VISION Practitioners’ Guide to Fluid Interpretation”; “Thinking about the environment”; Learning objectives guidelines; Evaluation questionnaires; Workshop session examples.
Thanks to:

- the absolute and from the start involvement of our target groups, considering that they are the real experts in their conditions;

- the flexible and dedicated highly professional team that spared no efforts when it came to doing extra work – as Dinos Aristidou from UCAN said during the last project meeting “we all embrace this project with the spirit of discovery, because no one came into it with an “I know best” attitude and I think that is why it worked, because we were learning as we went on”;

- the highly efficient approach, beyond our initial plans, of constantly updating our “visual awareness”;

- the abundance of visual materials and public events we held in order to get in touch with as broad an audience as possible;

- as well as the excellent support from our experts at the Bulgarian National Agency “Human Resource Development Center” …
… we succeeded to achieve the most important results - the smiles, the joy, the friendships, the new skills and confidence both in one’s own capacities and value as well as in an aware, supporting and welcoming world!
• All envisaged and not envisaged, expected and unexpected results of our project can be accessed and enjoyed from the web-site – www.vision-erasmusplus.eu

• Glimpses of what we have been doing and especially participants’ reactions can also be checked on the project Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/Vision-Erasmus-494509684023726/ & Youtube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvq317gb_JmWsXzdN4zb97A/feed

• For further contacts and information: Zornitsa Staneva – at 00359 889 306134 & zornitsastaneva@gmail.com
Bernard Latham from UCAN Productions summed up the VISION message while turning to all participants during a full-group activity within the international week in Palermo:

“Be strong!
Breathe deeply!
Heads on top of shoulders!
And be very, very proud of who you are!”
• A couple of videos:

  • [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfbUDK4tU2Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfbUDK4tU2Q)

  • [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EV5wHHlxX0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EV5wHHlxX0)

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