



International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness

**IAPB COUNCIL OF MEMBERS MEETING
SEPTEMBER 13, 2011**

REGIONAL REPORTS ON VISION 2020 ACHIEVEMENTS - EUROPE

Actual Activities

As in previous years IAPB Europe is adapting to a budget which is at 10 % of the initially proposed and planned budget. NGO activities in Eastern Europe have been terminated or reduced since 2009 and at present there is little hope for a reactivation. However Fred Hollows Foundation U.K. is investigating an engagement in Eastern Europe.

CBM continues to support IAPB Europe for the running of courses in the Prague Training Centre, for data collection in Eastern Europe (Dr. Ivo Kocur), for further development and translation of the website into Russian and for meetings of the National Vision 2020 chairs.

The most important activities that need to be carried out:

- training center in Prague
- organizing various courses in Vision 2020 / Community Eye Health and disease related topics
- data collection of eye care situation in relevant countries: population based studies, prevalence and incidence of blindness and service situation

Major focus is on the establishment of national Vision 2020 programmes. The number of countries with national Vision 2020 programmes fortunately is growing in Western and Central Europe, less in Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

General note: Eye care systems in many Eastern European countries develop fast, standard of eye care is rising, CSR is approaching Western European levels.

Private medicine is gaining increasing importance.

About 30% of population in many Central and Eastern European countries only have very difficult access to eye systems, as a personal financial contribution is mandatory.

Last regional meeting in Geneva after the SOE Congress, June 7th, 2011, had a very good attendance. The discussion focused on the role and the financial situation of the Prague Training Center and the data collection project as well as the national Vision 2020 Programmes. Reports were given from Bulgaria, Hungary, Serbia, U.K., Norway, Netherlands, Germany, Austria.

The most interesting findings of the Dutch Programme:

20% of persons in homes for elderly are suffering from treatable visual impairment. The Dutch Programme is focusing on the elimination of blindness in this risk group. Also the potential role of optometry in Europe was discussed.

In July 2011 a study meeting was held in the Prague Training Center with delegates from 12 Central and Eastern European Countries sharing data and the situation in Eye Care in the respective countries. Apparently there is a great disparity among countries. Countries with greatest need were identified like Ukraine, Moldova, Caucasian states. Data demonstrate the rapid progress particular in cataract surgery in the region.

Challenges in Central and Eastern Europe:

Extension of eye care programmes to distant and poorer parts of the countries through starting national Vision 2020 programmes.

Standardization of training and medical education through ICO and SOE regarding duration, contents and standard.

IAPB Europe Action Plan:

The objectives of the Action Plan remain unchanged:

Priority, target diseases: low vision, ROP, diabetic retinopathy.

IAPB Europe still needs and is looking for funding for a coordinator, possibly attached to the Prague Training Center, for lobbying and advocacy at regional level.

Single most important achievement in the region:

Foundation / strengthening of national Vision 2020 programmes in Western, Central and Eastern Europe.

Greatest challenge:

- To increase budgets
- To expand structure and activities of Prague training centre

Prof. Volker Klauss, Chairman IAPB Europe

Co-chairs:

Prof. Petia Vassileva, Bulgaria

Prof. Janos Nemeth, Hungary

Dr. Sergej Branchevsky, Russia

Dr. Nick Astbury, U.K.

Prof. Jan Keunen, Netherlands

Dr. Serge Resnikoff, Geneva