



1  **HEARING SERVICES IN EASTERN EUROPE  
DHICE 2005, London**

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2  ***It is not the deafness of the ear,  
but the deafness of the mind that is appalling.  
The deafness of the mind is the only incurable deafness***

Victor Hugo, 1847


3  **EASTERN EUROPE**


 **20 years ago** – communist countries behind “Iron curtain” with state controlled health and social welfare systems and low economic potential

4  **EASTERN EUROPE**


 **Today** – spectrum of countries with different boundaries, economic potential and health and social systems


 **Population** – 1.5 to 145 million

 **GBP per capita** – 1800 to 16500 USD

 **EU membership** – full members, candidates and “outcasts”


5  **HEARING SERVICES REQUIREMENTS**


 **Accurate database of hearing impaired persons**

 **UNHS and EHDI program**

 **Audiology centres with trained personnel and sophisticated equipment**


 **Rehabilitation facilities**


 **Hearing aids and CI program**

 **Organization and stable funding**


6  **DHICE 2005 QUESTIONNAIRE**

 **Number of hearing impaired children**

 **Average age of diagnosis of HL**

 **Neonatal hearing screening: universal, regional, high-risk**

7  **DHICE 2005 QUESTIONNAIRE**

 **Rehabilitation facilities: clinic, school, family based**

Intensity of rehabilitation: everyday, 3x, 2x, 1x a week, sporadic

Rehabilitation funding: government, parents, other

8  **DHICE 2005 QUESTIONNAIRE**

Hearing aids financing: government, parents, other

Cochlear implantation program (yes -no)

CI program financing: government, parents, other

9  **DHICE 2005 QUESTIONNAIRE**

Number of mainstreamed HI children

Number of HI children in schools for deaf

Professional support for mainstreamed children

10  **REPLIES OBTAINED FROM:**

Croatia (CRO)

Estonia (EST)

Latvia (LAT)

Republika Srpska (RS)

Serbia and Montenegro (S&M)

Slovenia (SLO)

11  **NUMBER OF HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN AGED 0 -18 years**

CRO	not available
EST	37
LAT	1693
RS	103
S&M	not available
SLO	3%

12  **AVERAGE AGE OF DIAGNOSIS**

CRO	3 months
EST	4 years
LAT	2-4 years
RS	3 years
S&M	18 months
SLO	not available

13  **NEONATAL HEARING SCREENING**

CRO universal

EST	regional
LAT	high-risk
RS	regional
S&M	regional
SLO	universal

14  **REHABILITATION FACILITIES**

CRO	clinics
EST	clinics
LAT	clinics
RS	school
S&M	clinics and schools
SLO	school

15  **INTENSITY OF REHABILITATION**

CRO	every day
EST	3 times a week
LAT	1-2 times a week
RS	every day
S&M	every day
SLO	twice a week

16  **FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

- GOVERNMENT PAYS FOR **REHABILITATION** OF HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN IN ALL COUNTRIES IN THE REGION
- BILATERAL HEARING AIDS** FOR CHILDREN ARE PAYED FOR BY GOVERNMENT IN ALL COUNTRIES

17  **COCHLEAR IMPLANTATION**

- ALL COUNTRIES HAVE **COCHLEAR IMPLANTATION** PROGRAM
- CRO fund raising activities
- EST government - 90%
- LAT government (2004)
- RS foundation
- S&M government (2005), parents
- SLO government (1996)

18  **MAINSTREAMING OF HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN**

CRO	70%
EST	50%
LAT	65-70%
RS	25%*
S&M	70%

- 19  **SCHOOLS FOR DEAF**
- |       |        |
|-------|--------|
| ■ SLO | 60-70% |
| ■ CRO | 30%    |
| ■ EST | 50%    |
| ■ LAT | 15-20% |
| ■ RS  | 75%*   |
| ■ S&M | 30%    |
| ■ SLO | 30-40% |
- 20  **PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT FOR MAINSTREAMED CHILDREN**
- |       |          |
|-------|----------|
| ■ CRO | yes      |
| ■ EST | no       |
| ■ LAT | sporadic |
| ■ RS  | yes      |
| ■ S&M | sporadic |
| ■ SLO | yes      |
- 21  **CONCLUSIONS (1)**
- Different hearing services in Eastern European countries due to: finances, logistics, organization and heritage
  - Incomplete databases and registration of hearing impaired persons
  - Neonatal hearing screening mostly regional or for high-risk babies
  - Delayed diagnosis and intervention for hearing impairment
- 22  **CONSLUSIONS (2)**
- Insufficient rehabilitation affects mainstreaming of hearing impaired children
  - Eastern European governments pay for bilateral hearing aids for children
  - Cochlear implantation is getting wider state support recently
- 23  **FUTURE TRENDS**
- Improve NHS and EHDI programs
  - Decrease the age of diagnosis , intervention and cochlear implantation
  - Increase mainstreaming and inclusion of hearing impaired children
  - Stable financing of hearing services
  - Continuous professional education
  - Increase public awareness
- 24  **CONCERTED EUROPEAN ACTION**

***Many things can wait, the child cannot.  
Now is the time his bones are being made, his mind being developed.  
To him we cannot say tomorrow,  
his name is TODAY***

*Gabriela Mistral,  
Nobel prize winner*