

# **New Audio Technology for Blind People**

editors

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## **Concerted Action on Technology and Blindness**

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## Contents

Medical and Health Research Programme of the EC .....	2
Introduction .....	4
Multi-lingual Text-to-Speech for the Visually Disabled <i>Bjorn Granstrom</i> .....	5
Speech Quality Assessment <i>Herman Steeneken</i> .....	10
Text to Speech Synthesis System Screen Reader for Visually Disabled People <i>Jean-Jaques Rigoni</i> .....	15
A Word Processor for Blind Koreans <i>Emerson Foulke, John Kilpatrick &amp; Yound Woo Kang</i> .....	18
Human Factors Issues for the Use of Speech Technology in Information Products <i>Stephen Furner</i> .....	20
Digital Daily Newspapers for Blind People in Sweden <i>Jan-Ingvar Lindstrom</i> .....	25
Applications of Vocoder Techniques for the Blind <i>Paolo Graziani</i> .....	28
Telework Projects <i>Sean Kenny</i> .....	32
Audio Technology in IT Education for the Blind <i>Jill Hewitt</i> .....	36
Audio Technology for Blind Programmers <i>Gerry Ellis</i> .....	44
Summary and Recommendations <i>Emerson Foulke</i> .....	46
Other publications .....	51

# **Medical and Health Research Programme of the EC**

## **Biomedical Engineering in the European Community**

The involvement of the European Community (EC) in the field of Medical and Health Research started in 1978 with the first Programme which contained three projects. Since then, it has steadily expanded and it will include about 120 projects by the end of the fourth Programme (1987-1991).

The general goal of the programme is clearly to contribute to a better quality of life by improving health, and its distinctive feature is to strengthen European collaboration in order to achieve this goal.

The main objectives of this collaboration are:

1. Increase the scientific efficiency of the relevant research and development efforts in the Member States through their gradual coordination at Community level following the mobilization of the available research potential of national programmes, and also their economic efficiency through sharing of tasks and strengthening the joint use of available health research resources,
2. Improve scientific and technical knowledge in the research and development areas selected for their importance to all Member States, and promote its efficient transfer into practical applications, taking particular account of potential industrial and economic developments in the areas concerned,
3. Optimize the capacity and economic efficiency of health care efforts throughout the countries and regions of the Community.

The current programme consists of six research targets. Four are related to major health problems: cancer, AIDS, age-related problems, and personal environment and life-style related problems: two are related to health resources: medical technology development and health services research.

Funds are provided by the Community for relevant "concerted action" activities which consist of research collaboration and coordination in EC Member States and/or in other European participant countries. Networks of research institutes can be set up and supported by means of meetings, workshops, short-term staff exchanges/visits to other countries, information dissemination and so on: centralized facilities such as data banks, computing, and preparation and distribution of reference materials can also be funded. The funds are not direct research grants; the institutes concerned must fund the research activities carried out within their own countries - it is the international coordination activities which are eligible for Community support. Each such research network is placed under the responsibility of a project leader chosen from among the leading scientists in the network, with the assistance of a project management group representing the teams participating in the network.

The Commission of the European Communities is assisted in the execution of this Programme by a Management and Coordination Advisory Committee (CGC - Medical and Health Research), and by

