The EASTIN network, a not-for-profit international association that includes partner organizations from 27 countries, aims to make available comprehensive and impartial information on assistive technology. The EASTIN web portal aggregates the contents of 7 national databases and provides continuously-updated info on over 55,000 assistive products available worldwide, in 24 languages.

A worldwide information system on assistive technology

The European Assistive Technology Information Network (EASTIN) was launched in 2006 as an outcome of a project funded by the European Union. The EASTIN Web Portal includes an advanced multi-lingual search engine that extracts information on AT products, companies and other related information from national AT databases. After ten successful years focused on expanding the service across Europe, it is now developing a global network. The network includes full and associate partner organizations from 27 countries.

Who is the EASTIN audience?

The Eastin audience includes: AT end-users (disabled people, their families and caregivers); professionals in health, social and education services; AT manufacturers and suppliers; researchers and policy makers.

Implications for Products, Provision, Personnel and Policy

Products: manufacturer and suppliers, even very small companies, have a free opportunity to make their AT products known worldwide.

Provision: end-users and professionals involved in service provision can select products from a wide range of options.

Personnel: AT practitioners and related professionals have a unique repository of knowledge to support their continuous education.

Policy: public agencies involved in disability policy and AT provision have a powerful window on the AT market.

Implications for other aspects of the Global Research Agenda

Access to comprehensive AT information, independent of commercial interest, is of paramount importance for the empowerment of disabled people; it is crucial to enable them to choose the optimal assistive solution and facilitates their involvement in all aspects of service provision. The ability to compare products across the globe also stimulates research and innovation towards higher-quality and more affordable assistive technology.

Strategies to share and build global capacity based on this work

EASTIN is open to any country and national AT databases who wish to apply to join the network. Each country can be represented by one organization only.

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