

**1984  
2024**

**Forty years of  
the European  
Blind Union**



The voice of blind and partially  
sighted people in Europe

**40  
years**

1984 - 2024

# Key milestones and achievements

## Pharmaceutical Braille

EBU worked across its member states and with the pharmaceutical and packaging industries, to assist in the development of the CEN standard development for braille on packaging and leaflets.

## Marrakesh Treaty

The 'Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled' was a milestone in our history, enabling organisations for the visually impaired to share books with neighbouring countries.

## EAA (European Accessibility Act)

EBU played a strong role in the conception of the EAA, which formulates a comprehensive set of minimum requirements for all businesses to make a range of products and services accessible. EBU also participated in the elaboration of the Web Accessibility Directive, which specifies the same kind of requirements for public service websites and mobile applications.

## The Euro Currency

EBU was approached by the EU to work on the accessibility of Euro coins and banknotes for the visually impaired community, a collaboration which is ongoing for future editions of the Euro.

## Silent Cars

Due to the strong intervention of EBU, the European Union and the UNECE (United Nations economic Commission for Europe) have addressed the necessity for additional artificial sound generation for electric and electric hybrid vehicles.

## VISAL (Visually Impaired Seniors Active Learning)

VISAL was one of many EBU led projects and it aimed at improving the situation of the increasing population of European citizens dealing with age-related site loss.

In the future, these are some of the objectives which we envision and will work for:

A society in which blind and partially sighted people can **fully access all information on an equal basis with others**. Fully accessible technologies, including artificial intelligence, offer unprecedented potential in that respect, but can also create new barriers if not designed accessibly from the outset.

From words to deeds: **Implementing existing and new legislation, treaties and conventions at all levels** so they really make a difference for inclusion in the daily life of blind and partially sighted people.

**Fully accessible and inclusive basic services** are the precondition for blind and partially sighted citizens to attain a high standard of living and to live independently. Remaining obstacles in areas such as health care, education, vocational training and employment must be removed. Trends such as ageing of the population and life-long learning must be taken into consideration.

**Support services and social protection schemes must provide for an adequate level of funding** (or other means), so blind and partially sighted individuals are not financially or otherwise disadvantaged due to their disability.



The mobility landscape will undergo significant changes in the years to come. Similar to new IT technologies, this offers huge potential for blind and partially sighted people to **move more freely and safely**. But, if not designed in an accessible manner from the start, the opposite is also true.

Elections authorities must ensure that persons with visual impairment can **vote independently and secretly, while political materials must be delivered in accessible formats**. Furthermore, blind and partially sighted people should also be able to run for office on an equal basis with others.

For more information on these topics and EBU in general, visit [www.euroblind.org](http://www.euroblind.org)



This publication is co-funded by the European Union

Contact EBU [ebu@euroblind.org](mailto:ebu@euroblind.org)

6 rue Gager-Gabillot, 75015, Paris, France

Follow us on:

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [LinkedIn](#)