

EBU in Action Episode 16: a treasure to cherish: braille as UNESCO heritage?

Intro

[Music]

(Neven): Hello, dear friends. Welcome back to another episode of “EBU in Action”, the podcast where we bring you the latest news on the blindness and partial sight community across Europe. I'm Neven Milivojevic and joined once again by my side is my friend and co-host, Paweł Masarczyk. Cześć, Paweł. Hello, how are you doing? How was the summer?

(Paweł): Hey, Neven. Hello to our listeners. I am fine, thank you. It's been a great summer. Maybe you have seen some of it even on the EBU channels, because I was privileged to be able to visit the headquarters of the European Blind Union, as freshly as two weeks ago, which would be the beginning of September as we record this.

And, yes, record a little clip announcing this very episode. So, it was definitely a very productive summer. But it was enjoyable in terms of, you know, holiday season as well. I can't complain.

(Neven): Great. Well, there was lot of heatwaves in Europe. Here in the north, we were kind of spared, so that's good. So, well, I mean, it's great to be back with you today.

And, you know, today we have something very interesting and important to cover from the cultural point of view. As you know, many disability advocates and associations of blind and partially sighted have been campaigning for the last years for the recognition of braille as a cultural heritage by UNESCO.

And we all know how important braille is for us in daily life: at work, at school, even guiding us through museums. I mean, this is truly one of the most important and closest companions to us.

(Paweł): That is so very true, Neven. And it's amazing to see how braille has evolved over the years and how many applications it has found.

So, since we mention UNESCO, definitely also in the area of culture, it gives us access to books, it gives us access to art of various forms. And it will be interesting to see even more uses for it, and maybe that will be propelled by it being recognised as UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage.

(Neven): For this occasion. I do think that it's really great that we are going today to listen to some very interesting testimonials.

In fact, for this episode, we spoke with Lily Martinet from the Ministry of Culture of France. UNESCO France, alongside UNESCO Germany, has submitted braille's candidacy for recognition as cultural heritage by UNESCO.

(Paweł): Yes. That will be a very important interview. And also, we have other guests with us who will explain even more about their involvement in this matter. That will be Susan LaVenture from ICEVI, the International Council on the Education of the Visually Impaired, and Santosh Kumar, the President of the World Blind Union, and they will explain what the Global Braille Literacy Campaign is all about, because it's very closely related.

(Neven): Well, I can't wait to listen to them. And, as always, since this is a podcast of the European Blind Union, you will also hear to one of our EBU Members here. And today we are going to listen to Reiner Delgado, who is the coordinator of the EBU braille Working Group and who has been heavily involved in this campaign for the recognition of braille as cultural heritage by UNESCO.

So, this is quite a packed show today, isn't it Paweł?

(Paweł): Yes, it is. And it's great to see that braille has on this occasion been given its special place again.

(Neven): Well, great. So, without further ado, let's go

Focus episode: a treasure to cherish: braille as UNESCO cultural heritage?

[Music]

(Neven): Now, for this episode, our colleague Nacho Lopez has had the chance to talk to all the guests we're going to hear from today. And I'm sure he has plenty to share with us.

So as always, we are delighted to welcome him back to our show. "Hola, Nacho. ¿Cómo estás?"

(Nacho): Hola, Neven. Yes, I'm doing fine. It's true that, as it happened in other parts in Europe, we had quite a lot of heatwaves in Paris.

Sometimes it was very difficult to bear, but, fortunately, a good thing of the summer is that you also have days with some freshness and some fresh air and blue skies, and it was a pleasure to be in Paris, honestly. I also had the chance to go one week to Spain to stay with my family.

So overall, it was nice, it was very nice. And as you already said in the introduction, it's also a great pleasure to be back again with another episode of "EBU in Action".

This time we have a very huge topic, which is the candidacy of braille to be recognised as cultural heritage by UNESCO.

You already pointed this out, Neven, in your introduction. We got to talk to many people that had to offer many different perspectives but also their very valuable insights on that subject. One of those people was Lily Martinet from the Ministry of Culture of France.

There is an anecdote that I would like to share not only with you, but with all our audience.

Three years ago, it was September 2023, EBU's Executive Director, uh, Lars Bosselmann and I got to meet representatives of blindness and partial sight associations here in Paris, in the Ministry of Culture. And among the people that were present in the meeting, there was Lily Martinet.

So, it's kind of a coincidence. A very positive one, I have to say. And again, it's also very funny, but also very enriching, to put it down into words, to see that, at least, people's paths cross again at some point in life. So yes, as you already mentioned in the introduction, and as I already said a few moments ago, Lily Martinet, is part of the Ministry of Culture of France, who's been working to promote the braille code's candidacy to be recognised as cultural heritage by UNESCO.

Without further to add, I will now let you all listen to the insights of Lily Martinet from the Ministry of Culture of France.

Interview with Lily Martinet, from the Ministry of Culture of France

(Nacho): Three years ago, we had the chance to sit next to you in a conference with other French NGOs to talk about the proposal to recognise braille as an element of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity by UNESCO. Since then, how has this nomination evolved? Have you also found other social actors outside the non-for-profit sector that have joined you in this?

(Lily): So, the nomination has been submitted by France and Germany in March 2026, and now it is currently examined by UNESCO. This is a phase in the process of a nomination which can take some time. It may take a year or several years. So, it's kind of complicated because you need to be patient.

And so, we need to wait for UNESCO to circle back towards us. And concerning your second question, on the social actors that have

participated in the nomination, I really need to talk about the Musée Louis Braille, who has been a great support in the nomination process and has coordinated the group meetings and has been involved with creating a network of different actors involved in the nomination.

We also had the chance to have the participation of French NGOs such as “L'Association des Transcripteurs Adaptateurs Francophones” or of editors and publishers like “Les Doigts Qui Rêvent”. The goal of the nomination is to bring together all the actors of the community of braille.

So, I won't be able to name everyone, but we had the chance to get real support from the whole network of NGOs participating in braille and its transmission.

(Nacho): Apart from Germany, what other countries have joined you in the mission and in what capacity?

(Lily): The use of braille is a universal model. It's recognized by 142 states, so potentially, 142 states could join the nomination. For the time being, we have had exchanges with several European states.

I can mention Spain, Belgium, but we know that there's a growing number of states that are currently working to include it in their national inventory of intangible cultural heritage.

(Nacho): Now I would like to stop at precisely that: the criteria used to recognise an element as intangible cultural heritage. What are UNESCO's requirements? How reading and writing by touch might be recognised as such?

(Lily): So, the first thing, the first criteria I should say is the element of intangible cultural heritage satisfies the definition of Article 2 of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

So, UNESCO checks that the practice, the knowledge, or the expressions that are submitted as a nomination are intangible cultural heritage. So, is there a community? Is it transmitted from generation to generation? Does it give a sense of identity and continuity to the community that transmits it and practices it?

Does it evolve? Is it constantly recreated? So, UNESCO checks these first criteria. Then, for nominations on the representative list, it looks at the contribution of the element to the goals of the list, which are ensuring visibility to ICH, raising awareness on the significance of intangible cultural heritage, encouraging dialogue, reflecting cultural diversity, and also, testifying to human creativity.

The third criteria is safeguarding measures. The idea of a nomination is to create a project for the transmission and the viability of intangible cultural heritage in the future.

So, communities need to elaborate a safeguarding plan with safeguarding measures for the future to ensure that the element of intangible cultural heritage is alive and will be transmitted to future generations.

The fourth criteria is about participation. Did the community participate in the preparation of the nomination? Did they give their free, prior, and informed consent for the inscription? And finally, the last criteria is: is the element included in an inventory of intangible cultural heritage in the country?

So, for France, braille was included in the Inventaire national du patrimoine culturel immatériel.

(Nacho): Now, as you know, the world is currently in a context marked by constant political turmoil. Despite that, have you and your colleagues in other countries found a way to be able to liaise with national authorities to help you in your initiative?

(Lily): We have exchanges with our colleagues in Europe. There's a network of European focal points for intangible cultural heritage. So, we exchange information and there's also a grassroots movement for the recognition of braille as intangible cultural heritage.

And the braille users in different countries have been working together. So, the information has flowed and there seems to be a real dynamic that has been born on the ground for this recognition.

(Nacho): And finally, since we're speaking to you from UNESCO France, bearing in mind that this is the country where Louis Braille was born, what do you wish to tell him, knowing how much valuable his invention has been for millions of blind and partially sighted people worldwide?

(Lily): And first, I would thank him and tell him about all the new evolutions of braille, especially digital uses and braille displays and show him how his invention has grown and evolved from its origin.

And then, I would explain to him how braille has become an essential element for access to physical environment, transportation, for exercising freedom, freedoms of expression, participating in cultural life. And I would thank him again.

(Nacho): Thank you very much, Lily Martinet, for responding to our questions to "EBU in Action". It's been a pleasure.

(Lily): Thank you very much for your invitation, it's been a pleasure.

End of interview with Lily Martinet

(Neven): Well, that was really an interesting interview, Nacho. She's very committed in this issue, I can hear. What do you think about this Paweł? Isn't it a great commitment from the Ministry of Culture of France?

(Paweł): Definitely. And I would even think that it may boost further the importance of braille and how well it will be recognised in France, and hopefully beyond. I think France is a key player here because, well, Louis Braille himself was a Frenchman, so the country has definitely an invention to be proud about.

[Music]

(Neven): Exactly. So, Nacho, you also talked to Susan and Santosh, could you tell us a little more about that?

(Nacho): Yes, exactly. Among the other guests that we had for this podcast, I also got the chance to talk to Susan LaVenture from ICEVI and also from Santosh Kumar from World Blind Union, who I also had the chance to meet last year in a commemorative event of the bicentenary of the Braille Code.

So again, it's curious to see how people's paths cross again in life. It was a very interesting interview to me, and it was also very nice to talk to them because, as our listeners will discover, both ICEVI and World Blind Union are working together in a global campaign to raise awareness about the importance of Braille, especially in the area of Braille literacy, to promote inclusion, amongst blind and partially sighted individuals.

It's a very beautiful commitment and I learned many things by listening to both Santosh and Susan. Now, I would like to stay silent for a little bit and let our audience and also both you, Neven and Paweł, know more about what I discovered with Susan LaVenture from ICEVI and Santosh Kumar from World Blind Union.

Interview with Santosh Kumar (World Blind Union) and Susan LaVenture (ICEVI)

(Nacho): One year ago, in September 2025, the elections at WBU's Board took place. After that, we had the chance to meet you, Santosh, in one of the multiple commemorative events on the bicentenary of the braille code that took place in Paris. After one year of mandate, how has WBU been shaping its priorities in the promotion of Braille? What's the state of the matter at a worldwide level?

(Santosh): As you know, even prior to our elections, WBU and ICEVI came together to launch a braille literacy campaign. This is a joint

campaign, and as a part of that campaign, we started various initiatives and we divided our campaign into three broad areas: advocacy, then information sharing, as well as research. And at the same time, now we are in the process of advocating for endorsement of a global declaration on braille literacy.

So, we have put this as one of the highest priorities, as part of our strategic plan and its implementation to ensure that braille literacy becomes an integral part of our, at least, elementary education to begin with.

(Nacho): Now, Susan, since you're the president of ICEVI, your organisation is devoted to promoting access to education and rehabilitation amongst children and young adults in Europe. Over the years, have you seen significant progress in the use of braille for that purpose?

(Susan): I would say the picture's mixed. We certainly have seen important advances all over through the past decades. More children today have access to digital technology, refreshable braille displays, electronic braille notetakers, and high-quality braille production systems than ever before. It's amazing.

We also see growing recognition that inclusive education means ensuring students have access to learning media that best meets their needs, which is huge, it's remarkable. But at the same time, many children who would benefit from learning braille are still not receiving timely instruction.

Too often, braille is introduced only as a student has struggled for years with inaccessible print. I've seen this in other countries where kids that don't even go to schools, you know, they don't have any access to any braille learning. They don't have any qualified teachers, maybe in the country limited access to braille and textbooks and learning materials.

And while it's just remarkable and wonderful progress, there still are many children who do not have access to braille or training of braille. And, from ICEVI's perspective, our goal is to promote braille and technology as well. It is to ensure that every learner who needs braille has the opportunity to become braille literate while also benefiting from technology.

Braille and technology complement each other. Together, they provide access to literacy, independence, educational achievement, employment, and full participation in society. So, in answer to your question, it is mixed. There's still a lot of work to do, and that's why I'm really happy that you've invited me to talk to you on your podcast.

(Nacho): EBU's braille Working Group has already underlined this in its past work. Educational systems in Europe aren't that active to promote the code's teaching and using. There's where I would like to go to your global braille literacy campaign. Susan, what are its objectives, and how are you planning to achieve them?

(Susan): Yes, so this is where the global braille literacy campaign will help merge the spectrum between those who have advanced and have the resources and those who don't have any resources. It's a global joint initiative with ICEVI and the World Blind Union, and we have a name: "More Braille, More Empowerment" its vision is very simple.

Braille literacy is a right, not a privilege. So, the campaign brings together organisations and people who are blind, educators, families, governments, universities, researchers, publishers, and technology companies around a shared commitment for improving braille literacy worldwide. It's people and organisations from regional, international...

It's like very broad, all sectors, so it's very much a collaboration. It's got a lot of life, and it's really taking off. And we do have three main focus areas:

First is advocacy. So, this is, you know, like you just said, this helps us in raising awareness that braille remains essential for literacy, education, and lifelong participation.

The second part of our focus is information resources, where we are working, we have teams on all of these, on practical guidance, teaching resources and examples of effective practice that can be shared internationally. So, we actually are gathering all of these resources from the world. We have put together a mechanism that's accessible so that others can continue to add to this.

We want to gather all these resources to be shared openly throughout the world, so...

And then, the third part of the campaign is research, because we need better evidence about who is learning braille, who is not, and what barriers exist in different countries. So, we are actually actively, we put together a global braille survey, which will provide the most comprehensive international picture of braille literacy ever undertaken.

The findings will help governments, educators, and organisations make evidence-informed decisions about teacher preparation, educational resources, and policy. So perhaps most importantly, this campaign is about partnerships. No single organisation can achieve this alone. By working together internationally, we can create a lasting change for future generations.

(Nacho): Now, Santosh, we all know that there are many organisations and policymakers who are helping you in the development of this campaign. Of course, we're not forgetting educators and disability advocates. On an international level, have you also found synergies with the promoters of braille's candidacy as cultural heritage at UNESCO?

(Santosh): Yes. We are working alongside that initiative as well. And as a part of that, we approached our member countries. And you know that, many of our member countries in Europe, since you are in Europe, you know more than I know, have taken a lead in this. And I think we have made a headway in that campaign for a declaration of braille as cultural heritage by UNESCO.

(Nacho): Finally, a reflection to share from both of you. How would that recognition help with the effective implementation of your campaign? Let's start with you, Susan.

(Susan): I really believe that UNESCO's recognition of braille as intangible cultural heritage would send a very powerful message. Braille is much more than a reading and writing system.

It represents literacy, education, culture, independence, and equal participation. It's much more than people probably know, and it has transformed the lives of millions of people around the world over the past two centuries. So I believe, well, both of our activities can, you know, feed off of each other and synergise, make it greater, recognition as cultural heritage would help increase public awareness of braille significance and encourage governments to view braille not as a specialised literary system for a small group of people, but as part of a shared human heritage that deserves protection, investment, and promotion. So, this would protect braille.

For our campaign, that recognition would strengthen our advocacy efforts by providing an internationally recognised framework, encouraging countries to invest in teacher preparation, accessible education materials, and lifelong opportunities for braille literacy.

One of the main goals, too, for us with our declaration about braille for what we're doing is we want that to be recognised worldwide. So, it's not just braille, but it's independence. It's people's lives and this needs to be protected.

(Nacho): Very interesting, Susan. Very interesting. Now, moving to you, Santosh, is there anything that you would like to share regarding that campaign and how that recognition of braille as cultural heritage could help with your campaign? Anything that you would like to share with our audience?

(Santosh): I believe that if we are successful in that declaration by UNESCO, braille as cultural heritage, that will strengthen and give us a foundation for our advocacy and our campaign to make the literacy of braille or braille literacy as a mandatory part of our education for blind and deafblind.

And national governments will be persuaded with reference to that declaration by UNESCO to accept our demand which is the prime demand of the campaign, to make necessary changes in their education policy, laws governing education, to make braille as a mandatory means for literacy of blind and deafblind at least.

(Nacho): Thank you very much, Susan, Santosh. It's been a pleasure to have you on board for this episode of "EBU in Action". Thank you very much.

(Susan): Thank you very much.

(Santosh): Thank you so much.

End of interview with Susan LaVenture (ICEVI) and Santosh Kumar (World Blind Union)

(Neven): Thank you so much. And also to you, Nacho. Thank you. It was a great interview and I really agree with Susan here. It's really a very significant campaign.

And I also am very happy to see that ICEVI and the WBU are doing this jointly because I do believe that we are much stronger if we work together with different stakeholders. And, I mean, also, it would be really great if more countries joined in trying to influence our national UNESCO institutions so we could actually get this through.

So, Paweł, what's your reflection on the interviews?

(Paweł): I have seen the Global Braille Survey making rounds in the social media already. We definitely mentioned it in the polish podcast I'm also taking part in, and I still have to fill it in, but I think it's great that more data is being gathered because we have been talking for a long time: is braille extinct? Is braille dying out?

Fewer and fewer blind people want to learn it. Fewer and fewer blind people want to use it. And finally, we will be able to assess it with real data. And, going from the data, it will be possible to establish the next steps to see how it can be indeed protected and maybe how also it can be brought closer to people who don't see it as a future-proof technology.

Because braille by now, I mean from its inception, but also especially now, it's technology. It's a part of technological solutions, and it can only

be, it can only be hoped that in the years to come, we'll see more ways of accessing that. And I think in the interview that we're going to hear next with Reiner, we will hear also some personal, quite touching stories on how braille can be used and in places where no other technology can surpass it at the moment.

[Music]

(Neven): Indeed. Please, Nacho, tell us about this last interview.

(Nacho): Yes, and sorry for interrupting, Neven, but indeed, in line to what Paweł was already saying, this goes in line with what our braille Working Group did last year through their "Braille 200" forum, where different uses of braille were shared across a focus section of our livingbraille.eu website.

There are so many uses of braille in areas such as technology, also art and, of course, culture in general. And it was a very fruitful and very enriching experience for all of us to get to know more about the different uses that people across Europe do with braille; precisely to commemorate this, what started as a reading and writing method for blind and partial sighted people, has evolved into something even bigger than that.

It's not only about reading and writing, it's also about trying to find uses, daily uses for blind and partially sighted people on that code in the different areas that I mentioned a few moments ago. And precisely, Reiner was also very kind to offer us a good insight, not only about that, but also about the current work of EBU's braille Working Group.

So yes, after this short introduction, I would like to let our audience know more about what our colleague Reiner Delgado from our braille Working Group is currently working on with our colleagues of that same working structure.

Interview with Reiner Delgado, Chair of EBU's braille Working Group

(Nacho): EBU's braille Working Group has been actively working to support braille's recognition as cultural heritage by UNESCO. What was the role of the Working Group in that endeavour, and of yourself as its Chair?

(Reiner): OK, let's explain first: we have in UNESCO this world heritage places, which are mainly architectonically things like buildings and so on. And then we have this intangible cultural heritage.

And you have national lists there where cultural practices can be inscribed. And we started in Germany to let inscribe the use of Braille in

this national German list. This was in 2020. And then, I told this to the other guys in the EBU braille Working Group, and they were quite interested in this topic.

And some of them started to apply for the inscription of Braille in their national lists. And then, we also communicated this topic in EBU via the EBU Newsletter and so. And we have now several countries who have inscribed braille into their national lists. Besides Germany, it's now France, Portugal, Belgium, Slovenia, Austria, Finland, and Spain.

So, it's not only members of our Working Group, but also other countries who did this application and were successful in inscribing the use of Braille in their national lists. And I think this is really a success of the European network built by EBU to organise this and to recognise it as an important point to be recognised as cultural heritage, the use of Braille.

And now what we did this year in March is, together France and Germany, as these were the two countries at that moment who have had inscribed Braille in the national list, to make a nomination for the representative lists of intangible cultural heritage of humanity. So, this is a worldwide list and we expect a decision in late 2027, and maybe the inscription will then be in December 2027 in Uganda.

(Nacho): Interesting, yes. Precisely, strategically, this candidacy comes in a key moment, having commemorated the bicentenary of the braille code last year. EBU's braille Working Group conducted its "Braille 200" project last year, 2025, through which you submitted daily contributions to EBU's livingbraille forum concerning the different uses of braille.

Since we're speaking about culture here, what interesting uses of Braille did you discover through that initiative?

(Reiner): Yes, let's say the using of a script is always culture. So, sighted people use reading and writing for everything in their life and it is a cultural technique.

And blind people do this by using braille. And of course, you use it for administrative things and for economic tasks. But, of course, things which we call culture in a more direct sense, like the communication between persons and all kinds of literature like tech- books and poems and whatever.

So, we as blind people use braille, exactly like sighted people too, and this has many cultural aspects. In our times, we have always the discussion of what is the relationship between braille and audio media, like you can get things spoken out by your synthetic speech at the computer or the smartphone, or you have audiobooks.

And people ask, "Why do you need still braille?" But braille users are very clear of this, that reading and writing braille is really something different than only reading. And so, it's a cultural difference in using script than only listening.

In this last year, where we had so many contributions about braille, what was mainly impressive to me is that what was expressed, for example, by a poem from a woman from Spain, that braille for blind people is a part of identity and personality.

So, it's more than script and culture and that, and something usual and daily what we have all around us. I think it's a bit like, because braille is not so every time there, but braille is always something special for blind people because you don't have it all the time.

And to use Braille and to be able to read and to write by your fingers by your own and not depending on other persons giving you information, this makes some blind people feel that braille is a part of their personality. And I thought: "Yes, for me, it's the same", and this is a very nice thing.

(Nacho): Braille has evolved in many ways: you can find it in books, museums, and even in music, where many advances have taken place over the last decades. Now that we are speaking about personal meanings of braille, if you were to pick a defining moment from a personal perspective, what would be the one that you feel the closest to your personal experience regarding the use of braille?

(Reiner): Yes, let's say that braille has a lot of practical advantages. Like, for example, I use a calendar for my appointments in braille, which I write with a slate and stylus and can read very easily every time. Or I use braille for presentations, for poetry, and what is quite new now, also as an EBU project, for braille art.

So you can make images with braille signs, and we want to publish a calendar for 2027 with twelve braille images from twelve European countries, and we will publish it in September digitally, and everyone can emboss it and use it as a very nice braille art calendar. So, you have a lot of very nice use cases or practical use cases.

What I like very much is just sitting somewhere on my couch, in a park, on the beach, and reading my book or newspaper in braille. Those are very relaxing and very nice moments. And what is really special, I find, is when I am reading braille to my sighted wife. So, I get the newspaper and sometimes I read out of this embossed newspaper to my wife.

And it's a nice moment because normally blind people get read by sighted people and, in this case, it's the other way around, and these are nice moments too.

(Nacho): Yes, indeed. It's very touching. I'm pretty sure that this is a very touching experience for both your wife and yourself, Reiner.

Yes, now that we've spoken about newspapers, culture in general, books- I would like to jump into another subject: technology, we all know that when technology's conceived in an accessible way, it can become a real agent for change; for instance, when it comes to facilitating access to culture.

What innovations are expected to take place in the future to even foster inclusion through culture by using braille devices?

(Reiner): Yes, let's say technology makes the access to braille easier every day. It's embossing braille in paper. It's digital access to braille via braille display and via the different devices that you can use, computer or smartphone or the braille device itself.

It's, of course, now the spatial braille devices, the multi-line braille displays, and the graphic displays, and it's always AI, which will make it much easier to convert information in a good braille code. And so, technique will help us or has helped us in the past and will help us in the future too. I'm very convinced of this.

First of all, that braille gets quicker to the people. And one example is our organisation: DBSV, in Germany, publishes everyday news for deafblind people in braille. And in the beginning, in the '80s, it was that way, news were recorded with audio tape from the radio.

And then someone typed this recording as a file, and then this file was converted into a braille file. And then, you had to go with a floppy disk to the embosser, and then you could emboss it and send it per post to the people.

And I did this yesterday because the colleague is ill, who makes it normally, and we just took news from the internet, and the conversion to braille was very quick, and the embossing also was very quick.

And in, let's say, one hour we could do this task, which took nearly one day years ago. And this is one example where technique makes it very easier to get braille nowadays, and it will be much easier in the future

(Nacho): Yes, definitely. Technology can facilitate access to braille, again, when conceived in an accessible way, and also bearing in mind the different needs of people with visual impairment.

Finally, are there any comments that you would like to share with our audience as a means of conclusion? Any wish? Well, I think that we have already heard a little bit about that, but are there any wishes that you would like to, to share with us?

(Reiner): Yes, I have heard podcasts the last days and this discussion we have a lot of times in our community of braille users, that people are complaining that there are less braille users now than before, and that, braille is dying and one will use it in the future, and so on.

And that the situation is very bad and becoming worse and worse every day. And, of course, you get a bad mood by this, taking part in such discussions, but it's true. We really have less braille users, but the reasons for this are very complex. For example, we have less blind people who are able to learn braille nowadays than before.

And of course, we have many ways to get to information besides braille now, what we didn't have 60 years ago. And I think it's not worth complaining every day that the situation is bad. But we should be happy with braille and be convinced by our braille use, and then, we can convince other people also to use braille and to find out that it's really a better life when you use braille than when you don't do it.

(Nacho): Perfect. Many thanks, Reiner Delgado, Coordinator and Chair of EBU's braille Working Group. It was a pleasure to have you with us at the microphone of "EBU in Action". Many thanks.

(Reiner): Yes. Thank you too for your interest, and greetings to everyone.

End of interview with Reiner Delgado, Chair of EBU's braille Working Group

(Neven): And as always, Reiner is very inspirational.

And I got really curious: did you hear that, Nacho, that he's actually even writing poetry with braille? I mean, maybe we have to ask him more about those poetries' examples sometime.

Now, in conclusion, Nacho, from these interviews, do you feel hopeful for the work with promoting braille here further on? Do you think we will be able to get this status at the UNESCO, for instance?

(Nacho): I hope so, because many work has been done over the last few years. There have been many meetings, there have been many events, and I think it could be, as Paweł said, major life-changing developments, especially in a context marked, among others, by other initiatives, such as, for instance, the braille global literacy campaign that World Blind Union and ICEVI are running together.

So that could be a very helpful element to keep promoting the teaching and using of the code. I'm hopeful that changes will take place in the future and here's for the recognition to take place next year.

(Neven): Well, thank you very, very much, Nacho, for all these great interviews and for keeping up the great work. And from us and the listeners also, thank you to everybody at the EBU Office.

And, well, you didn't mention, actually, we didn't have a news section this time, but anyway, we even have a new colleague, we can just say that we have even new colleague in Brussels.

So, thank you to all of you working at EBU, and we will speak again in the next episode.

(Nacho): Yes, sure. Even if I didn't mention it at the start of the episode, I think that it's worth also, and of course, we have to mention that we already have our dear Advocacy Officer, Roberta Raguccii, from Italy, who's working from our Brussels office as of now.

So yes, as you said, it's been a great addition to the EBU Office in Paris, but now, of course, working in Brussels.

(Neven): Well, thank you very much, Nacho. Thank you very much. So Paweł, do you feel hopeful for the development of promoting braille and braille in future? I mean, you're a braille user also, so I mean, this is very kind of important, I guess.

(Paweł): We'll have to see. To be honest, it definitely draw my interest to what the intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO is and what exactly counts as intangible cultural heritage, and what are the consequences of something being enlisted in that catalog. So, we will see what tangible fruits this recognition will bring.

Hopefully, it will not be purely symbolic. I mean, it's important representation and recognition. But hopefully, it will also make institutions of culture and art notice braille as an equivalent important means of conveying information that the regular print is already enjoying. So yes, I'm curious to what we'll be discussing, for example, next year or in two years' time, or when this matter progresses any further about what happened then.

(Neven): Yes. Well, we will have to follow it up. I think we had a great episode on this topic today. So, do you have anything else you would like to share with our listeners before we say goodbye today?

(Paweł): I hope you enjoyed this episode. I think this topic is very interesting and, aside from braille, if you prepare your next travel, that's what I will be doing from now on, google or, in any way, search for the

intangible cultural heritage object or phenomena in the place where you're going, because maybe you'll discover something very local and very unique.

(Neven): Wonderful. Thank you so much, Paweł I, and all the best to you. Thank you.

(Paweł): Same to you. Bye-bye.

[Music]

(Neven): So, this episode was made possible thanks to the excellent work of our sound master, Emiel Cornelisse in the Netherlands. So, thank you very much, “Dank u wel” Emiel.

And well, you, who listened, if you enjoyed today's episode, please subscribe to “EBU in Action” on your favourite podcast platform.

And if you would like to leave, to learn more about the European Blind Union or share your thoughts with us, well, all our contact details will be in the show notes. And very welcome to contact us, and we would really love to hear from you. So, all the best from all of us to you. Bye-bye.

(Voiceover: “EBU in Action” is co-funded by the European Union).

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