

EBU

Annual Report

2021



The voice of blind and partially sighted people in Europe

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Dear EBU Members, Dear Friends,

While I'm writing this short introduction to the 2021 EBU annual report, I'm divided between the satisfaction for the positive outcome of EBU's activities last year and the worrying news from the terrible conflict in Ukraine. Thousands of people with disabilities are suffering under the war and many of them are blind or partially sighted. So, our first goal is to contribute as much as we can to support them and achieve peace. This annual report shows very clearly and convincingly that despite the ongoing long-lasting Covid-19 pandemic, our organisation has continued its important work to promote and protect the interests of the 30 million blind and partially sighted people in Europe.

The positive results are clearly highlighted in the report and encourage us to follow the productive working method that we have applied after the first dramatic year of the pandemic, when we had to suddenly revolutionise our traditional way of managing our business. Not

only were we deprived of the irreplaceable human relationships, which we consider as a reward to our commitment, but we had to resort to the impersonal, cold online meeting discipline, although increasing the number of meetings of the governing bodies.

Sadly, during 2021 the EBU lost two Board members, our historic First Vice-President, Alexander Neumyvakin, and our esteemed and beloved Secretary General, Maria Kyriakou, who are both greatly missed. Following our constitutional rules, the Board elected a new First Vice-President and a Secretary General among its current members in the persons of Wolfgang Angermann and Maria Thorstensson, to whom we are grateful for their availability.

We are now half-way through our mandate and there is still a lot to do. When thinking about the future, the outlook seems to be challenging and subject to considerable uncertainty, due to the negative consequences of the war and the problems connected to the refugees that many of our national members are hosting and taking care of.

We expect to hear more and more about the difficulties they face even when they will try to go back to their country.

However, we should not forget the good things ahead of us. We are already taking the first steps to organise our 12th General Assembly which will be held next year, and in 2024 we will have the celebration of the 40th anniversary of EBU's foundation.

Also, we were lucky enough that most of our member organisations regularly paid their membership fees despite the financial problems they all faced. So, let's unite our efforts and unite our energies to overcome this terrible moment.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to a successful year of activities, my Board colleagues, the different networks with their specific fields of action, the national member organisations who participated in the various projects and, last but not least, our efficient and committed Secretariat in the Paris office.

Let's continue in our efforts to unite and strengthen our

membership. Together with the other ENGOs we must engage ourselves for a better future of the disability movement in all countries in Europe.

Your President

Rodolfo Cattani,
EBU President



EBU President Rodolfo Cattani

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Introduction By The Executive Director

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As it was the case in 2020, the year 2021 remained characterised by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, EBU and its members had learned how to deal with that situation much better than in the beginning, and the vaccination campaign across the continent improved the reality as the year went on. And this helped to organise events and meetings at least in a hybrid form.

You will read more details about it in this report, but I would like to underline the launch of our big awareness-raising project, called PARVIS. This project has produced a variety of audio-visual material covering many critical areas of life for blind and partially sighted people, and this material is ready for use by all EBU members, including those not being based in an EU country.

At the political level, the adoption by the EU of a new 10-year Disability Rights Strategy constitutes solid progress from our point of view. EBU has been actively lobbying for some of the key points now contained in that strategy such as a Europe-wide Disability Card or improved statistics on disability, just to name two examples. Again, more details in the section about our advocacy and campaigning successes.

Lastly, I would also like to highlight that 2021 was a critical year to plan forward: We prepared and submitted a new proposal for a 4-year grant to the European Commission. This turned out to be successful and places us amongst the top European umbrella DPOs.

The implementation of that new grant which starts in 2022, will allow us, in addition to carrying-out many activities, to gain more external visibility, to strengthen our relationships across the EBU membership, to better assess our own performance in our various interventions. It will therefore be a pivotal piece to make EBU a more vibrant organisation. And this will obviously only be possible through all member's active involvement, as well as strong commitment by the leadership and the EBU staff.

**Lars Bosselmann,
EBU Executive Director**



EBU Executive Director
Lars Bosselmann

How EBU Works

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The European Blind Union is a non-governmental organisation protecting and promoting the rights and interests of blind and partially-sighted people in Europe. The large number of member organisations we reunite provide us with a great deal of knowledge, expertise and experience related to visual impairment and its implications in the daily life of millions of persons with sight loss. Membership of the European Blind Union is globally stable. EBU currently has 41 members.

While the General Assembly of Members held every four years is our governing body, our work is directed by an Executive Board of up to 13 members. In 2021, the Board held four meetings. In addition the officers of the Board held online meetings at regular intervals to address issues requiring urgent action. The officers' decisions were reported to and confirmed by the Board at their face to face or virtual meetings.



Members of the EBU community at the EBU conference, Belgrade 2021

EBU's activities are also facilitated through Networks, established to address various work areas, including ICTs, Road safety and access to transport, rights, as well as the needs of specific segments of the visually impaired population, including persons with low vision, women.

EBU also participates in campaigns and activities which have a broader scope than Europe itself, in particular as the European member of the World Blind Union, a global organisation representing the interests of 285 million blind and partially sighted people in 190 member countries worldwide.

The EBU Central Office supports the Board, national members, Commissions and Networks in their work. It is also the main contact point for information to the general public, members and partner organisations. Ever since it was established, the EBU Office has been located in central Paris.

Headed by the Executive Director, EBU's central office team is composed of five other staff members. In 2021 the permanent EBU staff members were:

Executive Director

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The persistence of the Covid-19 pandemic throughout 2021 forced the European Blind Union to maintain the measures taken in the previous year to limit the spread of the virus, including remote working several days a week for our employees and almost all meetings held as online conferences. In spite of this, and thanks to the seriousness shown by all our employees and volunteers, the EBU was able to continue to operate satisfactorily, without any major impact on implementing the budget, which has actually continued to grow significantly.

Accordingly, expenditure amounted to €724,393, an increase of 29.70% compared with the previous year, while revenues were €736,266 (+18.48%). We therefore recorded a surplus of €11,873 (1.61% of revenues), pointing to a normal resumption of activities.

A Expenditure

Since the EBU had agreed to develop a new project – PARVIS – over a two-year period, we hired an additional member of staff, rented an office and purchased computer equipment for her; including the fees paid to two partner associations, total expenditure was €117,000.

Our staff costs, including social security contributions, amounted to €361,088, slightly less than last year, as the change of Director in 2020 involved a significant level of expenditure. Note that 79.40% of our staff costs in 2021 were taken up by our various projects.

Our other expenditure was in line with the budget estimates adopted at the start of the financial year, and consisted primarily of:

- travel and conference costs of €58,305,
- audit costs, translations of various documents and publication of our communications materials of €46,470,

- audit costs, translations of various documents and publication of our communications materials of €46,470,
- costs incurred for the Pascal project of €39,081,
- rent and service charges for the Paris offices of €27,550,
- accountancy fees of €18,360,
- a grant from the Solidarity Fund of €7,962,
- support for the Louis Braille museum of €6,000,
- depreciation of €8,300.

All other expenses were less than €5,000.

We did not organise an exchange of best practices between our members in 2021, and the Japanese association Onkyo did not run its usual contest to promote Braille.

B Revenues

As in previous years, our revenues came from the funding we receive to run our various projects:

- €331,432 for the REC project (45% of the total),
- €120,282 for Parvis (16.33%),
- €38,142 for Pascal (5.20%).

The vast majority of our members paid their subscription, with the reductions granted in 2020 maintained principally because of the economic difficulties associated with the pandemic. We therefore received €238,750, representing 32.42% of our resources.

We received a contribution of €1,000 from the ONCE for the Louis Braille museum and a grant of €3,346 from the Fédération des Aveugles et Amblyopes de France to hold the first face-to-face meeting of the Board, which took place in Nice last October. We thank them both.

Conversely, we received no donations for the Solidarity Fund or the Development Fund to help people with a visual impairment, which is a pity, insofar as the second of these will be operating again from 2022.

Similarly, because of the pandemic and despite our complaints, the Crédit Coopératif did not pay any dividends on the warrants we hold, whereas we received €3,000 in 2020.

C Balance Sheet

At 31 December 2021, we had €750,013, with €303,032 invested in warrants with the Crédit Coopératif, €77,221 in a savings account and €369,560 in our various current accounts. Unlike last year, we did not receive our grants for 2022 by the end of 2021.

The total reserves shown on the balance sheet before the income appropriation for the year were €690,587.79, with €166,826 remaining allocated to the Solidarity Fund and €37,740 to the Development Fund.

D Income Appropriation

We propose to allocate the surplus of €11,873.42 to our reserves.

Conclusion

Our cash-flow situation is satisfactory and our revenues and expenditure are in line with our budget estimates, as evidenced by the monthly monitoring sent to each member of the Board. Once again, I would like to thank all those who work regularly to produce these documents.

Philippe CHAZAL

Treasurer, European Blind Union

EBU And Its Members - Internal Communication

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As a European network, EBU wants to improve internal communication with its members through transparent and harmonised use of EBU technical terminology. Young European and national leaders attended a “Getting to know EBU” e-workshop, as has been the case in previous years, though in 2021 this took the form of a highlights of the year presentation.

Discussion Lists

In order to facilitate and boost in-depth exchange of information, experience and good practices among members between meetings, we have developed email “discussion lists” according to areas of interest.

The EBU Member’s newsletter is made up of contributions from our members, general news and information on issues relevant to our target group and an important feature is the regular campaign updates provided by the Head of Campaigning. The monthly EBU Member’s newsletter was also one of the vehicles used to promote the EBU Access Cast technology podcast.

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It is equally important to maintain and increase our visibility and to make the needs and aspirations of blind and partially sighted people known to decision-makers, partner organisations, industry and the general public. Communication tools we use to that effect include:

1 Internet

The [EBU website](#) is regularly updated and continues to be a major channel of communication for EBU activities and issues related to the visually impaired community. In 2021 the average number of monthly visitors to the website was around 10,150, **an almost 50% increase on 2020.**

2 The EBU Focus Newsletters

The three-monthly EBU [Focus newsletters](#) were also related to a mix of campaigning topics, ongoing activities and specific projects. The topics for the Focus newsletters in 2021 were:

- February – **Acoustic systems for navigation**

- June – **The EU Disability Card**
- December – **Employment, keys to inclusion**

The Focus newsletter is an excellent means of involving and thus making the most of both experts from EBU member countries and staff members as well as guest authors. As a reminder, the Focus newsletters are now produced in seven languages, the four original online versions, English French German and Spanish, and, as word documents only, in Polish, Serbian and Turkish.

3 EBU Responses to EU Consultations

In 2021 EBU published [Position Papers](#) or responses on 8 key topics including the development of the European Disability Rights Strategy and media funding to the European film industry.

As a complement to this work, we developed a fourth campaigning “how to” memo, on the use of Twitter, and its importance as a modern campaigning tool.

4 Twitter

In 2021 the number of followers has been stable. With just under 5,200, we are reaching what is probably the best we can do in terms of number of followers in the current organisation.

The good news is the increase of our member organisations now present on Twitter (27), albeit with only a tiny part of these really active, supporting our tweets and interacting with us on Twitter.

5 The EBU Access Cast

The [EBU Access Cast](#) continued through 2021. 8 podcasts were produced in 2021, though at the end of the year, the team decided to take a break, as the workload of producing regular material was too great. EBU is looking at ways to relaunch the podcast in a new format.

6 The EBU Annual Conference

The EBU 2021 conference was held on 21 and 22 October in Belgrade (Serbia) in collaboration with our national member.



Speakers on stage at the EBU conference

Entitled "[Employment of blind and partially sighted people – a key to inclusion](#)", it brought together 150 participants from 12 countries to discuss challenges and opportunities in the field of employment, as well as to look to the future in a post COVID context. The resulting [EBU Belgrade declaration](#) (available in 9 languages) highlighted employment as a powerful means of inclusion in society for BPS persons.



Audience participants at the EBU conference

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1 General remarks

The yearly meeting of our Commission for Liaising with the EU took place on 20-21 November in hybrid format, with presence in Ljubljana (Slovenia) and online participation for those unable to travel. This formula turned out to be rather satisfactory, with good and constructive exchange to assess our campaigning achievements of the past year and to plan future work.

In the context of the pandemic, EBU has managed, not only to maintain, but even to increase its visibility as a stakeholder with the EU institutions. In particular we have participated in a large number of consultations, in different forms, and often on short notice. We have obtained noteworthy external contributions to our quarterly thematic Focus Newsletter, namely from MEPs or Commission staff.

A key moment in our campaigning and advocacy work in 2021 was the adoption, by the European Commission, of its' Disability Rights Strategy. Though having

certain shortcomings, the strategy does contain positive elements to which EBU, alongside other DPOs actively contributed, and will continue to monitor as it is implemented.

Let us now look at EBU's other key campaigning and advocacy successes in 2021, in different domains.

1 Equality in Employment

EBU contributed to the report on Equality in Employment Directive in light of the UNCRPD by the Employment and Social Affairs committee (EMPL) of the European Parliament. After approval the EMPL of the European Parliament in January, the plenary adopted on 11 March – more than two months earlier than expected – the own initiative resolution on the implementation of the Equality in Employment Directive in light of the UNCRPD.

EBU welcomed this resolution which, in outline, calls for:

- a revision of the Employment Equality Directive as soon as possible with a view to harmonising it with the provisions of the UNCRPD and to implement a participatory process aimed at ensuring the direct and full involvement of representative organisations of persons with disabilities.
- harmonisation of the definition of disability and to ensure mutual recognition of disability status across Member States to ensure free movement for persons with disabilities and the enjoyment of their EU citizenship rights.
- the collection of EU-wide disability-related data with a human rights-based approach, including on employment and VET, disaggregated by gender, age, disability type, race/ethnic origin, sexual orientation, including persons with disabilities, who have until now been left out of the statistics.

3 Creative Europe/ MEDIA

A letter signed by the Chairman of the Commission for Liaising with the EU was sent on 16 January to the European Commission's competent units at DG CNECT and EMPL. In that letter, we expanded on our recommendations contained in our position paper of September 2020, to ask that applications which foresee accessibility in their budget get extra points and are prioritised when grants are awarded in general, so that production companies and filmmakers are incentivised to make their works accessible. The EU Commission [replied in March](#) offering some reasons to be positive going forward. On 16 June we issued a [press release](#) to welcome the progress observed in the first calls for proposals under the Creative Europe Programme for 2021-2027, which show some very positive developments for persons with a visual impairment.

To support our recommendations, DG CNECT interlocutors asked us to provide intelligence on the practice of the industry, to ensure added value of EU funding for accessible films. This led us to send an action request to our members in the EU, about the practice of national film funding agencies, on the basis of a questionnaire we provided. The results of this questionnaire will be fully analysed in the near future.

In the second week of September, as part of the PARVIS project, we had an awareness-raising campaign on Twitter about the right of access to culture, in which we particularly highlighted the need for audio description and audio subtitling for the enjoyment of films by BPS people, and our related demands as regards public funding to the film industry.

4 Reform of EU electoral law

Together with EDF, we continued to lobby the European Parliament's Constitutional

Affairs committee (AFCO). The amendments tabled by MEPs or groups very largely reflect our recommendations, although with considerably more support from the S&D and Greens/ELA groups than from others. We will need to continue our lobbying ahead of the AFCO vote on the amendments, probably in early 2022.

5 Marrakesh Treaty

Bosnia and Herzegovina ratified the Treaty in January, with Liechtenstein ratifying in late October, and Iceland in December the following European countries remain that still need to join: Montenegro, North Macedonia, Albania, Moldova, Ukraine, and Turkey.

At the annual meeting of our Commission for Liaising with the EU, we agreed to gather input on the implementation of the Treaty in the EU, through a survey to our members in the EU.

The European Commission published a Summary Report on its targeted consultation on the availability of accessible-format non-print works within the internal market, which aimed to see whether there was scope for extending the copyright exemption under the Marrakesh Treaty Directive to other types of works and/or disabilities.

Jointly with EDF, we expressed concern about the paragraph reading: “Stakeholders representing cultural heritage or educational institutions and those representing the interests of persons with disabilities mostly expressed their preference for producing ‘accessible format copies’ themselves rather than acquiring already commercially available accessible formats.”

6 Accessible Lifts

In September 2021, CEN approved a technical revision of the EU standard for accessibility to lifts (EN 81-70) which incorporates amendments for what we now consider satisfactory

colour contrast requirements. This results from an ANEC appeal and subsequent work, within the relevant working group of CEN, in which EDF and EBU were closely involved. The overall revision of EN 81-70 is ongoing, with EBU more evidently involved through ANEC than was the case in the past.

7 Mobility

In the Disability Rights Strategy, the Commission announced that by the end of 2023 it will propose an EU-wide EU Disability Card, building on the experience of the ongoing EU Disability Card pilot project in eight Member States. This is what we had consistently called for in the past years, pointing out the shortcomings of the pilot project. Also promising is the statement that the scope of the mutual recognition of disability status will also be extended.

1 The United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities

The [EBU UNCRPD database](#) has existed since 2008 and, since then, our members have regularly contributed despite very limited resources and the particular difficulty to identify English-speaking legal experts.



screenshot of an EBU video promoting article 20 of the CRPD

EBU concentrated its efforts on this topic in 2021 to provide solid input for EDF's draft CRPD alternative report, to be delivered in 2022.

Our [online CRPD database](#) was also augmented by awareness-raising videos produced in the framework of our Parvis project, see just below.

2 Awareness Raising

2.1 PARVIS Project

In 2021, the [PARVIS project](#) (Promoting Awareness on the Rights of Visually Disabled People in an Inclusive Society) successfully introduced multiple awareness-raising activities to promote rights of blind and partially sighted people across Europe. The project involves EBU members in 9 countries: Germany, France, Lithuania, Montenegro, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain, in addition to the Netherlands and Sweden, which are partners within the PARVIS consortium.



Participants at an info-session in Lithuania

One of the key activities of PARVIS has been the launch of short animated awareness-raising videos every two months, which have so far focused on the right to [accessible healthcare](#), [accessible information](#), [personal mobility](#), [work](#), [culture and sport](#) and [maximum independence](#).

The videos have been widely shared in social media through YouTube, Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn and have proven to be an important and efficient awareness-raising tool. Having received a positive response from EBU members, EDF and WBU, the first four videos in the series of ten have been translated into altogether 15 languages (Dutch, Estonian, English, Finnish, French, German, Montenegrin, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Serbian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish and Swedish).

Four e-workshops were organised in 2021 on the same thematic as the videos, which offered an opportunity for participating EBU members to learn how to effectively promote these rights to the public and decision-makers, as well as exchange on how the current situation is relation to these rights in different European countries.

An awareness-raising Twitter campaign #AccessToCulture targeting decision-makers in culture was launched in September 2021, highlighting the importance of audiodescription in TV and films in accordance with UNCRPD article 30 on the right to culture. Furthermore, the first two episodes of the PARVIS “Rights-Reporting podcast” titled “Rights on the labour market” and “Right to equal access to culture” aired, featuring interviews describing a specific difficulty in relation to these topics and how the different legal tools and mechanisms can be used to improve the situation.

In 2022, PARVIS will continue with e-workshops, short videos and podcasts every two months, in addition to new activities in the form of national info-sessions targeted to blind and partially sighted citizens as rights-holders; a decentralized awareness-raising event on the theme of political participation of visually impaired citizens on May 9; the launch of a 20-minute awareness-raising compilation video in May, highlighting obstacles visually impaired people face in their daily lives;

a seminar on non-discrimination in October as well as the launch of European audiodescription guidelines in December 2022.



2.2 Accessible Voting Awareness Raising (AVA)

Election commissions and decision-makers were approached with a tailor-made and multilingual information brochure and video in Albania, Czech Republic and Hungary.

This awareness-raising work was often complemented with advocacy efforts leading to the following results:

- Albania submitted a report on the general elections held in April 2021 to the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, which may include some recommendations in their own report.

- Czech Republic collaborated with their Ombudsman to provide guidance to both blind and partially sighted voters and to local election delegates.
- Hungary contributed the visual impairment dimension in the training material developed by the National Elections Committee for election officials and is approaching regional authorities.

The experience accumulated and data gathered over the years, in particular in our [AVA report](#), should be useful when the EC develops its future guide of good electoral practice addressing participation of citizens with disabilities in the electoral process.



2.3 Gender Equality Awareness Raising (GEAR)

Despite the Covid-19-related measures still impacting our members' work, EBU members in Germany, Iceland and also Montenegro (With financial support from EBU's Solidarity Fund) organised GEAR capacity-building and need assessment activities in 2021, benefitting 212 blind and partially sighted women.

This multi-annual activity is led by EBU's member in Sweden.

In a related activity, the EBU toolkit "[The future we want](#)" was also translated into Icelandic and Montenegrin.

3 Low Vision



Low vision aids in use at the EBU General Assembly

Low Vision Focus Group Meetings (LVFGM) enable partially sighted persons to collectively identify low vision priority issues and aspirations, propose solutions, discuss low vision rights, the role of low vision peer support and the role of low vision networks, and finally agree on next steps resulting hopefully in the adoption of national action plans.

In 2021, 51 partially sighted persons attended LVFGMs in:

- Hungary, Budapest (15 September, 19 participants).
- Ireland, Dublin (27 October, 8 participants) and online (28 October, 8 participants).
- Sweden, Stockholm (8-9 October, 16 participants). group.

4 The Importance of Braille

As part of ongoing important and extensive work on Braille, an EBU statement was delivered, and information on national authorities was compiled, both [uploaded onto the EBU website](#) and an online forum was set up to foster transnational exchange of expertise. This multi-annual activity was led by EBU's member in Germany, as part of a working group.

5 Connected and Autonomous Vehicles

5.1 The PAsCAL project

[Connected and Autonomous Vehicles](#) (CAVs) are a fantastic opportunity to improve blind and partially sighted persons' independent mobility. This is part of our wider work on promoting the 'Design For All' principle with industrial or research entities, thus endeavouring to voice the specific needs of our community as early as possible in any product/service development process. Therefore,

in 2021 EBU continued to provide the visual impairment input to the PAsCAL research project, co-funded by the European Commission. And we achieved very concrete results!

A survey on the acceptance of CAVs was carried out across Europe, with 5659 persons including 1030 blind and partially sighted persons.

[4 Focus Discussion Groups](#) involving 53 blind and partially sighted persons, were also held in Italy and [a test in an autonomous bus](#) with 5 visually impaired Germans was carried out.

Based on the many activities implemented, the consortium is currently feeding the future Guide2Autonomy (G2A), a set of 100 recommendations that will allow an improved understanding of CAVs. A few of them will focus on visual impairment. The G2A shall be launched during autumn 2022, just before the project ends.

For more information on the project, please visit the [PAsCAL website](#), follow its progress on social media ([Facebook](#) - [Twitter](#) - [LinkedIn](#)) or contact Romain FERRETTI, EBU Project Manager at ebuprojects@euroblind.org.

6 Collection of Best Practices on Accessibility

In relation to UNCRPD article 30, a call for best practices on access to culture (with a focus on access to museums and cultural heritage sites) was launched amongst the EBU membership in early March. [A publication in English](#) compiled the 12 national practices collected. The different levels of inclusion described in the examples make them relevant for museums and cultural heritage sites that are just starting with accessibility, as well as for those who are more advanced and experienced but still looking for ways to improve.

7 Employment and Working for Younger People

7.1 EByouth

As planned, the national and European young leaders with a visual impairment identified in 2018 participated in the four following

trainings:

- e-workshop 6 “A rights-based approach of visual impairment” on 26 April – 8 participants. Topics covered were: EBU main campaigns, the UNCRPD, the WIPO Marrakesh treaty and the EU Disability strategy.
- e-workshop 7 “Towards successful campaigning” on 13 October – 8 participants. Topics covered the preparatory phase (why, what for, why, how, resources) and the implementation phase (strategy, action plan, branding pitch, communication channels, monitoring).

The President and other Board members encouraged participants to be active within their respective national organisations, which is the door to leadership also at the EBU level.

Also in the field of youth engagement, EBU presented its work at an online summer camp, the International Camp on Communication and Computers. We certainly intend to sustain that collaboration in the future.

7.2 ADVISE (Aiding Young Visually Impaired Seeking Employment)

This multi-annual activity is led by EBU's member in Spain.

In 2021, EBU members in Denmark, Lithuania, and Serbia joined the ADVISE adventure.

The [EBU manual for inexperienced job seekers with a visual impairment](#) and the ADVISE trainers' manual were translated into Danish, Lithuanian and Serbian.



participants in the ADVISE programme meeting in Serbia

In order to share our specific experiences and expertise, promote exchange within networks and combine our voices on common dossiers, we regularly work with partners and friends. These fruitful and friendly collaborations take the form of exchanging expertise to prepare joint position papers, articles or press releases, or responding together to consultations.

Our wide range of activities also allow us to collaborate with third-party organisations (universities, industrial partners, other NGOs).

The collaboration with EDF, the European Disability Forum, is ongoing as we were one of the founder members, together with other disability organisations. EBU is represented in a number of EDF working bodies so that the visual impairment dimension is fully considered. EBU continues to collaborate closely with EDF on a number of important campaigns, and this has proved to be an effective collaboration.

ICEVI Europe continued to work closely with us, and the two organisations regularly share information through their respective newsletters.

1 Beyond Europe - Solidarity with Our Friends Worldwide

As one of its regional bodies, EBU continued to play an active role within the World Blind Union (WBU). The World Blindness Summit in June 2021 was a high-level gathering bringing together leaders from the blindness community, both in Madrid and online. The WBU and ICEVI General Assemblies took place within that context paving the way to the future, and EBU was represented in many workshops and meetings during the World Blindness Summit.

In a view to support our brothers and sisters in Africa, EBU looked at re-organising its development work. As a result, a call for proposals was sent to all EBU members, inviting submissions to the Board in the field of international cooperation. First proposals reached the Board in early 2022.



The voice of blind and partially sighted people in Europe



The voice of blind and partially sighted people in Europe



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