



The voice of blind and partially sighted people in Europe

Glossary of terms and acronyms in common use by the European Blind Union.

Fourth edition, 01/09/2022

Accessibility

Refers to measures to ensure that all goods, services and the built environment can be used by all, irrespective of their special needs

Accessible formats

Refers mainly to large print, braille and audio.

Action plan

A Board structured document identifying activities for a given year and planning deliverables, timeframe, resources and impact. It is public and available on the EBU website.

Activity

Within EBU an [activity](#) is work carried with a specific goal within a designated area leading to a concrete result.

AFUB

Acronym for the African Union of the Blind

Arne Husveg Award

An award given every four years, half-way through a work period, to women and men having worked for EBU and having rendered outstanding service to the organisation. It is named after Arne Husveg, one of the founding fathers and the first President of EBU.

Assistive Devices

Refers to the whole range of aids (technological, mechanical, and other) available to improve the lives of blind and partially sighted people.

Associate Members

Associate membership is available to individuals or organizations that don't meet the criteria of national membership, but who are interested in being part of EBU, [see article III of the EBU Constitution](#).

Blind

EBU adopts in principle the [definitions](#) used by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for blindness and partial sight.

Campaign / campaigning

EBU carries out [ongoing campaigns](#) at EU level on key issues to our community to ensure that EU law takes into account as fully as possible our rights and demands for an inclusive society with equal opportunities for all. Campaigning is about influencing and achieving change and may involve a range of other advocacy and communication activities, including:

- lobbying law makers
- using the media (issuing press releases and engaging with journalists in order to get them to write about an issue)
- using social media
- involving beneficiaries
- undertaking research to support your campaign (and publishing results)
- writing and disseminating policy briefings and position papers
- responding to consultations

Cerv

Acronym of the Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme of the European Union. Every year, the CERV programme co-funds a high number of EBU activities.

Children

Within EBU, refers to blind and partially sighted people below 18 years of age.

Clear Print Guidelines

A [document](#) offering basic principles with good practice examples that you can easily apply in all your printed and electronic communication activities, for producing information that is also legible for persons with reduced vision.

Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAVs)

These are more or less autonomous vehicles controlled at distance by technology and which require little or no input from the passengers. They use a system of sensors to adapt to their surroundings. This is new technology and is still being refined and regulated, but when operational will have significant repercussions for visually impaired people.

Constitution

The [EBU Constitution](#) is the governing instrument of EBU.

Constitution Committee

Makes recommendations to the Board on amendments required to improve the constitution.

Deafblindness

[Deafblindness](#) is a condition that combines in varying degrees both hearing and sight loss.

Deliverables

Tangible or intangible result from an activity or project (reports, videos, training courses).

Development fund

The EBU Development fund provides funding for small-scale needs, mainly income generating, supporting the disability movement predominantly in Africa.

DPO: Disabled People's (or persons) Organisation

Disabled persons' organisations or DPOs (sometimes now also referred to as OPD's) are representative organizations or groups of persons with disabilities, where persons with disabilities constitute a majority of the overall staff, board, and volunteers in all levels of the organisation.

EBU

Acronym of the European Blind Union

EBU Board (aka the board)

The EBU is led by a board consisting of 5 officers (President, first and second vice presidents, treasurer and secretary general) and up to 8 ordinary members, see [article V of the EBU constitution](#)

EBU Focus Newsletter

A three-monthly thematic newsletter in English, French, German and Spanish, introduced in 2018. In 2019 additional version, in .doc format only, were produced in Polish, Serbian and Turkish.

EBU Member's newsletter

A monthly newsletter in English for EBU members and partners launched in 2018

EBU office (aka the office)

The EBU Office or secretariat is based in Paris, France. It supports the Board and the other working bodies, and is a central contact point for information to the EBU membership, partners, external parties and the general public.

EDBU

Acronym of the European Deafblind Union.

EDF

Acronym of the European Disability Forum

EGDF

Acronym of European Guide Dog Federation.

Elderly

There is a prevalence of sight-loss amongst an increasing population of elderly people in Europe. When speaking of elderly within EBU the term refers generally to blind and partially sighted people over 65 years of age.

European Accessibility Act (EAA)

The [European Accessibility Act](#) aims to ensure all goods and services are accessible to persons with disabilities, and to improve the functioning of the internal market for accessible products and services by removing barriers created by divergent legislation.

FFC

Acronym of the Finance and Fundraising Committee. It provides advice and makes recommendations to the Board on ways and means to secure sound finances for EBU

GAOC

Acronym of the General Assembly Organising Committee. It monitors arrangements made by the host to make sure the assembly is successful.

General Assembly (GA)

The General Assembly of Members is EBU's supreme governing body, and is held every four years, [see article IV of the EBU Constitution](#).

Honorary Life Members

In addition to organizations, EBU honours individuals who made special contributions to the visually impaired community, see [article III of the EBU Constitution](#)

How to Memo

Internal EBU documents produced to assist members and collaborators with important technical topics, such as campaigning.

IAPB

Acronym of the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness

IDA

Acronym of the International Disability Alliance.

ICEVI

Acronym of the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment

IGDF

Acronym for the International Guide Dog Federation.

Liaison Commission (LC)

Short for Commission for Liaising with the EU, a body within EBU which organises our work in relation to the EU and its institutions and meets annually to formulate a plan for the next work period.

Livingbraille.eu

A forum for exchanging and discussion on Braille-related issues, managed by the EBU Braille working group.

Lobbying

Lobbying is a key part of political campaigning. The work carried out by EBU members, experts and consultants to ensure that the voice of blind and partially sighted people, and the position of EBU, is taken into account by decision makers. It is the term used when the 'targets' we want to influence are either legislators (e.g. MEPs or MPs), or officials from a government or institution (e.g. the European Commission)

Low Vision

[Low vision and partially sighted](#) are used as equal indication of limited sight, to differentiate between this group of people and fully blind people.

Mainstreaming (disability)

Making the concerns and experiences of persons with disabilities an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic, and societal spheres (Handicap International, 2009).

Marrakesh Treaty

Refers to the WIPO [Marrakesh Treaty](#) to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled, which sets the legal frame for needed modifications in national copyright regimes and which enables authorized entities to share their accessible book collections across national borders with other entities and with blind, low vision and print disabled individuals.

Members

EBU currently has [41 member countries](#), each represented by a national delegation.

Network

Groups of experts from within EBU designated to contribute their expertise to EBU's work in specific areas and activities. These networks replaced the previous structure of Commissions and are designed to have a more flexible approach.

Nominations Committee

Works to support and ease the election process at general assemblies. It is elected by the general assembly.

Onkyo World Braille Essay Contest

An annual braille essay-writing competition which was run by the Japanese Onkyo Corporation, the last edition was in 2020. EBU organised the European part of this competition, attempts are underway to relaunch this contest.

Organisations of and organisations for blind and partially sighted people (see also DPO)

"Organisation of the blind and/or partially sighted" means a body representative of blind and/or partially sighted people having a substantial number of members and with a majority of its membership consisting of blind and/or partially sighted persons, and having a governing body with a majority of blind and/or partially sighted persons elected by the membership at regular intervals.

"Organisation for the blind and/or partially sighted" means a body established for providing goods, services and facilities for blind and/or partially sighted people whether or not some of its members or of its governing body are blind and/or partially sighted.

Partially Sighted (or partial sight)

[Partially sighted and low vision](#) are used as equal indication of limited sight, to differentiate between this group of people and fully blind people.

PARVIS

An acronym (Promoting Awareness on the Rights of Visually Disabled People in an Inclusive Society) the title of an EU-funded, EBU led awareness-raising project. The Project will last for 2 years beginning in January 2021 and will involve a selection of EBU members.

Position Paper

Official EBU responses to consultations, regulatory frameworks etc. often but not exclusively concerning the EU.

Press Releases

Announcements of key events and milestones for EBU and its work

Project

Within EBU a project is a large scale, carefully planned and structured topical collaboration aiming to achieve specific objectives with budgetary and time constraints.

SDG

Acronym of Sustainable Development Goal (United Nations). Disability is referenced [in various parts of the SDGs](#) and specifically in parts related to education, growth and employment, inequality, accessibility of human settlements.

Silent Cars

Refers to the EBU campaign to highlight and limit the dangers electric vehicles (EV), electric-hybrid vehicles (EHV) and connected and autonomous vehicles present to blind and partially sighted people.

Solidarity Fund

An EBU fund intended to provide a mechanism for organisations of blind and partially sighted people to seek support/relief if they experience financial difficulties in, among others, paying their membership fees, developing projects, organising or participating in meetings.

Sponsors

A grant given to EBU by a private concern – manufacturer of an assistive device or a pharmaceutical company working on the prevention or treatment of an eye condition – in return for informing or raising awareness about a new product, treatment or process through EBU communication channels.

Strategic Plans

The key objectives and priorities are articulated in the [EBU Orientation Plan](#) for the four year working period, it currently covers the period 2020-2023.

Based on this public Strategic Plan, another document is generated only for EC funding purposes identifying activities for 3 or 4 years. It plans deliverables, timeframe, resources and impact. Also referred to as the CERV strategic plan, it currently covers the period 2022-2025.

UEA

Acronym corresponding to the French name of EBU, l'Union Européenne des Aveugles

UNCRPD (aka CRPD)

Refers to the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities](#)

Universal Design

[Universal Design](#) is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability or disability.

Vision for Inclusion award

An award given every four years at EBU general assemblies to distinguish individuals, organisations or companies having made an outstanding contribution to the full inclusion of persons with a visual impairment in society.

Visually impaired

The term 'visually impaired' is used to indicate blind plus partially sighted people together.

WBU

Acronym of the World Blind Union

WHO

Acronym of the World Health Organisation

Work period

The four-year period between two general assemblies.

Work programme

A document generated only for EC funding purposes identifying activities for a given year and planning deliverables, timeframe, resources and impact. Also referred to as CERV work programme, it is not public and is not available on the EBU website.

Youth

Within EBU, refers to the group of young people ranging from 18 to 30 years of age.