European Blind Union

11th general assembly, Rome, Italy, 28/30 October 2019

**EBU Strategic Orientation 2020-2023**

# Introduction

The European Blind Union (EBU) is a body which represents organisations of blind and partially sighted people across Europe.

We passionately believe that blind and partially sighted people should have the same rights and opportunities as other citizens and that society should be organised in ways which support and include blind and partially sighted people.

This Strategic Orientation outlines the EBU direction for 2020 to 2023. It sets out our Vision, Mission, Values, Principles and Priorities. Achievement of the Orientation’s Actions will of course require a partnership between EBU and its member organisations.

# Vision

Our vision is: A Europe which supports and empowers blind and partially sighted people, in which we can be self-determining and which fully includes us within all aspects of society, in line with the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-2.html) and the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/).

# Mission

Our mission is:

* To promote the interests of all blind and partially sighted people to European bodies
* To produce European-wide research and best practice relating to policies, services and social inclusion;
* To support and strengthen national organisations of blind and partially sighted people.

# Values and Principles

* Upholding the right of self- determination of blind and partially sighted people to make decisions and choices about our own lives
* Focusing on the human rights and needs of blind and partially sighted people while fully cooperating with those with other disabilities
* Ensuring equality of participation and treatment of blind and partially sighted people with diverse experience including differences relating to: visual impairment, other disabilities, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender identity
* Ensuring a positive approach to achieving outcomes based on non-discrimination and positive action
* Having regard for the welfare and advancement of blind and partially sighted people in developing countries
* Maintaining a twin-track approach to supporting full inclusion and where appropriate specialist services
* Working in partnership to promote the interests of blind and partially sighted people and to prevent avoidable sight loss

**Priorities and Objectives**

## List of acronyms

* **ADVISE** Aiding Young Visually Impaired Seeking

Employment

* **AVA** Accessible Voting Awareness-Raising
* **CAV** Connected and Automated Vehicle
* **EAA** European Accessibility Act
* **EC** European Commission
* **EP** European Parliament
* **GA** General Assembly
* **ICC** International Camp on Communication and

Computers

* **ICEVI-EUROPE** International Council for Education of People

with Visual Impairment

* **ICT** Information and Communication Technology
* **UN CRPD** United Nations Convention on the Rights of

Persons with Disabilities

* **SDG** Sustainable Development Goal
* **VI** Visually Impaired

# Priority 1 – Empowering blind and partially sighted persons.

## Objective 1: In cooperation with ICEVI-Europe, governments, professionals and other stakeholders are made aware of the importance of braille (UNCRPD art. 9, 21 and 24 - SDG 4).

### **Action 1**: To promote the Braille report “Braille Teaching and Litera-cy”.

Expected outcomes:

* EBU has supported at least 12 EBU countries to create a Braille committee.
* All EBU countries have implemented at least 3 of the 11 recommendations contained in the implementation report.
* Implementation report available in at least 8 languages.

### **Action 2**: To agree a statement clarifying EBU’s position on Braille to support standardisation work.

Expected outcome:

* EBU statement used at least three times in the year by standardisation bodies.

## Objective 2: Every blind and partially sighted adult in Europe has the opportunity to have a fulfilling job (UNCRPD art. 27 - SDG 8).

### **Action 3**: To promote the survey report “The situation of blind and partially sighted people regarding employment in Europe after 10 years of the UN CRPD: Challenges and opportunities”

Expected outcomes:

* Report available in at least 5 languages.
* Jointly with ICEVI-Europe, a conference on access to jobs and rehabilitation is held.

### **Action 4**: To pursue the ADVISE approach to support VI young people’s job access.

Expected outcomes:

* 2 training courses held in at least 12 countries.
* 240 young VI job-seekers trained and coached.

### **Action 5**: To collect and disseminate examples of good practice in providing in-work support.

Expected outcome:

* A brochure is produced and made available in 5 languages.

## Objective 3: Every blind and partially sighted person has access to technologies that meet their information needs UNCRPD art. 9 – SDG 9).

### **Action 6**: To collect good practice on the implementation of the EU Directive on the Accessibility of Public Sector’s websites.

Expected outcomes:

* A report is available in at least 5 languages.
* Report implemented by European institutions; the accessibility of their websites improved.
* A regional seminar is held to ensure the transfer of good practice to EBU members outside the EU.

### **Action 7**: To support the provision of ICT trainings.

Expected outcome:

* 2 ICC/EBU camps are held.

### **Action 8**: To provide information on ICTs.

Expected outcome:

* At least 32 EBU podcasts on assistive technologies are produced, making sure the needs of the elderly are also addressed.

## Objective 4: Every blind and partially sighted person has the right to participate in public life (UNCRPD art. 29 - SDG 16).

### **Action 9**: To promote the AVA report on the Accessibility of Elections for Blind and Partially Sighted Voters in Europe.

Expected outcomes:

* Report (excluding annexes) available in at least 8 languages.
* 8 countries approached their authorities to raise awareness on accessible elections based on the AVA information module (already available).

### **Action 10**: To ensure elections are accessible to blind and partially sighted voters.

Expected outcome:

* A European Parliament resolution calling to ensure full accessibility of the European elections in 2024 is adopted.

## Objective 5: Blind and partially sighted persons, including children, are protected against discrimination in all areas of life (UNCRPD art. 5 – SDG10).

### **Action 11:** To promote the need for an EU Equal Treatment Directive.

Expected outcomes:

* An EP resolution to press the Council to that effect is adopted.
* A Directive is adopted.

### **Action 12**: To lobby the EP for an EU-wide Disability Card for equal access to related services.

Expected outcomes:

* A position paper and a members’ briefing are developed.
* Current EU Disability Card scheme extended to at least 5 EU Member States.

### **Action 13**: To raise the awareness of the EBU members outside the EU on non-discrimination in connection with the EU Equal Treatment Directive and the EU Disability Card.

Expected outcomes:

* 1 information seminar is held.
* 1 video on the impact of the EU Disability Card is produced.

## Objective 6: Every blind and partially sighted person has access to inclusively designed goods and services (UNCRPD art. 9).

### **Action 14**: To fill the gaps left by the EAA as regards the physical environment.

Expected outcome:

* Legislative and awareness-raising initiatives taken regarding the built environment, public urban transport and household appliances.

### **Action 15**: To push the EU and Member States to use their financial leverage to promote the production of accessible audiovisual productions, including productions for children.

Expected outcomes:

* Audio-description is made mandatory to access EU funding.
* Similar initiatives in 3 member countries taken nationally.

### **Action 16**: To ensure health professionals are aware of the needs of VI patients.

Expected outcomes:

* Awareness-raising module produced in 4 languages.
* Awareness-raising sessions held in 4 pilot countries.

## Objective 7: Every blind and partially sighted person has improved mobility (UNCRPD art. 20).

### **Action 17**: To start collaborative work to harmonise acoustic information and navigation systems.

Expected outcomes:

* A conference is held.
* Standards are developed.

### **Action 18**: To lobby for European legislation on electric mobility, including the use of electric scooters.

Expected outcomes:

* A position and a members’ briefing are developed.
* A campaign is launched.

### **Action 19**: To engage with developments regarding CAVs.

Expected outcomes:

* The needs of users with visual impairments, including children, are assessed.
* EBU position paper available in 5 languages.
* Our position paper taken on board by law-makers from the outset.

# Priority 2 – Strengthening EBU and its members.

## Objective 8: EBU has improved governance and working processes.

### **Action 20**: To ensure balanced representation of under-represented groups.

Expected outcomes:

* EBU toolkit “The Future We Want” available in 8 additional languages.
* Toolkit implemented and 12 national women committees set up or strengthened.
* 12 national low vision committees set up or strengthened.
* 20 young leaders empowered.
* 6 women, 4 young persons and 6 partially sighted persons elected as board members at the 2023 GA.

### **Action 21**: To achieve greater cohesion amongst the membership.

Expected outcomes:

* 1 yearly conference held.
* 6 twinnings formalised to ease exchange of expertise.
* 10000 EUR contributed every year by EBU and its members to the EBU Solidarity Fund.

### **Action 22**: To make EBU and its work known to blind and partially sighted people at the grass root level

Expected outcomes:

* Short presentation of EBU and its work is produced, translated in as many European languages as possible and published in newsletters and other communication channels run by EBU members.

### **Action 23**: To promote Erasmus+ among our members

Expected outcomes:

* One conference to be held to exchange the experience of studying abroad
* To recruit at least 3 students who would be available to translate EBU’s internal documents on a voluntary basis to improve their translation skills.

### **Action** **24**: To campaign for reliable statistical data.

Expected outcomes:

* Awareness-raising module produced in 4 languages, possibly in liaison with Eurostat and/or the EC.
* Awareness-raising sessions held in 4 pilot countries.

### **Action** **25**: To increase the visibility of the Board and its members.

Expected outcomes:

* Each Board member represents EBU at 4 events.
* 9 Board members are active on Twitter.

## Objective 9: EBU and its organisations have improved communication and campaigning capacity.

### **Action 26**: To upgrade EBU’s information and campaigning capacity.

Expected outcomes:

* Audit report on EBU’s information (incl. social media) complete by end of 2020.
* Social media strategy for effective campaigning complete by end of 2021.

### **Action 27**: To provide information and training on campaigning.

Expected outcomes:

* At least 4 ‘How To’ campaigning memos produced, available in at least 8 languages.
* As many related e-workshops are held.
* 3 information e-workshops to raise awareness on the Sustainable Development Goals are held in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

## Objective 10: EBU and its organisations have improved fundraising capacity.

### **Action 28**: To provide information and training on EU funding programmes.

Expected outcomes:

* To hold an information e-workshop on EU funding every two years; 20 participants.
* To hold a face-to-face training course on EU funding; 12 participants (excl. guides).

### **Action 29**: To collect and disseminate good practice in national private fundraising.

Expected outcomes:

* 5 examples collated and circulated.
* A conference is held.

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