



## Press Release, 7 January 2020

EHIMA Secretariat  
Herriotstraße 1  
60528 Frankfurt a. Main  
Germany  
Tel.: +49 69 6642 6340 10  
E-Mail: sz@ehima.com

### Hearing Instrument Manufacturers: “Bluetooth LE Audio is a major step ahead for hearing aid users”

Frankfurt, January 7, 2020 - Today, the [Bluetooth Special Interest Group \(SIG\)](#) announced LE Audio, the next generation of Bluetooth audio. With LE Audio, hearing aid users will benefit from high quality sound from many types of media directly in their hearing instruments.

Since 2013, the [European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association \(EHIMA\)](#) has been collaborating with Bluetooth SIG to develop a new suite of standards which bring improved features and performance, specifically for hearing aid users. LE Audio introduces broadcasting of signals to any user in the range of the transmitter that has a hearing aid. This means that the user can connect to the transmission with a simple action in their hearing instrument. This new technology is more cost effective and simpler to install compared to the induction-based system used hitherto.

“With direct streaming of audio signals in noisy situations, Bluetooth LE Audio helps us to provide better service for users of hearing instruments, such as hearing aids and implants. We expect the simplicity and affordability of this solution to lead to higher popularity and coverage compared to previous systems”, says EHIMA Secretary-General Stefan Zimmer.

Users will be able to listen to high quality, stereo music in theatres, concerts and churches as well as to voice messages from public information infrastructure. Used in public transportation, LE transmitters will allow hearing aid users to be up to date on information pertaining to their journey.

Both public and private venues will find installation of these systems much more economical, resulting in a step change in accessibility for anyone with hearing loss.

EHIMA will continue to work with hearing instrument user groups as well as with Bluetooth SIG to maximize the benefits of this pioneering technology.



## **The European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA)**

The European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA) represents the world's seven major hearing instrument manufacturers, offering smart hearing aid and implant solutions for people hard of hearing. EHIMA was founded in 1985 and its members are among the world's largest and most advanced hearing instrument manufacturers. Members of EHIMA develop, manufacture and market hearing instruments on a large scale in one or more countries in Europe as well as exporting their products worldwide. [www.ehima.com](http://www.ehima.com)

### **Key Facts on Hearing Loss**

- 1 in 10 of the total EU population states a hearing loss.\*
- Only 1 in 3 of the hard of hearing people uses hearing instruments.\*
- Untreated hearing loss costs EU28 each year 185 billion €. \*\*
- Hearing instruments help to reduce these costs.\*\*

Source: \*EuroTrak; \*\*Bridget Shield (2019): Hearing Loss – Numbers and Costs, Brunel University London; both available at [www.ehima.com](http://www.ehima.com)

### **Press Contact**

For political and general inquiries:

Dr. Stefan Zimmer, Secretary General  
European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association  
Herriotstrasse 1, 60528 Frankfurt am Main, Germany  
Phone: +49 69 664 26 34 10 E-  
mail: [sz@ehima.com](mailto:sz@ehima.com)

For technical inquiries:

Dr. Rob Drullman, Secretary of the EHIMA Technical Commission  
E-mail: [tc@ehima.com](mailto:tc@ehima.com)

[www.ehima.com](http://www.ehima.com)