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## Press release - EHIMA

### **Bluetooth Auracast™ Broadcast Audio: New standard can significantly improve the ability of people with hearing loss to communicate**

**Frankfurt a. M., Germany, June 8, 2022.** Today, the Bluetooth Special Interest Group (SIG) announced Auracast™ broadcast audio, an upcoming audio broadcasting capability based on Bluetooth technology. Auracast™ broadcast audio will enable an audio transmitter (e.g., smartphones, laptops, TVs, or public address systems) to broadcast audio to an unlimited number of close-range Bluetooth audio receivers. This includes hearing aids and hearing implants.

“Train stations, airports and other public spaces with a lot of background noise can be challenging for people living with hearing loss,” explains Eric Bernard, President of the European Hearing Instrument Manufacturers Association (EHIMA). “Understanding speech in these acoustically challenging environments requires technological support. Solutions such as Auracast™ Broadcast Audio can significantly improve the ability of people with hearing loss to communicate. Users of hearing aids or hearing implants will thus be able to move and orient themselves more easily and safely in their acoustic environment in the future. Participation and inclusion will be facilitated, and the overall quality of life will be enhanced.”

According to Bluetooth SIG, Auracast™ broadcast audio will “function as the next-generation assistive listening system (ALS) technology.”

“For the last 50 years, hearing aid users have gotten accustomed to use the telecoil functionality for better understanding in churches and other public places, where hearing loops are installed. With the new standard Auracast™, there will be a much wider range of places covered,” says Eric Bernard. “EHIMA has worked together with Bluetooth SIG to make it one solution for hearing aids and all other Bluetooth BT audio devices.”

The audio broadcasting capability will include the option to link several user devices for a shared listening experience, but also the possibility to listen to silent televisions in public venues. In addition, Auracast™ enabled Bluetooth hearing systems would be able to receive audio broadcasts directly from a public address system of venues such as cinemas or houses of worship.

Auracast™ broadcast audio Bluetooth is part of the Bluetooth LE Audio specification suite and scheduled to be released within the coming months.



## **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.

### **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)

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