

Concluding Statement of the Annual General Meeting 2025 Tallinn, Estonia

Telecoils to stay as the integral feature of hearing devices

EFHOH calls for a balanced approach where Telecoils and Auracast™ features co-exist in hearing devices to ensure access to assistive listening systems for at least the next 10- 15 years.

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) is committed to advocating for accessible assistive listening technologies that ensure full participation in public and private life for people with hearing loss. EFHOH upholds the position that maintaining the telecoil feature and providing access to hearing loops is essential for safeguarding inclusive hearing access across Europe for at least the next 10 to 15 years. By prioritizing assistive technology compatibility and advocating for inclusive regulations, EFHOH aims to ensure that people with hearing loss can benefit from both current and emerging technologies in their daily lives.

With the development of new technologies such as Auracast™, it has been suggested that hearing loops, and the Telecoils which provide access to them, are no longer needed as new systems are going to replace them. **Auracast™ audio streaming**, designed to be used in facilities as a replacement or add-on option for existing assistive listening systems, is not ready. Furthermore, removing telecoils from hearing devices too early risks cutting off access to proven systems before newer technologies like Auracast™ are fully integrated and reliable.

Auracast™ broadcast audio offers new Bluetooth connectivity, allowing hearing aid users to stream personalized audio from multiple sources, enhancing flexibility in both public and private spaces.

Telecoil is an essential accessibility feature for many users, offering access to clear, reliable sound in public spaces offering a hearing loop.

CALL TO ACTION

We call on hearing aid and cochlear implant manufacturers:

- To maintain telecoils in hearing aids, cochlear implants and other hearing devices to enable direct connection to existing hearing loops, without the need for additional receivers.
- To maintain telecoils in both rechargeable and non- rechargeable devices.
- To provide clear marketing information regarding the inclusion of telecoils in the devices prior to purchase.

We call on audiologists and hearing aid professionals:

- To support hard of hearing people in hearing well in as many places as possible by informing them of the benefits of both technologies.
- To encourage choices of devices with both Telecoils and Auracast™.
- To activate Telecoils and Auracast™ where they exist in the instruments.

We call on venues, building planners:

- To maintain existing hearing loops and assistive listening systems.
- To consult with hard of hearing organisations prior to refurbishment and installation plans.

We call on policy makers and accessibility professionals:

- To continue the inclusion of existing assistive listening systems in accessibility requirements until Auracast™ streamed assistive listening has matured and has a large enough user base to enable it to work appropriately for people with hearing loss.

About EFHOH

The European Federation of Hard of Hearing People represents interest of 59 million of hard of hearing people in Europe. Our network consists of national organisations for hard of hearing and deafened people. Our vision is Europe where hard of hearing people can live without barriers and participate at all levels of society.