Summary document - visual disability

Following the needs gathering workshops, which took place in three Swiss cantons (Lausanne, Bern and Lugano), two ideation workshops were organised on the theme of visual impairment.

Workshop 1: in collaboration with SBV and FabLab Luzern in Horw. Workshop 2: in collaboration with Unitas and USI in Lugano.

This document summarises the main elements that were discussed during these two workshops, the challenges to be overcome and concrete ways to respond to the needs identified.

# The six main themes

## **Housing**: People with visual impairments want to be able to use all household appliances independently.

- Touch-sensitive appliances without physical controls are difficult or impossible for visually impaired or blind people to use.

- Electronic displays are also sometimes difficult to read for visually impaired people, as the contrast is not good and blind people cannot see them anyway.

## **Autonomy, mobility**: People living with a visual impairment want to be able to orientate themselves independently and use buses and trams in any city.

- Numbers on buses/trams or other public transport are often not very visible to visually impaired people.

- Each city or region has its own public transport network, which operates differently: Signage, numbering, announcements, timetables, etc.

## **Hobbies, games**: people with visual impairments want to be able to enjoy their hobbies and, when playing computer games, to be able to do so independently.

- Navigating computer games is one of the main difficulties for gamers living with a visual impairment.

## **Internet** : People with vision impairments want to be independent in their use of the Internet and have access to all websites.

- Captcha: window to confirm that the person is not a robot. These tests are often visual, there is a code to read or an image to identify and it is inaccessible.

## **Public space**: People living with a visual impairment want to have access to all visual information in public space.

- At the post office, people have to take a ticket. Information at the counters (counter number, ticket number, waiting time) is only visual.

- Temporary (cleaning sign) or permanent obstacles are only indicated visually.

## **Administration**: Visually impaired people want to manage their own personal administration and fulfil their duties and rights as citizens autonomously and anonymously.

- Voting participation should be guaranteed, and an online voting solution should be promoted.

- Paper documents are not accessible to blind people

- The eTax software is not accessible, so blind or visually impaired people have to use a third party to complete the tax return. What about sensitive data? The need to remain anonymous when the blind or partially sighted person relies on the assistance of a third party to complete the tax return.

- Personal administration (paying bills, sending mail) must be able to be done completely independently.

# Challenges to overcome

* Communication: awareness, consideration, becoming visible
* Orientation: signs, road markings
* Cities and authorities are often overwhelmed by reports of problems
* Great diversity of disabilities and strong individuality
* Documents online
* The electronic signature
* Software updates, which lead to changes in its use
* Use of Captcha
* Using Emoticons
* Identification and safe use of pedestrian crossings
* Identification of public places and their entrances such as pharmacies and supermarkets

# The concrete ideas

## Creation of an intercantonal cooperation network between the different organisations

There are organisations that are in direct contact with people with visual impairments. These organisations collect the needs of the people concerned, direct them to associations and institutions, take stock of their personal situation and direct them to concrete solutions.

There is a lack of coordination between the different regions, so that solutions found in one place and for one person are made accessible to others.

## Open-source solutions platform

Many small, handmade solutions are created and customised for individuals. These solutions should be made available as open source so that anyone can use them.

The principle of open source should be promoted, right from the design stage of projects.

## Customised recognition and description based on access, or through an individual digital account

Use of audio description, or other personalised solutions, according to the preferences indicated by the person.

## E-city: People communication system

Cities should be equipped with a system to communicate with the user, to indicate points of interest, entry and exit points, construction sites, alleys, traffic lights and to identify public transport by means of a user-friendly, low visual impact, essential application, which does not have to be an object to be held in the hand and, above all, which is structured in such a way that, whatever the weather situation, fog, storms, it is functional An interactive system that offers visually impaired people a new tool to interact with street furniture, benches, lampposts, etc. through requests and questions. All this is facilitated by the physical infrastructure of the whole city. Giving people the opportunity to rediscover their local environment, to share it with others using unique identification codes.