



ANNUAL REPORT 2020



Helping people find devices that best suit their needs



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2020 IN NUMBERS



63,500

unique visits
to GARI each
month

66%

of advanced
searches are for
hearing features

1500+

devices within
GARI

30+

manufacturers/
OEM's involved

82%

of searches on
GARI are for
phones

20

languages
available

70%

of GARI users
find what they
are looking for

14

videos on
accessibility
features
produced

40

organizations
and agencies
link to GARI

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BACKGROUND

Twelve years ago the Mobile & Wireless Forum (MWF) established the Global Accessibility Reporting Initiative (GARI) to help people find a device that could best suit their needs.

Today, the GARI database contains information on the accessibility features for over 1,500 devices including mobile phones, tablets, Smart TVs and Wearables. You'll also find information on accessibility apps that work on these devices. The database is free to use, available online in more than 20 languages and is used

by governments, user organizations, telecom providers and many other stakeholders around the world.

GARI constantly evolves based on feedback from the disability community, accessibility experts and the latest technological developments. It also builds on partnerships with organisations around the world to expand its reach and value.

In this report, we present a summary of GARI's progress in 2020, including improvements to the usability of the website, search interface and database.

30 MANUFACTURERS, FIVE PRODUCT GROUPS AND 1,500+ ACCESSIBLE DEVICES

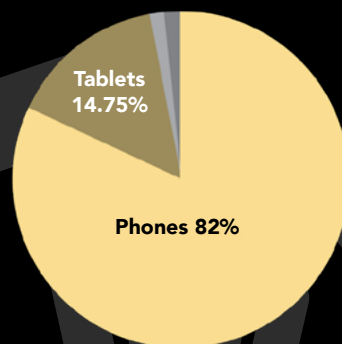
The GARI database is populated in line with new devices coming to the market. By the end of 2020, the database listed information on the following number of mobile phone models around the world:

In total, there are currently 1,449 accessible mobile phones listed in the GARI database, in addition to accessible tablets, Wearables and Smart TVs.

The database also lists almost 600 accessibility related apps which have been specifically designed to help overcome barriers people face due to disability, injury, illness, old age or disabling environments. The apps include maps for accessible locations, crowd-sourced help via the device camera for people who are blind, speech to text functions for people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, alternative and augmented communication and much more.

By the end of 2020, over 30 manufacturers are displaying their products and the information on their accessibility features in the GARI database. These include: Samsung, Apple, Sony, LG, Motorola Mobility, Alcatel, Huawei, Google, Nokia, Motorola Solutions, ZTE, Lenovo, OPPO, OnePlus, HTC, T-Mobile USA, Kyocera, HP Inc., Sonim Technologies Inc., Cisco, Timex Group USA Inc., SEMP TCL, Coolpad Americas, MobiWire, POSITIVO, KonnectONE, Foxx Development Inc., Bullitt Group, Coolpad Technologies Inc, Wiko Mobile.

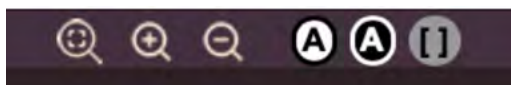
Phones and tablets are the most popular devices searched for



THE GARI DATABASE AND WEBSITE

Over the summer of 2020 we went to work on further improving the usability of the GARI website based on feedback from our users.

To begin with we added better contrast control and the option for a high contrast mode to help those with low or weak vision. There is now an option to select black text on a white background (and in the process removing other colour elements from the site) or white text on a black background.



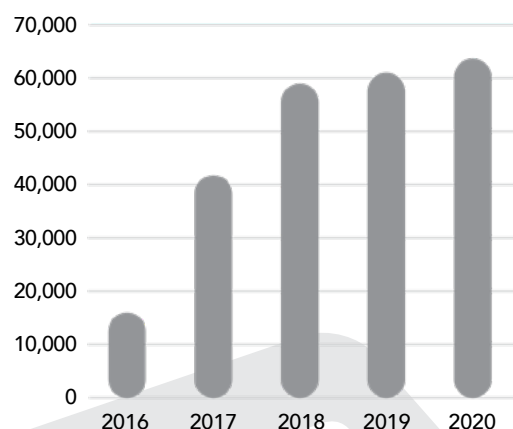
We also added an option to zoom in or out from the default presentation of the site. You can still use the keyboard commands for your browser to zoom in and out of the page, or use these new buttons to do so. A reset Zoom button returns the page to the default display.



Finally, based on feedback from our visitors who use GARI with screen-readers, we have implemented a skip link – which allows screen-reader users to move straight into the content of each page and avoid all of the menus and links at the top of each page. We also updated the page HTML language tags to match the language displayed so that screen-readers are able to read out the content in the correct language. The layout of the search pages was also improved so that they print better, and all 20 language versions were reviewed for display errors, in particular those written in non-Latin alphabets.

We hope that this will improve the experience of the many visitors to the GARI website, which registered in 2020 a monthly average of 63,500 unique visits and 410,000 pageviews.

Average unique visits each month to GARI



This data only covers the main project site and does not include information on usage from the many organizations that also use the underlying data via direct XML feed.



WHERE DO GARI USERS COME FROM?

The highest number of GARI users in 2020 was to be found in North America with 40%, followed by Latin America over 20%, Europe with almost 20%, and the rest coming to equal parts from Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa.

We see the geographical use change from year to year in correlation to regional initiatives that can be driven by government but also by private sector, especially network providers who might be promoting accessible devices and services for their customers.



ACCESSIBILITY INFORMATION IN 20 NATIONAL LANGUAGES

As important as it is to provide information on the accessibility features in devices, it is equally important to provide the information in ways that can be accessed as widely as possible. For this reason, the MWF has been working to constantly improve the availability of the information in a growing number of languages.

Languages currently supported on the site include English, Arabic, Danish, German, Spanish, Swedish, Finnish, French, Hungarian, Italian, Korean, Dutch, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Japanese, Chinese, Hebrew and in 2020, Lithuanian.

The MWF is committed to expanding the range of languages that GARI is provided in and is willing to work with partner organisations to help bring this about.



MOST SEARCHED FOR FEATURES IN 2020

Hearing features continue to dominate the list of the most searched for features (via the 'Advanced Search' function).

- Hearing Aid T-coil Coupling
- Hearing Aid or "HAC" Setting
- Internet Capability
- Improved Call Quality
- Adjustable Maximum Volume Control

- Supports ability to install third party applications or apps
- Connection available for Induction Loop
- Ringer Volume Adjustable
- Touch Screen

Hearing features comprise two-thirds of the most searched for features on GARI.

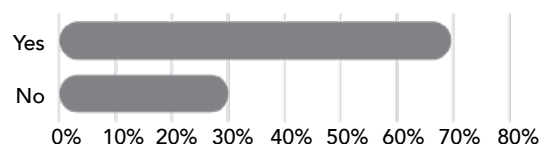


GARI USER SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS

The GARI website also includes a user satisfaction survey which is entirely optional for those visiting the site. The survey is only shown at the end of a visit and we had received 4,665 responses by the end of 2020.

Some interesting insights into the use of the site include that 40% of the respondents indicate that they have a disability and close to 70% of the respondents confirm that they found what they are looking for on the site.

Did you find what you were looking for in terms of information on accessibility features in devices?

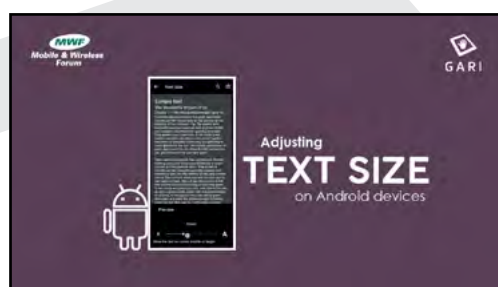
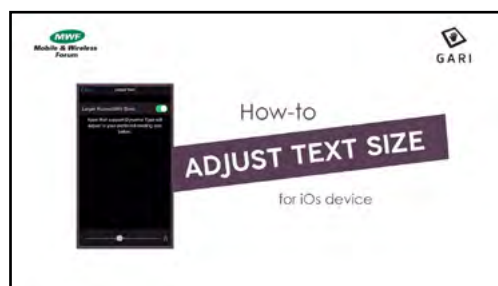
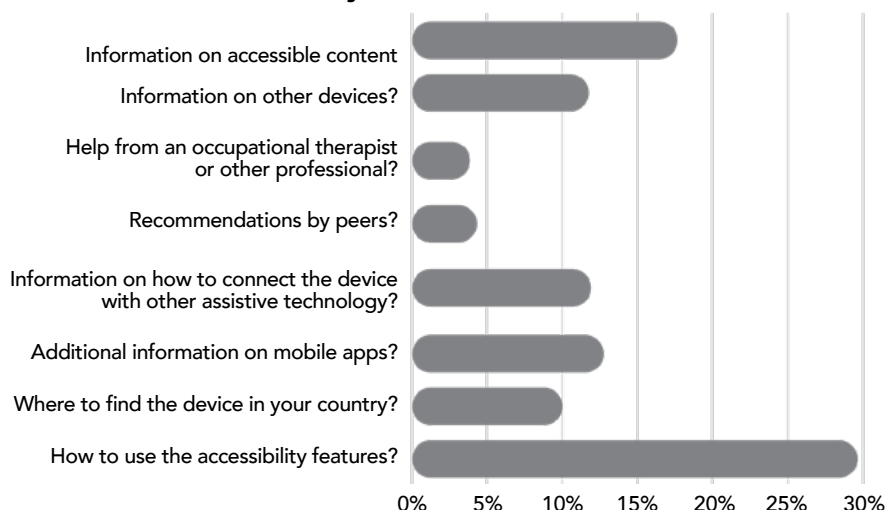


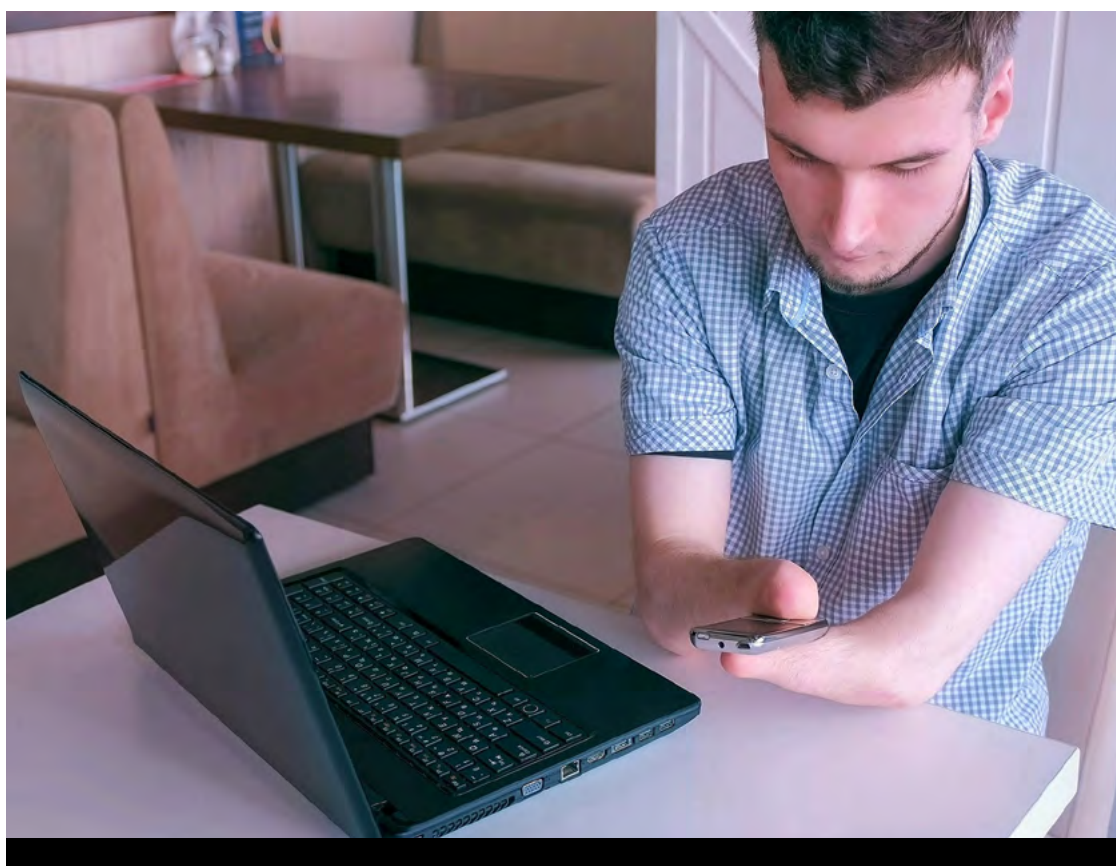
When asked whether additional information is needed, nearly 30% of those responding said that they would like more information on how to use the accessibility feature.

To address this particular request, the MWF has started adding short videos, explaining how a feature might be useful and how to activate it within the device. The videos are linked alongside the feature within the GARI site and they are also available via the MWF YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvwTMEqvWD3BWx2tmxYGDUA>.

What do you need more information on?

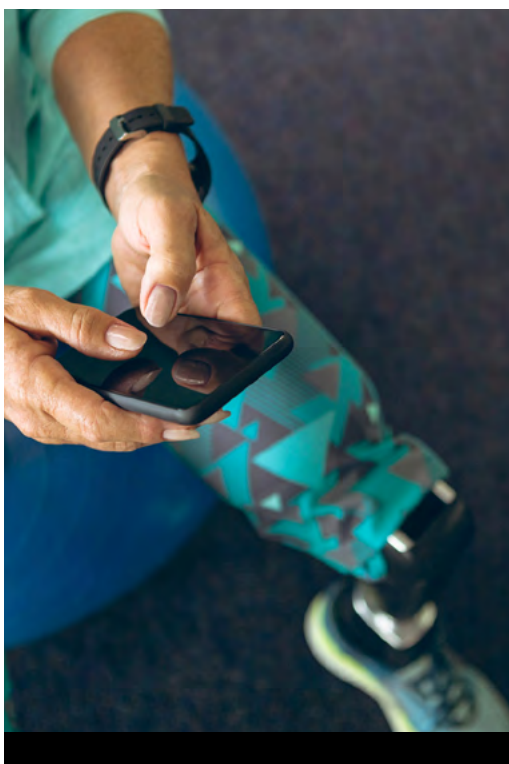




STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

In 2020, we welcomed a number of additional organizations linking to GARI or integrating the XML dataset within their own website. Two German speaking associations of persons with a disability that are now promoting GARI include:

- The German Association for the Hearing Impaired (Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund e.V.) integrated a link to GARI into the resource page on their website (<https://www.schwerhoerigen-netz.de/informationen/sachthemen/technische-assistenzsysteme/>).
- The Austrian Association in Support of the Blind and Visually Impaired (Hilfsgemeinschaft) launched their new website that features an xml integration of GARI in German: <https://gari.hilfsgemeinschaft.at>



The MWF makes the GARI dataset available as an XML feed for organizations wishing to feature GARI within their own sites. The dataset is updated on a daily basis and licensed under a Creative Commons License¹.

The “Examples of GARI in use” page on gari.info gives an overview of around 40 organizations, network providers, regulators and government agencies now linking to GARI².

Currently 14 network providers and industry bodies in 10 countries are using GARI to train their staff on how to search for appropriate devices to meet consumer needs or to provide information on mobile accessibility to their customers. Other network providers use GARI for the selection of accessible devices for their product portfolio, requiring device suppliers to provide a GARI report on the accessibility features of their device as part of the procurement process.

GARI also partners directly with the disability community, governments and regulatory authorities, app developers, ITU, G3ict, health platforms, occupational therapists, industry, network providers, consumer organizations, universities, and Assistive Technology platforms.

An example of the value of this work can be seen in the GSMA's report on “How mobile operators are driving inclusion of persons with disabilities”, which

1 See <http://www.gari.info/download-gari-db.cfm> for more information and the terms of the Creative Commons License.

2 <https://www.gari.info/government.cfm>





highlighted GARI as an important tool for helping improve “customer awareness of accessible products and services”³:

[...] access to handsets and services is challenging when the information required to purchase them is not available in an accessible format. The Global Accessibility Reporting Initiative (GARI), a project from the Mobile & Wireless Forum (MWF) is a database of devices (including mobile phones, tablets, mobile apps, wearables and smart TVs) that provides information about the accessibility features of a device and helps users choose devices that are more suited to their needs. Some operators offer GARI’s information to their customers.

For instance, in Mexico, Telcel provides search filters in their device database for customers to select when looking for an accessible handset for mobility and hearing and visual impairment. In Costa Rica, operators Claro, ICE and Telefónica signed an agreement to provide access to GARI through their websites.

The South Africa Electronic Communications Association, a non-profit association representing the telecommunications industry, provides a GARI-based search engine for accessible mobile phones and tablets. Other operators that categorise their catalogue of mobile products based on GARI include Telefónica and Movistar in Spain, AT&T in the US, and MTN and Vodacom in South Africa. Providing access to GARI’s information is an important step to increase awareness of available accessible handsets.

Another example of the value of our collaboration and outreach is the Case Study of successful accessibility projects that has been published on Access Israel’s website⁴.

³ The report is available online: https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/GSMA_How-mobile-operators-are-driving-inclusion-of-persons-with-disabilities_Accessible_v2.pdf

⁴ <https://aisrael-global.org/global-accessibility-reporting-initiative-gari/>



GARI DESIGN CHALLENGE AND RESEARCH QUESTION



In 2020, the MWF launched a design challenge for students of design and IT to come up with proposals for a new user interface for GARI and a presentation of the information that would allow the widest possible range of people to understand and easily

interact with the GARI website and database to find accessible devices.

Additionally, continuing the MWF's strong support for research in other fields, it was agreed to fund a research project looking into how mainstream devices could become eligible for assistive technology (AT) funding. Based on feedback from the disability community in many countries, mainstream devices are often excluded from national assistive technology programs – even though such devices would provide better and broader support than an expensive single-use piece of AT equipment.



HARMONISING ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS GLOBALLY

In April 2020, the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) published new rules to assist people with special communications needs. The rules, registered under an updated Accessibility Code require equipment suppliers to provide information about the accessibility features of customer equipment to network operators and service providers so they can inform their customers. The new rules also reduce the administrative responsibility of phone equipment suppliers by better aligning

domestic and international reporting requirements. The updated rules will apply to phone equipment including portable, mobile, wireless and satellite phones sold in Australia. The accessibility information for mobile phones is based on what manufacturers provide via GARI, and the Code ensures that providing information this way ensures compliance making it even easier for manufacturers to help their customers and meet their obligations at the same time.



SOME THINGS TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN 2021

In 2021, the MWF will focus on further promoting GARI's Smart TV section particularly through collaboration with several organizations that have shown a strong interest in the learning more about Smart TV accessibility features.

We will also be expanding the range of feature videos available across the major platforms to assist people to learn more about the accessibility features that a device has and how to activate them.

We are looking forward to the results of our research project on the synergies between mobile and assistive technologies and will continue our work with universities and students on the GARI Design Challenge.

Building on GARI's strong representation of accessible devices, we will adapt and promote the database and website to ensure compatibility with the European Accessibility Act and offer this resource to better inform consumers about the available accessibility solutions in the market.

Our aim throughout the year will be to constantly improve the information provided and reach many more consumers and users who are looking for accessible mobile phones, tablets, Wearables, Smart TVs and accessibility related apps.



GET IN TOUCH

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss how we could further promote awareness of the accessibility features in devices or about the GARI project itself. Our contact details are as follows:

Mobile & Wireless Forum

Email: accessibility@mwfai.org

Web: www.mwfai.org

Twitter: [@GARIupdates](https://twitter.com/GARIupdates)



www.gari.info



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