
EN 17210:2021 — Accessibility and Usability of the Built Environment

EUROPEAN STANDARD (CEN) — adopted in the UK as BS EN 17210:2021

AnnounceAgain and accessible communication by design

1. What this is

EN 17210:2021 is a European Standard (CEN), also adopted in the UK as BS EN 17210:2021, setting out basic, common minimum functional requirements for accessibility and usability across the built environment, based on Universal Design principles. It traces to earlier CEN mandates including M/473 on “Design for All”, and complements national building regulations and other accessibility standards. A revision of EN 17210 is separately underway under European Commission Standardisation Request M/587 (issued 2022, after the 2021 edition), to align it with the European Accessibility Act.

2. Who it applies to

Organisations responsible for the design, construction, refurbishment, adaptation and maintenance of built environments — both indoor spaces and outdoor pedestrian/urban areas — in countries that adopt CEN standards, including the UK (as BS EN 17210:2021).

3. What kind of instrument this is

A European Standard (CEN), adopted nationally (e.g. BS EN 17210:2021 in the UK) — a voluntary technical standard unless referenced by specific regulation or procurement requirements, though increasingly used as an EU-wide accessibility benchmark.

4. Specific requirements relevant to announcements and accessible communication

- Clause 6 (Wayfinding): 6.2 Wayfinding information; 6.5 Audible information and hearing enhancement; 6.6 Signage.
- Clause 13 (User interface, controls and switches): 13.2 Public ICT information screens; 13.3 ICT user interfaces.
- Clause 14 (Fire safety for all — evacuation and emergency exits): 14.8 Emergency warning systems, signals and information.
- Clause 15 (Environmental conditions in buildings): 15.2 Acoustics.

5. What organisations are expected to do

- Provide wayfinding and orientation information accessibly (6.1–6.2).
- Ensure audible information is complemented by hearing enhancement or an accessible alternative (6.5).
- Provide accessible signage (6.6), and accessible public ICT information screens and interfaces (13.2–13.3).
- Ensure emergency warning systems provide both audible and visual signals and information (14.8).

6. Which requirements AnnounceAgain can help address

The 6.5 expectation that audible information be complemented by hearing enhancement or an accessible alternative, and — where AnnounceAgain content is also shown on venue screens — aspects of the 13.2 public ICT information screen theme.

7. How AnnounceAgain addresses them

- Provides a text alternative to audible PA and wayfinding-related announcements, addressing the “audible information plus accessible alternative” expectation in 6.5. AnnounceAgain covers routine PA content only — see section 8 for what it does not cover, including certified emergency warnings.
- Delivers translated, replayable announcements to a visitor’s own device (or to public screens where deployed), extending the reach of ICT-based information provision.
- Requires no change to the underlying PA or audible system, so it can be layered onto an existing building or estate.

8. Requirements AnnounceAgain does not satisfy by itself

- Does not provide tactile information (6.4) or physical signage (6.6) itself.
- Is not a certified fire or emergency warning system for the purposes of Clause 14.8, and must not be relied on as one.
- Does not address acoustic design (15.2), lighting (15.1), or full ICT user-interface accessibility for other on-site systems (13.3).

9. Requirements needing certified hardware or other measures

- Certified emergency warning and fire evacuation systems (Clause 14, particularly 14.7–14.9) — see the separate BS 5839-8 / BS EN 50849 datasheets.
- Physical wayfinding infrastructure and tactile information (6.3–6.4), acoustic treatment of spaces (15.2), and accessible physical signage production (6.6).

10. Suggested wording for an organisation's accessibility statement

“AnnounceAgain provides a text and translated alternative to routine spoken PA and wayfinding announcements, alongside our accessible signage and [other measures]. AnnounceAgain is not a certified fire alarm or emergency warning system and must never be relied on during a fire or emergency evacuation — always follow the venue’s live announcements, alarms, signage and staff instructions.”

Important: This datasheet summarises the publicly available scope and clause structure of EN 17210:2021 (BS EN 17210:2021 in the UK). It is not a substitute for the published standard, does not constitute legal or design advice, and installing AnnounceAgain does not by itself demonstrate compliance. Organisations should obtain and consult the current published standard from BSI or their national standards body.

Sources & further reading

- [AccessibleEU Centre — EN 17210:2021 summary](#)
- [BSI Knowledge — BS EN 17210:2021 product page](#)