

European Declaration Art, Culture, Media & Disability



2003, European Year of People with disabilities, 10th anniversary of the UN 48/96 resolution

We, representatives to the European Union, its Member States, territorial communities, professionals in the arts, cultural, media, healthcare and social/medical sectors, NGO and association representatives, European citizens and the signatories of the present Declaration

-> consider access to cultural activity as an inalienable right, inherent to all human beings.

> assert that equal opportunity in the access to cultural activity, art works, cultural heritage and artistic practices is one of the values of European identity.

" A society that shuts out a number of its members is an impoverished society. Actions to improve conditions for disabled people will lead to the design of a flexible world for all. " (The Madrid Declaration, 2002)

In order to provide equality of access to art, culture and media to over 50 million European citizens with disabilities, we commit ourselves - within the scope of our responsibilities and capacities - to disseminate the Declaration widely across all levels of society, to encourage its endorsement and to carry out the articles outlined :

1. Consideration of the specific needs of disabled people in measures for all in the areas of art, culture and media

2. Carrying out studies

- regarding the needs of disabled people, of all ages and all type of disabilities, living in a health centre or at home
- regarding cultural policies and strategies (good practices, legislation, funding, professions, accessibility to cultural venues and programmes, etc.)

3. Making cultural venues and programmes accessible to all disabled people

(Decisions regarding accessibility for disabled people should be taken into consideration at the earliest stages of all planning processes)

• Access to the built environment and equipment

(free mobility for people in wheel-chairs, clear signage, induction loops, audio descriptions, etc.)

- Access to art works, cultural events and activities (specialized teaching, adapted activities and technical aids : visits to sites in sign language ; dance classes for wheelchair users and performances ; booklets in Braille, large fonts and 'crystal clear' language including relief maps and illustrations ; computer assisted music and drawing activities with technical assistance, etc.)

4. Development of services to improve the accessibility to artistic practices and culture for disabled people

- Information on cultural accessibility offered (conceived with the appropriate supports according to the different types of disabilities)
- Ancillary services for cultural activities (for the access to art works, events and artistic practice)
- In-home cultural activity services (delivery of books, videos, cd-roms, tools to paint, to compose and to play music, artist visits, etc.)

5. Establishment of measures, plans of action and instruments to implement inclusive cultural policies

- Consultation and decision-making bodies facilitating the networking within the cultural, media, healthcare and social-medical sectors (within the European Union, States, regions, towns, institutions, etc.)
- Plans of action to launch and run cultural policies for disabled people (within the European Union, States, regions, towns, institutions, etc.)
- Financial plans of action and right to compensation (specific budget lines in the framework of general financial action programmes; support funds for experimentation and innovation, etc.)
- Supporting measures to encourage the development of inclusive artistic activities
- Development of resource centres for information, networking, training, research, technical aids on accessibility, new technologies, consultancy assistance to aid project leaders and policy makers
- Obligations for project planning of institutions for the integration of disabled people in cultural life, within cultural, healthcare and social-medical sectors (planning, charter of action, referral persons, etc.)
- Training for volunteers, professionals and the creation of new jobs in all relevant sectors

6. Professional integration of disabled people within art, cultural and media professions (development of measures to enhance access to teaching, training, employment and assistance in the delivery of products; equal protection of intellectual property)

7. Measures for media accessibility (quotas for subtitles, translation in sign language, audio descriptions, etc.)

If you would like to adhere to present Declaration and wish to officially give your support, please contact the Coordination Committee:

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