



Enhancing Cultural Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the European Union

A Policy Brief

Protecting the Right to Culture of Persons with Disabilities
and Enhancing Cultural Diversity through European Union
Law: Exploring New Paths (DANCING)

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Cover Page Image: Nadenh Poan, Monique Dior Jarrett, Emily Lue-Fong, Hannah Sampson, Christian Brinklow and Jannick Moth (Stopgap Dance Company) performing 'Lived Fiction'. Photo by Photographer Chris Parkes (Courtesy of Stopgap Dance Company - Used with permission).

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why Cultural Participation of Persons with Disabilities Matters?

Cultural participation is a [human right](#) and a vital part of being a member of society. Yet, [persons with disabilities face multiple obstacles when participating in cultural life](#). In the European Union (EU), [Eurostat data](#) have shown the significant and persistent ‘disability gap’ in cultural participation, with data showing lower rates of cultural participation among people with disabilities compared with the overall population aged 16 and over across all EU Member States (MS).

Barriers faced by persons with disabilities include the absence of adequate or effective legislation ensuring the right to cultural participation, as well as the insufficient consultation and involvement of persons with disabilities in relevant decision-making processes. Additionally, the lack of physical and informational accessibility of cultural sites, goods and services, as well as persistent negative attitudes and stigma around participation of people with disabilities in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) are significant barriers for persons with disabilities. Structural barriers – such as poverty, social marginalisation and exclusion, along with the lack of adequate support services – contribute to the exclusion of people with disabilities from cultural life. Further, in the EU, barriers to cultural participation are linked to the existing [fragmentation of EU accessibility legislation](#), piecemeal approaches to [funding for accessible cultural initiatives](#) as well as to relatively low prioritisation of cultural participation of

persons with disabilities in EU disability policy.

As provided for in Article 26 of the [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) (CFR), persons with disabilities have the right ‘to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community’, which includes participation in culture. Furthermore, Article 30 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD) articulates the right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life – alongside the right to participate in sport, leisure, and recreation – and lists a number of obligations to be complied with by States Parties to the Convention. Having ratified the CRPD, the EU, alongside its MS, shall [implement Article 30 and promote the right to culture of persons with disabilities](#). However, ensuring meaningful participation in cultural life for people with disabilities is not only a matter of compliance with the [CRPD](#) and social justice, but it is also a vital contribution to the richness and diversity of society. When cultural spaces, programmes, and policies are accessible and inclusive, everyone benefits.

1.2 What is This Policy Brief About?

This Policy Brief presents recommendations for policymakers as one of the ‘Tools for Change’ developed in the project ‘Protecting the Right to Culture of Persons with Disabilities and Enhancing Cultural Diversity through European Union Law: Exploring New Paths (DANCING)’, funded by the European Research Council

(ERC) and based at Maynooth University (MU) under [Professor Delia Ferri](#) as a Principal Investigator (PI). DANCING commenced on 1 September 2020 and is due to be completed on 31 August 2025. It has explored the right of persons with disabilities to take part in cultural life as an essential aspect of enhancing cultural diversity in the EU.

The main purpose of this Policy Brief is to guide the EU and the MS' efforts towards greater inclusion of people with disabilities in cultural activities and better use of resources to fulfil the obligations laid out in the [CRPD](#). This Policy Brief further aims to support the development of coherent, inclusive, and actionable policies that promote the rights of people with disabilities in the CCS and address existing barriers to participation in culture.

1.3 For Whom is This Policy Brief?

This Policy Brief is for policymakers, both at the EU and national levels. While MS are chiefly responsible for cultural policies, the EU has a major role to play in supporting MS and in informing their legislation and policy in matters that relate to non-discrimination, accessibility and free movement. This Policy Brief may also serve Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and other Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and guide their advocacy efforts.

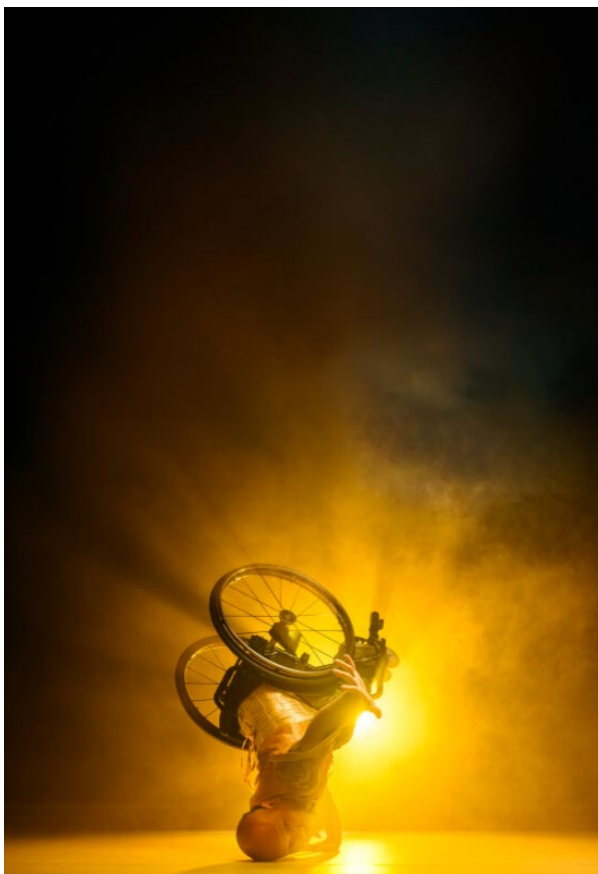
1.4 What Research Underpins This Policy Brief?

This Policy Brief draws on findings from the interdisciplinary research conducted within the DANCING project, which has combined the in-depth study of EU disability law and EU cultural policy with [empirical research](#) that takes into account lived experiences of persons with disabilities. DANCING is divided into four complementary and partially overlapping [Work Packages](#) (WPs).



Monique Dior Jarrett (Stopgap Dance Company) performing 'Lived Fiction' by Photographer Chris Parkes (Courtesy of Stopgap Dance Company - Used with permission)

WP 1 <i>Experiential</i>	It combines qualitative and arts-based research to advance greater understanding of barriers faced by people with disabilities in the CCS. It also aims to understand the extent to which lack of accessibility and lack of recognition of disability identities affect the cultural domain as a whole in the EU.
WP 2 <i>Normative</i>	It advances the understanding of the extent to which the right to cultural participation of persons with disabilities is protected and promoted in the EU legal framework. It also aims to gauge whether EU measures aimed at protecting cultural diversity have dealt with any elements of discrimination, inequality and poverty of people with disabilities. This WP brings together empirical and doctrinal approaches to legal research and examines an array of EU hard and soft law as well as relevant international instruments ratified by the EU, in particular the CRPD , the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions , and the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled (Marrakesh Treaty).



Nadenh Poan (Stopgap Dance Company) performing 'Lived Fiction' by Photographer Chris Parkes (Courtesy of Stopgap Dance Company -Used with permission)

WP 3 *Theoretical*

It aims to re-theorise cultural diversity as encompassing the right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life within the EU legal order. It builds on the research conducted within WP1 and WP2 to provide a novel theoretical framework that can support future research on cultural diversity and inclusivity in EU Law.

WP 4 *Tools for Change*

It aims to foster societal change through discussion of DANCING findings in conferences, workshops and public conversations with artists, legal scholars and key stakeholders as well as through collaboration with artists with disabilities. It encompasses a series of dissemination and artistic outputs aimed at raising awareness of the DANCING project and its results.

1.5 What Are the Key Terms Used in the Policy Brief?

Persons/People with Disabilities

Persons who 'have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others' ([Article 1\(2\) CRPD](#)).¹

Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)

This Policy Brief acknowledges the difference between Organisations *of* Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and Organisations *for* Persons with Disabilities. While both should be included in relevant decision-making processes, the [CRPD](#) explicitly requires the participation of OPDs. In particular, Parties to the CRPD are obliged to involve OPDs in decision-making, consultation, and monitoring of all issues affecting persons with disabilities ([Articles 4\(3\)](#) and [33\(3\) CRPD](#)).

¹ In line with the CRPD and with EU law, the Policy Brief uses 'people first language' (i.e. persons/ people with disabilities). Additionally, in line with the language used by European Union of the Deaf and other organisations, this Brief uses the term 'Deaf people/persons'. However, this Policy Brief acknowledges that these terms are not used by everyone, nor are they wordings which everyone identifies with or agrees with.



Jannick Moth (Stopgap Dance Company) performing 'Lived Fiction' by Photographer Chris Parkes (Courtesy of Stopgap Dance Company -Used with permission)

Right to participate in cultural life	It encompasses the right to access cultural activities, goods and services, i.e. the right to cultural consumption, and the right to active involvement in culture, which includes the engagement in the creation of cultural goods, services and activities. It also entails the right of cultural communities to be recognised and protected as well as to enjoy and make use of their cultural heritage and cultural expressions (see Ferri and Leahy, 2025).
Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS)	The Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) include all sectors carrying out activities based on cultural, artistic and other creative expressions, such as activities related to the development, creation, production, dissemination and preservation of goods and services embodying such expressions. This includes architecture, archives, libraries and museums, artistic crafts, audiovisual forms of expression (such as film, television, video games and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design (including fashion design), festivals, music, literature, performing arts, books and publishing, radio, visual arts, media, and entertainment (Art. 2 Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013).

The EU can play an important role in advancing participation of persons with disabilities in cultural life and enhancing cultural diversity, by using its portfolio of competences and by shaping a disability-inclusive cultural policy. The following recommendations aim to support the EU institutions and bodies in advancing the right to cultural participation for persons with disabilities through legislation, funding, coordination, monitoring and all available means. These recommendations stem from the research carried out in the [DANCING project](#) and build on the analysis of the overall [EU's role in the protection of disability rights](#).

2.1 Recommendations for the European Commission

The European Commission should strengthen its existing [Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030](#), advance legislative proposals that contribute to the implementation of [Article 30 CRPD](#), enhance its cultural policy to better address the needs of persons with disabilities, as well as foster the exchange of information and best practices on cultural participation for people with disabilities. The European Commission should also ensure effective monitoring of the transposition and implementation of existing EU accessibility provisions, particularly those that are relevant to the CCS, as well as provisions and fundings relevant to the participation of people with disabilities in the CCS. Further, the European Commis-

sion should take the lead on accessibility and inclusion in its own cultural initiatives, awards, exhibitions, and artistic collaborations.

Notably, the Commission should:

Advance EU Disability Policy and Prioritise Cultural Participation of Persons with Disabilities

- Ensure training of Commission staff on the [CRPD](#) and embed the CRPD's implementation across all Directorates-General (DGs). Support the creation of disability focal points throughout all EU institutions, bodies, and agencies, as recommended by the [CRPD Committee](#) most recently in its [Concluding Observations on the combined 2nd and 3rd periodic reports of the European Union](#).
- Establish an effective coordination mechanism within the Commission and an inter-institutional coordination mechanism in line with [Article 33\(1\) CRPD](#). Coordination among various DGs and with other institutions will be essential to bolster the implementation of the [CRPD](#) as a whole, and to enhance prioritisation of the right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life.
- Launch the study to evaluate the implementation of [Article 30 CRPD](#) 'to support MS in policies to increase the participation of and support to persons with disabilities in sport, culture and leisure activities', as outlined in the [Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2021-2030](#).
- Revamp the [Strategy for the Rights of Persons](#)

[with Disabilities 2021-2030](#) and draft a new detailed action plan for the five year period 2025-2030 that includes specific initiatives in the areas of employment of persons with disabilities in the CCS, accessibility of the CCS and independent living, the latter being an essential pre-condition to participate in cultural life.

- Develop a specific comprehensive strategy and related action plan on disability in EU external actions, to improve the coherence and intersectionality of international programmes, and advance cultural participation of persons with disabilities through international cultural cooperation.

Ensure a Disability-Inclusive EU Cultural Policy

- Integrate cultural participation of persons with disabilities (both as audience and as artists and cultural professionals) as a cross-cutting objective of EU cultural policy.
- Set specific targets for the participation of OPDs and artists with disabilities in [Creative Europe](#) calls and funding allocations, and track progress regularly. These targets should be included in the annual work programme.
- Develop the forthcoming [Culture Compass for Europe \(Culture Compass\)](#) initiative in a disability-inclusive manner, and explicitly recognise in such Culture Compass that participation of persons with disabilities in the CCS is essential to promoting cultural diversity and enriching the European

cultural landscape.

- Ensure that the forthcoming [Culture Compass](#) initiative, in serving as a strategic framework for improving the working conditions of artists and cultural professionals, addresses the [distinct barriers](#) faced by artists and professionals with disabilities.
- Prepare the working document on key findings on the implementation of the [EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026](#) by April 2026 and adopt a comprehensive report by June 2026 as envisaged in the Plan. Ensure that such documents assess actions and progress on disability-inclusion and accessibility in the CCS. In that connection, provide MS with the necessary support to ensure that they implement the [EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026](#) in a disability-inclusive manner. Encourage and assist MS in delivering their 'voluntary' written contribution to the planned working document on preliminary key findings on the implementation of this EU Work Plan.
- Invite and support OPDs as well as artists and cultural professionals with disabilities to participate in all consultations or calls for evidence on cultural policy or legislation relevant to the CCS.
- Encourage social partners to address, within the remit of their mandate, disability inclusion in the CCS.
- Ensure that the [Cultural Relations Platform](#) (CRP), set up within the framework of the [EU strategy for international cultural relations](#), contributes to make the global CCS disability inclusive.

Put Forward New Legislation and Other Initiatives to Foster the Right of Persons with Disabilities to Participate in Cultural Life

- Put forward a new legislative proposal on non-discrimination that protects persons with disabilities from discrimination in access to goods and services, including cultural goods and services following the withdrawal of the [Proposal for a Council Directive on implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation](#) (COM/2008/0426 final -Horizontal Equal Treatment Directive Proposal).
- Put forward a proposal for a Recast Marrakesh Directive that widens the personal scope of the harmonised copyright disability exception and, as required by the [CRPD Committee](#) in its [Concluding Observations on the combined 2nd and 3rd periodic reports of the European Union](#), to repeal [Article 3\(6\)](#) on compensation schemes of the current [Directive \(EU\) 2017/1564 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 September 2017 on certain permitted uses of certain works and other subject matter protected by copyright and related rights for the benefit of persons who are blind, visually impaired or otherwise print-disabled and amending Directive 2001/29/EC on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society](#) (Marrakesh Directive).

- Ensure that the proposed review of the [current Directive \(EU\) 2018/1808 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 amending Directive 2010/13/EU on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the provision of audiovisual media services \(Audiovisual Media Services Directive\) in view of changing market realities \(AVMSD\), tabled for 2026](#), fully and adequately addresses and guarantees the right of persons with disabilities to access audiovisual content.
- Request [European Standardisation Organisations](#) to develop accessibility standards for the CCS and encourage the [Strategic Advisory Group on Accessibility \(SAGA\)](#) to ensure that accessibility is addressed in standardisation processes relevant to the CCS.
- Encourage the [Accessible EU Centre](#), which is currently a significant resource centre on accessibility, to address accessibility in the CCS, including through the monitoring of activities undertaken in the MS and the sharing of good practices, as already highlighted in the [Council conclusions on improving and fostering access to culture 2024](#).
- Ensure that the CCS [Guarantee Facility](#) is accessible to people with disabilities and that disability-led cultural organisations receive the financial support they need in an effective and equitable manner.

Foster Collaboration with Member States

- Foster collaboration among MS and exchange of best practices relevant to the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the CCS through the [Disability Platform](#), with particular attention to accessibility of cultural initiatives.

Ensure Adequate Monitoring of Member States' Actions

- Monitor the implementation of the [Directive \(EU\) 2019/882 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on the accessibility requirements for products and services](#) (European Accessibility Act) with particular attention to the application of its provisions to relevant cultural goods and services.
- Monitor the transposition of the [Directive \(EU\) 2024/2841 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 establishing the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card for persons with disabilities and Directive \(EU\) 2024/2842 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2024 extending Directive \(EU\) 2024/2841 to third-country nationals legally residing in a MS](#) (Directives on the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card).
- Ensure that MS effectively monitor compliance of websites and mobile applications of public cultural institutions falling within the [Directive \(EU\) 2016/2102 of the European Parliament and of](#)

[the Council of 26 October 2016 on the accessibility of the websites and mobile applications of public sector bodies](#) (Web Accessibility Directive).

- Ensure that both mid-term and final evaluation reports for Creative Europe include comprehensive qualitative and quantitative assessments of accessibility for people with disabilities across cultural programmes, in line with [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme \(2021 to 2027\) and repealing Regulation \(EU\) No 1295/2013](#) (Creative Europe Regulation).
- Introduce disability-specific performance indicators into the monitoring framework of [Creative Europe](#).
- Introduce specific indicators to monitor the participation of artists and cultural professionals with disabilities across MS in transnational mobility schemes such as [Erasmus+](#) and assess barriers to such mobility.

Ensure that EU Funding Enhances Cultural Participation of Persons with Disabilities

- Ensure that Creative Europe projects and other projects funded by the EU (including under [Horizon Europe](#), [European Regional Development Fund](#) or [European Social Fund Plus](#)) fully cover disability-related costs, allowing these costs to be planned within project proposals without reducing resources allocated to core activities or creating a financial burden for applicants.
- Require that all EU-funded cultural projects embed accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities as a cross-cutting matter throughout project implementation.
- Ensure that the application procedures for cultural fundings are accessible to persons with disabilities and that the additional costs of cultural professionals with disabilities, where the additional costs are related to having a disability, are fully covered.

Collect Data on Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the CCS

- Collect data on the participation of artists and cultural professionals with disabilities in EU-funded projects.
- Collect data on the participation of persons with disabilities in the CCS in the EU.
- Promote more systematic data collection on participation of persons with disabilities in [cultural statistics](#).

- Ensure that future Eurobarometer surveys capture data on persons with disabilities in relation to cultural participation. It seems a missed opportunity that the [Special Eurobarometer 562](#), which will inform the preparation of the [Culture Compass for Europe](#), has not highlighted barriers faced by persons with disabilities or addressed issues related to artists with disabilities.

Lead by Example

- Encourage accessibility of sites and initiatives that receive the [European Heritage Label awards](#) or the [European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards](#).
- Promote a stronger focus on accessibility of cultural venues in the remit of [Access City Awards](#).

2.2 Recommendations for the European Parliament

The European Parliament should ensure accountability and effective implementation of EU inclusion policies for persons with disabilities in the CCS. It should continue to play a leading role in raising awareness and advocating for the rights of people with disabilities, ensuring that disability issues remain a central focus in the EU. In particular, the European Parliament should:

- Advocate for a progressive, disability-inclusive approach in the annual EU budget, guaranteeing

that sufficient resources are allocated to enhance access and participation in the CCS.

- Collaborate with OPDs and cultural stakeholders to ensure co-design of inclusive policies.
- Enhance exchange between Parliament Committees dealing with matters that are relevant to the enjoyment by people with disabilities of the right to participation in cultural life, particularly, but not exclusively, the Committees on [‘Culture and Education’](#) and [‘Employment and Social Affairs’](#).
- Leverage on the [Disability Intergroup](#) to promote the right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life.
- Request regular reporting from the European Commission on the implementation of accessibility and inclusion measures in EU-funded CCS projects.
- Call for the evaluation of the extent to which major EU cultural initiatives foster participation of persons with disabilities in the CCS.
- Ensure that when commissioning studies on EU cultural programmes, the commissioned authors consider the rights of persons with disabilities and the obligations stemming from the [CRPD](#).
- Promote awareness of the [petition process](#) as a democratic tool for advancing disability rights, including the right to participate in cultural life.
- Ensure the visibility of artists and cultural professionals with disabilities in the [Disability Rights Week](#) initiative, which serves as a platform for public discussion and dialogue, and bring renewed

attention to the right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life.

- Involve artists and cultural professionals with disabilities and inclusive art companies to showcase diversity in events and exhibitions organised at the European Parliament premises in Strasbourg and Brussels.

2.3 Recommendations for the Council of the EU

The Council of the EU, particularly through the [Education, Youth, Culture and Sport \(EYCS\) Council](#), plays a central role in shaping strategic priorities and adopting conclusions that guide EU cultural policy. While cultural policy mostly remains a national competence, the Council can steer MS and EU institutions towards greater inclusion by mainstreaming disability rights in its cultural agenda. The recommendations below aim to support the Council in fostering full participation of persons with disabilities in the CCS across the EU. Specifically, the Council should:

- Ensure a stronger focus on cultural participation of persons with disabilities in the EYCS Council and mainstream disability rights in Council conclusions.
- Continue promoting cultural participation of persons with disabilities, through conclusions such as the [Conclusions on improving and fostering access to culture 2024](#), and prompt MS to safe-

guard disability rights in the CCS.

- Call on the Commission and MS to mainstream disability inclusion into existing and future initiatives in the CCS, including the tabled revision of the [AVMSD](#) as well as in EU funding.
- Set strategic priorities for EU policy in the CCS which are inclusive of people with disabilities and designed with them in mind.
- Amend [Regulation 1/1958 determining the languages to be used by the EU](#) to include national sign languages as official EU languages or enact a bespoke regulation on the basis of [Article 342 TFEU](#) to support the use of national sign languages in EU institutions.

2.4 Recommendations for the EU External Action Service (EEAS)

As the EU's diplomatic arm, the [EEAS](#) is mandated to advance the EU external policies, protect and promote human rights globally and to enhance [EU international cultural relations](#). The following recommendations aim to strengthen the EEAS's and EU Delegations' role in promoting the right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life and ensuring that EU values of inclusion and equality are embedded in international cultural relations. In particular, the EEAS should:

- Promote, through EU Delegations, a disability inclusive and intersectional approach to cultural

initiatives in third countries, in line with the Guidance Note '[Leaving No One Behind: Disability Inclusion in EU External Action](#)'.

- Advance, through EU Delegations, cultural initiatives supporting artists and cultural professionals with disabilities through mainstream and targeted actions.
- Make sure that EU Delegations systematically apply disability-sensitive budgeting to all cultural initiatives that they organise or support.
- Promote training for staff members of EU Delegations on inclusive cultural practices and accessibility of culture for persons with disabilities.
- Ensure the systematic collection and reporting on the application of the disability policy marker to cultural initiatives by EU Delegations.
- Support and include artists with disabilities in the recurrent [exhibitions of contemporary art](#) at the EEAS premises in Brussels.

2.5 Recommendations for the EU Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA)

The [FRA](#) plays a central role in providing EU institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and MS when implementing EU law with assistance and expertise relating to fundamental rights including the rights of persons with disabilities. The FRA conducts an array of evidence-based studies on the rights of persons with disabilities and acts as part of the [EU monitoring](#)

[framework set up in line with Article 33\(2\) CRPD](#). The recommendations below aim to encourage the FRA to strengthen its work on cultural participation of persons with disabilities across the EU. Namely, the FRA should:

- Expand the research to better address the right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life, with a focus on addressing barriers to participation and good practices in MS, and to include more explicitly and consistently cultural participation of persons with disabilities in studies addressing Articles [21](#) (Non-discrimination), [22](#) (Cultural, religious and linguistic diversity) and [26](#) (Integration of persons with disabilities) of the CFR.
- Support national human rights institutions and equality bodies in monitoring and reporting on the implementation of [Article 30 CRPD](#) through technical assistance and methodological tools.
- Include data on cultural participation of persons with disabilities in the [EU Fundamental Rights Information System](#) (EFRIS).

2.6 Recommendations for the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA)

As the implementing agency for Creative Europe, Erasmus+, and other programmes, EACEA plays a crucial role in shaping how funding reaches the CCS and in ensuring that accessibility and inclusion are fully embedded in these programmes. In collaboration with relevant Commission DGs, the EACEA should:

- Ensure that OPDs and artists with disabilities can have full access to information on calls for proposals.
- Include clear requirements for the integration of accessibility and disability inclusion in project design and evaluation criteria across Creative Europe and relevant Erasmus+ calls.
- Adopt specific reporting requirements on the participation of persons with disabilities in funded projects.
- Develop technical guidance for applicants on budgeting disability-related costs and designing inclusive cultural projects.



Nadenh Poan and Emily Lue-Fong (Stopgap Dance Company) performing 'Lived Fiction' by Photographer Chris Parkes (Courtesy of Stopgap Dance Company -Used with permission)

3

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL POLICYMAKERS

National policymakers play a vital role in ensuring that persons with disabilities can participate in, and contribute to, the CCS on an equal basis with others. Their responsibility extends from participatory and inclusive cultural policymaking to ensuring access to artistic education, from guaranteeing the enactment of legislation that is effective in countering discrimination on the ground of disability in the CCS to promoting funding mechanisms that are disability-inclusive. Further, policymakers in MS should strive to continuously advance the rights enshrined in the [CRPD](#). The following recommendations outline concrete measures to support MS in advancing inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of cultural life.

3.1 Recommendations for National Legislatures and Governments

Governments and parliaments can contribute to shape disability-inclusive CCS and to support equal access, participation, and representation of persons with disabilities in culture. They should:

Ensure Participation of Persons with Disabilities in Cultural Policymaking

- Promote and facilitate participation of persons with disabilities in national cultural policymaking at all levels of government. In particular, artists and cultural professionals should be included in policymaking processes related to culture on an

equal footing with other cultural stakeholders.

- Ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities and representatives of OPDs in ministerial and inter-ministerial advisory bodies, national agencies or bodies responsible for developing, deploying and/or overseeing cultural policy.
- Guarantee accessibility of venues, platforms and materials used in meetings of ministerial working groups and relevant parliamentary processes.
- Ensure that legislative processes related to the development of legislation relevant to the CCS embed consultation processes with OPDs and systematically incorporate feedback from OPDs as well as artists and cultural professionals with disabilities.

Ensure that Non-Discrimination Legislation Effectively Protects Persons with Disabilities in the CCS

- Ensure that non-discrimination legislation applies to the CCS and protects persons with disabilities as audiences, as artists and cultural professionals.
- Guarantee that national legislation effectively promotes the duty to provide reasonable accommodation, even beyond work settings, and that funds are available for cultural institutions and other CCS stakeholders to accommodate persons with disabilities, as audiences, artists and cultural professionals.

Ensure Effective and Timely Transposition and Implementation of Relevant EU Legislation

- Fully implement the [European Accessibility Act](#) and the [Web Accessibility Directive](#) in relation to the CCS.
- Ensure the timely transposition of the [Directive on the European Disability Card and the European Parking Card](#), and the deployment of the cards.

Promote Accessibility in the CCS

- Ensure that national accessibility provisions are applied consistently across the CCS in order to benefit audiences with disabilities as well as artists and cultural professionals with disabilities.
- Monitor accessibility of cultural venues through regular mapping exercises and systematic studies that capture accessibility of public transport routes to those venues and accessibility of the venues themselves.
- Support the use of assistive technologies to facilitate access to cultural venues and cultural content.

Promote Accessibility and Inclusivity of Artistic Education and Training

- Ensure that professional artistic education, including higher art education, is fully accessible to people with disabilities and does not discriminate against students with disabilities.
- Adopt new legislation and/or national educational

frameworks to [make arts and cultural education more inclusive](#) and to ensure equal opportunities for enrolment.

- Monitor curricula, teaching materials, and assessment methods used in artistic education and ensure that these are inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities.
- Support accessibility training for educators engaged in professional artistic education.
- Promote the development of Universal Design in artistic training and education to support artists and cultural professionals with disabilities.
- Sustain lifelong learning opportunities in formal and informal artistic education for persons with disabilities.

Promote Universal Design in the CCS

- Integrate accessible and inclusive measures into all future cultural policy initiatives to ensure long-term accessibility and encourage [accessibility by design](#).
- Promote and provide adequate funding mechanisms that support the deployment of Universal Design principles across various cultural venues, such as in Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums (GLAM), as well as in Heritage Sites.
- Embed accessibility and Universal Design in the training of architects.
- Enact bespoke financial support for cultural initi-

atives that abide by Universal Design principles.

Consider the Right to Participate in Cultural Life as Interdependent with Other CRPD Rights

- Prioritise the transition from institutional care to community-based settings, ensuring that persons with disabilities are not segregated from society and from opportunities in the CCS, as audiences, amateurs, students, artists or cultural professionals.

Ensure Accurate Reporting to the CRPD Committee

- Provide the CRPD Committee with accurate accounts on the implementation of [Article 30 CRPD](#) and on how accessibility measures have been implemented in the CCS.
- In line with the [CRPD Committee Guidelines](#), provide the CRPD Committee with information on:
 - Efforts to make cultural facilities and services accessible (heritage sites and monuments, museums, libraries, theatres, galleries, cinemas, public cultural programmes, etc.), including through conditional public procurement and public funding.
 - Endeavours to make cultural materials and content (books, movies, exhibitions, theatre performances, concerts, etc.) accessible to persons with various disabilities.
 - Measures to promote active participation of

persons with disabilities in cultural life, including as cultural professionals.

- Measures to support the development and realisation of artistic and creative potential (access to all levels of art education, national and transnational mobility, etc.).
- Measures to recognise, protect and promote cultural and linguistic identity of Deaf people and the use of sign language.
- Make use of [OHCHR Indicators](#) to support the implementation of [Article 30 CRPD](#).

3.2. Recommendations for National Funding Bodies and Cultural Agencies/Bodies

Advancing the participation of persons with disabilities in cultural life requires national policymakers to ensure that financial support is available. To that end, funding bodies and agencies should:

Ensure Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities and Mainstream Accessibility Requirements across Funding Schemes

- Mainstream accessibility requirements in all public calls for cultural project proposals.
- Ensure that cultural funding schemes cover the full costs of accessibility and inclusion measures for audiences and cultural professionals with disabilities. Applicants should be required to consider and budget for such measures in their project design.

- Ensure that the application procedures for cultural fundings are accessible to persons with disabilities.
- Make accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities explicit evaluation criteria and assigning dedicated scoring for proposed measures.
- Fund effective initiatives for cultural professionals with disabilities, such as tailored guidance counselling and skills development programmes to help navigate career opportunities and ensure awareness of the rules in place, including on taxation, status and social security.

Enact Initiatives to Support Artists and Cultural Professionals with Disabilities

- Allocate funding to improve accessibility in workplaces and cultural venues by financing adaptive equipment, assistive technologies, and necessary structural modifications.
- Assist employers in improving reasonable accommodation, such as covering the costs of sign language interpreters, personal assistants, or other accessibility services that facilitate equal professional opportunities in CCS, as well as inclusive employment practices, so as to reduce the gap in employment between persons with and without disabilities.
- Ensure that the receipt of a grant, or any other funding by cultural professionals with disabilities, does not interfere negatively with their receipt of

disability welfare payments.



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