

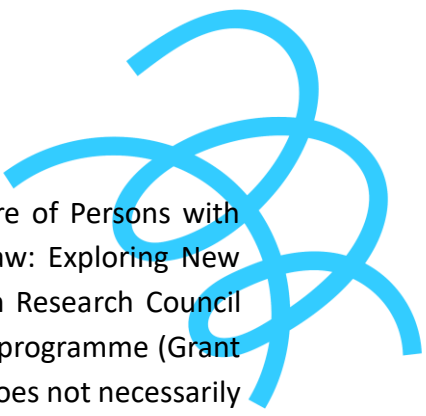


**Protecting the Right to Culture of Persons with Disabilities and Enhancing Cultural
Diversity through European Union Law: Exploring New Paths (DANCING)**

Report
The ERC DANCING Project
Final Report
Delia Ferri and Elodie Makhoul

20 September 2025






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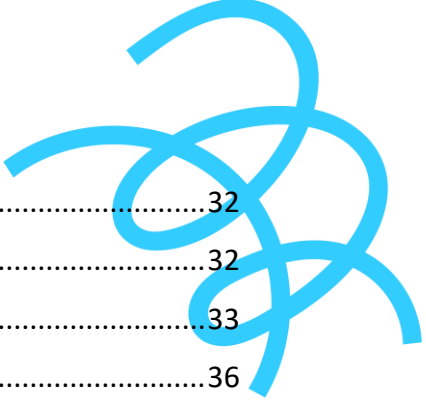


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Contents

LIST OF FIGURES	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	7
1. INTRODUCTION	8
2. THE DANCING PROJECT	9
2.1. Overview	9
2.2. DANCING Ambitions.....	10
2.3. DANCING Underpinning Tenets	11
2.4. DANCING Timeline	12
2.5. Project Visual Identity and Communication	13
2.5.1. <i>The DANCING Logo</i>	14
2.5.2. <i>The DANCING Website</i>	14
2.5.3. <i>Social Media Strategy</i>	15
3. PROJECT ORGANISATION	17
3.1. DANCING Team	17
3.2. The Advisory Board	18
3.3. Collaborations	20
3.4. DANCING Organisational Strategy	20
4. DANCING RESEARCH	22
4.1. DANCING Work Package 1 – Experiential Objective	22
4.1.1. <i>Desk Based Research</i>	22
4.1.2. <i>Qualitative Research</i>	23
4.1.3. <i>Arts-based Research</i>	25
4.2. DANCING Work Package 2 – Normative Objective	25
4.2.3. <i>Legal-Doctrinal Research</i>	27
4.2.4. <i>Qualitative Research</i>	27
4.3. DANCING Work Package 3 – Theoretical Objective	28
4.4. DANCING Work Package 4 – Tools for Change	29
5. RESEARCH ACHIVEMENTS AND MILESTONES	30
5.1. Qualitative Research	30
5.2. Arts-Based Research	31
5.3. Socio-legal and Legal Doctrinal Research	32



5.4.	Key Milestones	32
5.4.1.	<i>DANCING Conferences</i>	32
5.4.2.	<i>Artistic Events</i>	33
5.4.3.	<i>Academic Conversations and Workshops</i>	36
5.5.	Collaboration with Other EU Projects and Participation in Major International Conferences	38
6.	DANCING CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE AND OUTPUTS	40
6.1.	DANCING Overarching Contribution to Knowledge	40
6.2.	DANCING Impact	41
6.3.	Outputs	43
7.	CONCLUDING REMARKS	46
	REFERENCES	47
	ANNEXES	50
	Annex I - Academic Conversations	50
	Annex II - Workshops	51
	Annex III - Scholarly Publications	52
	Annex IV - Blogposts	56
	Annex V - Programme of the DANCING Concert, 4 September 2023	60
	Annex VI - Programme of 'Lived Fiction', 11-12 April 2024	68

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: DANCING Methodology.

Figure 2: DANCING Main Objectives.

Figure 3: Work Packages Timeline.

Figure 4: Work Package 1 Tasks Descriptions.

Figure 5: Work Package 2 Tasks Descriptions.

Figure 6: Work Package 3 Tasks Descriptions.

Figure 7: All DANCING Reports.





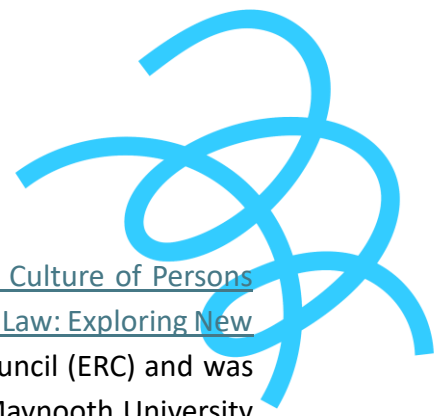
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents an overview of the past 5 years of research led under the European Research Council (ERC) funded project ‘Protecting the Right to Culture of Persons with Disabilities and Enhancing Cultural Diversity through European Union (EU) Law: Exploring New Paths – DANCING’. It describes the project, its objectives and ambitions, as well as delves into its organisational approaches and dissemination strategy. On the whole, the report showcases how DANCING has advanced the state of knowledge and contributed to methodological innovation. It further discusses the extent to which DANCING contributed to interdisciplinary scholarship on disability rights, particularly on the right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life, and supported the shaping of EU disability law as a standalone field of academic research. In that regard, the report shows that DANCING also enriched the broader scholarly debate on the EU integration, and on non-doctrinal methodological approaches to EU law. The impact of DANCING extends beyond scholarship, and the report further presents how the project endeavoured to effect social and policy change in the Cultural and Creative Sector (CCS).

DANCING comprised four different Work Packages (WP). Three of them relate to the key objectives of the project (experiential, normative and theoretical), while the fourth focuses on translating the research into practical tools for change which affect various stakeholders of the project. DANCING embraced a socio-legal perspective, and pursued an analysis of law that directly engaged with the social contexts, practices and stakes to which legal norms apply. Consistent with this perspective, and in order to achieve the three objectives indicated above, DANCING’s research strategy combined legal doctrinal research, qualitative research and arts-based research.

Over the past five years, DANCING produced groundbreaking research. The project shed light on the barriers to, and facilitators of, cultural participation experienced by persons with disabilities and how they affect the wider cultural domain. It provided a normative exploration of how the EU has used - and can use in the future - its full range of competences to make the CCS more inclusive of, and more accessible to, persons with disabilities. It also looked at the intertwining between the promotion of accessibility and inclusivity and the enhancement of cultural diversity. The project also articulated a new theorisation of the promotion of cultural diversity as encompassing disability within the EU legal order. Such theorisation underpins several of the scholarly outputs released in the last part of the project or currently in press.

The findings of the DANCING project were disseminated beyond academic circles through a range of initiatives, including non-academic publications and public events, aimed at raising awareness among the broadest possible audience. DANCING’s ambition, innovative research methods, and numerous achievements contributed to unveiling both the normative and practical dimensions of participation in cultural life for people with disabilities, while opening new avenues for future interdisciplinary research.



1. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the project '[Protecting the Right to Culture of Persons with Disabilities and Enhancing Cultural Diversity through European Union Law: Exploring New Paths \(DANCING\)](#)'. The project was funded by the European Research Council (ERC) and was led by Prof. Delia Ferri as a Principal Investigator (PI). It was hosted by Maynooth University (MU) School of Law and Criminology and Assisting Living and Learning (ALL) Institute. It ran from 1 September 2020 until 31 August 2025 (project duration: 60 months) and investigated the extent to which the protection of the right to take part in culture of people with disabilities and the promotion of cultural diversity intersect and complement each other in the European Union (EU) legal order.

This report covers retrospectively all aspects of the project, encompassing both organisational and management issues, as well as main research milestones. This report further provides an overview of the key research activities undertaken throughout the DANCING project and of the methods used. It highlights the main findings and insights that emerged from the research, and outlines DANCING's overall contribution to knowledge across different fields, with an emphasis on methodological advances and novel epistemological approaches. However, the report does not offer a comprehensive account of all the data collected over the course of the project, nor does it attempt to examine every finding in detail. Instead, it highlights the most significant aspects and outcomes, referencing key outputs produced during the project's lifespan to offer a clear understanding of DANCING's impact and achievements.

Following these introductory remarks, Section 2 provides an overview of the project, its objectives, ambitions and timeline. It also briefly explains the visual identity of the project and its dissemination approach. Section 3 outlines the main structural and organisational aspects. Section 4 details the core research activities undertaken during the past 5 years. Section 5 highlights the key research achievements and milestones of the project. This section does not aim to summarise the multifaceted outcomes of the project. Rather, it highlights key advancements, pointing to specific outputs released during the project. Section 6 gives a succinct account of DANCING overarching contribution to knowledge. Section 7 provides some concluding remarks. The report is complemented by a series of annexes.

2. THE DANCING PROJECT

2.1. Overview

The ERC-funded project '[Protecting the Right to Culture of Persons with Disabilities and Enhancing Cultural Diversity through European Union Law: Exploring New Paths \(DANCING\)](#)' (2020-2025) **investigated the extent to which the protection of the right of people with disabilities to take part in culture and the promotion of cultural diversity intersect and complement each other in the EU legal order.** It aimed to produce ground-breaking knowledge with a view to challenging the cultural exclusion often faced by people with disabilities and making European society more inclusive and culturally diverse.

DANCING endeavoured to disrupt conventional approaches adopted by legal (particularly EU law) scholarship by using a combination of **legal, empirical and arts-based research** to pursue its objectives, within the remit of a participatory research strategy (Figure 1).

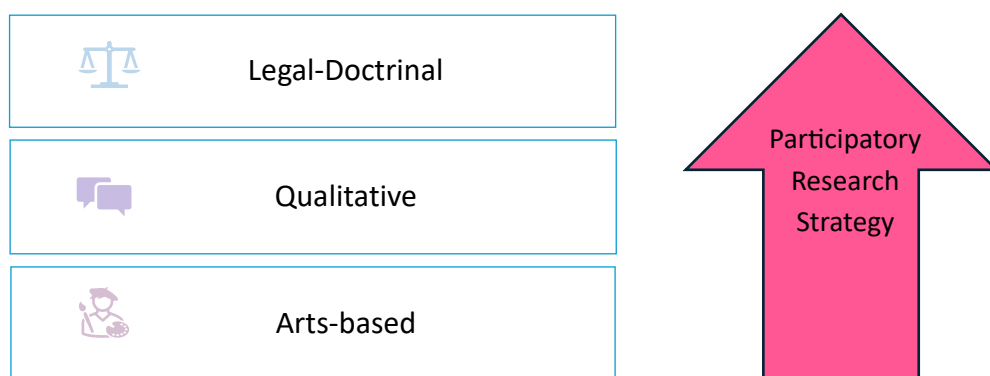


Figure 1: DANCING Methodology.

DANCING pursued three main objectives (Figure 2). Firstly, it identified and categorised barriers to, and facilitators of, cultural participation experienced by persons with disabilities and how they affect the wider cultural domain (**experiential objective**). Secondly, it provided a normative exploration of how the EU has used and can use its competence to combat discrimination and its supporting competence on cultural matters, in synergy with its wide internal market powers, to ensure accessibility of cultural activities and to promote disability identities. In that connection, DANCING aimed to advance the understanding of how EU law could be used to make culture inclusive of persons with disabilities and to enhance cultural diversity (**normative objective**). In doing so, DANCING connected the implementation of the United Nations (UN) [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (CRPD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) [Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions](#). It further looked at the implementation of other relevant treaties such as the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) [Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons](#)

Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired or Otherwise Print Disabled. Thirdly, it advanced the understanding of the legal concept of cultural diversity, and, in the final phase of the project, articulated a new theorisation of the promotion of cultural diversity within the EU legal order (**theoretical objective**).

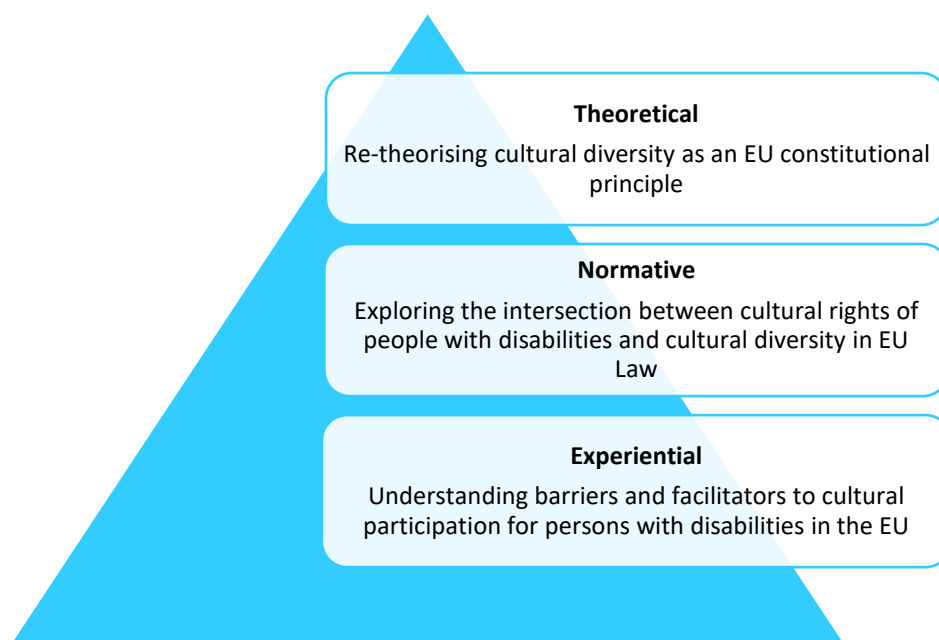


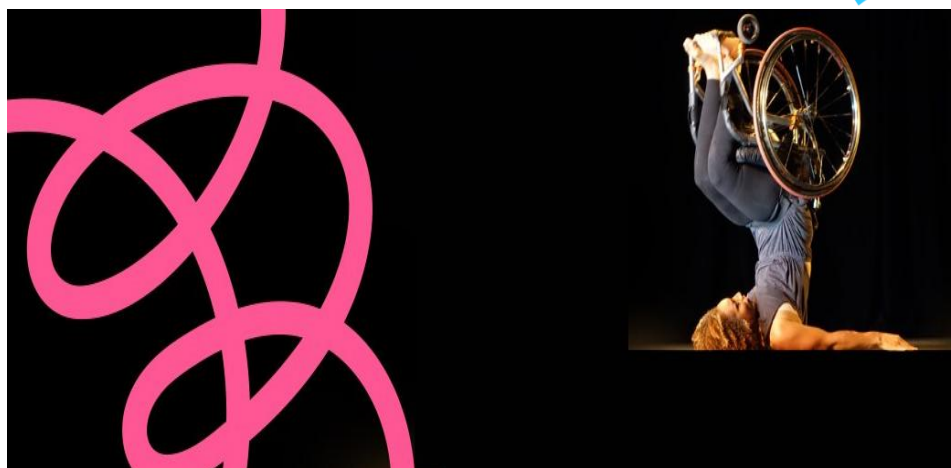
Figure 2: DANCING Main Objectives.

These objectives (experiential, normative and theoretical) were pursued by means of bespoke research Work Packages (WPs). Furthermore, DANCING also comprised a cross-cutting WP (WP4) aimed at translating the academic findings into practical tools that can trigger societal and policy change. All DANCING WPs will be explained in Section 3 below.

2.2. DANCING Ambitions

Although culture had been recognised as essential to ending the marginalisation of persons with disabilities in society (Tatić, 2015), scholarly work on the rights of persons with disabilities had for long remained limited and scattered. Little consideration had been given to the cultural diversity brought by people with disabilities as cultural producers.

One of the images used in the project and portrayed below shows a dancer in a wheelchair performing a dynamic balance position on her back, upside down. This image symbolises the DANCING overarching ambition which was a change of perspective when it comes to culture and disability in the EU.



DANCING banner featuring project logo and dancer performing in a wheelchair.

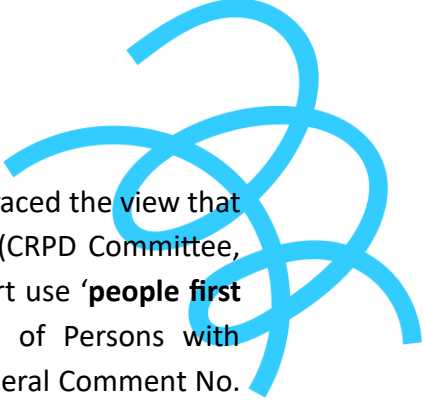
In line with its ambition, DANCING sought to **address a gap in legal literature** and **highlight the importance of participation in cultural life for people with disabilities**, which had been largely overlooked. In that regard, DANCING contributed to **advancing the legal discourse on the right to culture** of persons with disabilities. Further, by combining legal-doctrinal research with qualitative and arts-based methods, DANCING ensured a **focus on the lived experience of people with disabilities** and the barriers they face in cultural settings to achieve a deeper understanding of the right to culture. In doing so, DANCING also significantly contributed to **overcoming the limited interactions among disciplines concerned with cultural participation of persons with disabilities**, which had resulted in conceptual fragmentation and epistemic gaps.

DANCING also aimed to shed light on **how EU law can promote cultural participation of persons with disabilities**. In that regard, it provided a **broader contribution to EU legal scholarship, both methodologically and normatively**. It highlighted key strengths of interdisciplinary approaches to EU law.

2.3. DANCING Underpinning Tenets

DANCING has **approached disability as a human rights issue** and has aimed to **generate new knowledge to support the implementation of [Article 30 CRPD](#) in the EU** (and beyond). It adopted a **socio-legal perspective**, i.e. pursued an analysis of law that engages with the social situation to which the law applies.

The project was underpinned by the CRPD, as global legal standard on disability rights, and was informed by the **human rights model of disability**. In particular, DANCING embedded the concept of disability as laid out in [Article 1\(2\) CRPD](#). The provision recognises that persons with disabilities include those ‘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'. DANCING also embraced the view that 'disability is a social construct' and 'is one of several layers of identity' (CRPD Committee, 2018a). Consistent with the CRPD terminology, the project and this report use '**people first language**' (i.e. persons/ people with disabilities), and Organisation(s) of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs). In DANCING, OPDs have been defined in line with General Comment No. 7 of the CRPD Committee (CRPD Committee, 2018b).

The project conceived of the right to participate in culture in a comprehensive way, considering both its individual twofold dimension and collective aspect (Romainville, 2015; Chow, 2018). The individual dimension includes both the right to cultural consumption – meaning the right to access cultural activities, goods and services – and the right to active involvement in culture, which includes the engagement in the creation of cultural goods, services and activities. The collective aspect entails the right of cultural communities to be recognised and protected, as well as to enjoy and make use of their own cultural heritage and cultural expressions.

The project acknowledged the existing comprehensive definitions of culture and the cultural domain that connect to cultural rights. However, it deliberately focused on arts practices (including literature, dance, music, theatre, and visual arts...) and heritage as forms of cultural expression (Caust, 2019), and used contemporary dance as a selected art practice for the purpose of arts-based research. The project's focus links to the definition of Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCS) included in EU law (particularly in [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/818 establishing the Creative Europe Programme](#)), discussed in other [DANCING outputs](#). The CCS include 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. Namely, the CCS include architecture, archives, libraries and museums, artistic crafts, audiovisual (including film, television, video games and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design (including fashion design), festivals, music, literature, performing arts, books and publishing, radio, and visual arts, publishing, media, and entertainment.

2.4. DANCING Timeline

DANCING was completed over a period of 60 months (5 years) and was divided into 3 complementary and partially overlapping WPs complemented as noted above by WP4 for as a cross-cutting WP focusing on awareness raising through specific outputs for the general public (Figure 3).

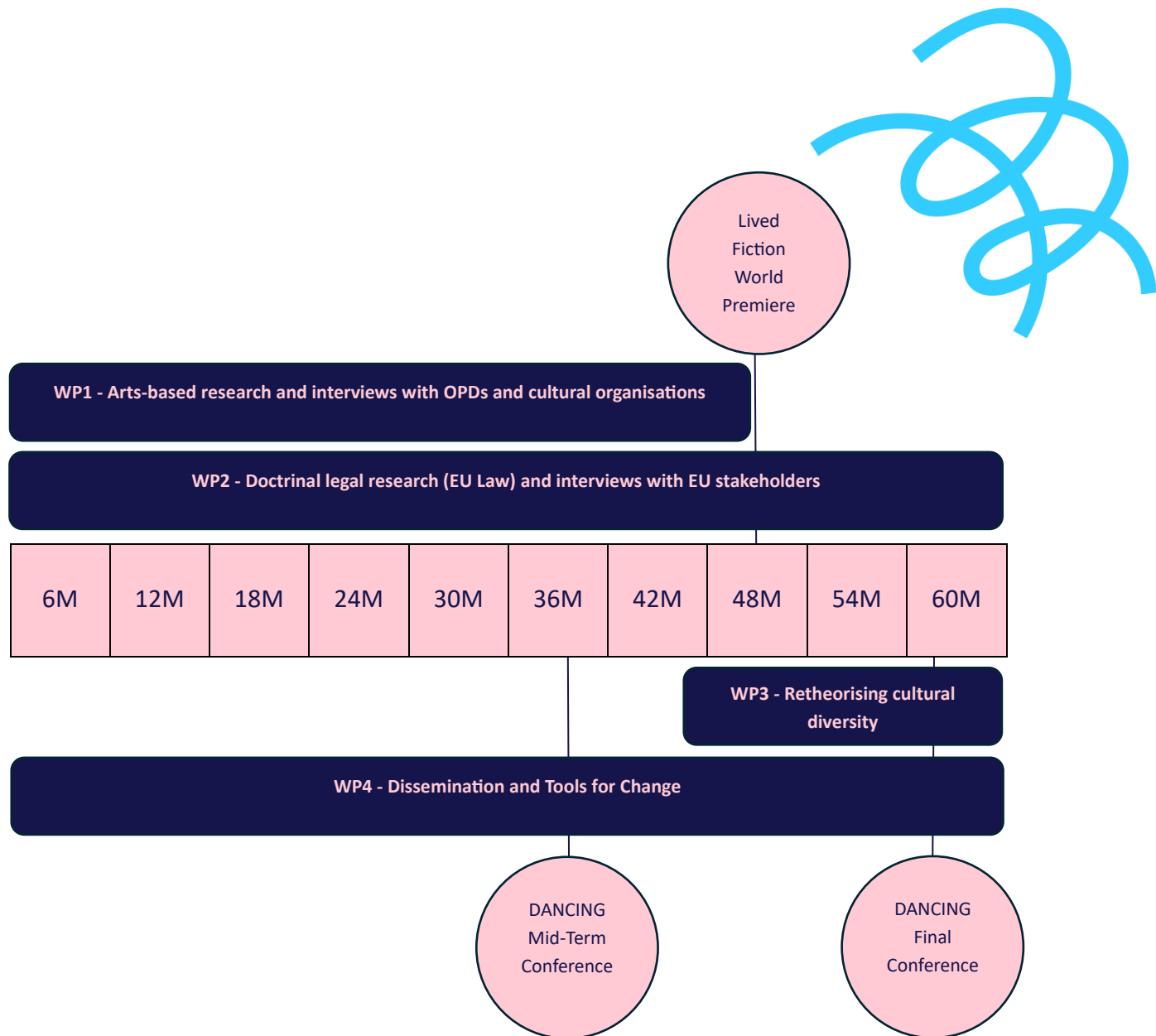


Figure 3: Work Packages Timeline.

2.5. Project Visual Identity and Communication

The DANCING project developed a strong visual identity that prioritised accessibility and inclusivity. A distinct colour palette and a recognisable [logo](#) were consistently applied across all materials, ensuring clarity and coherence. Communication strategies combined academic rigour with broad outreach, making use of social media channels such as [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#) to share updates and engage with diverse audiences. A comprehensive [website](#) was created as the central hub of information, functioning both as a communication tool and as a long-term archive of the project's outputs and achievements. The design emphasised accessible formats, with attention to readability, contrast and navigation, so that people with disabilities could fully engage with the content. This visual and communicative strategy reinforced the project's mission to democratise research and to extend its impact beyond academia.

2.5.1. The DANCING Logo

Our [logo](#) was created for DANCING by Wonder Works Studio Ltd. in consultation with Prof. Delia Ferri in the first few months of the project. It consists of the warm font Aller, and loose hand drawn lines. The lines symbolise the movement and diversity of performing artists; they are different shapes but complement each other when put together. The logo was created in various colours while keeping contrast in mind for accessibility.



Dancing Logo.

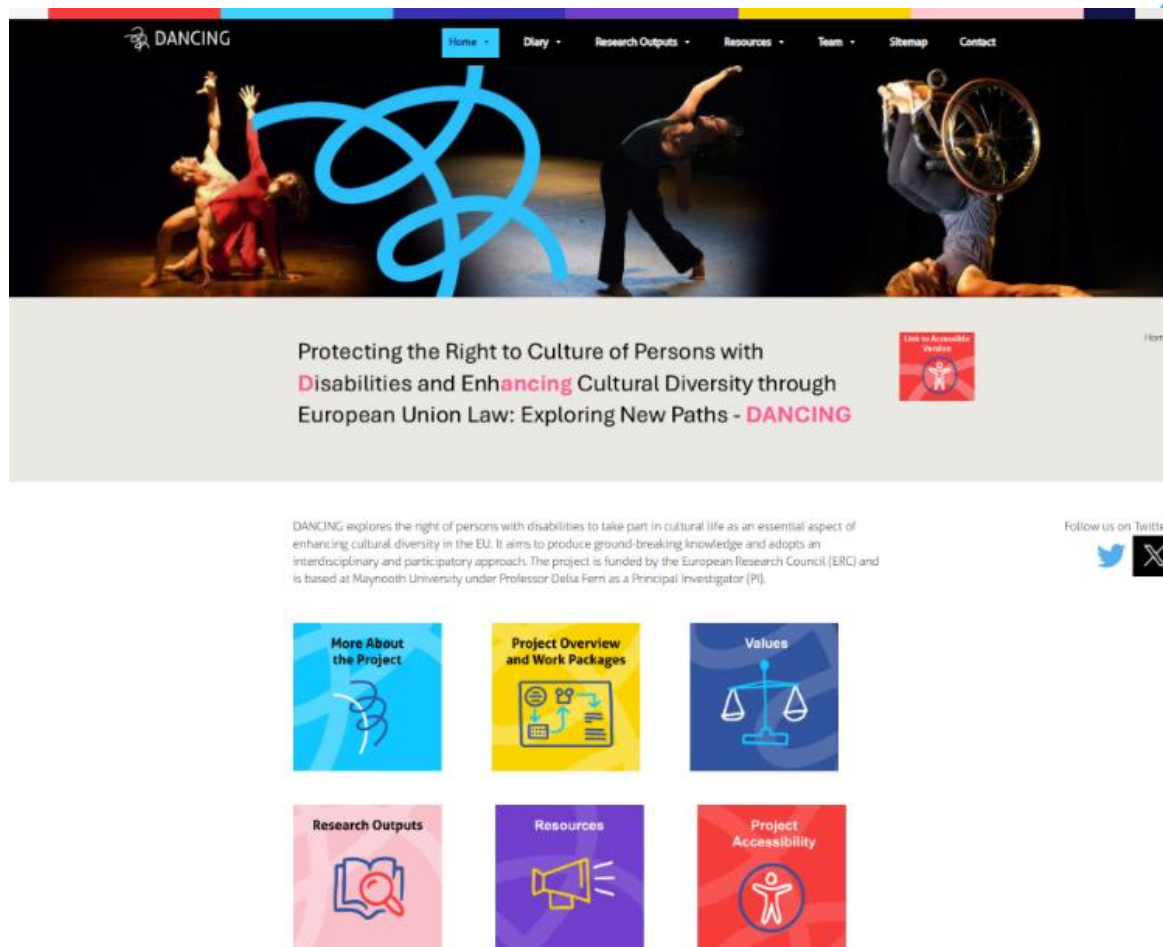
2.5.2. The DANCING Website

The [DANCING website](#) was designed with accessibility in mind, choosing an accessible template from WordPress. The fonts and colours are easy to perceive and read, and the layout is simple to navigate. In addition to the site conforming to [WCAG 2.1 AA](#) standards, accessible versions of many pages have been created. Further, several outputs and graphics are available in easy-to read, text-description, audio and Irish Sign Language (ISL) versions.

Launched on 16 March 2021, the DANCING project's website served as the primary outlet and archive, showcasing the project's achievements and outputs while raising awareness of the right to cultural participation of people with disabilities. Although the project concluded on 31 August 2025, the website remains live and available as a valuable archive of resources advancing cultural rights for people with disabilities.

The website has over 100 webpages to showcase DANCING research and activities, including a resources section and a timeline which features over 220 news items. The website includes a summary of the project, information on the research team, information on the results and outputs (which has been constantly updated up until the end of the project). During the life

of the project, it featured a chat function to allow members of the public to contact the research team directly (and privately).




DANCING Website Homepage.

Up until August 2025, the website was frequently updated to reflect the latest research progress and regularly monitored for any technical issues, such as formatting changes caused by programme updates. Project Manager Hilary Hooks led website maintenance and updates, with support from the wider DANCING team to uphold high quality standards. As detailed in the [report on WP4](#), two major revamps of the website were conducted to improve its accessibility and aesthetic.

2.5.3. Social Media Strategy

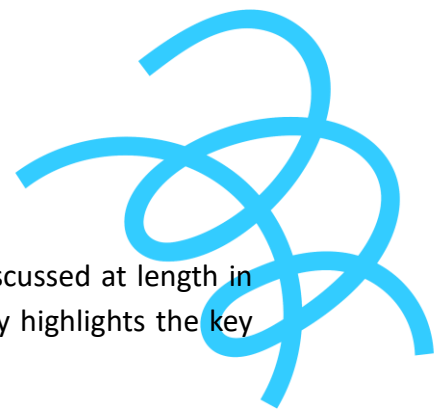
An obvious way to best disseminate all the outputs and achievements shared on the website was through a strong social media presence. In 2020, a [Twitter/X profile](#) was set up to reach out to a range of professional audiences, including academics, policymakers, OPDs and civil society to share the project's milestones and key outputs. In the final year of the project, DANCING also deployed a [LinkedIn page](#) to enhance impact and diversify the project's social



media portfolio. Furthermore, as the DANCING project was based within the [ALL Institute](#) and the MU [School of Law and Criminology](#), the DANCING team engaged regularly with the LinkedIn pages of these entities.

Active social media participation allowed the team to highlight and raise awareness of project activities. For example, for the DANCING Final Conference, the visuals of the LinkedIn page increased by 264.9% and the number of single visitors increased by 331.8% in the weeks preceding and following the event. At the time of this report, the Twitter/X account collected 593 followers, and the LinkedIn page has 189 followers.

In advance of the end of the project, DANCING's last tweet on X/Twitter was on 7 July announcing that the page would no longer be active. The post encouraged viewers to continue following the updates of the project directly on the LinkedIn page, which has remained active to share some of the final achievements of the project, furthering DANCING's impact even beyond the conclusion of the project.



3. PROJECT ORGANISATION

The organisational and management aspects of DANCING have been discussed at length in the [DANCING Organisation and Management Report](#). This section briefly highlights the key approaches adopted within the project.

3.1. DANCING Team

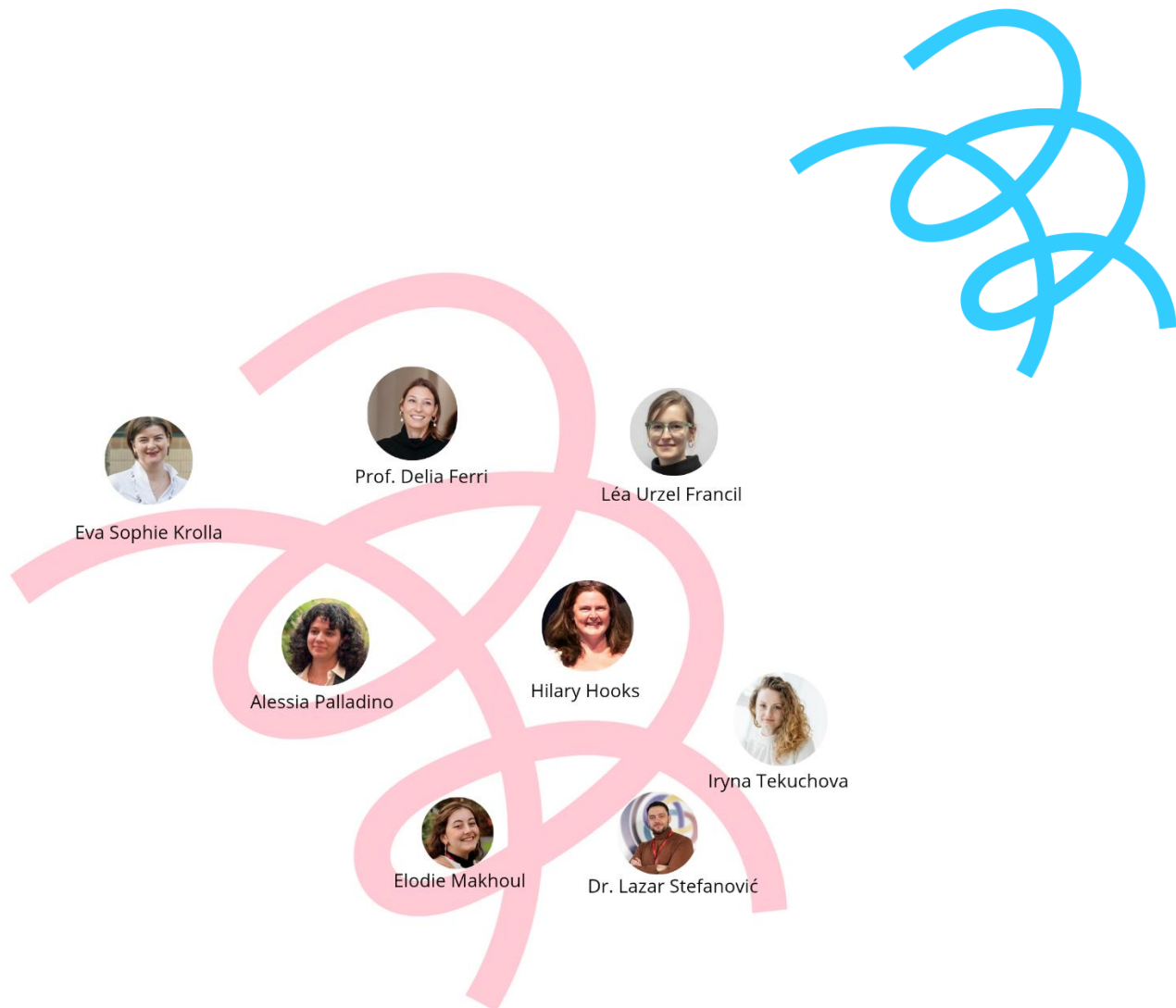
The European Research Council (ERC) Consolidator Grant enabled the Principal Investigator (PI) to establish a high-performing, interdisciplinary research team suitable to achieve the ambitious objectives of the DANCING project. The grant also allowed the PI to foster individual talent, valuing diversity, and supporting early career researchers. Since the start of the project, PI Prof. Delia Ferri led and mentored the DANCING team, which included a project manager, post-doctoral researchers, early career researchers, and PhD candidates, ensuring alignment with the project's scientific goals and overseeing all administrative aspects.

Hilary Hooks joined in September 2020 as [Project Manager](#), supporting project implementation, monitoring deadlines, overseeing financial aspects, and contributing to WP4 activities.

Post-doctoral Researcher Dr. Ann Leahy, who joined in 2020 and completed her tenure in 2024, contributed to WP1. Post-doctoral Researcher Dr. Neža Šubic, and Post-doctoral Researcher Dr. Vincenzo Tudisco, who were part of DANCING in initial phases, contributed to WP2.

PhD Candidates Léa Urzel Francil (who joined DANCING in February 2021) and Iryna Tekuchova (who joined DANCING in January 2022) contributed to WP1 and WP2, while undertaking their individual PhD projects.

Research Assistant Tiarnán McDonough joined DANCING in the mid-phase, supported major milestones, such as the mid-term conference, and contributed to WP1 and WP2. Senior Research Assistant Eva S. Krolla commenced her tenure in DANCING in March 2022 and contributed mostly to WP2, WP3 as well as WP4. Research Assistants Alessia Palladino, Elodie Makhoul, and Dr. Lazar Stefanović joined in the final year of the project and supported the PI across the completion of all WPs.



DANCING Team Members (Year 5)

3.2. The Advisory Board

The project was supported by a multidisciplinary Advisory Board (AB) composed by six members reflecting interdisciplinarity and diversity. The AB provided strategic advice to the PI, offering guidance and expert insights at various junctures of the DANCING project.



Prof. Anna Lawson, Professor in the School of Law at the University of Leeds, and Joint Director of the university-wide interdisciplinary Centre for Disability Studies.



Emeritus Prof. Bruno de Witte, Professor of EU Law at Maastricht University and part-time Professor at the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence.



Prof. Laverne Jacobs, Professor of Law at the University of Windsor, Founder and Director of the Law, Disability & Social Change Project and Member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



Prof. Eilionóir Flynn, Established Professor at the School of Law and Director of the Centre for Disability Law and Policy (CDLP) at the University of Galway.



Emeritus Prof. Mark Priestley, Emeritus Professor of Disability Policy at the University of Leeds.



Prof. Sarah Whatley, Director of the Centre for Dance Research at Coventry University.

Prof. Laverne Jacobs joined the esteemed DANCING AB following the untimely passing of Dr. Damjan Tatić in January 2024.



Dr. Damjan Tatić was a founder and associate of the National Organisation of Persons with Disabilities of Serbia, and guest lecturer at the Legal Clinic at the Faculty of Law of University of Belgrade and Academy of European Law, in Trier. He also served as an expert member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities from 2011 until 2019.

3.3. Collaborations

The DANCING project benefitted greatly from the key collaborations that played a central role in advancing [WP4 – Tools for Change](#).

DANCING collaborated with [Stopgap Dance Company](#), an innovative and inclusive dance company based in the United Kingdom (UK). Stopgap was a key collaborator for the arts based research and created the [performance ‘Lived Fiction’](#). This contemporary dance piece embeds accessibility and gives a plastic representation of the new theorisation of cultural diversity.

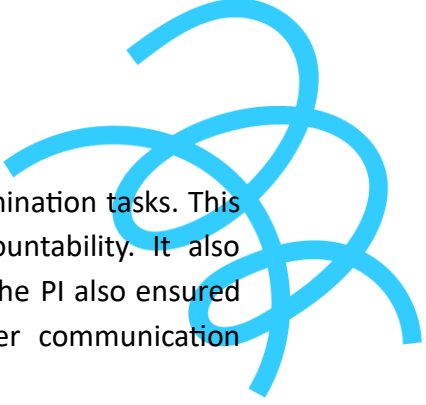
James Kelly from [Feenish Productions Ltd](#) directed and produced the documentary on the DANCING project, entitled [Steps to Change: Following the DANCING Project 2020 – 2025](#). Filmed at various points throughout the project’s duration, the documentary captured significant research challenges, strengths, and findings.

DANCING collaborated with the [Accessibility Designer Norbert Croonenberg](#) who created all of DANCING’s [infographics](#) and [cartoons](#), designed the DANCING [photobook](#), and provided graphics and suggestions for improving the website. Norbert Croonenberg also shared guidance on the design and accessibility of other outputs, notably on the various [toolkits](#) developed for WP4 as well as the [DANCING Interactive Map](#) showcasing the core tenets of the project in an innovative and interactive way. His work has helped raise awareness of the project, bringing it to a wider audience which would not have been possible otherwise.

[Tiziano Pantano](#), a blind artist from Milan, created the artwork [‘Odisseo-Ulysses’](#) for the DANCING project. The piece consists of two side-by-side panels: one a collage in colour, and the other an identical version in white, designed so that the work ‘can be appreciated in different ways by diverse people and can be ‘experimented’ with and touched by people who are blind or have a visual impairment’.

3.4. DANCING Organisational Strategy

As discussed in the report on [Project Organisation and Management](#), the PI defined clear roles within the team, in alignment with the activities and objectives outlined in the project proposal. Each member was assigned responsibilities that matched their expertise, including



legal research, data collection and analysis, literature reviews, and dissemination tasks. This organisational approach minimised task overlap and encouraged accountability. It also fostered collaboration and prevented further challenges down the line. The PI also ensured communication and collaboration through regular meetings and other communication channels.

The project started amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, which posed significant challenges to traditional research activities. Restrictions on travel, in-person meetings, and fieldwork disrupted planned timelines from the very beginning. It required rapid adaptation to remote or digital methods, and increased efforts to maintain collaboration and engagement with stakeholders. In the aftermath of the pandemic, DANCING continued to face residual challenges. Institutional delays, shifting priorities, changing political landscapes in the EU, and limited face-to-face contact persisted even after restrictions were lifted. Additionally, the long-term impact of COVID-19 on participants availability, mental health, and digital fatigue inevitably influenced DANCING. Adapting to this new landscape required sustained flexibility and problem-solving, as well as an iterative approach to research management.

In DANCING, research and organisational flexibility were crucial for the team, who would prioritise urgent tasks and support other team members in their respective work when necessary. Such flexibility was also essential to address a changing and ever evolving international and EU landscape on disability rights. Notably, between 2020 and 2025, the EU introduced the [Strategy on the Rights of Persons with disabilities 2021-2030](#), which was the springboard of several key flagship policy initiatives, such as [AccessibleEU](#), a European hub for sharing accessibility knowledge and best practices, launched by the end of 2022. The most important legal development occurred in 2023, with the release of the proposal on the European Disability Card, which became a [Directive](#) in 2024. DANCING endeavoured to capture these ongoing developments and investigate the way in which they affected the right to culture of persons with disabilities. It also investigated – particularly within WP2 – the interaction between different pieces of legislation adopted just before the project started, such as the [European Accessibility Act](#). On the whole, legal developments and policy shifts created both opportunities and challenges for DANCING, as it had to respond to a fast-evolving legal context.



4. DANCING RESEARCH

After having provided a short overview of the DANCING project, its objectives, ambitions, timeline, and organisation, this section details the core research activities undertaken between September 2020 until August 2025.

4.1. DANCING Work Package 1 – Experiential Objective

WP1 encompassed a [socio-legal analysis](#) of the right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life, which entailed the examination of [Article 30 CRPD](#) and its implementation within the social situations in which it applies (Hutchinson & Duncan, 2012).

This WP identified features of cultural access experienced as exclusionary by people experiencing different types of disability, and tools that may facilitate their cultural participation. It also investigated the extent to which disability identity is perceived as a cultural identity by persons with disabilities and cultural operators. In doing so, it endeavoured to understand what impact barriers experienced by persons with disabilities display on the cultural domain.

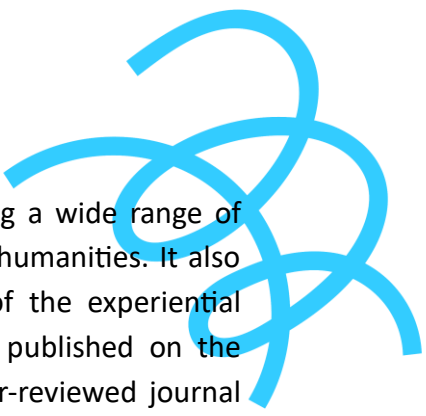
WP1 encompassed four main tasks (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Work Package 1 Tasks Descriptions.

4.1.1. Desk Based Research

WP1 entailed a multidisciplinary literature review, which was conducted at the beginning of the project, and then updated at various junctures. A narrative approach to the review was



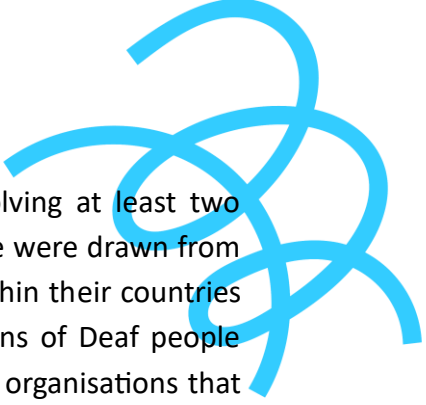
used to ensure broad coverage and flexibility, with the view of including a wide range of studies in different disciplinary domains across, law, social sciences and humanities. It also allowed to focus on the aspects most relevant to the achievement of the experiential objective. An [article](#) presenting the findings of the initial review was published on the [Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research](#) (SDJR), an international peer-reviewed journal aiming to disseminate high quality social research on disability. SDJR was deemed the best outlet for this review as it is a journal that supports a ‘critical reflection on the position of people with disabilities in different societal contexts’. Other strands of the literature review fed into different articles published within the remit of WP1. A [bespoke review](#) was conducted within the remit of Task 1.4 and fed into the article [Leveraging EU non-discrimination law to make the cultural and creative sectors more inclusive of professionals with disabilities: socio-legal perspectives](#), authored by PhD candidate Léa Urzel Francil and published in the [International Journal of Cultural Policy](#), a renowned peer reviewed outlet for a multidisciplinary research on cultural policies.

WP1 further involved traditional legal doctrinal methodology to investigate the obligations brought by [Article 30 CRPD](#), as well as relevant other provisions of the CRPD. Legal research was the bedrock of research conducted under WP2 and fed into various outputs of WP1.

4.1.2. Qualitative Research

Qualitative research, in the form of document analysis and empirical research (mainly semi-structured interviews with key informants and focus groups), was also undertaken under this WP. Document analysis entailed the systematic review and analysis of States Parties’ reports and the CRPD Committee’s documents (List of Issues -LIs and Concluding Observations-COs) related to EU Member States plus the UK and the EU itself. The reference period was between January 2008, when the CRPD came into force, and the end of May 2024. The team accessed reports on the [UN Treaty Body Database of progress reports](#). The total number of States Parties’ reports reviewed was 42. In addition to States Parties’ reports, 70 documents comprised of LIs and COs (published up until 31 May 2024) were reviewed. The project conducted a thematic analysis, which leveraged on the legal analysis of the CRPD, which involves examining the data collected and identifying recurrent themes or detecting repeated patterns of meaning (Braun and Clarke 2006). Initial findings of this analysis were included in an [article](#) published in the [ALTER Journal](#), with final and updated findings included in the volume [Dismantling Barriers and Advancing the Right of Persons with Disabilities to Participate in Cultural Life: A Socio-Legal Analysis](#) authored by the PI and Dr. Ann Leahy, and published by Routledge in 2025.

The qualitative research, fully detailed in the [Qualitative Data Collection and Archiving in the DANCING Project](#) report, included semi-structured interviews aimed to identify the main barriers to cultural participation as perceived by key stakeholders of people with disabilities across Europe. Interviews were conducted to accomplish Tasks 1.1., 1.2. and 1.3. The team pursued a purposeful sampling strategy and recruited representatives of 64 organisations



drawn from 28 European countries (27 EU countries and the UK) involving at least two participating organisations from each country. Those invited to participate were drawn from three types of organisations: umbrella OPDs working at national level within their countries and representing a range of disability types (n=28), national organisations of Deaf people (n=11), and organisations that work in the cultural field, with priority for organisations that were disability-led (n=25). In a few cases, where a national umbrella OPD did not agree to participate, DANCING engaged with other organisations in that country, such as umbrella organisations of blind people or an organisation working on independent living. The project prioritised organisations primarily governed by people with disabilities based on the definition in General Comment No. 7 of the CRPD Committee (CRPD Committee, 2018b). A total of 41 interviews and 23 written questionnaires (in lieu of interviews) were conducted with representatives of national organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), national organisations of Deaf people, and organisations working at the intersection of disability and the arts. All participants were over 18 and volunteered to take part, with interviews conducted in English and accompanied by a range of accessibility measures and reasonable accommodation.

Data collected through the interviews and questionnaires were supplemented by two focus groups, whose participants were primarily individuals working on access and disability issues within the CCSs across different EU Member States, or engaged in European projects aimed at facilitating or promoting greater access for people with disabilities. The focus groups explored barriers to accessing and producing culture, thereby complementing data obtained through interviews and questionnaires to achieve Task 1.1., 1.2 and 1.3, and how these barriers affect the cultural domain as a whole to support the accomplishment of Task 1.4. One group included nine participants from five European countries, while the other comprised 11 participants from eight countries. Focus groups were selected because they enable the collection of qualitative data through group discussions. In this respect, they rely on participants' dialogue to generate insights that would be less accessible without such interactions (Morgan, 2019; Acocella and Cataldi, 2021).

The data collected were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun, 2013; Braun and Clarke, 2021). The process moved through familiarisation, coding, theme development, and refinement. Initial coding was largely inductive, with themes developed to reflect both legal aspects of the project and the CRPD's social-contextual understanding of disability.

Ethical approval for this research was obtained from MU Ethics Committee (Social Research Ethics Subcommittee – SRESC). As discussed in [DANCING's data collection report](#), all participants were provided with an information document in advance, and they gave informed consent in writing. The information document outlined the research purpose, process, data-collection procedures, voluntary participation, confidentiality and data-protection issues. Attention was paid to accessibility issues relative to the documents used in all aspects of the

research, with, for example, the information/consent documents used available in alternative formats.

4.1.3. Arts-based Research

Within the remit of WP1 (and WP4) DANCING also collaborated with the inclusive dance company Stopgap to create the choreography *Lived Fiction*. Stopgap brings together dancers with and without disabilities through an integrated creative access approach. The collaboration began in 2022 and culminated in a final public performance in 2024. Throughout project, the PI ensured close engagement with the choreographer and dancers and built rapport and trust, which was essential to deploy the arts-based research, expounded in the [dedicated report 'Role and Findings of Arts-based Research'](#). This research was characterised by different methods.

Observation was the first method used. The PI observed the company during rehearsals and performances, as well as through video recordings. Participant observation involves immersion in everyday activities and interactions (Marshall and Rossmann, 1995; Musante DeWalt and DeWalt, 2010), capturing behaviour in natural contexts (Glaser, 1996). Scholarship recognises the co-constructed nature of observation and the importance of reflexivity (Tedlock, 1991). Observation was complemented by semi-structured interviews (n=9) with dancers and behind-the-scenes members, some of whom identified as people with disabilities. These explored participants' experiences of contributing to the piece and the inclusivity of the process. All interviews were recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim.

Additional data came from a questionnaire and a focus group with audience members at two stages of development. The questionnaire (n=25) was administered after a 'scratch' performance in February 2023, gathering feedback on accessibility. Respondents were mainly arts professionals, some of whom identified as people with disabilities. The focus group, held after the first theatre performance in April 2023, involved six participants, all of whom identified as people with disabilities, and was recorded and transcribed. It elicited perceptions of accessibility and inclusivity while extending the creative process to audiences with disabilities beyond Stopgap.

Consistent with the approach adopted throughout WP1, data collected within the remit of arts-based research were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis.

4.2. DANCING Work Package 2 – Normative Objective

WP2 explored the intersection between cultural rights of people with disabilities and cultural diversity in EU law. WP2 advanced understanding of the extent to which the right to cultural participation of persons with disabilities is protected and promoted by EU cultural policies and

EU disability policies, both in the internal EU sphere and in the external one. It encompassed four tasks (Figure 5).

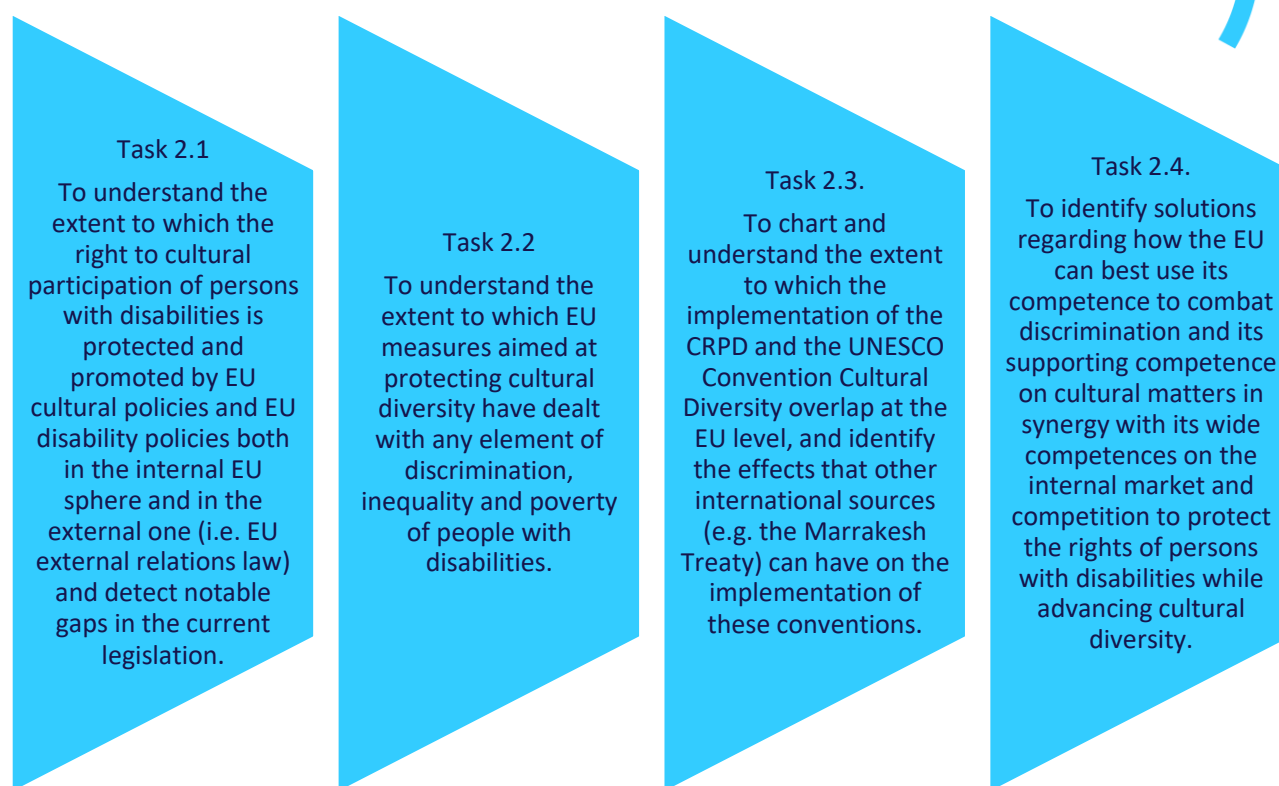


Figure 5: Work Package 2 Tasks Descriptions.

Research activities undertaken as part of this WP brought together traditional legal doctrinal research and empirical research to understand the extent to which the right to cultural participation of persons with disabilities is protected and promoted by EU cultural policies and EU disability policies, both in the internal EU sphere and in the external one (i.e. EU external relations law). The WP also aimed to detect notable gaps in the current legislation, as well as to gauge whether EU measures aimed at protecting cultural diversity have dealt with any element of discrimination, inequality and poverty of people with disabilities (Tasks 2.1. and 2.2). In doing so, it also investigated the extent to which implementing measures of different international instruments (such as the CRPD, the UNESCO Convention Cultural Diversity and the Marrakesh Treaty) intersect and complement each other within the EU (Task 2.3).

Research conducted in the WP also supported the identification of best practices, and ways forward to ensure that the EU can best use its competence to combat discrimination and its supporting competence on cultural matters in synergy with its wide competences on the internal market and competition to protect the rights of persons with disabilities while advancing cultural diversity. The accomplishment of Task 2.4, and more broadly of all tasks of

WP2, assisted the publishing of a [Policy Brief](#) that included bespoke recommendations for EU (and national) policymakers.

Despite challenges posed by the breadth of this WP, by political uncertainties in legislative processes, and unpredicted developments, the WP achieved its normative goal.

4.2.3. *Legal-Doctrinal Research*


Using a traditional legal method, the research encompassed the analysis of the full spectrum of EU disability law and EU cultural policies. Mapping and analysis of soft law (such as Commission Communications and European Parliament Recommendations), hard law and Court of Justice of the EU case law supported a number of outputs and scholarly publications. The legal analysis allowed to investigate and gauge a deep understanding of the relationship between sources in the EU legal order. Some of the interim findings of Task 2.1. were presented in the article [Characterizing access to culture for people with disabilities in EU cultural policy: European identity, market integration, and social inclusion](#), authored by the PI and Dr. Šubic and published by a diamond multilingual open access journal, [DPCE online](#). Other interim findings or bespoke strands of the research were published in working papers hosted within the [STALS Working Paper Series](#). STALS was selected as it is not a mere papers archive, but rather a series that includes papers which undergo a peer-review process. It is also an important 'space' where both young and experienced scholars share ideas. STALS was hence an ideal venue to disseminate DANCING research findings in a relatively quick way, and to reach a very broad community of scholars dealing with European, comparative and international law. STALS was also a venue that supported feedback on specific legal facets investigated in the project. Specific issues and new developments relevant to WP2 were published in academic [blog posts](#).

Situated between WP1 and WP2 and contributing to both, the doctoral project undertaken by PhD candidate Léa Urzel Francil investigated the role of EU law in fostering the right to take part in cultural life of persons with disabilities as professionals in the CCS.

A dedicated strand of research focused on EU external action, including cultural cooperation with third countries. This research was particularly linked to the doctoral project deployed within DANCING carried out by PhD candidate Iryna Tekuchova.

While WP2 focused on EU law, national law came to the fore in relation to specific topics such as [sign languages](#), or was examined to better understand the influence and effects of EU law on national legislation and policies. The project hence engaged with comparative aspects, as well as best practices at the national level. Among these, an article explored the role of [National disability strategies as rights-based cultural policy tools](#). This was authored by the PI and Dr. Šubic and published in the [International Journal of Cultural Policy](#).

4.2.4. *Qualitative Research*



Doctrinal legal research was complemented by 10 semi-structured interviews with European OPDs. The sampling captured the most representative organisations, building on findings from WP1. Further 10 interviews were carried out with stakeholders in disability and cultural cooperation with third countries. 10 interviews were conducted with EU policymakers (including Members of the European Parliament and officials from the Commission and Council) working on cultural and disability policies. These interviews took place between months 30 and 42 of the project. This strand of qualitative research is further detailed in the [Qualitative Data Collection and Archiving in the DANCING Project](#) report. Due to data saturation, a focus group initially envisaged in the proposal, was not carried out.

Consistent with the overall approach to qualitative research adopted in DANCING, empirical data collected were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis (Clarke and Braun, 2013). Equally data collection was undertaken on foot of ethical approval obtained from MU Ethics Committee (Social Research Ethics Subcommittee – SRESC).

4.3. DANCING Work Package 3 – Theoretical Objective

WP3 aimed to retheorise cultural diversity as encompassing the protection of the right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life within the EU legal order (Figure 6). Doctrinal legal analysis was the core method, used to situate cultural diversity within the EU legal framework as a whole.

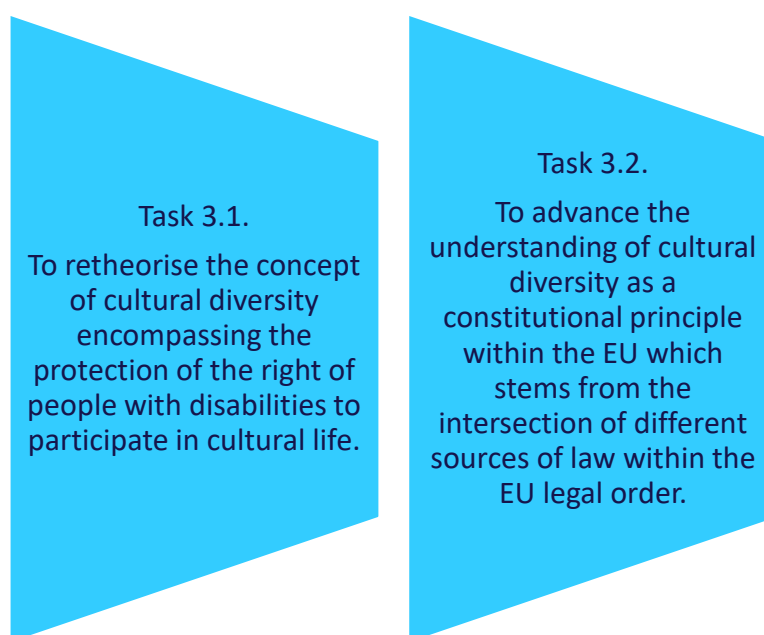
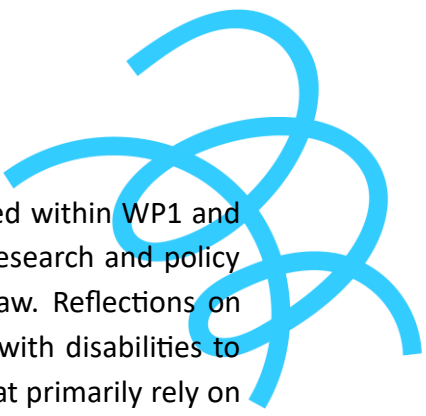


Figure 6: Work Package 3 Tasks Descriptions.



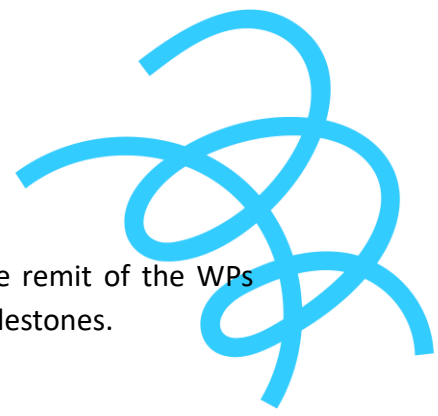
WP3 was the last WP to be undertaken. It built on the research conducted within WP1 and WP2 to provide a novel theoretical framework that can support future research and policy work aimed at promoting cultural diversity and inclusivity through EU Law. Reflections on cultural diversity as encompassing the protection of the right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life (Task 3.1) fed into different scholarly outputs that primarily rely on WP1 and WP2 findings. Some WP3 research findings were included in the book authored by the PI and Dr. Leahy [on Dismantling Barriers And Advancing The Right Of Persons With Disabilities In Cultural Life](#), published within the remit of WP1 and in the article on [Advancing an Embodied Understanding of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities](#), authored by the PI and published in [the Journal of Human Rights Practice](#). Findings arising from Task 3.1 are also included in a forthcoming article related primarily to WP2 and that centres on the Marrakesh Treaty. This article authored by the PI will be published in the [International Review of Intellectual Property and Competition Law](#) (IIC), which is an authoritative peer-reviewed academic journal published by the [Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition](#).

4.4. DANCING Work Package 4 – Tools for Change

WP4, titled *Tools for Change*, aimed to share DANCING's academic findings and scholarly advancements with the general public. Raising awareness of blue-sky research (Linden, 2008) was considered essential to democratise knowledge and ultimately ensuring that people, especially people with disabilities, could benefit from cutting-edge research. As its title indicated, WP4 also offered a platform for experiential, normative and theoretical findings to stimulate legal, policy and societal change. In this respect, WP4, in combination with WP1, was crucial to implementing a participatory research strategy by ensuring that people with disabilities were active participants in the project, and by embedding co-creation elements in a PI-led project such as DANCING. This approach was consistent with the human rights model of disability (Degener, 2017), which informed the project.

As part of WP4, DANCING also fostered synergies with the broader academic community and with a range of stakeholders through the discussion of emerging findings, participation in conferences, workshops, and tailored DANCING Academic Conversations.

Overall, WP4 translated the cutting-edge research carried out within DANCING into accessible and diverse outputs, including cartoons, infographics and artistic performances.



5. RESEARCH ACHIVEMENTS AND MILESTONES

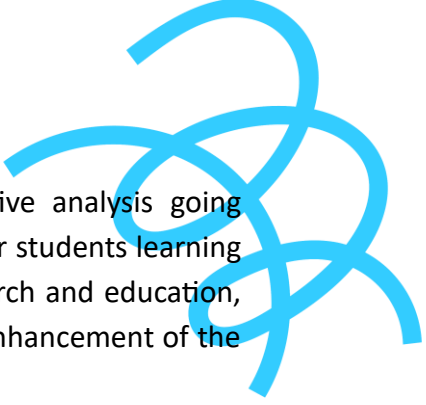
While Section 4 has already discussed the research activities within the remit of the WPs deployment, this section gives an overview of main achievements and milestones.

5.1. Qualitative Research

In WP1, as noted above, a total of 41 interviews and 23 written questionnaires were conducted with representatives of national OPDs, national organisations of Deaf people, and organisations working at the intersection of disability and the arts. In addition, 10 interviews were conducted with representatives of umbrella organisations of cultural producers, artists, and cultural industries active at the European level. To complement these data, two focus groups were held in December 2021, involving participants mainly working on access and disability issues in the CCS across EU Member States. In WP2, qualitative research included three sets of interviews. 10 interviews were conducted with representatives from EU-level umbrella NGOs and OPDs working on disability-related matters. Another 10 interviews involved policymakers, including staff at the European Commission, European Parliament, and other EU bodies whose work concerned the rights of people with disabilities. A further set of 10 interviews involved stakeholders and policymakers working on cultural cooperation and disability in EU external relations. Across WPs 1 and 2, qualitative data comprised 80 interviews, 24 written questionnaires, and two focus groups.

Qualitative research generated evidence that informed legal research and policy recommendations delivered as part of DANCING. By combining insights from OPDs, cultural organisations, and policymakers, DANCING also highlighted a number of best practices that were included in a [Toolkit](#) and [Resource List](#) for cultural organisations.

In compliance with rules on Open Data, a total of 64 interviews and both focus groups (fully anonymised) were archived with participant consent. Questionnaires were not archived in full due to the potential risk of revealing identifiable information about organisations or third parties. Archiving was conducted in compliance with the DANCING Data Management Plan (Ferri, 2021) and best practices (Gray, *et al.*, 2011). The datasets produced are very important as anonymised interviews that have been archived with the Irish Qualitative Data Archive (IQDA) might support further research. Other researchers will be able to revisit and analyse the data, exploring new questions that differ from DANCING's aims. These interviews could also potentially be used in longitudinal studies to examine changes over time or in comparative studies with different and non-EU contexts. Particularly the dataset related to WP1, which documents lived experiences of individuals and communities, would create opportunities for future researchers to examine societal or cultural shifts over time. Combined with the report on [Data Collection and Archiving](#), the datasets may also support researchers in deploying qualitative research. While replication is rare in qualitative research, access to these data and to the report would enable partial replication or validation of findings, backing rigorous and transparent scholarly practices. Additionally, the datasets are valuable for



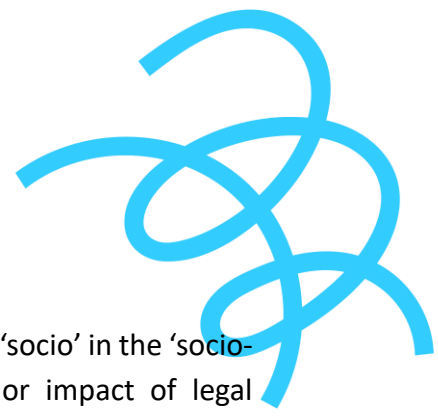
methodological innovation, allowing scholars to develop new qualitative analysis going beyond thematic analysis. DANCING datasets may also provide support for students learning qualitative research methods and/or working on disability. Beyond research and education, DANCING datasets help preserve knowledge that will inform the future enhancement of the right to participate in cultural life of persons with disabilities.

5.2. Arts-Based Research

Arts-based research (i.e., qualitative research employing the premises, procedures, and principles of the arts; Given, 2008) was used in DANCING both as a method of data collection and as a means to represent the social phenomena under study (Franz, 2010; Coemans & Hannes, 2017; Coemans et al., 2017; Jones & Leavy, 2014). This approach was central to achieving the project's experiential objective, generating deep insights into the meaning of disability, accessibility and cultural diversity, by going beyond rational-cognitive ways of knowing and enhancing the participatory dimension of the research. Arts-based research supported the investigation of legal concepts from alternative perspectives.

DANCING focused specifically on dance, as detailed in the report [Role and Findings of Arts-based Research](#). DANCING engaged with the inclusive dance company Stopgap, which created for the DANCING project a choreography *Lived Fiction*. In alignment with Stopgap's terminology and the CRPD, the PI referred to the practice as 'inclusive dance'. As noted by Whatley and Marsh (2017), terms such as 'inclusive' and 'integrated' dance are descriptive, often used interchangeably, and remain contested. Stopgap does not attempt to normalise the movements of dancers with disabilities but recognises them as sources of artistic expression (Boswell et al., 2023). Dance was chosen as it emphasises embodiment and enabled people with disabilities to express their diverse physicality; second, as a traditionally niche art form, it provides a lens through which to examine various facets of cultural diversity; and third, it offers a powerful non-verbal mode of communication capable of reaching a broad audience. By using inclusive dance as a form of arts-based research, **DANCING also contributed to the growing scholarship on integrating dance practice into interdisciplinary, mixed-methods research processes** (McGrath et al., 2022: 97) and **added to the extensive literature on dance and disability** (Albright, 2001; Hermans, 2016; Whatley, 2007, 2010, 2023; Whatley et al., 2018). One of the most significant scholarly output correlated to this research is the article published by [the Journal of Human Rights Practice](#) on [Advancing an Embodied Understanding of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities](#) by PI Prof. Delia Ferri.

The premiere of the choreography [Lived Fiction](#) is one of the main milestone of the DANCING project. In *Lived Fiction*, Stopgap balanced diverse aesthetics with access measures embedded in the choreography, including audio description, captioning, and a dancer serving as an Access Guide to explain scenic movements and interact verbally with performers and the audience.



5.3. Socio-legal and Legal Doctrinal Research

Socio-legal and legal research were at the core of DANCING. Although the ‘socio’ in the ‘socio-legal’ remains quite open, it broadly relates to the societal context or impact of legal phenomena (Mulcahy and Cahill-O’Callaghan 2021), but also to the need to expand epistemological narratives. In that regard, most of WP1 outputs incorporate findings from multidisciplinary literature reviews and qualitative research and are situated in the broad socio-legal domain. The PhD thesis of Léa Urzel Francil also situated within the socio-legal domain investigates the role of EU law in supporting the right to take part in cultural life of persons with disabilities as professionals of the CCS, contributing to WP1 and WP2.

WP2 scholarly outputs include both socio-legal scholarly outputs and traditional legal analysis to understand the role of EU law in supporting access to culture for persons with disabilities and the interplay between different sources of law. The doctoral work of PhD Candidate Iryna Tekuchova also largely contributed to the doctrinal legal core of the DANCING. Her PhD thesis investigated how the EU promotes EU disability norms in the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries and what mechanisms and tools within EU external relations law facilitate the transfer of these norms in EAP countries. Ukraine is employed as a case study to trace the EU disability norm transfer process and determine whether this process advances the national legal framework protecting disability rights in Ukraine.

5.4. Key Milestones

Among the milestones of the project, key events in the 5-years’ timeline marked significant progress, major achievements and showed the completion of important tasks and deliverables. These are discussed below.

5.4.1. DANCING Conferences

Throughout the project, DANCING hosted two major conferences with the goal of bringing academics, cultural professionals, and policymakers together to exchange together on the thematics related to and findings of DANCING. To mark the halfway point of the ERC DANCING project and to present interim findings and preliminary results, the DANCING team hosted the DANCING Mid-Term Academic Conference on 4 September 2023 at MU. The conference is discussed in the bespoke [Report on the mid-term conference](#).

Marking the end of the project, the DANCING Final Conference took place at MU on 19 and 20 June 2025. The first day focused on academic research findings, while the second day was devoted to the societal and policy impact of the project. The opening of the conference was honoured by a video speech of Prof. Adam Bodnar, Ministry of Justice of Poland, on behalf of the [Polish Presidency to the EU](#). The two-days event featured, among many participants, keynotes speeches from [Emeritus Prof. Bruno de Witte](#) (Maastricht University), [Ms](#)

[Inmaculada Placencia Porrero](#), Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and a keynote dialogue with [Prof. Mark Priestley](#). To disseminate the main conclusions of the final conference further, the DANCING team published the DANCING [Final Conference Report](#) on the final conference detailing the event, and PI Prof. Delia Ferri gave an [interview](#) in Italian. Additionally, a blog post on the event was published by PhD candidate Roberta Esposito (['Some personal takeaways from the DANCING Conference: on methods and legal research beyond the letter of the law'](#)).



All attendees and participants of the DANCING Final Conference.

5.4.2. Artistic Events

In line with its ethos and objectives, DANCING also organised and delivered an array of artistic outputs, mostly through its collaborations with artists with disabilities mentioned earlier in this report. It also hosted creative events, highlighting the importance of artists with disabilities and their contribution to cultural diversity.

A highlight of the DANCING Mid-term Conference was the **accessible concert**, which showcased performers with and without disabilities, and included works by composers both with and without disabilities.



Accessible Concert Performance.

As noted earlier, another major milestone of the project was the performance of [Stopgap Dance Company](#)'s *Lived Fiction*, which premiered on 11 April 2024 at the Lir Academy Theatre in Dublin. The **premiere of *Lived Fiction* marked the culmination of the arts-based research carried out under WP1**. The premiere was followed by an engaged post-show Q&A featuring the full *Lived Fiction* cast, choreographer Lucy Bennett, and Professor Delia Ferri. The discussion explored the nature of the research collaboration, the creative process, and the dancers' experiences of developing and performing the piece. The Q&A, together with the reception that followed, provided a valuable forum for artists, researchers, and audience members to reflect on how the performance connected with DANCING's wider objectives: protecting and promoting the cultural participation of persons with disabilities and advancing cultural diversity through EU law.



'Lived Fiction' Premiere Performance in the Lir Theatre, Dublin, 11 April 2024 accompanied with creative captions and audio-descriptions.

The event was discussed further in [DANCING's Arts-based Research Report](#), and some behind the scenes feature in the project's documentary and [videos webpage](#).



Q&A following the performance of 'Lived Fiction' in the Lir Theatre, Dublin, 11 April 2024. The Q&A was interpreted into Irish sign language by Shelley Gibson.

The first day of the DANCING Final Conference featured the unveiling of the DANCING-commissioned artwork 'Odisseo-Ulysses' created by artist [Tiziano Pantano](#). The unveiling was graciously marked by an insightful speech of [MU President Prof. Eeva Leinonen](#).



Prof. Delia Ferri and MU President Prof. Eeva Leinonen unveiling together the artwork.

Moreover, the DANCING Final Conference was concluded with the screening of the ERC DANCING documentary produced by Feenish Productions Ltd. featuring a post-show Q&A with director [James Kelly](#) as well as [Lucy Bennett](#) and [Monique Dior Jarrett](#) of [Stopgap Dance Company](#), introduced and moderated by [Dr. Denis Condon](#).



Roundtable of the conference featuring the chair and the four speakers following the documentary screening.

5.4.3. Academic Conversations and Workshops

The DANCING team organised different events to foster engagement with the academic community and stakeholders outside the format of conferences.

The DANCING Academic Conversations (DAC) series featured leading scholars that, with their presentation contributed to situate DANCING within broader scholarly debates. They were usually held in hybrid format with participants attending online and in-person on MU campus. This facilitated many to attend from abroad and contributed to establishing connections across Europe.



 **DANCING Academic Conversation**

with
Professor Sacha Garben

Presenting and Discussing:
Confronting the Competence Conundrum: Reflections on the Ultra Vires Challenge to the Minimum Wage Directive and its Meaning for the EU (Social) 'Constitution'



Please register by sending an e-mail to:
eva.krolla@mu.ie

DATE: Thursday, 5 December

TIME: 12 - 1.30pm (GMT/DUBLIN)

VENUE: Blended in Room 238 Eolas and Online (Microsoft Teams)

This event is supported by the [Research Centre for European Law](#) at Maynooth University.

    This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme (grant agreement No. 864182).

DANCING Academic Conversation with Prof. Sacha Garben Promotional Poster.

In the course of the project, the DANCING team also organised thematically focused workshops to discuss specific aspects of the DANCING research and gather feedback and further insights from peers, colleagues and collaborators.



 **DANCING**

Prof. Delia Ferri, PI of the ERC Project DANCING is delighted to present the seminar:

***AUDIO DESCRIPTION:
LEGAL PERSPECTIVES AND CREATIVE PRACTICE***

Keynote Speaker: Pádraig Naughton (Arts & Disability Ireland)
Discussant: Donal J Fitzpatrick (National Disability Authority)

Roundtable facilitated by Dr. Emma Smith



DATE: Monday 21st November
TIME: 12:00 – 13:30
VENUE: MUSSI Seminar Room
3RD FLOOR, IONTAS BUILDING, NORTH CAMPUS, MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY
LUNCH AND TEA/ COFFEE WILL BE SERVED.

Please register by sending an e-mail to:
eva.krolla@mu.ie

The DANCING project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme (grant agreement No. 864182).

DANCING Workshop with Pádraig Naughton and Donal J Fitzpatrick Promotional Poster.

5.5. Collaboration with Other EU Projects and Participation in Major International Conferences


Collaboration across different projects funded by the EU under the [Horizon programmes](#) is essential for maximising impact, avoiding duplication of effort, and fostering innovation through knowledge sharing. By linking complementary research and innovation actions, projects can build on each other's results and accelerate progress.

DANCING has actively pursued collaboration as part of its commitment to cross-fertilisation and to advance more cohesive research on societal challenges. As evidence of this commitment, DANCING collaborated with the Horizon2020 projects [ReCreating Europe](#) and [inDICEs](#), and organised the Open Up Museums! Conference at Mart Museum of Rovereto, Italy on 25 of May 2022. The conference was imagined as ‘a two-day itinerary workshop to explore key issues and tools to promote openness in the cultural sector between law and practice’. The event was kindly hosted by [Mart Museum](#) and the [Faculty of Law of the University of Trento](#).

The Open Up Museums! conference engaged academics and researchers from across Europe in activities encompassing panel discussions, training sessions, and guided museum tours, and contributed to the reach of DANCING and its European impact. Notably, the conference highlighted the significance of digital accessibility and underscored the relevance of copyright legislation. These thematic threads linked the research conducted within the remit of the DANCING project to broader scholarly efforts on cultural inclusion and in particular on the impact of the [Marrakesh Treaty](#).



Event poster 'Open Up Museums! Prospects and challenges of accessibility, diversity and inclusion'.



Participation in conferences plays a crucial role in the life of a project. It offers an important opportunity to share emerging findings with a wider academic, professional, and sometimes general public, helping to raise the profile of the work and ensure its relevance beyond the immediate project team. The DANCING team and PI Prof. Ferri presented at numerous events and major conferences, including conferences focused on disability studies and key EU law events, during the entire lifetime of the project. Presenting at such events provided valuable feedback from peers and experts, which informed the development of the research. For the DANCING team, especially early-career researchers, these events contributed to their professional growth, enhancing their ability to communicate ideas effectively and engage in critical dialogue. A list of conference and presentations is included in the DANCING [website](#).



6. DANCING CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE AND OUTPUTS

This section will first outline DANCING contribution to the state of art and impact and give an overview of the outputs.

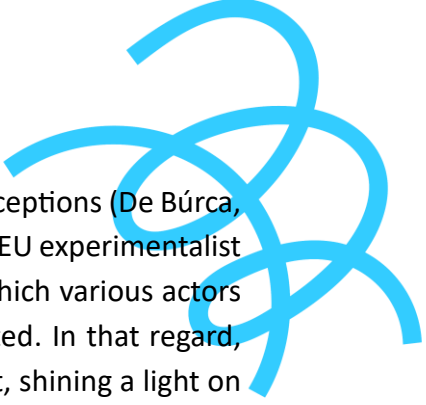
6.1. DANCING Overarching Contribution to Knowledge

DANCING has made three main overarching yet entrenched contributions: **epistemic**, **methodological**, and **legal/normative**.

First, **DANCING has contributed to bridging different semantics and epistemic communities** when it comes to cultural participation of persons with disabilities, and has given a better understanding how law interacts with social realities in relation to disability and culture. Through an array of articles, reports books, and practical sources, it has deepened the understanding of [Article 30 CRPD](#), but also of legal concepts such as disability and accessibility. In this respect, the article on [Advancing an Embodied Understanding of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities](#), authored by the PI and published in [the Journal of Human Rights Practice](#), is an important example of epistemic advancement brought by DANCING.

Secondly, **DANCING has contributed to the discussion on interdisciplinary approaches in EU law** and provided different methodological perspectives to the study of EU disability law. In fact, DANCING added to the growing EU law literature that leverages on different methodologies, theoretical frameworks and approaches to studying EU decision-making processes and critically examining legal sources. In particular, the volume [Actors and Roles in EU Disability Law](#), edited by the PI and Eva S. Krolla, by adopting an ‘actor-oriented perspective’, extended the understanding of how EU disability law has actually been shaped. This has proffered a multifaceted picture of how different methodological approaches can give deeper insights into the role of institutional and non-institutional actors in protecting and promoting disability rights within the EU.

DANCING has also **contributed to the building of EU disability law as stand-alone academic discipline**. From a doctrinal standpoint, EU disability law currently consists of an array of primary and secondary legal sources, including key non-discrimination provisions enshrined in the [Treaty on the Functioning of the EU](#) (TFEU), the [EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) (CFR), the [Employment Equality Directive](#), and the CRPD as ‘integral part of EU law’, disability-related provisions incorporated in EU legislation as well as disability-specific acts, such as the [European Accessibility Act](#), and a complex net of soft law, as well as technical standards adopted by standardisation organisations, and variegated policy tools. Many DANCING outputs have engaged with the field as a unified, yet stratified, area of EU action, and contributed to its systematisation by looking at the interaction of different sources. In doing so, **DANCING has advanced the knowledge of how disability sits within the process of EU integration**. While this was not a bespoke objective, this is a very important academic contribution that DANCING provided. In this respect, as noted above, the volume [Actors and Roles in EU Disability Law](#) illustrates the multifaceted contribution of different actors to the



shaping of EU disability law as a stand-alone field of EU action. With few exceptions (De Búrca, Keohane, & Sabel, 2014), legal scholars' contributions on the way in which EU experimentalist governance has influenced the content of the CRPD itself to the way in which various actors construct, interpret and ultimately shape EU disability law has been limited. In that regard, the volume, which is a key output of the project, advanced the state of art, shining a light on the making of EU disability law by a range actors interacting in fully constitutionalised processes and/or through informal participatory governance tools.

DANCING outputs and presentations in conferences and events identified and unveiled **three main normative dynamics of EU disability law**. The first dynamic is the **constitutionalisation** of disability rights in the EU. In that regard, research in DANCING built on the previous PI's [research](#) and was presented at conferences. The second dynamic is that of federalisation of EU disability law, which was discussed in the chapter authored by Ferri and Šubic titled [The European Union: Federal trends in disability rights](#). DANCING research discussed how, in the EU, the need to implement the CRPD has supported the deepening of the EU influence over domestic disability law. The Europeanisation of the concept of disability has gone hand in hand with the expansion of disability related legislation. DANCING has also investigated a third interesting dynamic, that of hybridity. EU disability law has been seen as a laboratory for new governance tools, participatory mechanisms at the EU level and for the intertwining of hard and soft law. An [article](#) on this was published under DANCING in the [European Law Journal](#) in 2023, which is an important outlet for scholarly works on European integration through law in multifaceted contexts (political, economic, historical, philosophical, social, or cultural).

6.2. DANCING Impact

It is now almost 20 years since the CRPD was passed by the General Assembly and its implementation has been slow and difficult. This is because the CRPD profoundly challenges how disability is thought about. This so also because the CRPD embedded a paradigm shifts where rights are considered in a holistic manner, are interdependent, tied one another, and must be read through the lens of dignity, equality, participation and accessibility. **DANCING has endeavoured to support this complex paradigm shift purported by the CRPD** in three main ways that are discussed below.

First, as noted earlier, DANCING has generated **new knowledge to support the implementation of [Article 30 CRPD](#)** in Europe and globally. In doing so, it has strived, through WP4, to **effect change in policy, society and in the lives of people with disabilities**. It has done so through a [Policy brief](#), which provides recommendations for EU institutions and policymakers. DANCING also published a [Toolkit](#) to provide cultural organisations with key information and recommendations to improve and advance inclusion and cultural participation of people with disabilities, both as professionals and as audiences. This Toolkit highlights the key barriers faced by persons with disabilities, and presents recommendations on how to implement accessibility in cultural settings. It also includes guidance on how to



develop a successful accessible and inclusive disability policy within an organisation. This Toolkit aims to support cultural organisations in their ‘inclusivity journey’ and in encouraging greater diversity in their cultural spaces. It is accompanied by a non-exhaustive [Resource List](#) that showcases existing initiatives improving the cultural participation of people with disabilities. This Resource List builds on the findings of WP1, includes inclusive transnational and national initiatives, funded either by the EU, national and regional institutions, or private funds. In fact, while it is important to highlight barriers to participation faced by persons with disabilities and point to inaccessible or discriminatory practices, DANCING did not want to provide only a narrative of ‘what is wrong’ and should be changed. It also highlighted examples of good and promising practices to fostering future synergies across different experiences.

The second way in which DANCING has tried to address and fulfil the complex shift called for by the CRPD has been through a **participatory approach to research, involving persons with disabilities and embedding - in a PI led project - co-creation components**, particularly through the collaboration with Stopgap Dance Company. This collaboration has been discussed at length in other [reports](#) and in the [Dance as a Powerful Tool to Advance Disability Inclusion: Reflections from an Interdisciplinary Collaboration](#), published in [Dance Research](#).

The third way in which DANCING has strived to contribute to the paradigm shift is by **embracing accessibility**, which is a fundamental principle upon which the CRPD is based. Accessibility is a precondition for other rights and for independent living. In this respect, the CRPD requires in [Article 9](#) to ensure ‘access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications’. In requesting accessibility, the CRPD also challenges the traditional way of doing academic research, and asks academics to take accessibility seriously and implement it in all stages of the research. DANCING has endeavoured to ensure that academic advancements could be shared with the general public, and particularly with people with disabilities. In the effort to lead by example and to implement the principle of accessibility, provided for in [Article 9 CRPD](#), **DANCING has made the research findings available in a range of accessible formats, including sign language and Easy to Read, and throughout different media**. Thanks to the collaboration with Norbert Croonenberg, DANCING has delivered a series of tools such as [infographics](#) to translate academic publications graphically and in easy and appealing formats. The [DANCING cartoons](#) available on the website have been designed as an innovative way to raise awareness on the research progress and on the project’s milestones. The cartoons showcase the project year by year, highlighting important events – such as conferences or workshops – and dissemination activities. **DANCING also created an [interactive map](#) that gives an overview of the project, its core tents and results and enables interactivity with DANCING research and content.**



Cartoon designed by Norbert Croonenberg Accessibility Design. Ideas and text by Prof. Delia Ferri, Principal Investigator of DANCING.

6.3. Outputs

DANCING research findings were disseminated to academic but also non-academic audiences, to maximising the project's impact and recognition.

Scholarly outputs entailed primarily peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and books. They also included working papers, blog posts and presentations at conferences and seminars. DANCING publications have had, so far, notable impact which is expected to grow in the future. For example, DANCING's article [‘Barriers and facilitators to cultural participation by people with disabilities: A narrative literature review’](#) got over 8000 views. Similarly, the article [‘Barriers to cultural participation by people with disabilities in Europe: A study across 28 countries’](#) published in leading journal on disability [Disability and Society](#), presents itself as a point of reference for those studying disability issues with over 6400 views/downloads.

In addition to publishing various academic outputs, the DANCING team also made sure to convey the project achievements and findings through reports. These reports underwent several rounds of internal reviews and consulting external reviewers that are experts in the field to maintain a high-quality standard of work thanks to multidisciplinary perspectives and a holistic approach. As of the time of writing, DANCING published [six reports](#) respectively titled [‘The ERC DANCING Mid-Term Academic Conference’](#), [‘Role and Findings of Arts-based Research in the DANCING Project ‘...Usually in the world it is the other way around...’](#),

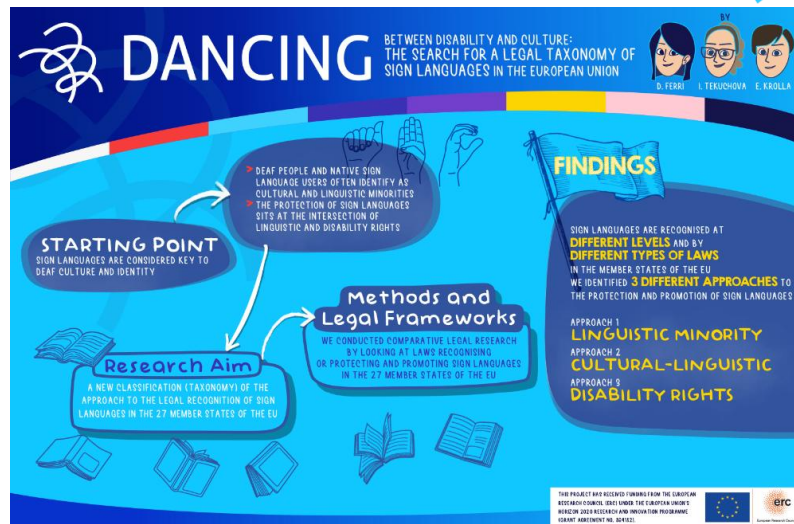
[‘Qualitative Data Collection and Archiving in the DANCING Project’](#), [‘The ERC DANCING WP4 Tools for Change’](#), and [‘The ERC DANCING Final Conference’](#), and [‘The ERC DANCING Organisation and Management’](#). This is the seventh and final report that will be published. Overall, these reports have shed light on certain angles of the DANCING research in a new and greatly accessible way for the general public as demonstrated by the number of interactions the reports got, with for example the [DANCING Final Conference report](#) counting over 300 views within the first month of publication.



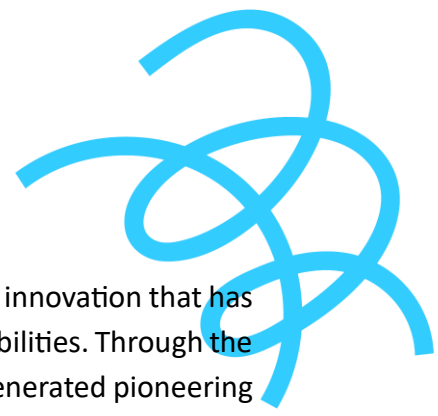
Figure 7: All Reports of the DANCING Project.

DANCING developed other outputs dedicated to stakeholders, notably the DANCING [Toolkit for Cultural Organisations](#), the DANCING [Resource List](#), and the DANCING [Policy Brief](#). These tools translate academic findings into practical tools and reach specific stakeholders, such as cultural organisations and policymakers. As mentioned, the Toolkit and the Resource List aim to support cultural organisations in their ‘inclusivity journey’.

Along non-scholarly outputs, DANCING delivered as noted above, [infographics](#) and [cartoons](#), as a series of graphic tools to raise awareness about key goals, methods and findings of the project.



Infographic designed by Norbert Croonenberg Accessibility Design. Ideas and text by Prof. Delia Ferri, Principal Investigator of DANCING.



7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

DANCING leaves behind a substantial body of research, collaboration, and innovation that has advanced the understanding of cultural participation for persons with disabilities. Through the combination of doctrinal, empirical, and arts-based methods, DANCING generated pioneering insights into accessibility, inclusivity, and cultural diversity, while also shaping the emerging field of EU disability law. Academically, it has strengthened interdisciplinary work, advanced methodological innovation, and positioned EU disability law as a distinct field of inquiry. DANCING has bridged distinct communities of knowledge, enhancing understanding of how law interacts with lived realities in the field of disability and culture.

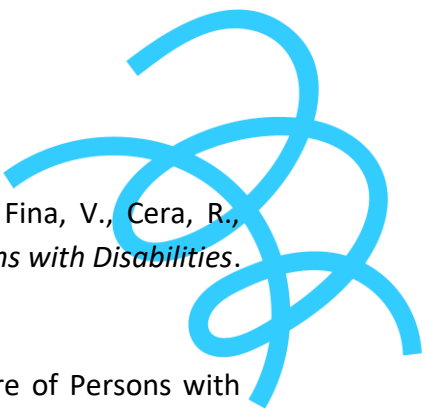
Over its lifetime, the project marked important milestones, from the development of the choreographic piece *Lived Fiction* in collaboration with Stopgap Dance Company to the ERC DANCING Final Conference.

DANCING also deployed a publication strategy that aimed to support the broad dissemination of findings through different types of publications, supported by various events, workshops, and artistic events. Beyond its research achievements, DANCING has generated awareness-raising tools that will remain valuable resources for national governments, EU institutions, cultural organisations, and civil society organisations. These tools are designed to enable stakeholders to translate the project's findings into concrete strategies that foster accessibility, inclusion, and cultural participation.



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ANNEXES


Annex I - Academic Conversations

The DANCING Academic Conversations featured leading scholars who contributed to situate DANCING within broader scholarly debates.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Conversation with Professor Sacha Garben</u> - 5th December 2024 <p>Discussion on 'Confronting the Competence Conundrum: Reflections on the Ultra Vires Challenge to the Minimum Wage Directive and its Meaning for the EU (Social) 'Constitution'.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Conversation with Professors Eliantonio, Korkea-aho and Mörtz</u> - 20th June 2024 <p>Discussion of their recent co-edited volume 'Research Handbook on Soft Law' published by Edward Elgar in 2023.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Conversation with Dr. Giulia Priora</u> - 22nd March 2024 <p>Discussion on 'Distributive Rationales in EU Copyright Law' which underpins her forthcoming monograph on the topic.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Conversation with Dr. Viliija Velyvytė</u> - 9th February 2024 <p>Discussion on her recent book 'Judicial Authority in EU Internal Market Law: Implications for the Balance of Competences and Powers' (Hart Publishing 2022), shortlisted for the University Association for Contemporary European Studies (UACES) Best Book Prize 2023.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Conversation with Dr. Evangelia Psychogiopoulou and Prof. Sarah Schoenmaekers</u> - 7th December 2023 <p>Discussion on their forthcoming co-edited volume 'European Union Economic Law and Culture: Towards a European Culturally Corrected Market Economy' (Edward Elgar).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Conversation with Prof. Giuseppe Martinico</u> - 12th June 2023 <p>Discussion of the new edition of his book 'The Tangled Complexity of the EU Constitutional Process: The Frustrating Knot of Europe'.</p>

Annex II - Workshops

The themed workshops organised by DANCING contributed to discussions on the DANCING research and gather feedback and further insights.

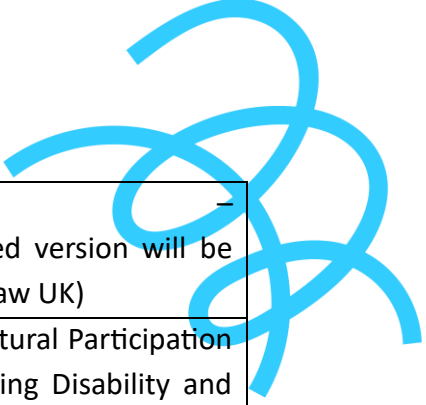


<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Accommodating Equality in the Skies</u> - 26th September 2024 <p>Discussion on the topic of (in)accessible air travel and transport by persons with disabilities, and in particular persons with reduced mobility.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Audio Description in Live Theatre</u> - 21st November 2022 <p>Workshop on audio description that aimed to bring together legal perspectives with practice among those working in the arts.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Colloquium on Inclusive Dance</u> - 23rd August 2022 <p>Workshop on “Inclusive Dance: Addressing Challenges, Sharing Experiences, and Exploring Tools for Participatory Research”</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>A conversation with Dr Rosaleen McDonagh</u> - 22nd March 2022 <p>Discussion hosted by DANCING team and the Maynooth University Sexualities and Genders Network with Dr. Rosaleen McDonagh to discuss her widely acclaimed and ground-breaking book ‘Unsettled’ as part of MU Social Justice Week,</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Researching Disability and Diversity in Culture</u> - 16th March 2021 <p>Discussion on the aims, objectives and research milestones of the DANCING project and highlighting the importance of building inclusivity into the project through a range of accessibility measures and participatory research methods including arts-based and empirical research elements.</p>

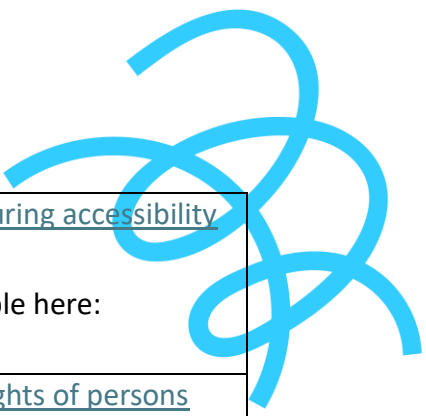
Annex III - Scholarly Publications

As discussed above, DANCING completed successfully its objectives, notably through numerous relevant high quality, peer-reviewed publications.

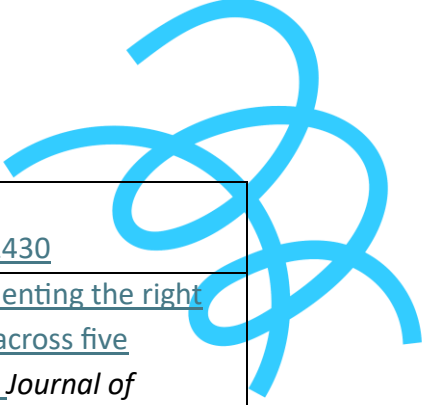
WP	Type	Citation
2025		
WP2	Working Paper	Ferri, D., & Palladino A. (2025). <u>The Disability Dimension of the New European Bauhaus: The ‘Soft’ Route to Embedding Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities in the European Green Deal</u> , STALS Research Paper, 4/2025 Available here: https://stals.santannapisa.it/european-politics-and-policies/
WP1	Article	Ferri, D., & Leahy A. (2025). <u>Dance as a Powerful Tool to Advance Disability Inclusion: Reflections from an Interdisciplinary Collaboration</u> . <i>Dance Research</i> , 43 (1). Available here: https://doi.org/10.3366/drs.2025.0439
WP2	Chapter	Ferri, D. (2025). <u>Enhancing access to digital goods and services for consumers with disabilities: the transformative and yet untapped potential of the European Accessibility Act</u> . In G. Veldt, K. Heidary & V. Mak (Eds.), <i>Empirics and Consumer Law in Changing Markets</i> . (pp. 159–175). Edward Elgar Publishing. Available here : https://www.elgaronline.com/edcollchap-0a/book/9781035327096/chapter9.xml
WP2	Chapter	Ferri, D. (2025). Fostering Cultural Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the European Union Through Funding: ‘I Was Told There’d Be Cake’ In: <i>El poder transformador del Derecho de la Unión Europea</i> . Las Rozas – Madrid : Aranzadi La Ley. Pre-print and pre-copyediting version available at https://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/id/eprint/19719/
WP2	Book	Ferri, D., & Krolla, E. (Eds.). (2025). <i>Actors and Roles in EU Disability Law</i> . Hart Publishing. Available here: https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/actors-and-roles-in-eu-disability-law-9781509984275/
WP2	Working Paper	Krolla, E.S. (2025). <u>The Safeguarding of Braille as Intangible Cultural Heritage: At Their Fingertips</u> . STALS Research Paper, 4/2025. Available at https://www.stals.santannapisa.it/fundamental-rights
WP2	Article	Ferri, D. (2025). The Directive on the European Disability Card and European Parking Card: Promoting Disability Rights and Making the EU “More than a Market”? <i>European Law Review</i> (pre-copyedited, author-produced version of the article accepted for publication following peer review available at:



		https://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/id/eprint/19718/ – http://ssrn.com/abstract=5237089 . Definitive published version will be available online on the European Law Review on Westlaw UK)
WP2	Chapter	Ferri, D. & Leahy, A. (2025). Addressing Barriers to Cultural Participation for People with Disabilities in Ireland: Towards Bridging Disability and Cultural Policies, In Durrer, V., FitzGibbon, A. and McCall Magan (eds). Cultural Policy: Perspectives on the Island of Ireland. Routledge. Available at: https://doi.org/10.4324/9781032716466
2024		
WP1	Article	Leahy, A., & Ferri, D. (2024). Cultural policies that facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in the arts: Findings from a qualitative multi-national study . <i>Disabilities</i> , 4(3), 539–555. Available here: https://doi.org/10.3390/disabilities4030034
WP1	Chapter	Urzel Francil, L., Leahy, A., & Ferri, D. (2024). A Human rights approach to accessibility for visitors with disabilities in museums. Reflections from the DANCING Project . In G. Dore & M. Arisi (Eds.), <i>Open Up Museums! Prospects and Challenges of Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusion</i> , 53–76. Ledizioni. Available here: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.14281624
WP1	Article	Leahy, A. (2024). An ambivalent approach to disability in older age: Evidence from reporting by states parties under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities . <i>Ageing and Society</i> , 45(8), 1633– 1654. Available here: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0144686X24000485
WP1	Article	Ferri, D. (2024). Advancing an Embodied Understanding of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities . <i>Journal of Human Rights Practice</i> , 17(2), 1– 18. Available here: https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huae049
WP2	Chapter	Ferri, D. (2024). The role of disability studies in the advancement of EU law scholarship . In R. Deplano, G. Gentile, L. Lonardo, & T. Nowak (Eds.), <i>Interdisciplinary Research Methods in EU law: A Handbook</i> (pp. 39–58). Edward Elgar. Available at : https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4406745
WP2	Article	Ferri, D., Tekuchova, I., & Krolla, E. (2024). Between disability and culture: The search for a legal taxonomy of sign languages in the European Union . <i>International and Comparative Law Quarterly</i> , 73(3), 669–706. Available here: https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020589324000253
2023		
WP1	Article	Leahy, A., & Ferri, D. (2023). Barriers to cultural participation by people with disabilities in Europe: A study across 28 countries . <i>Disability and Society</i> , 39(10), 2465–2487. Available here: https://doi.org/10.1080/09687599.2023.2222898



WP2	Article	Ferri, D. (2023). <u>The role of the European Union in ensuring accessibility of cultural goods and services: All about that... internal market?</u> <i>European Law Review</i> , 48(3), 257–280. Available here: https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4403323
WP2	Article	Ferri, D. (2023). <u>The role of soft law in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities in the EU: A ‘hybridity’ approach to EU disability law.</u> <i>European Law Journal</i> , 28(4-6), 134–153. Available here: https://doi.org/10.1111/eulj.12454
WP2	Chapter	Ferri, D., & Šubic, N. (2023). <u>The European Union: Federal trends in disability rights.</u> In D. Ferri, F. Palermo, & G. Martinico (Eds.), <i>Federalism and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities</i> (pp. 23–42). Hart Publishing. Available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=4697115
WP2	Article	Ferri, D. (2023). <u>Advancing disability rights in the EU: A blueprint in the social agenda of the Spanish presidency.</u> <i>Anales de Derecho</i> , 40(2), 85–107. Available here: https://doi.org/10.6018/analesderecho.586401
WP2	Article	Ferri, D. (2023). <u>The role of the European Union in ensuring accessibility of cultural goods and services: All about that... internal market?</u> <i>European Law Review</i> , 48(3), 257–280. Available here: https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4403323
2022		
WP2	Article	Šubic, N., & Ferri, D. (2022). <u>National disability strategies as rights-based cultural policy tools.</u> <i>International Journal of Cultural Policy</i> , 467–483. Available here: https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2022.2053960
WP2	Article	Šubic, N. (2022). <u>Challenging the use of EU funds: Locus standi as a roadblock for disability organisations: ECJ Order of 15 April 2021, Case C-622/20 P, Validity and Center for Independent Living v Commission.</u> <i>European Constitutional Law Review</i> , 18(1), 59–81. Available here: https://doi.org/10.1017/S1574019622000037
WP2	Working Paper	Tudisco, V. (2022). <u>Accessibility of audiovisual media services for persons with disabilities in the European Union: Lights and shadows of the audiovisual media services directive.</u> <i>STALS Research Paper</i> , 6/2022. Available at: https://mural.maynoothuniversity.ie/id/eprint/16788/
WP2	Article	Šubic, N., & Ferri, D. (2022). <u>Characterizing access to culture for people with disabilities in EU cultural policy: European identity, market integration, and social inclusion.</u> <i>DPCE Online</i> , 52(2). Available at: http://www.dpceonline.it/index.php/dpceonline/article/view/1611
WP1	Article	Leahy, A., & Ferri, D. (2022). <u>The right to participate in cultural life of persons with disabilities in Europe: Where is the paradigm shift?</u> <i>Alter</i> ,

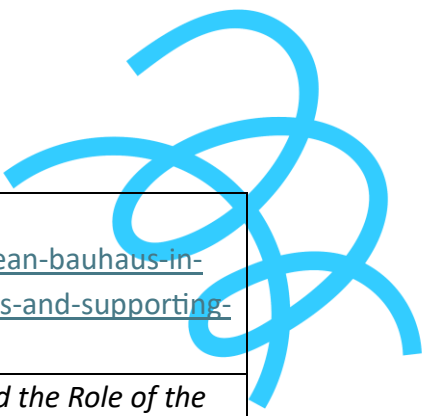


		16(4), 5–29. Available at https://journals.openedition.org/alterjdr/1430
WP1	Article	Ferri, D., Leahy, A., Šubic, N., & Urzel, L. (2022). Implementing the right of people with disabilities to participate in cultural life across five European countries: Narratives and counter-narratives. <i>Journal of Human Rights Practice</i> , 859–878. Available here: https://doi.org/10.1093/jhuman/huac035


Annex IV - Blogposts

The DANCING project, to reach a greater audience and diversify its dissemination strategy also published blogposts in various prestigious outlets, enabling a greater audience to learn and read about the project.


WP	Citation
2025	
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferri, D. (11 September 2025). <i>Embedding Disability Rights in Cultural Policy: Lessons from Spain</i> By Delia Ferri. Diritti Comparati. https://www.diritticomparati.it/embedding-disability-rights-in-cultural-policy-lessons-from-spain/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palladino, A. (13 June 2025). <i>Reflecting on Climate Change and Access to Culture for Persons with Disabilities: What to Expect in the Future?</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/reflecting-on-climate-change-and-access-to-culture-for-persons-with-disabilities-what-to-expect-in-the-future/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stefanović, L. (2 May 2025). <i>The European Heritage Label and Persons with Disabilities</i>. Ideas in All. https://www.ideasinall.com/the-european-heritage-label-and-persons-with-disabilities/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makhoul, E. and Palladino, A. (14 March 2025). <i>Breaking Barriers: New Tools to Make Culture More Accessible</i>. Ideas in All. https://www.ideasinall.com/breaking-barriers-new-tools-to-make-culture-more-accessible/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferri, D. and Stefanović, L. (27 February 2025). <i>Fostering Cultural Participation of Persons with Disabilities in the European Union: What is the potential of the Recovery and Resilience Facility?</i>. Diritti Comparati. https://www.diritticomparati.it/fostering-cultural-participation-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-the-european-union-what-is-the-potential-of-the-recovery-and-resilience-facility/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krolla, E.S. (4 February 2025). <i>The Difficulties of a Double-mandate: Competing Equality Portfolios in the European Commission</i>. EUreka!. https://www.eurac.edu/en/blogs/eureka/the-difficulties-of-a-double-mandate-competing-equality-portfolios-in-the-europea
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krolla, E.S. (21 January 2025). <i>Two Steps Forward, One Step Back? Equality and Disability Rights in the Von der Leyen II Commission</i>. Diritti Comparati. https://www.diritticomparati.it/two-steps-forward-one-step-back-equality-and-disability-rights-in-the-von-der-leyen-ii-commission/
2024	
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Palladino, A. (20 December 2024). <i>The Role of the New European Bauhaus in Enhancing Access to Culture for Persons With Disabilities and</i>



	<p><i>Supporting Their Wellbeing</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/the-role-of-the-new-european-bauhaus-in-enhancing-access-to-culture-for-persons-with-disabilities-and-supporting-their-wellbeing/</p>
WP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makhoul, E. (20 December 2024). <i>Culture, Wellbeing and the Role of the EU: Some Reflections from the DANCING Project</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/culture-wellbeing-and-the-role-of-the-eu-some-reflections-from-the-dancing-project/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferri, D. (25 November 2024). <i>The G7 'Solfagnano Charter': What Is It Telling Us about the Global Trajectory of Disability Rights?</i>. Diritti Comparati. https://www.diritticomparati.it/the-g7-solfagnano-charter-what-is-it-telling-us-about-the-global-trajectory-of-disability-rights/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferri, D. (21 November 2024). <i>The European Accessibility Act and the EU 'Marrakesh Package': Will We Still Need the Marrakesh Directive and Regulation in June 2025?</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/the-european-accessibility-act-and-the-eu-marrakesh-package-will-we-still-need-the-marrakesh-directive-and-regulation-in-june-2025/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferri, D. (23 October 2024). <i>Taking Cultural Participation of Persons with Disabilities Seriously: The New Spanish Law on Higher Education</i>. Diritti Comparati. https://www.diritticomparati.it/taking-cultural-participation-of-persons-with-disabilities-seriously-the-new-spanish-law-on-higher-education/
WP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krolla, E.S. (17 October 2024). <i>At Their Fingertips: The First International Day of Intangible Cultural Heritage</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/at-their-fingertips-the-first-international-day-of-intangible-cultural-heritage/
WP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hooks, H. (24 September 2024). <i>My Experience as Project Manager of DANCING... Some Personal Reflections on the First Four Years</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/my-experience-as-project-manager-of-dancing-some-personal-reflections-on-the-first-four-years/
WP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ferri, D. (17 April 2024). <i>'Lived Fiction' Goes on Stage: Reflecting on a Major Milestone for the DANCING Project and the Collaboration with Stopgap</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/lived-fiction-goes-on-stage-reflecting-on-a-major-milestone-for-the-dancing-project-and-the-collaboration-with-stopgap/
WP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hooks, H. (11 March 2024). <i>Creating an Accessible Survey for the DANCING Project</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/creating-an-accessible-survey-for-the-dancing-project/
2023	



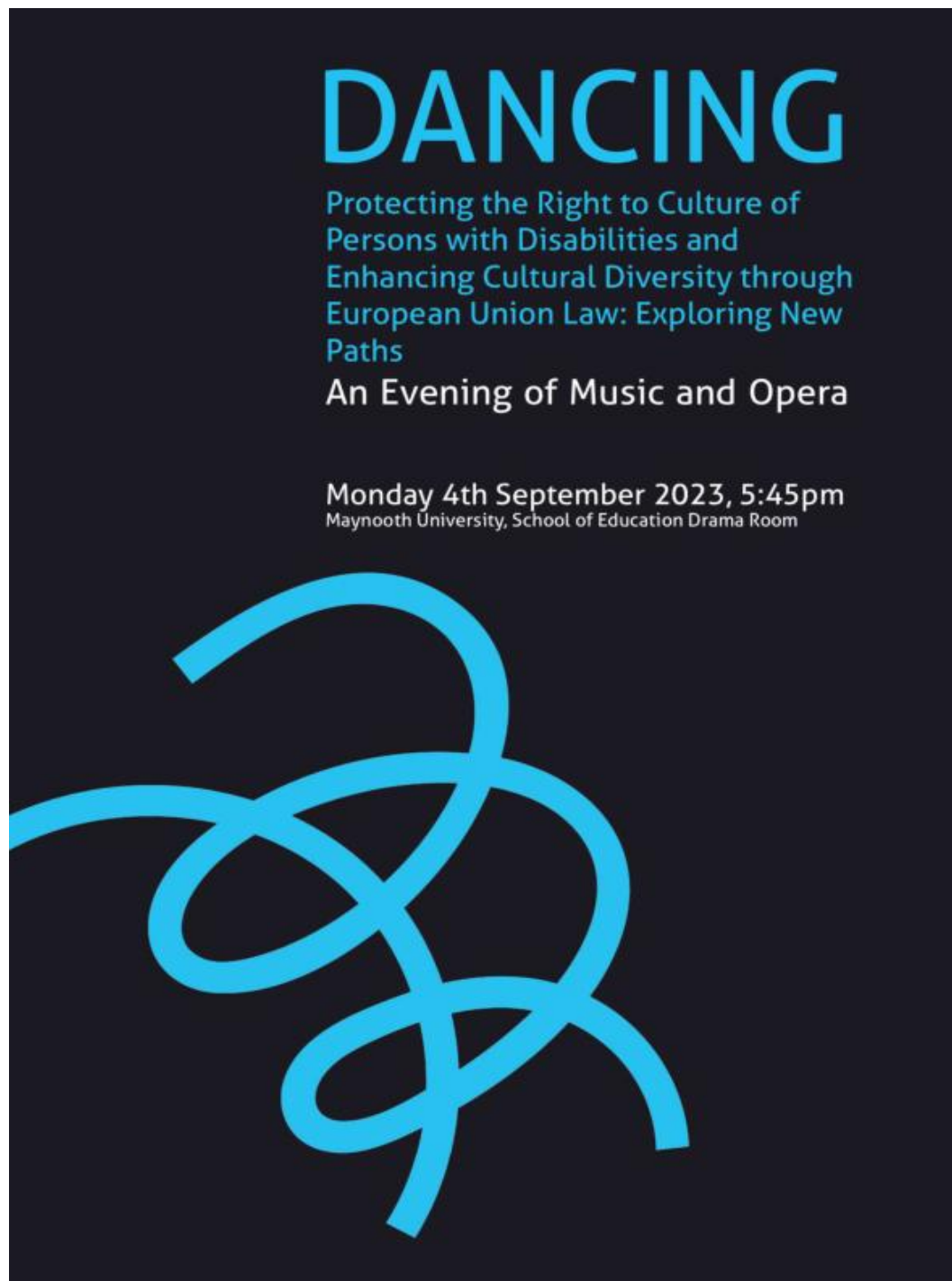
WP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krolla, E.S. (2 October 2023). <i>The DANCING Mid-term Academic Conference: Taking Stock of the First Three Years and Reflecting on the Challenges of Interdisciplinarity</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/the-dancing-mid-term-academic-conference-taking-stock-of-the-first-three-years-and-reflecting-on-the-challenges-of-interdisciplinarity/
WP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leahy, A. and Ferri, D. (10 March 2023). <i>'Lived Fiction' First Sharing of Inclusive Contemporary Dance Choreography within the DANCING Project</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/title-lived-fiction-first-sharing-of-inclusive-contemporary-dance-choreography-within-the-dancing-project/
2022	
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urzel Francil, L. (7 October 2022). <i>The Disability Employment Package: A concrete step forward in realising the right to work of persons with disabilities?</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/the-disability-employment-package-a-concrete-step-forward-in-realising-the-right-to-work-of-persons-with-disabilities/
WP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leahy, A. (30 September 2022). <i>Disability in Older Age – Do Definitions Matter?</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/disability-in-older-age-do-definitions-matter/
WP4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krolla, E.S. (9 June 2022). <i>First Time Conference: DANCING to Italy</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/first-time-conference-dancing-to-italy/
WP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urzel Francil, L. (24 March 2022). <i>Maynooth University's Social Justice Week: Reflections on the Intersections between the DANCING project and the SDGs</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/maynooth-universitys-social-justice-week-reflections-on-the-intersections-between-the-dancing-project-and-the-sdgs/
WP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urzel Francil, L. and McKenna, M. (4 February 2022). <i>The European Declaration on Digital Rights and Principles: A Proposed Guide for the Digital Transformation</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/the-european-declaration-on-digital-rights-and-principles-a-proposed-guide-for-the-digital-transformation/
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tekuchova, I. (28 January 2022). <i>Election to the CRPD Committee: Some Insights from Behind the Scenes</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/election-to-the-crpd-committee-some-insights-from-behind-the-scenes%E2%99%A2/
2021	
WP1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urzel Francil, L. (23 September 2021). <i>International Day of Sign Languages: Promoting Sign Languages and Deaf Culture as Part of</i>



	<p><i>Human Diversity</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/international-day-of-sign-languages-promoting-sign-languages-and-deaf-culture-as-part-of-human-diversity-3</p>
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Šubic, N. and Ferri, D. (29 June 2021). <i>The Constitutionalisation of Sign Language in Slovenia</i>. I-CONnect. https://www.iconnectblog.com/the-constitutionalisation-of-sign-language-in-slovenia/
2020	
WP2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Šubic, N. (17 December 2020). <i>The Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights: Some Reflections on the 20th Anniversary of the Charter</i>. Ideas in ALL. https://www.ideasinall.com/the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-the-eu-charter-of-fundamental-rights-some-reflections-on-the-20th-anniversary-of-the-charter/

Annex V - Programme of the DANCING Concert, 4 September 2023

The formatting of the programme has been adapted to the file and does not fully reflect the final graphic format of the final programme. Accessible versions are available on the DANCING website at: <https://ercdancing.maynoothuniversity.ie/diary/events/event-accessible-concert/>



Welcome



Good evening,
Buonasera,

I am pleased to welcome you all to an evening of music and opera to mark the occasion of our Mid-Year academic conference, held earlier today. This evening's concert is an opportunity to enact some of the inclusive practices we have identified as part of our research, and to celebrate how cultural life is enriched when greater inclusion is afforded to people with disabilities. We are pleased to welcome disabled and non-disabled performers on the stage and to present a performance that embeds some important accessibility features, including sign language interpretation and audio description.

Tonight's concert, graciously organised in collaboration with the Department of Music at Maynooth University, is key to the ethos of the DANCING project. DANCING investigates the extent to which the protection of the right to take part in culture of people with disabilities and the promotion of cultural diversity intersect and complement each other in the European Union (EU) legal order. Being premised on the idea that cultural exclusion of people with disabilities has not only engendered their marginalization, but has also entailed a loss for society as a whole, DANCING aims also to support the implementation of Article 30 of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. DANCING disrupts the conventional approach adopted by EU law scholarship by using a combination of legal, empirical and arts-based research to pursue three complementary objectives, experiential, normative and theoretical respectively. In that regard, engagement with different art forms is part of the interdisciplinary approach that characterises the project. Hence, tonight's performance expands such engagement, which has thus far focused on inclusive dance practice.

On a more personal note, tonight's concert is close to my heart as it presents some *arie* from Italian opera, and reminds me of my time as intern in the Arena di Verona back in 2003. I also feel that opera illustrates the rich palette of human life, reflecting the full inclusion that DANCING aspires to promote.

Delia Ferri
Principal investigator for DANCING

Please join us after the performance for a reception graciously offered by the School of Law and Criminology.

DANCING



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

An Evening of Music and Opera

Presented in collaboration with Maynooth University
Department of Music

Soprano Francesca Placanica

Tenor Paolo Grazioli

Accompanist Antonio Cascelli

Concert Programme

Stanislao Gastaldon Musica Proibita

**Maria Theresia von
Paradis** Morgenlied Eines Armen Mannes

**Francesco Paolo
Tosti** La Serenata

**Francesco Paolo
Tosti** 'A Vucchella

Leonard Cohen Alleluya Music

Franz Lehár Tace Il Labbro

Programme



Musica Proibita

**Stanislao
Gastaldon**
(1861-1939)

'Musica Proibita' ('Forbidden Music'), is a composition with a compelling history. The text of this aria by Gastaldon was written under the pseudonym Flik Flok, to music he had composed twenty years earlier

The text describes a young girl's desire to echo the refrain of a love song, sung to her by an attractive young man each night beneath her balcony. This is forbidden by the girl's mother, so the girl sings the melody alone in her absence.

Morgenlied Eines Armen Mannes

**Maria Theresia von
Paradis**
(1759-1824)

The English translation of this piece is titled 'Morning-Song of a Poor Man'. It is a setting from a poem by Johann Timotheus Hermes. The text recounts the inner monologue of a poor man who wakes up in the morning and when confronted with the misery of his life, wishes for his wife and child to keep sleeping in blissful slumber. The music portrays the sense of urgency implied by the text through a tragic declamation recalling eighteenth-century operatic style

Von Paradis was an Austrian musician and composer who lost her sight at an early age. Some believe it was for her that Mozart may have written his Piano Concerto No. 18 in B-flat major. She had a successful career as a concert pianist, and switched to composing and teaching later in life. She was an advocate for the musical education of young girls and the visually impaired.

Von Paradis' overcame the barriers she faced in her time, as both a woman and a person with disabilities, to become a star musician and composer. Unfortunately, Von Paradis' work remains underrepresented in current classical music programming



Notes

La Serenata

Tosti was a singer and one of the greatest composers of chamber music. His contribution to the genre, which includes over 400 compositions in multiple languages, is comparable with Schumann and Schubert.

The song's title, which means "the serenade", is a 'supplica', in which the singer is heard urging the sound of the serenade to wing its way to a beloved who rests alone under the moon's radiance.

**Francesco
Paolo Tosti**
(1846-1916)

'A Vucchella

'A Vucchella', one of Tosti's most well-known romanzas, is built on Gabriele D'Annunzio's poetic metaphor describing the lips of the lover as a small rose ('A Vucchella' translates as "a dimple", referring to the dimple at the crest of the lips).

The poet, using the Neapolitan language, begs his lover for a kiss with a romantic yet fervent tone.

Alleluya Music

'Alleluya Music' transforms the well-known song 'Hallelujah' by Leonard Cohen into a sacred composition, with revisions to both the music and the text of the original. This adaptation was done by the Bass singer Salvatore Schiano di Cola, with input by Giampaolo Grazioli.

Leonard Cohen
(1934-2016)

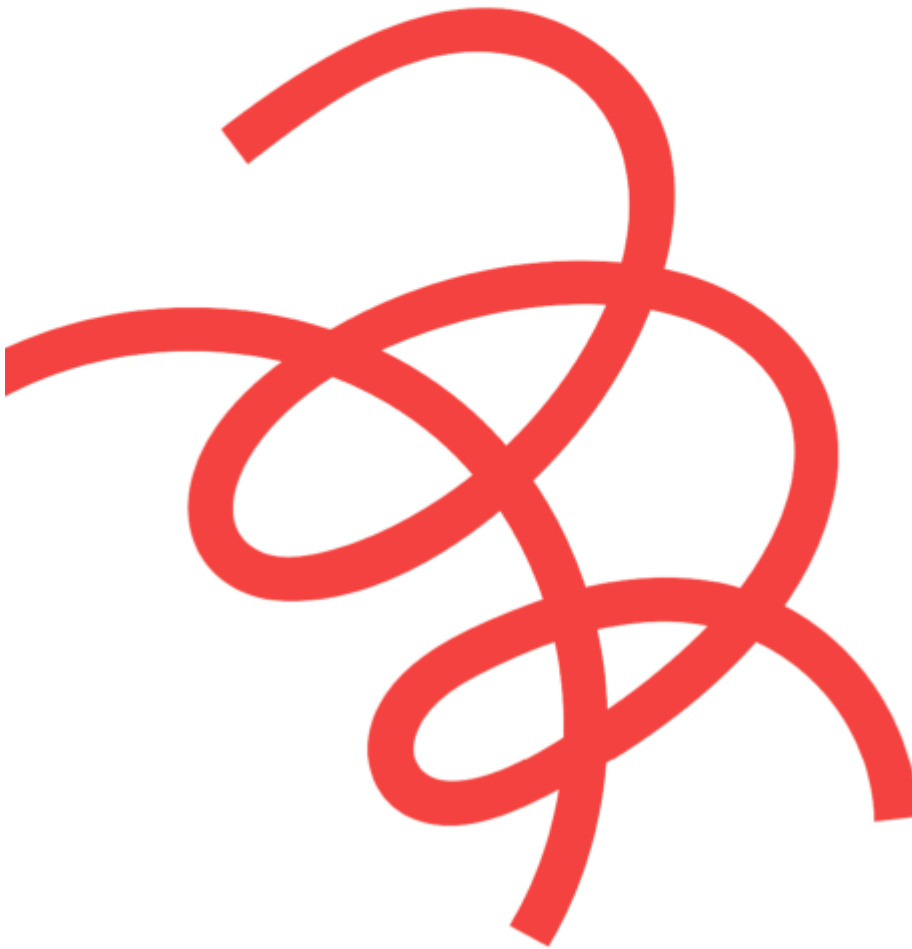
Tace Il Labbro

The final piece is 'Tace Il Labbro', which translates as 'Lips are Sealed' from the operetta 'La Vedova Allegra' or 'The Merry Widow', composed by Franz Lehár.

This piece appears in Lehár's operetta towards the end, as various schemes start to unfold. The aria is sung by the character Danilo who, on the notes of a splendid and well-known waltz, declares his love for Hanna.

Franz Lehár
(1870-1946)

About the Performers





Francesca Placanica

Francesca Placanica, soprano and artist-researcher, performs extensively as a music theatre, opera and chamber soloist in Europe, Canada and the USA. A PhD in Music from University of Southampton (2013) and a twentieth-century vocal performance scholar, she has been producing and performing on smaller-scale musical monodramas since 2012, which she toured across European Universities and concert venues, with the support of higher education partners. She is currently a Marie Curie Senior Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield and the project-leader of her practice-based project, 'Networks of Practice in New Music Theatre' (NePraMusT, 2022-24). For more information, please visit: www.francescaplacanica.com.

Paolo Grazioli

Paolo Grazioli is a tenor whose long career is strongly connected to the Arena di Verona where he began as a choir artist in 1973. Following a serious injury in 1979, Paolo's singing career was temporarily halted, returning to the Arena as choir singer again in 1981. Since 1989, Paolo has performed in prestigious venues across Italy as well as Budapest, Salzburg and Vienna. This includes solo performances at Teatro La Fenice (Venice), Teatro Massimo (Palermo). His operatic work includes several supporting actor roles at the Arena di Verona, where he performed until 2010. Notable performances include appearing as a featured performer in a live performance of Strauss' 'Salome' on RAI RADIO, the Italian radio channel operated by the national public-broadcasting organisation RAI, and as a soloist at the Mozarteum premiere of Salieri's Requiem. In addition, he has performed for audiences across Italy as part of composer and conductor Ennio Morricone's choir.

Antonio Cascelli

Antonio Cascelli is a musicologist and performer specialising in piano accompaniment. He has taught music and performance studies at the University of Hull, University of Southampton and the University of Maynooth, where he is currently Associate Professor. Antonio's research focus is the history of music theory, with particular focus on analysis, theory, metaphor and performance. His papers on Chopin and Schenkerian analysis, among other topics, have been widely published in illustrious journals including Cambridge Opera Journal, Early Music, and Ad Parnassum. Antonio has collaborated with Radio Vaticana in Rome, Italy, on several recorded programmes. In 2018 he coordinated the Medieval and Renaissance Music Conference (MedRen2018) in Maynooth. As performer, he has collaborated with singers Virginia Kerr, Niamh Murray, Eamonn Mulhall, Francesca Placanica, and cellist Alison Hood.

DANCING



Project Team

Delia Ferri Principal Investigator

Ann Leahy Post-Doctoral Researcher

Hilary Hooks Project Manager

Léa Urzel Francil PhD Candidate

Iryna Tekuchova PhD Candidate

Eva Krolla Research Assistant

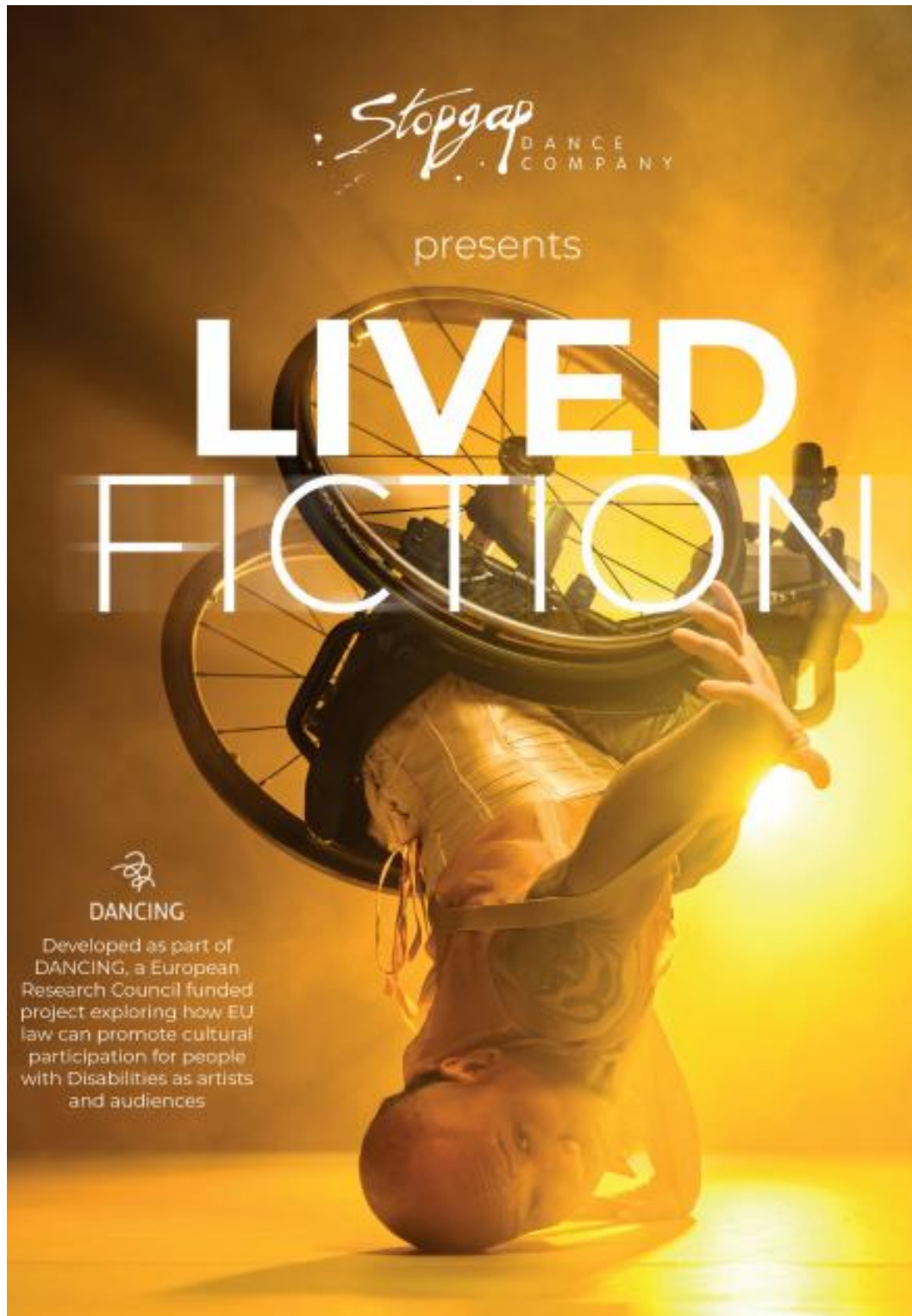
Tiarnán McDonough Research Assistant



This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation programme (grant agreement No. 864182).

Annex VI - Programme of 'Lived Fiction', 11-12 April 2024

The formatting of the programme has been adapted to the file and does not fully reflect the final graphic format of the final programme. Accessible versions are available on the DANCING website at: <https://ercdancing.maynoothuniversity.ie/diary/events/event-world-premiere-of-lived-fiction/>





Lived Fiction

11-12 April 7pm

Project Arts Centre, Dublin

Developed as part of DANCING, a European Research Council Funded project at Maynooth University School of Law and Criminology

Premiere performance on 11th April, followed by a post-show Q&A with Stopgap and members of the DANCING research team

Show Duration: 90 minutes, including a 15-minute intermission





Welcome message from Prof. **Delia Ferri**, Principal Investigator of 'Protecting the Right to Culture of Persons with Disabilities and Enhancing Cultural Diversity through European Union Law: Exploring New Paths (DANCING)'

Good Evening,

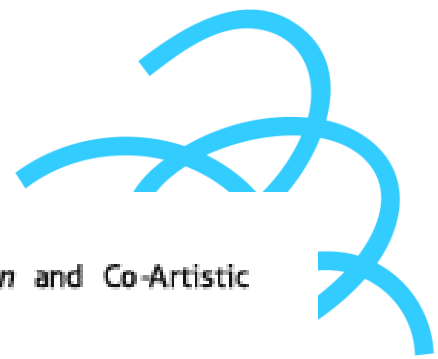
It is my great pleasure to welcome you to the premiere of *Lived Fiction* by Stopgap Dance Company, which was developed as part of DANCING, a European Research Council funded, interdisciplinary research project exploring how European Union (EU) law can advance the right to culture for people with disabilities, based at the Maynooth University School of Law and Criminology.

Lived Fiction challenges barriers that continue to make both performing and attending dance (as other cultural events) more difficult for people with disabilities. Stopgap have developed an exciting piece of contemporary dance and one where accessibility is considered artistically, not as an afterthought but intrinsic to a creative vocabulary that combines choreography with audio description, captioning, tactile elements, and responsive sound-design.

Tonight's premiere of *Lived Fiction* showcases how DANCING facilitates exchange between researchers and artists that lead to artistic innovation but also enable artists who work inclusively to support current developments in EU law and policy. We are pleased to welcome to tonight's event legal scholars, policymakers, representatives from organisations of people with disabilities and those working in the arts, particularly those involved in inclusive practice. We hope that *Lived Fiction* will continue to spark conversations between those working in different disciplines long after the house lights have dimmed. This is characteristic of how DANCING aims to disrupt conventional approaches to EU law scholarship, combining legal, empirical and arts-based research to understand the extent to which the protection of the right to take part in culture of people with disabilities and the promotion of cultural diversity intersect and complement each other in the EU legal order.

Having previously trained as a dancer and worked in the arts, I am keenly aware of the enrichment that cultural participation brings. DANCING is premised on the idea that cultural exclusion of people with disabilities has not only engendered their marginalisation but has also entailed a loss for society as a whole. To address this, DANCING supports the implementation of Article 30 of the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which recognises the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life. DANCING's findings so far have shown that the persistence of barriers for people with disabilities means that inclusion continues to be denied to many. We believe that dialogue between artists, policymakers and people with disabilities is fundamental to bring about inclusion for all, as exemplified in tonight's performance by Stopgap.

Delia Ferri
Principal Investigator of DANCING



Statement by Lucy Bennett, Choreographer of *Lived Fiction* and Co-Artistic Director of Stopgap

"...It's sharing and caring and finally chairing conversations about the mainstream or our own stream that we can slip down to our own big fat we don't give a damn about being invited to the table, we invite you to ours instead..."

—Lived Fiction Text

Stopgap Dance Company wants everyone to experience an inclusive world where diversity is not just accepted, but pursued. We are a choreographer-led company that specialises in devising inclusive dance productions collaboratively. For *Lived Fiction*, our latest performance developed as part of project DANCING, we wanted to invite non-disabled people into the culture of Disabled creatives, together evolving a new way of experiencing dance.

In developing *Lived Fiction*, we wanted to go beyond reasonable accommodation for Disabled audiences and embrace Integrated Creative Access, considering access as an artistic element to the work itself. As a collective of Deaf, Disabled, neurodivergent and non-disabled allies we regularly break from the past and the traditional and thrive on the creativity and potential of an alternative way of doing things. We are inspired by the thrill of reinvention, upcycling and translating dance and theatre and for us creative access is just that, bringing everyone closer to the intentions, beauty and passion of dance.

One of the questions we revisited within the creative process was: 'How can we balance access for audiences and the aesthetics of the choreography?' We would take a long time as a team trying to resolve the question scene by scene only to realise, we needed to take in the whole production holistically to be able to truly answer that question. It was a constant dance between being up-close to the details of the work and experiencing the feel and pace from a distance. Every seemingly small change in the choreography would create a ripple effect for collaborators working to embed creative access throughout.

Our involvement with the DANCING research team meant at certain points in the process we could open rehearsals to Deaf, Disabled, neurodivergent and non-disabled stakeholders outside of Stopgap. We nervously prepared for huge changes in direction but found instead insight and clear solutions borne out of the lived experience of participants. This bolstered our course and gave us permission to keep pursuing creative access alongside inclusive choreography. The insights we gleaned, however, are not something we can just add to our 'to-do' list when making a show. To stay relevant, we need to continue to evolve through feedback from a diverse range of patrons.

Stopgap has employed Disabled performers for over twenty years and in this time, we have been disturbed by the lack of Disabled talent being developed by cultural institutions, dance organisations and local dance schools worldwide. We too must own up to a lack of diversity in our audiences. To change this, maximum effort is needed. In developing *Lived Fiction*, we have come to realise that Integrated Creative Access is not about simply 'helping people who face barriers' but helping everyone. The experience has taught us so much about how we receive and perceive dance. Through this, our practice has evolved and is now more original than ever. It is only now, at the end of the process and the start of a tour, that we understand how inviting diverse audiences into our dance world through creative access has broadened cultural participation in all directions. We hope *Lived Fiction* will ignite a passion for experiencing dance in new and diverse audiences worldwide.



Lived Fiction Credits

Lived Fiction was conceived, written and devised by Stopgap's Deaf, Disabled, neurodivergent and non-disabled creatives. The process was facilitated by Stopgap's Co-Artistic Director Lucy Bennett.

Cast and Creatives	Christian Brinklow, Monique Dior Jarrett, Emily Lue-Fong, Jannick Moth, Lily Norton (Audio Describer), Nadenh Poan, Hannah Sampson and Dan Watson (Voice of Dan)
Director and Co-Writer	Lucy Bennett
Access Artist and Co-Writer	Lily Norton
Rehearsal Director	Amy Butler
Composer and Sound Designer	Dougie Evans
Creative Captions and Projection Art	Ben Glover
Lighting Design	Jackie Shemesh
Costume Design	Ryan Dawson Laight
Prop Designer	Colin Holden
Access Guide	Lauren Trim
Production and Stage Manager	Ethan Duffy
Production Manager	Emma Henderson
Technical Manager	Francois Langton
Lighting Associate	Joe Hornsby
Costume Associate	Rosie Whiting
Consultants for Creative Access	Kelsie Acton, Angela Bettoni, Lucy Clark, Martin Glover, Andrew Loretto, Anne McCarthy, Lesta Woo, Sofia Young-Santamaria, Ada Eravamo, Maria Oshodi



Project Manager	James Greenhalgh
Access Workers	Abbie Thompson & Laurel Flatley
General Manager	Charlotte Mackie
Administrator	Amy Owen
Co-Artistic Directors	Laura Jones & Lucy Bennett
Executive Producers	Sho Shibata & Lucy Glover

Stopgap Dance Company is driven by a diverse creative team who uses dance as a movement for change.

Stopgap's mission is to create an inclusive world where diversity is not just accepted but pursued, a world where no one is limited by prejudice against Deaf, Disabled, or neurodivergent people.

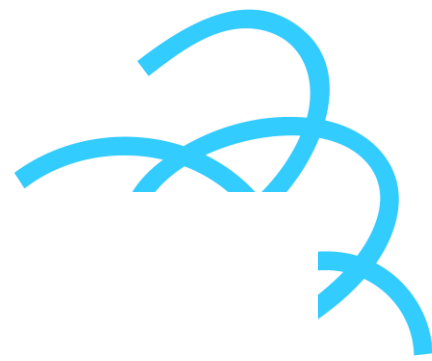
Working with an artform shaped by human touch and energised by the spark of connectivity, Stopgap's work demonstrates the compelling power of diversity and inclusivity. Stopgap's artists move together to create a remarkable experience that transforms society's perceptions of difference and dismantle the inequity of privilege, in dance and in all aspects of living, collaborating, and creating together as humans.

Stopgap's work is both focused on and born out of the company's rigorous investment in equity and inclusive culture. They are committed to removing barriers to dance, nurturing the talents of dancers born into any body and any mind. Stopgap are in coalition with a wave of organisations moving towards a better representation of diversity on our stages and in society.

Stopgap are a global leader of disability access in dance and continuously examine best practice. They actively advocate for the industry and the wider world to become more inclusive.

Discover more about Lived Fiction on our website:
www.stopgapdance.com/lived-fiction

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



DANCING

Protecting the Right to Culture of Persons with Disabilities and Enhancing Cultural Diversity through European Union Law: Exploring New Paths (DANCING) is an interdisciplinary research project, funded by the European Research Council (ERC) and based at Maynooth University, under Principal Investigator Professor Delia Ferri.

DANCING combines legal, empirical, and arts-based research methods to investigate the extent to which the protection of the right to take part in culture of people with disabilities and the promotion of cultural diversity intersect and complement each other in the EU legal order. This approach involves:

Identifying and analysing features of cultural access experienced as exclusionary by people experiencing different types of disability.

Exploring how the EU has used and can use its competence to combat discrimination to ensure the accessibility of cultural activities. This includes promoting disability identities, while achieving cultural diversity. In doing so, DANCING bridges the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions.

Rethorising the legal concept of cultural diversity, stemming from the intersection of different sources of law to encompass the protection of the rights of people with disabilities. In doing so DANCING promotes a new way of understanding the right to participate in cultural life within the EU legal order.



DANCING believe that **everyone** has a right to take part in the cultural life of the community and to enjoy the arts.

DANCING looks at the right to participate in culture in a comprehensive way that has individual and collective dimensions and encompasses:

Participation in culture, such as the right to access cultural activities, goods and services.

Active involvement in culture, including creating cultural goods, services and activities.

Recognition and protection for cultural communities, as well as the right to enjoy and make use of their cultural heritage and cultural expressions.

DANCING are committed to engaging in broader dialogue with artists, the academic community, organisations of persons with disabilities and society at large. DANCING provides platforms for collaboration and discussion of emerging findings, through conferences, workshops and public conversations with artists, legal scholars and key stakeholders. DANCING is also collaborating with an accessibility designer and artists with disabilities to raise awareness of the project through outputs accessible to a diverse range of people.

You can find out more about our activities , including an archive of resources, academic papers and previous events on our website:

<https://erc.dancing.maynoothuniversity.ie/>

For news of upcoming events and activities we are involved in, follow us on Twitter/X:

@DancingErc



Lived Fiction and the arc of creative access

Performers and audiences revelling in a shared-experience of an inclusive theatre space

Stopgap Dance Company explain their multifaceted approach to embedding access in the creation of Lived Fiction

To make dance accessible to the widest possible range of audiences, *Lived Fiction* places the aesthetics of access at its core. This is an approach which seeks to address barriers to art whilst also recognising the enormous artistic potential of access. *Lived Fiction* integrates audio description, creative captioning and a relaxed environment with world class choreography, allowing each element its own artistic voice so that dance takes on a new form that resonates with all audiences. Our success hinged on deconstructing dance in its purest form and re-constructing it in collaboration with creatives and advisors with lived experience of deafness, disability and neurodivergence. This collaborative approach to accessibility began right at the beginning of our creative process and was not an afterthought.

We want to avoid describing *Lived Fiction* as 'universally accessible'. To make every minute of a full-evening's work accessible to everyone would assume all access needs are the same and disregard personal preferences and unique perspectives. Instead, *Lived Fiction* has an arc, where the balance of artistry and accessibility ebbs and flows, offering audiences an understanding of how different people might meaningfully experience dance and the wider world.

Creative Audio Description

We are integrating both live and pre-recorded audio description, delivered by our on-stage audio describer and the dancers. The majority of scenes place emphasis on audio description and spoken word, supporting blind and visually impaired audiences with access to the choreography. This also presents opportunities for sighted audiences to engage with dance work in a new way. In some scenes text and description is pared back, leaving space for the music, sounds of the dancers, the space, and the costumes to do the descriptive work.



Creative Captions

We feel that the work is visually rich and engaging for Deaf audiences, supported by creative captioning and digital projections working together to artistically express the choreography, spoken word and music. Through consultation with our Deaf, Disabled, neurodivergent and non-disabled collaborators and creatives, we made a collective decision to not incorporate sign language interpretation during the performance. However, we will work with host venues to provide sign language interpreters for any pre or post show talks and announcements.

Relaxed Performances

We warmly welcome Learning Disabled and neurodivergent audiences to *Lived Fiction* and are committing to core elements of Relaxed Performances. Our Access Guide will be working with Project Arts Centre's Front of House staff to implement this, ensuring a committed shared approach to access.

We welcome voluntary and involuntary noise and movement in the auditorium.

We will have the house lights on at a sufficient level and leave the auditorium doors open throughout the performance, and we welcome audiences entering and exiting the auditorium at any time.

For our performances at Project Arts Centre, a Quiet Space is available before, during, and after the performance.

There is an Access table outside in the foyer of the Project Arts Centre, where audiences will be able to access resources, alternative format programmes and sensory supports such as ear defenders and sunglasses.

There will be no specific adjustments to the sound or lighting during the show. The show uses text, music and soundscapes, with varying levels of noise. When available, please take a look at our visual and sonic stories which share more about the sound levels. In particular, the eight-minute scene called 'Tight Textures' in the middle of act one has loud bass-filled music and bright moving lights. We will provide an in-show warning before 'Tight Textures'. This will allow people to prepare for the scene and potentially leave the auditorium temporarily if they wish to.

Alternative Formats

A Visual Story is available for this performance and braille versions of the programme and visual story are both available at our Access table.