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CURABILITY

CUltuRal AccessiBILITY

POLICY RECOMMENDATION PACK

for defining the sustainability strategy that will include all actions to take, obstacles to overcome, decisions to make in order to use the project in other settings at local or national level

CURABILITY Project



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PROJECT INFORMATION

Project acronym:

CURABILITY

Project title:

CULTuRal AccessiBILITY

Project Number:

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Key Action:

KA220-ADU - Cooperation partnerships in adult education

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European Cultural Heritage plays an important role in building the future of Europe, and accessibility to this cultural heritage (CH) is not only a basic human right, but also a fundamental strategy for its valorization and promotion. But access to cultural heritage is not equal for all people, and is especially difficult for the most disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities.

There is a lack of knowledge of disability in general and its needs. There is a lack of training for cultural professionals and their trainers regarding the needs of people with disabilities and technological resources. And furthermore, there is a shortage of financing, both for the implementation of improvements in equipment and for the training of cultural workers.

In this very complicated framework the CURABILITY project has been developed, which arose from the need to improve access to culture for people with disabilities, whatever it may be. As part of the project, this PACKAGE OF POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS has been developed, which defines the strategy to follow, the actions to be taken, the obstacles to overcome and the decisions to be made, to ensure the SUSTAINABILITY of the products created by the project, and Furthermore, so that they can be used in other environments, whether at the local, national or European Union level as a whole.

Sincerely,

The CURABILITY partnership



Proposals from partners for the implementation of actions that allow the sustainability of the project results

Possible actions for sustainability

- A **strong Community of culture lovers** (local / international level) should be built along the lines of the Curability Online Community to share the CURABILITY products and best practices with all the different stakeholders. Establish **long term partnerships and collaborations** among the Community stakeholders (Museums, cultural institutions, ...) with interest on the inclusion of PWD and cultural accessibility.
- **Financial resources should be continuously invested** to Enlarge this Community of cultural workers, educators, organisations and cultural institutions by offering the project outcomes, plus additional training and workshops developed by the project to improve the situation of the target group.
- Use the project "**community of culture lovers**" to spread the implementation possibilities for workers and facilities by sharing the materials developed during the project.
- Offer **continuous training** and workshops for accessible curators and professionals in the field, **adapting the materials to the different target groups** and to the specific needs of the local audiences, and using the available **digital tools** to reach the maximum number of stakeholders.
- **Continuous organising of meetings, workshops and communication channels to disseminate the project results** with the different stakeholders by using the "One EU point of good practises" thus the "E-data bank" developed. This will **upgrade awareness** and improve the accessibility of the different target groups. This dissemination should be done not only through a classic approach, but also through the use of **new technologies** to be used for training purposes, and by adapting the project results to the different target groups and to each local territory's needs.
- **Continuous Staff training** on accessibility needs, diversity and specificities to create a more inclusive and accessible working space for the different stakeholders. The new gained skills shall open **new opportunities** for better help cultural workers and people with disabilities by creating accessible cultural spaces and understanding their rights and demands concerning these spaces.



<p>Cost of the Implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of Training events require investment, either in cost or time of the staff, but normally it means both. The Staff needs to be trained first, so they gain the skills to disseminate and implement the events. In other cases, this shall mean the need to have to hire new staff, that might also be a challenge due to additional cost it means, putting an additional strain on the organisation's budget. - The learning of new capabilities and skills by the staff needs time investment. Also the preparation and development of workshops and training events also needs staff time and cost investment. Due to lack of available resources and funds a competition on priorities with other tasks within the organisations will appear, so prioritisation of tasks shall be needed. The available funds of the organisations will be the cutting tool to define the activities to be done. -The limitation on fundings might challenge the cultural places and the cultural workers to recognise the added value of the offered learnings and training events in the area of cultural accessibility and the proposed transformation of their places, understanding they might not put them in practice in their daily work. - To become an expert in some specific tools, such as the 3D printing technology requires intensive training either self-paced or external, which means additional cost and time not always available. - The materials and outputs developed and available thanks to the CURABILITY project shall have to be adapted to the different entities target groups and considering each local social and cultural environment. - The implementation accessibility improvements, being sure they will have a very positive impact on society, will hardly have a specific economic recognition for the entity, that means it makes it difficult to think the entities will receive additional funds to support the additional costs of these implementations. - The opportunity to use the new technologies to put the improvements available to the maximum of stakeholders also means the need of skills and experts on these new technologies to adapt and develop the project results to the different types of disabilities.



<p>Changes to laws and regulations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the European level, many countries have made efforts to align their laws and policies with the principles and obligations set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Most of the proposed changes to laws are very generic and written without considering people with disabilities needs and opinions. To change this the PWD voice has to be taken into account to contribute in the new legislation or initiatives development. However, despite all efforts, PWD are still stigmatised and discriminated against because they are still not treated as individuals with legal capacity, autonomy and freedom. Most of the current laws in some countries already cover different accessibility aspects basically addressing essential rights, but still many countries face big challenges of discrimination against PWD due to social stigma and exclusion which still persists in the society. A possible solution would be to develop and enhance additional campaigns and programs focused on the change of society's perception against PWD. - In general, to secure over time the necessary changes it would be necessary the implementation of new special and specific regulations about accessibility requirements for designing an accessible environment in cities and buildings to be accessible for people with reduced mobility or physical, visual and hearing impairments. To support and secure these new laws and regulations it would be necessary to provide additional grants and funds for training of the cultural workers and cultural staff, on how to welcome and accommodate visitors with different types of disabilities. Thus, fundings would also be necessary for buildings and spaces adaptation. - In the last years some fundings were provided resulting in most of the cultural spaces being redesigned, but to maintain these changes over time some more additional fundings would be necessary. The creation of an important-high valued fund to organisations already working with PWD to improve their places could make the difference and would encourage others to do the same. Generally in the EU



countries most buildings and infrastructures belonging to the public sector are required to provide accessible provisions for people with disabilities, and most private infrastructures also offer accessible features such as ramps and elevators but this is not always the case. This can put disabled people in a difficult position when trying to access different spaces.

- At international level **the cooperation between policy makers and representatives of PWD should be increased**, building partnerships to promote the involvement of PWD and their organisations in the policies, programs and initiatives process. **PWD voices** have to be truly taken into consideration at every stage of decision-making policy. It would be necessary at all EU levels to intensify the consultations between the policy makers, cultural stakeholders and representatives of PWD. Binding and regular **consultation mechanisms** should be established at European and national level with disability associations and advocacy groups to gather input on policy issues affecting PWD.

- In some countries there are laws that aim to promote the social integration and inclusion of PWD. This law encourages employers to **hire PWD** and to provide “reasonable” accommodation, and however, this detail is where **"real" inclusion fails**, and does not reflect the diversity of all the PWD collective. Therefore, extra financial support for employers who contract PWD would be beneficial, plus an additional budget to adapt the equipment and resources. Laws should put more pressure on private institutions to implement measures that create more accessible cultural spaces for people with disabilities.

Effects and pit-falls

- Explaining, convincing and implementing the necessary changes into the cultural entities will surely be a challenge, certainly not due to lack of motivation or understanding but mainly due to **additional related costs**. Laws and Regulations therefore, must demand for these changes to happen.

- **Different types of disabilities** need diverse approaches, knowledge and skills to adapt the materials to each specific case. The disability community is diverse, with different types and degrees of disabilities. This makes it difficult to balance interests, efforts and funds, which makes it challenging to ensure all types of disabilities and impairments are equally covered.



-**Regular consultations mechanisms** must be set to ensure long term reflect and represent the diversity of the disability community to allocate fundings and support.

-Attractive and effective raising **awareness campaigns** are needed to convince the policy makers, managerial levels, trainers and even the PWD community. These campaigns demand financial and staff efforts and finding the resources and funds can be a true challenge.

-**Long term efforts** and investment is needed to gain the needed skills among the staff, and to implement the needed improvements in the cultural places.

-Despite there are different grants for organisations working with PWD, the place's improvements surely will need further additional resources.

-To ensure long term efforts and results, **regulations are needed** to demand for the changes to happen.

- Government, cultural institutions, organisations of PWD and decision makers need to work together to secure the development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes over time. The **authorities** must be involved and convinced on the need to generate policies that change the current situation of little or no accessibility in some equipment. The change of these policies will lead to an obligation on the cultural entities to **invest** in improving the accessibility to cultural facilities, both public and private.

- **Awareness raising campaigns** about the importance of cultural accessibility, practical training need to be organised to ensure all types of disabilities are well covered. The establishment of these consultation mechanisms would require individuals or teams responsible for coordinating and managing them.

- The changes require **continuous training and education** of organisations, institutions, staff and professionals. Social workers can also attend training workshops to increase their knowledge about cultural heritage. This improves the possibilities not only for them to act as cultural assistants to museums and art galleries, but also for the PWD and institutions to have more technicians properly trained. Facilitators and coordinators of consultations would need to be

**Responsibilities
and needs to be
created**



	<p>trained in inclusive communication (knowledge of sign language, accessible document creation) and have a comprehensive understanding of the rights of PWD.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is important to design social campaigns to understand the reality before designing the awareness campaigns, so the weaknesses and needs are detected before developing the training, workshops, educational and awareness programs. This is also important to design new Policies and Campaigns, communication strategies, etc... - The improvements and changes require continuous training and education of organisations, institutions, staff and professionals over time. But also contracting new staff and training the already contracted to increase and adapt their skills. Training in New Technologies can be key so the staff can be autonomous in the creation and improvement of virtual spaces or networks where different services can be offered, from online virtual visits, reservations, etc.. - Cultural stakeholders need to work together to improve the cultural accessibility. - To have a better, improved and more attractive place it is needed the availability of additional higher funds source to complete the full cost, engage internal staff and launch informational campaigns to promote the new program.
<p>SWOT analysis</p>	<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In most countries new laws and regulations have been adopted to ensure proper level of physical accessibility of cultural institutions. - Collaborations with Key Stakeholders (museums, cultural institutions,...) will build a strong network of support and expertise. The bigger this network is the more other stakeholders will be interested and more initiatives will come. Building a strong community along the lines of the Curability online community can foster collaboration, knowledge sharing and the initiation of future projects. - The results produced by the CURABILITY project provide a range of tools to cultural professionals, staff and institutions to implement and influence change in their practice. From them, project training can be offered to other stakeholders



apart from the cultural workers, that will be a valuable strength. Thus, the project **Holistic approach** in terms of accessibility perspective provides tools for developing different strategies and the results provide real world experiences that will help other cultural institutions to improve accessibility. **Tailoring the project content** to the specific needs of the local audience ensures that the proposed workshops and training sessions are relevant and effective.

-The project results will help institutions and staff to increase their knowledge and awareness of the existence of **different types of disabilities** and the specific differences among different European countries. The project training and outcomes will provide a strong starting point that can be used within the different countries to take them to the **local specificities**.

- A variety of **funding opportunities** are present to financially support the education and training of stakeholders.

Weaknesses

- Many cultural managers, workers, educators as well as policy makers are not familiar with the concept of cultural accessibility apart from physical accessibility. Additionally, there is a **variability** in Partner Experiences that will create the need of **adapting the project results** to the different national levels, considering the different experiences and contexts of partner countries. This can be challenging. Thus, local cultural professionals, educators and museum staff have little knowledge about the project and the value of the workshops and training.

- **Shortage of fundings** for cultural organisations to put in practice the recommendations and proposals and solutions for space transformation and staff training is with no doubt, a big challenge for the organisations. Additionally, the Implementation of the recommendations developed during the project may require significant financial and human resources challenges. Providing workshops and training at the local level can be resource intensive, which would strain the budget and affect the quality and scale of these activities. The access to funds and grants is limited and there are many **other needs in Europe** to attack which compete with the cultural accessibility.

- **Individuals and groups' natural resistance to change** will be a challenge to implement the necessary changes to improve in terms of accessibility. Raising



awareness of cultural accessibility can be challenging among professionals and institutions due to the time and effort needed.

- Despite the project being a step forward in the current situation promoting and improving the awareness of different types of disabilities and needs, surely this approach is not sufficient and should be deeply treated in further future projects.

Opportunities

- The project has created a net of institutions, of staff and of organisations that will help to have a broader window for cooperation and awareness raising either at national, as at international level. Project **e-Databank** can intensify the promotion of good examples of accessible spaces + lessons learnt. Implementing changes might mean potentially increasing the potential number of attendees which lead to increase of financial support. The **policy recommendation pack** provides an opportunity for cultural institutions to collaborate and share their experiences and solutions, creating a professional network for cooperation.

- The use of **new technologies** for sure will help to broaden the potential public, entities and staff in the courses and examples developed during the project.

- Establishing suitable **public consultation mechanisms** among the different stakeholders can make the problem more visible to the society. The diverse Disability Representation presents an opportunity to address a broad range of accessibility needs.

- The project outcomes can provide **international impact** on organisations, institutions and professionals that wish to expand their knowledge and resources to implement changes in their spaces or provide further opportunities for training to cultural institutions and relevant organisations. Building **local collaborations and a strong community** can open up opportunities for partnerships with other organisations. Local workshops and training will have a direct impact on the local cultural stakeholders, which will improve the accessibility and inclusivity in local cultural institutions.

Threats

- The increasing **shortage of funding** for the cultural sector might put a pressure



on managers and staff and make them to focus only on their basic duties, and can discourage the organisations in implementing the changes needed to improve the accessibility of all types of disabilities. These shortages will create a **competition** for these necessary improvements for attention and participation with other multiple priorities and commitments. Moreover considering the possibility of the public not responding well or at all to the efforts of cultural institutions

- The limitation in resources will impact in the implementation of long-term partnerships and in the development of training and workshops, which require resources. **The resource constraints are a challenge for sustainability.**

- Cultural institutions and professionals may encounter **resistance to change** on the institutions, organisations and staff, to adopt the changes and the accessibility practices. Leaving the comfort zone is not easy and an important awareness work must be carried out to minimise it.

- **Regulatory changes** related to accessibility may impact the relevance, applicability and sustainability not only of the policy recommendation pack, but also of the project's results as they may gain or lose importance. This can affect the decision makers (local/national) to adopt the necessary changes in regulations which increases the difficulty in implementing an all-inclusive change as the diversity among people with disabilities.



<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In most countries new laws and regulations have been adopted to ensure proper level of physical accessibility of cultural institutions. - Collaborations with Key Stakeholders (museums, cultural institutions,...) will build a strong network of support and expertise. The bigger this network is the more other stakeholders will be interested and more initiatives will come. Building a strong community along the lines of the Curability online community can foster collaboration, knowledge sharing and the initiation of future projects. - The results produced by the CURABILITY project provide a range of tools to cultural professionals, staff and institutions to implement and influence change in their practice. From them, project training can be offered to other stakeholders apart from the cultural workers, that will be a valuable strength. Thus, the project Holistic approach in terms of accessibility perspective provides tools for developing different strategies and the results provide real world experiences that will help other cultural institutions to improve accessibility. Tailoring the project content to the specific needs of the local audience ensures that the proposed workshops and training sessions are relevant and effective. -The project results will help institutions and staff to increase their knowledge and awareness of the existence of different types of disabilities and the specific differences among different European countries. The project training and outcomes will provide a strong starting point that can be used within the different countries to take them to the local specificities. - A variety of funding opportunities are present to financially support the education and training of stakeholders. 	<p>Weaknesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Many cultural managers, workers, educators as well as policy makers are not familiar with the concept of cultural accessibility apart from physical accessibility. Additionally, there is a variability in Partner Experiences that will create the need of adapting the project results to the different national levels, considering the different experiences and contexts of partner countries. This can be challenging. Thus, local cultural professionals, educators and museum staff have little knowledge about the project and the value of the workshops and training. - Shortage of fundings for cultural organisations to put in practice the recommendations and proposals and solutions for space transformation and staff training is with no doubt, a big challenge for the organisations. Additionally, the Implementation of the recommendations developed during the project may require significant financial and human resources challenges. Providing workshops and training at the local level can be resource intensive, which would strain the budget and affect the quality and scale of these activities. The access to funds and grants is limited and there are many other needs in Europe to attack which compete with the cultural accessibility. - Individuals and groups' natural resistance to change will be a challenge to implement the necessary changes to improve in terms of accessibility. Raising awareness of cultural accessibility can be challenging among professionals and institutions due to the time and effort needed. - Despite the project being a step forward in the current situation promoting and improving the awareness of different types of disabilities and needs, surely this approach is not sufficient and should be deeply treated in further future projects.
<p>Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The project has created a <i>net of institutions</i>, of staff and of organisations that will help to have a broader window for cooperation and awareness raising either at national, as at international level. Project <i>e-Databank</i> can intensify the promotion of good examples of accessible spaces + lessons learnt. Implementing changes might mean potentially increasing the potential number of attendees which lead to increase of financial support. The <i>policy recommendation pack</i> provides an opportunity for cultural institutions to collaborate and share their experiences and solutions, creating a professional network for cooperation. - The use of new technologies for sure will help to broaden the potential public, entities and staff in the courses and examples developed during the project. - Establishing suitable public consultation mechanisms among the different stakeholders can make the problem more visible to the society. The diverse Disability Representation presents and opportunity to address a broad range of accessibility needs. - The project outcomes can provide international impact on organisations, institutions and professionals that wish to expand their knowledge and resources to implement changes in their spaces or provide further opportunities for training to cultural institutions and relevant organisations. Building local collaborations and a strong community can open up opportunities for partnerships with other organisations. Local workshops and training will have a direct impact on the local cultural stakeholders, which will improve the accessibility and inclusivity in local cultural institutions. 	<p>Threats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The increasing shortage of funding for the cultural sector might put a pressure on managers and staff and make them to focus only on their basic duties, and can discourage the organisations in implementing the changes needed to improve the accessibility of all types of disabilities. These shortages will create a competition for these necessary improvements for attention and participation with other multiple priorities and commitments. Moreover considering the possibility of the public not responding well or at all to the efforts of cultural institutions - The limitation in resources will impact in the implementation of long-term partnerships and in the development of training and workshops, which require resources. The resource constraints are a challenge for sustainability. - Cultural institutions and professionals may encounter resistance to change on the institutions, organisations and staff, to adopt the changes and the accessibility practices. Leaving the comfort zone is not easy and an important awareness work must be carried out to minimise it. - Regulatory changes related to accessibility may impact the relevance, applicability and sustainability not only of the policy recommendation pack, but also of the project's results as they may gain or lose importance. This can affect the decision makers (local/national) to adopt the necessary changes in regulations which increases the difficulty in implementing an all-inclusive change as the diversity among people with disabilities.

Conclusions

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Conclusions

Currently, at the European level, many countries have made efforts to align themselves with the obligations of the United Nations convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. However, most of the proposed legislative changes are too generic and have been made without considering the needs and opinions of people with disabilities, and without considering all its diversity.

To prevent this from continuing to happen and to be able to achieve real improvement, it is important that legislators become aware of the real needs and translate them into specific and concrete laws that represent real improvements for people with disabilities, not only in public facilities and buildings, but also in private ones. To achieve it, better consultation tools must be established that are binding and carried out on a regular basis.

On the other hand, it is essential to establish a strong community of different stakeholders and lovers of culture, both nationally and internationally, where the results and good practices developed can be shared.

The necessary improvements, both in the training and skills of cultural workers, and in the improvements in physical spaces, require strong and continued investment. Having this additional investment will allow those responsible with decision-making power to implement the necessary improvements, without having to choose between the different activities they already carry out.

Without this continued investment, it will be difficult to ensure the continuous training of cultural workers, the development of courses or workshops, and the adaptation of results and good practices to the needs, diversities and accessibility specificities of the different target groups.



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As a summary, the following points could be highlighted as the main obstacles detected:

- Lack of knowledge of disabilities in general and their needs
- Lack of training of cultural professionals and their trainers, regarding the needs of people with disabilities and technological resources
- The shortage of funding for training and its application in resources.

The partnership:

