



The voice of blind and partially sighted people in Europe

# **Creative Europe (2021-2027)**

## **Cultivating inclusion through EU funding**

EBU Press Release | 16/12/2020

On 14 December, a political agreement was finally reached between the European Parliament and EU Member States on the new Creative Europe programme (2021-2027), pending the final approval of the legal texts.

The European Blind Union (EBU) welcomes the addition in the new regulation of a general clause stating that the programme's objectives shall be pursued in a way that encourages inclusion, equality, diversity and participation and, where appropriate, through specific incentives that ensure access to culture and creative sectors for people with disabilities – among other groups at risk of social exclusion and marginalisation – and encourage their active participation in those sectors.

“People with visual disabilities have the right to enjoy culture as much as everyone else, and they need it to be accessible” stated EBU President Rodolfo Cattani. “It is very important that the EU showcase, through Creative Europe funding, that it lives up to its commitment to promote equal access to culture for persons with disabilities”.

Also positive is that support measures under the MEDIA strand of Creative Europe continue to explicitly include support for audio description and subtitling, despite initial concerns.

In line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the new regulation will be a good basis to promote the consideration of the accessibility needs of blind and partially sighted persons in EU funding to the film industry. EBU will continue its campaigning efforts to ensure that Creative Europe funding really benefits visually impaired people.

## Background information

The EU acceded to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and is responsible for its implementation within its competences, including through funding. Article 30, paragraph 1 of the CRPD defines the right of persons with disabilities to take part on an equal basis with others in cultural life, and it obliges State Parties to take all appropriate measures to ensure that persons with disabilities enjoy access to films in accessible formats.

In a recent [position paper](#), EBU deplored that the EU so far has failed to use MEDIA leverage to raise awareness among film producers about audio description and audio subtitling as an element of accessibility for visually impaired persons.

Audio description of what is shown on a screen communicates important visual content with spoken information inserted as a narrative between the dialogue and other programme sounds. Audio subtitling – also known as spoken subtitles – is the reading aloud of subtitles; they are necessary for inter-lingual subtitles, but can also be useful for same language subtitles.

Ends

**The European Blind Union (EBU)** is a non-governmental, non-profit making European organisation founded in 1984. It is one of the six regional bodies of the World Blind Union, and it promotes the interests of blind and partially sighted people in Europe. It currently operates within a network of 41 national members including organisations from 25 European Union member states, candidate countries and other countries in geographical Europe.

### European Blind Union

6 rue Gager-Gabillot - 75015 Paris

+33 1 88 61 06 40 | [ebu@euroblind.org](mailto:ebu@euroblind.org) | [www.euroblind.org](http://www.euroblind.org)

**Contact:** Gary May, Information & Communications Officer  
[ebuinfocom@euroblind.org](mailto:ebuinfocom@euroblind.org) | +33 1 88 61 06 63