

Facilitation of Access to the Cultural Goods for Persons with Disabilities as Part of the Implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Abstract—The article presents the main results of the activities of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation for 2012-2017 aimed at implementing the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities. The author analyzes the main activities performed by the cultural institutions in order to increase the level of accessibility for persons with disabilities, to develop their creative abilities, as well as to engage the disabled persons in the cultural life.

Keywords—accessibility; persons with disabilities; persons with special health needs; cultural values and goods

I. INTRODUCTION

The ratification by the Russian Federation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Federal Law No. 46-FZ “On ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” dated May 3, 2012)¹ has enhanced actions of the State and society aimed at increasing the level of accessibility of the social infrastructure facilities, including the cultural-sector institutions, to persons with disabilities.

The cultural institutions are participating in the most proactive way in the process of creating the accessible environment for persons with disabilities.

II. CONDUCTING THE AWARENESS-RAISING AND EDUCATIONAL WORK IN KEEPING WITH IDEAS OF THE CONVENTION (ARTICLE 8 OF THE CONVENTION)

When implementing the Convention, the activities are performed by the cultural institutions so that the persons with disabilities could satisfy their cultural needs and so as to promote the public awareness in terms of respecting the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities:

The libraries are working actively to encourage the persons with disabilities to read.

In order to increase the level of the cultural enlightenment of the persons with visual disabilities and to make it possible for them to use the electronic files with music scores represented in Braille, the Russian State Library for the Blind is conducting the large-scale work on establishing the electronic library of music scores published using the Braille’s system of raised dots.

To date, the said electronic library of music scores consists of 38 musical compositions and contains 3,382 pages. The digitalized music scores published using the Braille’s system of raised dots is publicly available at the website of the library.²

Moreover, the collection of the Russian State Library for the Blind has been enlarged in 2016, as compared to 2015, and is about 1.5 million storage units, given that the collection of publications for the blind and partially-sighted people makes 91% of the total library collection.

In Sakhalin Regional Universal Scientific Library, there is a Mobile Library Service Center providing various library services to the persons with disabilities, ranging from issuing documents from the library collection, allowing access to the databases and Internet resources to legal consulting;

Developmental and educational programs for children with disabilities are being carried out by the museums, allowing such children not only to become familiar with the exhibits, but also to acquire the necessary knowledge of the surrounding world.

For instance, the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts has organized an exhibition of tactile (touchable) pictures — “Seeing the Invisible” — perceivable by the blind and partially-sighted people; The Tsarskoye Selo Museum-Preserve carries out the project “Touch the Beauty” allowing the children with visual impairments to familiarize themselves with the exhibits through the use of tactile mock-

¹ On ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: Federal Law No. 46-FZ dated May 3, 2012// Collection of Legislation of the Russian Federation. – 2012. - No. 19. - p. 2280.

² Official website of the Russian State Library for the Blind [Electronic resource]. Access mode: <<http://rgdb.ru>> (access date: 15/11/2017).

up models and leaflets presented using the Braille's system of raised dots;

The Moscow Kremlin museums let the visitors with visual impairments to get familiar with the 3D-tactile models of the museum items and the Kremlin cathedrals and provide an option for persons with vision and hearing disabilities to use interactive devices;

The theatre organizations perform activities so as to make the performances accessible and so as to be visited by persons with disabilities as well.

For example, at the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre of Russia, there is the equipment for simultaneous interpretation installed, adapted for audio descriptive commentary of the performances for the vision-impaired persons.

The Alexandrinsky Theatre conducts the charity performances for persons with disabilities;

The circus organizations actively promote the involvement of persons with disabilities in the cultural life.

Thus, the Great Moscow State Circus at the Vernadsky Prospekt organizes the regular tours to present the circus shows at the hospitals and the orphanages.

The culture and leisure institutions contribute to the development of the creative abilities of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities, and their socio-cultural rehabilitation by means of offering club and class activities.

The best results of working in this field are achieved in Sverdlovsk and Moscow regions, Altai Krai, Buryat and Kalmyk Republics.

The cultural-sector educational institutions (the Saint-Petersburg State Institute of Culture, the Moscow State Institute of Culture) implement the adapted educational programs in the area of arts, the textbooks and educational and teaching methods manuals for the adapted educational programs are also being developed and introduced in the educational process (the Russian State Specialized Academy of Arts).

Moreover, the cultural-sector educational institutions conduct the seminars, conferences, exhibitions of students' works dedicated to the problems of integration of persons with disabilities into the social environment.

The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation annually provides the governmental support for production of cinema films about people with disabilities;

In 2016, on the basis of the State contract concluded with the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, the Gorky Film Studio recorded audio descriptive commentaries and subtitles for 38 best Soviet movies, among which 12 two-part films, totaling 50 episodes. In addition, a copy for the digital cinema screening was produced for each film, containing audio descriptive commentary and subtitles for deaf people, as well as a copy of a movie on DVD with open audio descriptive commentary and subtitles for deaf people.

III. MEASURES FOR PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE FACILITIES AND SERVICES OFFERED BY THE CULTURAL-SECTOR INSTITUTIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN THE SAME WAY AS FOR OTHER CITIZENS (ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION)

The efforts are being made by the cultural-sector institutions in creating the accessible environment for persons with disabilities or limited mobility.

The roadmaps for improving the accessibility indicators approved by the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, as well as the local legal provisions of the institutions addressing the issue of creating the accessible environment, include measures for staged equipping of the facilities with assistive devices and adaptive aids in order to ensure the unimpeded access for disabled people with all kinds of health problems.

For collecting the information about the accessibility of the cultural institutions and availability of events for persons with disabilities or special needs held by such institutions, the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation has developed the automated information system Single Information Space in the Sphere of Culture,³ which consolidates the information about the institutions and the events, which are open to persons with disabilities or special needs.

The accessibility map of all cultural institutions in Russia and the corresponding events is published on the website of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, as well as on Kultura.rf portal (in Russian – Культура.рф) in the Events section (in Russian – Афиша).

The cultural-sector institutions are also adapting the offered services to the needs of people with disabilities.

Accessibility of cultural institutions is ensured, among other things, through the conduction of regular independent quality assessment of services performed by cultural institutions intended to improve the delivery of services to the people with disabilities.

IV. PARTICIPATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES IN CULTURAL LIFE (ARTICLE 30 OF THE CONVENTION)

The cultural institutions do great work promoting participation of people with disabilities in cultural life, creating conditions for engaging these categories of persons in the creative activities and introducing them to the works of culture and arts, promoting integration of people with special needs into the creative environment and facilitating their creative interaction.

Among the arts and cultural-enlightenment projects that are being carried out by the cultural institutions and which are popular with people with disabilities we can mention:

³ The Automated Information System Single Information Space in the Sphere of Culture: project of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation [Electronic resource]. Access mode: <<https://all.culture.ru/intro#events>> (access date: 15/12/2017).

Biblionight, the All-Russian Library Action, as part of which a great number of events available for persons with disabilities are being conducted by the libraries of the Russian Federation, ranging from reading books to interactive performances and music games. In particular, all activities, which are being carried out as part of Biblionight by the Russian State Children's Library, are available to persons with disabilities;

The Night of Museums, the Night of Arts and the Intermuseum all-Russian actions, the activities of which are available to people with disabilities;

The Past at Your Fingertips project, in the framework of which pupils from the residential schools of Saint Petersburg for blind and partially-sighted children get acquainted with the exhibits and also practice various kinds of creative activities – clay modeling, drawing, etc. (State Hermitage);

The Accessible Museum project combining exhibition arrangements and educational activities aimed at creating the accessible environment for visitors with disabilities (The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts).

For involvement of persons with disabilities into the cultural life of the society and with the purpose of their socio-cultural rehabilitation, the disabled people's art festivals and competitions, charity concerts for persons with disabilities are being held annually, such as The White Cane, International Charity Festival, the International Paradelphic Games and others.

All-Russian public associations of persons with disabilities also perform great work engaging people with disabilities in cultural life to the maximum extent possible.

V. CONCLUSION

Thus, the activities of the cultural-sector organizations is entirely devoted to ensuring accessibility of cultural values and goods for people with disabilities, to creating opportunities for realization of creative potential by these categories of citizens and satisfaction of their cultural needs, as well as to the socio-cultural rehabilitation of people with disabilities by means of culture and the arts.

REFERENCES

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