

Creating Inclusive Cultural Space in the Russian Federation

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Abstract—The article focuses on the main aspects of implementing the state policy on ensuring the access to cultural values and benefits for people with disabilities in the Russian Federation. Based on the data of the annual monitoring in the Russian Federation, the article provides the main indicators of increasing accessibility for people with disabilities in the field of culture and arts. The perspectives of creating inclusive cultural space in cultural institutions are highlighted and include: creating a network of inclusive creative laboratories (centres) at the leading cultural institutions of the Russian Federation; creating the maps of cultural institutions accessibility in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation; assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of measures to ensure the accessibility of cultural institutions for people with disabilities in the Russian Federation; and implementing inclusive creative projects within public-state partnership.

Keywords—accessibility of cultural values and benefits; people with disabilities; inclusive creative laboratories

I. INTRODUCTION

Accessibility of cultural values and benefits is considered a key factor for engaging people with disabilities in the cultural life of the society.

Creating inclusive cultural space in the Russian Federation by means of ensuring the accessibility of cultural facilities and services for people with disabilities, including children with disabilities, their social adaptation and integration into the cultural life of the society, aimed at unlocking individual creative potential, is one of the top priorities for the Ministry of Culture of Russia.

For the recent years, the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation has been conducting significant work on improving the legal and regulatory framework in terms of accessibility of cultural values and benefits for people with disabilities. Nevertheless, due to the unequal economic and social development of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and municipal entities, there are certain inequalities in access to cultural institutions facilities and services, which reduces the possibility of disabled people to exercise the assigned rights to full extent.

Meanwhile, in order to achieve maximum accessibility for people with disabilities, the cultural sector needs to

mobilize efforts and resources of all the interested parties, within interdepartmental cooperation, in particular.

According to the Russian Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), about 53% of people with disabilities aged 15 and over are able to have an active lifestyle¹. However, the actual level of the engagement of people with disabilities in cultural activity shows lower figures.

The network of cultural institutions of the Russian Federation is rather diversified and completing to adapt and adjust cultural organizations' facilities and services for people with disabilities requires substantial funding. Taking it into consideration, this work is implemented in stages, as provided by industry regulations up to the year 2030.

In order to achieve the goal, the following major tasks have to be carried out, in accordance with the law and other regulations:

- Creating conditions for equal accessibility of cultural values and benefits, development and fulfilment of cultural and spiritual potential of people with disabilities, including children with disabilities.
- Increasing the interest of people with disabilities, including children with disabilities, in creative activity and their integration into culture through the development of the corresponding personal needs and their engagement in the cultural environment.
- Enhancing service delivery for people with disabilities by means of regular systematic training of cultural institutions employees.
- Disseminating the most effective inclusive methods and practices of dealing with people with disabilities.
- Ensuring the accessibility and quality of education in the area of culture and arts for people with disabilities, including children with disabilities.
- Independent assessment of the quality of services provided by cultural institutions with a view to

¹ Official website of the Russian Federal State Statistics Service. The data of Comprehensive Observation of the living conditions of the population. Available at: http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/invalid/tab7-1.htm

determine their accessibility for people with disabilities.

- Information accessibility of events organized by cultural institutions for people with disabilities.
- Assisting with organizing the activity of inclusive creative unions and groups and increasing their number.
- Ensuring the implementation of law and other regulations of the Russian Federation on the accessibility of cultural values and benefits for people with disabilities by cultural institutions.

Based on the established legal and regulatory framework on ensuring the accessibility of cultural benefits for people with disabilities (27 orders of the Ministry of Culture of Russia [1]-[20], over 300 regional and 500 municipal acts), the institutions of the cultural sector carry out systematic work to ensure the improvement of cultural benefits accessibility and the increase in the number of creative events accessible for people with disabilities, as well as events with their participation.

In order to increase the accessibility of cultural values and benefits for people with disabilities, there is a Working Group at the Commission under the President of Russia for People with Disabilities, on creating conditions for people with disabilities to participate in the cultural life of the society, which has been operating since 2015. The Working Group is an expert platform for discussing the issues of providing the accessible environment for people with disabilities in cultural institutions and engaging people with disabilities in the cultural life of the society.

II. ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS ACTIVITY

The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation provides annual monitoring of the accessibility of cultural benefits for people with disabilities [21], [22], [23].

The results of the monitoring demonstrate increasing accessibility for people with disabilities in the field of culture and arts in 2015-2018:

First, in general, 53% of cultural organizations developed the accessible environment (2015-2018), in particular:

- 62% of museums (the State museum of Military History and Natural Reserve "The Kulikovo Field", the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, the Museum of the World Ocean, the Museum of the Great Patriotic War, the State Darwin Museum, etc.);
- 52% of educational organizations in the field of culture (Academy of Watercolor and Fine Arts of Sergey Andriaka, the Gerasimov Institute of Cinematography (VGIK), Russian State Specialized Academy of Arts, etc.);
- 50% of theatre and concert organizations (Novosibirsk State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre, Mariinsky State Academic Theatre, Russian

State Academic Drama Theatre named after Fyodor Volkov, etc.);

- 46% of libraries (the Russian State Library for the Blind, the Russian State Children's Library, the Russian State Library for Young Adults, etc.);

Second, in 2017-2018, the number of creative events accessible to people with disabilities, organized by the cultural segment institutions increased by 1.8 times, compared with 2016.

Third, in 2017-2018, the number of employees of cultural establishments, trained in programs for service delivery to people with disabilities increased by 1.4 times, compared with 2016.

Fourth, in 2018, the number of people with disabilities, who entered the educational institutions of the cultural sector to study, increased by 2.6 times (in 2018 - 2665 people with disabilities; in 2017 - 1048 people with disabilities; in 2016 - 1027 people with disabilities).

The Ministry of Culture of Russia pays special attention to the issues of improving the accessibility and quality of education for people with special health needs in educational institutions of the cultural industry.

Aimed at ensuring the necessary conditions for people with special health needs to have vocational training in educational institutions that provide educational programs in arts, the measures taken are as follows: based on the order of the Ministry of Culture of Russia No. 705, dated 15 May, 2018 [24], at the Russian State Specialized Academy of Arts under the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, the industry-specific Resource educational-methodological centre for teaching people with disabilities and special health needs was established. The aim of the institution is to increase the accessibility and quality of education in the field of arts for people with disabilities and special health needs.

The main results of the Resource educational-methodological centre for teaching people with disabilities and special health needs under the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation for the year 2018 are as follows:

- Resource educational-methodological centre organized contacts with educational organizations of the cultural sector on the issues of providing accessibility and quality of higher education for students with disabilities: 68 cooperation agreements on improving accessibility and quality of education for people with disabilities were signed with educational institutions of the cultural industry (universities, colleges, and children's art schools).
- Organizing and conducting advanced training courses for teaching and academic staff of the cultural industry educational organizations and events on the issues of inclusive education: 2 international scientific and practice conferences and 3 round table conferences were held; 158 teaching and academic staff members and heads of the cultural industry educational institutions undertook additional training

programs on inclusive education within the advanced training courses organized by the Resource educational-methodological centre under the Ministry of Culture of Russia.

- Advising educational institutions of the cultural sector on the issues of inclusive education by means of providing the call-centre activity at the Resource educational-methodological centre. The call-centre of the Resource educational-methodological centre at the Ministry of Culture of Russia provides regular advice to educational organizations of the cultural sector on improving accessibility and quality of education for people with disabilities (over 100 consultations were held from 1 June, 2018 to 1 April, 2019).
- Organizing and conducting workshops and webinars as part of collecting unique inclusive methods and practices for teachers of the cultural industry educational institutions. The Ministry of Culture of Russia organized and conducted a series of workshops and webinars for educational establishments of the cultural sector, such as "Ensemble of wind musical instruments", "The basics of writing musical scores in Braille for teachers working with blind students", "Stage movement for students with visual and mobility impairment", "Providing the accessible environment for people with disabilities in educational organizations", etc.
- Developing adapted teaching and learning materials for educational organizations of the cultural industry on the peculiarities of teaching people with disabilities.
- Monitoring studies on the accessibility of education in the area of culture and arts: 4 monitoring sessions were conducted, the results of the monitoring can be found on the portal for information and methodological support for inclusive higher education for people with disabilities and special health needs (Available at: <https://инклюзивноеобразование.рф>).
- Career guidance for applicants with disabilities. Career guidance activities are regularly held for the applicants with disabilities among the students of the senior years of children's art schools.
- Establishing the Sharing Centre. In order to educate people with disabilities in higher education institutions of the cultural sector, the Resource educational-methodological centre purchased special technical tools to provide them for the educational institutions of the cultural sector, where people with disabilities study, for temporary, shared use.
- In order to promote the employment of people with disabilities, the Atlas of professions was developed. It includes the most promising professions on the labour market in the field of culture and arts for people with disabilities. The Atlas of professions is available at

the portal for information and methodological support for inclusive higher education for people with disabilities and with special health needs (<https://инклюзивноеобразование.рф>)

III. UNLOCKING THE CREATIVE POTENTIAL OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES BY MEANS OF CULTURE

The Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation pays great attention to creating the necessary conditions for full integration of people with disabilities into the cultural life of the society and their creative development.

The main activities aimed at increasing the accessibility of cultural values and benefits for people with disabilities, engaging them in social and cultural activity and their creative development include years of effective domestic and foreign experience of ensuring the accessibility of cultural values and benefits for people with disabilities, scientific research on this issue, as well as various methods and techniques used by cultural institutions (art therapy, theatre therapy, bibliotherapy, animation therapy, music therapy, dance therapy, etc.).

The strategy focuses on creating unified approaches to the complex resolution of the issues of providing the accessible environment in cultural institutions, increasing the opportunities for social adaptation and integration of people with disabilities, and developing the creative potential of individuals.

In order to develop the inclusive environment in the field of culture and arts, promote the creative fulfilment of people with disabilities, and share the most effective inclusive techniques and practices of the Ministry of Culture of Russia, the idea to create a network of inclusive creative laboratories at the leading cultural institutions of the Russian Federation (the State Tretyakov Gallery, the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, the State Darwin Museum, the Russian State Library for Young Adults, the State Museum-Cultural Centre "Integration" named after N.A. Ostrovsky) is being developed.

At cultural and leisure institutions, there are 15,839 inclusive creative unions and groups functioning, with 226,081 people participating, including people with disabilities and special health needs. The maximum number of inclusive creative groups operate at cultural and leisure institutions of Moscow, Krasnodar region, Republic of Tatarstan, Moscow region, and Rostov region [25].

The functioning of inclusive creative unions and groups provides a common space for unlocking the creative potential of individuals with disabilities.

The long-term practice of implementing inclusive creative projects has shown the effectiveness of the applied model of public-state partnership in the area of social and cultural rehabilitation of people with disabilities. A significant part of activities for people with disabilities is conducted by cultural institutions and public organizations with State support.

The annual funding from the Ministry of Culture of Russia for creative events and activities for people with disabilities accounts for 12.0 million roubles. Among the largest inclusive creative projects implemented with the support of the Ministry of Culture of Russia are the following: the Charity Festival “White Cane”, the International Creative Festival for children with special health needs “A Step Towards!”, the Festival for young talented people with disabilities “Open World of Creativity”, etc.

The Ministry of Culture of Russia on a regular basis provides methodological and informational support on implementing inclusive creative projects. Major attention is paid to ensuring the information accessibility of creative activities for people with disabilities. For instance, the automated information system “Integrated information space in the field of culture” developed by the Ministry of Culture of Russia allows to get information on inclusive events held by cultural institutions, at any time, all around the country. The information on the events is also available on the portal “Культура.рф” (Culture.ru) in the section “Events”.

Measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of activities in the field of social and cultural rehabilitation of people with disabilities is implemented through an independent assessment of the quality of service delivery by cultural establishments. According to the order of the Ministry of Culture of Russia No. 599, dated 27 April, 2018 [26], the availability of cultural services for people with disabilities is one of the key assessment criteria.

The Ministry of Culture of Russia is one of the participants of a priority area for the Russian Federation - creating a comprehensive system for the rehabilitation of people with disabilities, including children with disabilities. Culture organizations, depending on the available resources, provide complex accessibility of facilities and services for people with disabilities of all nosological groups.

The practice of implementing a pilot project on creating a system of comprehensive rehabilitation and inclusion of people with disabilities, including children with disabilities, in Perm region and Sverdlovsk region in 2017-2018, showed that financing activities, being implemented by cultural institutions within the state program of the Russian Federation “Accessible Environment” aimed at solving two tasks:

- Purchasing rehabilitation equipment for people with disabilities;
- Training staff responsible for ensuring accessibility of facilities and services for people with disabilities.

The implementation of creative, cultural and educational activities accessible for people with disabilities was carried out by cultural institutions within state target funds and grant support from the founders (culture management departments of Perm region and Sverdlovsk region).

While implementing the pilot project, cultural institutions developed effective methods, practices and technologies of dealing with people with disabilities, including:

- Audio description and subtitling films and performances for people with visual and hearing impairments;
- Bibliotherapy, art therapy, play therapy, sensory and other technologies aimed at social and cultural rehabilitation of people with disabilities, and their integration in culture;
- Using inclusive media services;
- Audio description tours for people with visual impairments;
- Organizing activities of inclusive creative unions and groups.

The events implemented by cultural institutions within the pilot project have contributed to unlocking the creative potential of people with disabilities, increasing their level of socialization and sociocultural adaptation, and expanding cultural and interpersonal connections.

Nevertheless, it is not yet possible to evaluate the effectiveness of activities carried out by cultural institutions in line with the goals and objectives of the pilot project, as there are no unified, developed approaches and mechanisms of social and cultural rehabilitation of people with disabilities and disabled children.

IV. CONCLUSION

The strategic goals to ensure the accessibility of cultural benefits for people with disabilities in the Russian Federation include:

- Creating maps of accessibility of cultural institutions in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation;
- Assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of the measures to ensure the accessibility of cultural institutions for people with disabilities in the Russian Federation.

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