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Inclusive CultuRRRe:
On Even More Openness
in Cultural Institutions

MAŁOPOLSKA
EMPATHETIC CULTURE

Our goal is to increase the presence of people with disabilities in cultural institutions. We support institutions in making their programs accessible to anyone who is interested. Together with experts, we advise, offer trainings, and promote good practices.

The project was initiated by the Management Board of the Malopolska Region back in 2016. The Malopolska Institute of Culture in Krakow is in charge of all activities related to the project in cooperation with the Department of Culture and National Heritage of the Marshal's Office of Malopolska. The cultural institutions of Malopolska and partner non-governmental organizations are some of the participants in the project.

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Inclusive CultuRRRe

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| Introduction

Dear Friends, Dear Readers,

We present you with the publication entitled *Inclusive CultuRRRe:*[1] *On Even More Openness in Cultural Institutions*, published as part of the program "Malopolska. Empathetic culture."

"Malopolska. Empathetic culture" is an extensive program that aims at educating and making its audience more receptive to people with different needs. The Marshal's Office of Malopolska launched the program in 2016 and it has since been coordinated by the Malopolska Institute of Culture in Krakow and carried out by all 23 cultural institutions of Malopolska. We have dealt with the topic of accessibility ever since we first started operating and we are looking for spaces where we can apply this idea. Now that the program has been in place for seven years, it is time for the next step – which consists in initiating research on a concept broader than accessibility alone. This concept is inclusiveness. We want to gather opinions on this topic and begin a discussion on a greater scale. In this undertaking, we are supported by our strategic partners and accessibility coordinators of the cultural institutions of Malopolska, by the Department of Culture and National Heritage of the Marshal's Office of Malopolska, and by the people who feel close to "Malopolska. Empathetic culture."

VANTAGE POINT

This publication was written from the vantage point of people who work in cultural institutions or with organizations engaged in cultural activities and

[1]   Cultu**RRR**e – the Malopolska Institute of Culture in Krakow uses the letter "R" three times to emphasize its mission, which relies on three pillars: **R**efinement, **R**egionality, and **R**eflection.

who actively participate in cultural events. For several years now, we have been looking from different angles at how institutions open themselves to the needs of their audience, how they work with it, what they have learned, and what they should learn. We are interested in accessibility. We deal with it professionally in ways such as creating tools which facilitate cultural participation (including audio descriptions, translations, and guides in Polish Sign Language), working with people with different needs (including artists with disabilities), and providing trainings to institutions. We like to work with people, which is why we based the publication on interviews, surveys, and conversations to gather opinions on the subject discussed. We want to show you the challenges that institutions face and the difficulties that people involved in increasing accessibility have to deal with as well as indicate good practices and to determine the directions for development which might assist people involved in culture in planning their activities and making strategic decisions.

We also wanted to find out if we could talk about measures that reach beyond accessibility in the context of institutions opening themselves to the public. Together, we look at what inclusiveness is and how we can understand it. We use the two terms interchangeably in this publication depending on the context. We were interested in the relationship between accessibility and inclusiveness in cultural institutions and in how the people who work in this field on a daily basis understand the relationship between these concepts. We conducted nine in-depth interviews with eleven people from institutions located in different parts of Poland. They represent organizations with different attitudes with respect to institutions opening themselves to the public and working closely with it. We asked them to talk about their experience of building inclusiveness as well as good practices and challenges.

In order to map the spot at which institutions are currently located more accurately, we invited the employees of cultural institutions who are engaged in creating accessibility to fill out an extensive questionnaire. 35 people participated in this study.

For a broader outlook, we asked nearly 30 people involved in culture about how they conceptualize inclusiveness in cultural institutions and how they recognize it. We wanted to see if our assumptions and intuitions would be

confirmed by the voices of others who participate in culture. We approached people from all over Poland who live in cities and small towns, who participate in or contribute to cultural life in their communities (including people who work in cultural institutions and artists). People with different needs were represented among the study participants as well. We have compiled and woven their anonymous responses into this text.

WHAT IS INCLUSIVENESS?

The Polish word "inkluzywny" is a direct translation of its English counterpart *inclusive*, *inclusiveness*, which translate to "inkluzywność" and "włączający," respectively[2]. The adjective *inclusive* is defined as: "open to everyone: not limited to certain people" (*the Britannica Dictionary*[3]), "deliberately aiming to involve all types of people… especially people who have been excluded in the past because of race, gender, disability, etc." (*The Macmillan Dictionary*)[4], as well as "allowing and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability)" (*the Merriam-Webster Dictionary*)[5]. In addition, an inclusive group or organization is one that "tries to include many different types of people and treat them all fairly and equally" (*the Cambridge Dictionary*)[6].

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2   The attributes "inkluzywny" and "włączający" function interchangeably in Polish. However, the word "włączający" automatically implies that a group which it describes has been cast out of the community and that society needs to make extra room for it. Thanks to its foreign origins, the word "inkluzywny" does not bear such connotations in Polish and does not put emphasis on the necessity of "including those who have been cast out." Source: www.unboundeway.pl. Access to all online sources: August 16, 2023.

3   "*Open to everyone: not limited to certain people*," https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/inclusive.

4   "*Deliberately aiming to involve all types of people… especially people who have been excluded in the past because of race, gender, disability, etc.*," https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/inclusive.

5   "*Allowing and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or disability),*" https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/inclusive.

6   "*An inclusive group or organization tries to include many different types of people and treat them all fairly and equally,*" https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/inclusive.

The online dictionary of Polish maintained by the renowned publishing house PWN defines the word "inkluzywny" ("inclusive") as "connecting or encompassing a whole, also: intended for everyone."[7] The term is used primarily with respect to jobs, businesses, or educational institutions but at the same time, nothing prevents it from being employed to describe other areas, such as culture, language, etc.

Today, inclusiveness is one of the most socially relevant issues (apart from well-being, mental health, diversity, sustainable development, responsible business). It encompasses a number of different concepts such as accessibility, tolerance, equality, activity, equal rights, education, language. Its aim is to create such conditions and an environment in which all people will feel accepted and taken into account in various activities, regardless of age, gender, race, ability, sexual orientation, religion, background, etc. It entails inviting[8] minority groups to contribute to activities, involving them in the process of creating the program, and encouraging them to expand upon the ideas of what the norm is. It is also a behavior that takes into account, respects, and accepts diversity.

Inclusiveness – what is it?

The very concept of "inclusiveness" is the acceptance of all diversity, which abolishes limitations and is capable of breaking down all barriers and constraints resulting from the imperfections of the human body and mind… From my own standpoint, inclusiveness in cultural institutions is a process that we experience every day, a process that takes place here, in the cultural space in which we are included, whether we like it or not because – after all – we are among other people. We learn, prepare, read, think, rebel, accept – all the time…

an excerpt from an in-depth interview
with **Elżbieta Starowicz from the Provincial Public Library in Krakow**

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7   https://sjp.pwn.pl/sjp/inkluzywny;3281554.

8   We deliberately refrain from using the term "activation" here, as discussed in an article by Bartek Lis in which he writes about the issue he takes with this concept: https://epale.ec.europa.eu/pl/blog/mam-problem-z-aktywizacja-osob-niepelnosprawnych.

When we think of inclusiveness in cultural institutions, we define the audience as a very diverse group, which includes people of different ages – from children and adolescents to seniors, people with different ability levels, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, people on the autism spectrum, Deaf people, people representing national or ethnic minorities, including immigrants, LGBTQIA+ people, people in a mental health crisis, with different sensory sensitivities, with different height, etc. We want there to be a place for all of them in public space because access to the works of culture is every human's right, not a privilege.

WHY DO WE ASK ABOUT AN INCLUSIVE CULTURAL INSTITUTION?

Our goal was to focus attention on the moment when the attitude towards an institution and its audience changed. Until a few years ago, it was not obvious that people with different needs were present among us. When asked about accessibility, many entities pointed to solutions which took into account architectural accessibility and limited their thinking about people with disabilities primarily to those who use wheelchairs. As a 2021 study of the Mazovian Institute of Culture shows, there are places which still exhibit such a narrow-minded attitude even after the *Act on Ensuring Accessibility to People with Special Needs* was passed in 2019[9]. Although the statutory obligation does not directly point to people with disabilities as the main beneficiaries of accessibility, cultural workers use this term to refer to them most of the time, in a common sense understanding of the concept. We see this clearly in the conversations we have had, in the accessibility declarations available on different websites,

[9] "Much like defining accessibility itself, identifying the beneficiaries of accessibility measures proved difficult to survey participants. The focus was mainly on people with a visible disability, primarily motor disability, including those in a wheelchair. People with a visual disability, a hearing disability, an intellectual disability, and finally seniors were talked about less." Source: M. Ochał, A. Woźniak, *Tu zaczynają się schody* ("It's all uphill from here"), in: *Badania w sektorze kultury* ("Research in the Cultural Sector"), ed. A. Pluszyńska, K. Kopeć, M. Laberschek, Kraków 2022, p. 197.

and in our study. Although we did not directly refer to people with disabilities in our questions for people who work on improving accessibility, as many as 19 out of 35 survey participants brought up the topic of disability in one way or another. Survey participants identified the beneficiaries of their measures with this concept as well as associated it with the scope of their responsibilities or motivation to deal with the topic of accessibility.
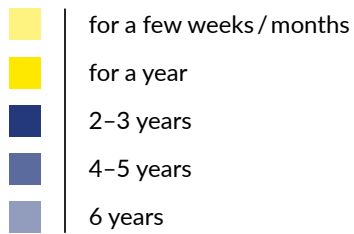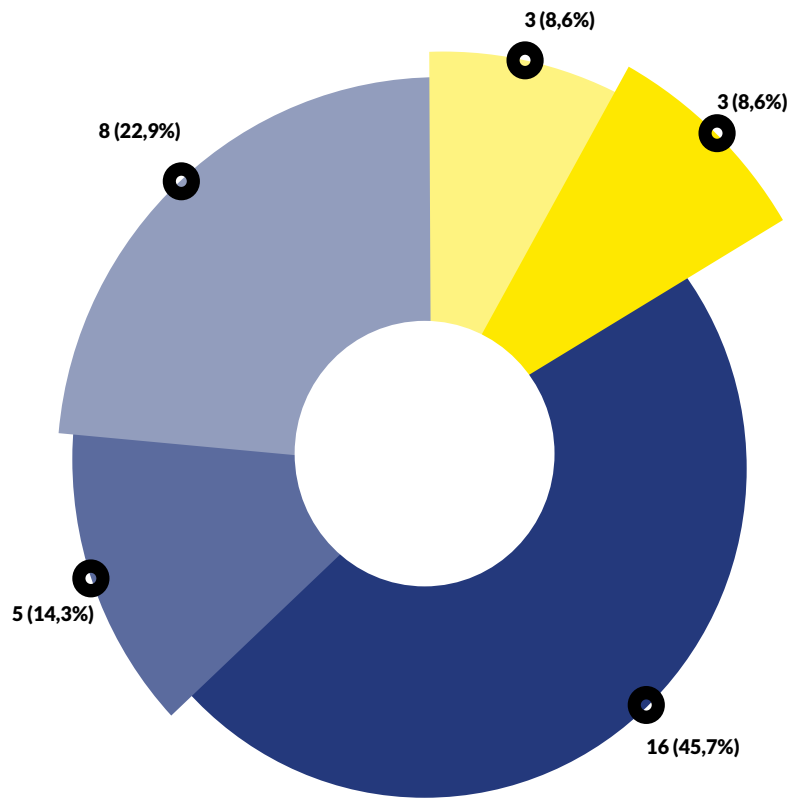
The act imposes a legal obligation on entities in the public financial sector. However, it does not specify how accessibility should be interpreted and established[10]. In many institutions, the subject of accessibility that the act raised is still new and fresh. Only 13 of the 35 accessibility workers we surveyed (i.e., 37%) indicated that they had been dealing with the topic for more than four years, i.e., that they had started before the act was passed. The legal obligation gave a vast majority of institutions the first impulse to focus on this issue and to see it for something more than just architectural accessibility.

Institutions are still learning how to build accessibility, and this fact often entails dynamic changes. In our deliberation on inclusiveness, we wanted to show a broad perspective, try to examine the trend that we see at many institutions, in their practice and in the activities of people who decide what they offer. This is why we did not ask about accessibility and wanted to talk about inclusiveness instead.

We are aware that neither our report nor our deliberations are exhaustive. With respect to the different points of view that we have heard and our own experiences, we try to draft a map to present the directions that we can take in thinking about inclusiveness and to indicate "control lights," which – in our opinion – are worth paying attention to.

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10   The act defines people with special needs as "individuals who, by virtue of their character-
     istics or the circumstances that they are under, must take additional measures to overcome
     barriers that prevent or hinder their participation in various areas of life on equal terms with
     others." (*the Act on Ensuring Accessibility to People with Special Needs of 19 July 2019*, article 2).

Figure 1. How long have you been working in accessibility?

3 (8,6%)
3 (8,6%)
8 (22,9%)
5 (14,3%)
16 (45,7%)

for a few weeks / months
for a year
2–3 years
4–5 years
6 years

What is an inclusive cultural institution?

"It is a place where everyone feels welcome, desired, and right."

"[An inclusive institution] is one to which everyone is invited, no matter how old they are, where they come from, who they are, and what level of ability they have."

"It considers the needs of different audiences and enables them to participate in events regardless of their level of ability, language skills, or economic situation. [An inclusive institution] is one that addresses its offer to everyone."

"...it is a space where everyone can find themselves, it is a representation, it is a place for everyone, and everyone feels good in it."

excerpts from our conversation with **people involved in culture**

FOR EVERYONE

We found it interesting to compare our ruminations on inclusiveness with the answers that came from people familiar with the topic when we asked them to try to define it. Few people had any doubts about what they can understand under inclusiveness, others focused solely on accessibility for people with different needs, probably due to their own work experience. But what was repeated in many responses was that **an institution should be a place for everyone**.

A recurring point was the demand for non-exclusion based on age, economic status, or belonging to a minority. Our interviewees pointed out that they recognized inclusiveness by an overt openness to diversity (for example, by using the colors of the Ukrainian flag or a minority language) and the acknowledgment of the different ways in which individuals might make use of the space they are in. In addition to architectural accessibility, they listed facilities for parents and carers, such as changing tables and feeding places, or a dog bowl as a sign that pets are welcome. It is simply a friendly space that everyone can use.

In a cultural institution there should be a place not only for experts, specialists, or people educated in a particular field. Therefore, we will talk about leveling the entry threshold and opening institutions to people with different levels of knowledge and different amounts of cultural capital. One of the key factors in developing this aspect will consist in addressing the program to different age groups, e.g., in deliberately designing exhibitions with the aim that both adults and children can take something away from them; those who are familiar with a particular topic just as well as those who confront it for the first time.

Diversifying the offer in terms of pricing will be another important issue – it is particularly important considering the creeping economic crisis and inflation. An inclusive institution is a place where, apart from paid events, others that are free of charge will take place as well. Not all institutions are able to offer the entire scope of their services free of charge, as libraries do, for instance. Most institutions are required to "make money" because ticket revenues are an important part of any budget and without them institutions are often unable to implement the program. However, there are many opportunities for people with different economic backgrounds to participate in culture, such as cheaper tickets, open meetings or workshops, e.g., outdoors, a day on which an exhibition can be seen free of charge[1] or, in some projects, a clear indication that a service is available to people in a difficult financial situation as well.

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1   Institutions subject to *the Act on Museums* are obligated to set one day on which permanent exhibitions can be visited free of charge. See *Act of 21 November 1996 on Museums, Dz. U. (Journal of Laws) 2022. 385, article 10, point 2.*

Who is a cultural institution dedicated to?

In my opinion, an inclusive cultural institution is one that considers the needs of different audiences and enables them to participate in events regardless of their level of ability, language skills, or economic situation. It is one that addresses its offer to everyone. After all, cultural institutions are usually public institutions, and we all pay taxes. We should therefore use this money in a way that actually allows the people who pay these taxes to participate in cultural events.

Moreover, I think it is quite simply an institution which asks those who participate in culture and the local community about their needs. It is not simply a donor that sets up a cultural institution within the walls of a building without considering the needs of potential audiences at all. Instead, it asks about and responds to the needs related to the current political situation, to what is happening at any time, e.g., to the war in Ukraine. Responds to current events... It is also a question of tolerance for diversity and non-discrimination based on sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identification – all sorts of things can be included here. For a cultural institution, it should not matter who you are if you visit it. If you want to participate, you should have the opportunity.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Marta Otrębska from the Emigration Museum in Gdynia**

Not just for people with amazing capital

We understand accessibility in the broadest sense possible [so that it includes] topics, new topics that may arise and that were or have been abandoned by cultural institutions in their programs due to fear of losing funding, of what people will say, of how these institutions would be judged by other sectors or audience groups. And that takes courage.

With this out of the way, I want to add that if we understand accessibility like this – in an economic sense, as referring to different worldviews, lifestyles, cognitive barriers, that it is not only about screening movies previously shown at

Cannes or Sundance film festivals, but it is also about exposing audiences to more accessible works of cinema, which do not require huge [cultural] capital – this kind of accessibility has begun to shape my, our understanding of inclusion, inclusiveness. In this sense, they are synonyms. Accessibility is inclusion because if we understand accessibility in a narrow sense as just infrastructure or something utilitarian, it does seem to offer too little to be equated with the word "inclusion." But if we define it this way, it becomes the same as inclusion or something equivalent to it, another word for inclusion, inclusiveness.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Bartek Lis**
from the ZAMEK Culture Center in Poznan

For people excluded from society

Without emphasis on accessibility for people with individual needs and people with disabilities but rather with emphasis on people in different economic circumstances, with different amounts of cultural capital. This kind of inclusive approach, with the willingness to attract people who are somehow excluded from participation in culture and to invite them to visit institutions. It has been the case for Sinfonia for a very long time now and it manifests itself, among other things, in very attractive ticket prices, which we manage to keep at a fairly low level, and we try for as many people as possible to be able to come to the events that we organize – because they will be able to afford it. Moreover, there are free events as well, such as dances, and they are located at the intersection of what the core of our institution is, i.e., classical music and symphony orchestra, and something that's more "for the people," i.e., with different dances, folk music, something that employs a more ethnic aesthetic, etc. So we have such events in our calendar – dances in particular are a fixed element of it, as are Szalone Dni Muzyki (the Crazy Days of Music), with tickets priced at twenty–thirty zloty last year, while in the same city, you would have to pay at least fifty up to two hundred and more zloty for a single ticket to an opera performance or a concert – generally, the cost is several times higher. The formula is very open, with a lot of short concerts so that people who are less familiar with the topic can try it out. So there are a few initiatives that focus on including people who are not neces-

sarily familiar with classical or contemporary classical music, and we are open to a less engaged audience, including people who live here, in the vicinity of our headquarters, i.e., in the Praga-Południe district of Warsaw, which is somewhat neglected culturally compared to the center of the city and stereotypically associated with less cultural capital among its inhabitants.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Olga Curzydło from Sinfonia Varsovia**

Many people involved in culture (both actively contributing to and participating in cultural events) who took part in our conversations emphasized how important it was for them to feel well in a given place. What they indicated as desirable was a sense of security, which they associated with not being exposed to judgment – regardless of who they are, what they look like, and for what reason they visit an institution.

People who visit a cultural institution may have various reasons to do so, not always related to the program implemented there. The responses we received included entering the institution in search of shelter (shade on a hot day or dry conditions when it rains), for instance. Therefore, we are talking about facilities capable of being used in different ways, where spaces available free of charge will be of some significance — including free restroom access (without having to present a ticket), comfortable seats where you can relax, spend time, eat, or maybe even charge your phone.

Another point to consider is a so-called pink box, usually located in restrooms, where you can find free basic hygiene products necessary during menstruation, such as pads and tampons.

Both our experiences and the remarks of our conversation partners show that the ability to use food services located at cultural institutions, such as cafes and restaurants, makes up an important element of how inclusiveness is established. By finding a space where you can eat and drink. This way, visitors can get an energy boost before an exhibition or an event or relax after completing a given activity at the institution. Such spaces make room for social gatherings

and meetings as well, which is always a great advantage for an organization – this is how it can attract new visitors.

NO BARRIERS

An inclusive institution is a place where barriers are overcome – from the mental threshold of entry to architectural barriers. The people we talked to pointed to specific elements by which they recognize that a place takes into account people with different needs. Many of them mentioned accessibility features for people with mobility issues, e.g., wide passages, an elevator, ramps, adapted toilets.

It should be pointed out that in order to set up an accessible space well and reliably, not only knowledge is required but also an opportunity for its prospective users, including people with disabilities, to test the functionality of the solutions implemented. It is best to consult them at the design stage already, but it is also a good idea to invite them to test ready-to-use solutions and see for themselves whether the institutional space is functional. You can ask the audience attending a specific event for a comment as well: Is there anything missing in this space? Is this solution convenient for you? Is there something that we can improve? A person who is well-informed with respect to what they need may suggest minor improvements which may significantly facilitate participation in cultural events offered and which the institution's employees have not considered.

Practice shows that, despite good intentions, some of the key aspects that facilitate the use of amenities might not be considered, e.g., light switches may be mounted too high and therefore out of reach for people in wheelchairs, inscriptions might be too small and in turn prevent visually impaired people or seniors from reading freely; or there might be too little space left to maneuver with a stroller or a wheelchair.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the best solutions are those that people can use independently, without help – for example, an elevator or a ramp tilted at an appropriate angle which includes a comfortable handrail will be a better option than a stair lift, which calls for staff assistance.

Considering different sensory needs was another accessibility standard and, consequently, inclusiveness standard for institutions that the audience brought up. They mentioned facilities for people with visual disabilities, for example audio descriptions or texts/labels printed in Braille, interpreting into Polish Sign Language for Deaf people, a hearing loop for hearing-impaired people, or places of silence created primarily for people on the autism spectrum. As far as we know, these solutions have also been requested by people without disabilities or individual sensory needs for whom it is simply a clear signal that someone who works at an institution has thought about these needs. It is important that accessibility tools are visible with respect to this point – not as something extra, e.g., as a part of an educational program, a bonus project, or as something that you need to ask for in advance. Inclusiveness is defined by consistent availability: by things being present and visible in the space in question, on the website, at exhibitions, at the box office or reception desk so that no one has to look or ask for them shyly but instead can reach for them at any time.

FLEXIBILITY IN USE

Universal design, based on the principle of equitable use, constitutes an important dimension of thinking about an inclusive institution. Flexibility in use is one of the seven (sometimes eight)[2] features of universal design, so considering the different ways in which proposed solutions can be used is a good idea. It should be noted that regardless of how they differ in terms of their capacities and limitations, all people have their own preferences and habits as well as their own strategies of spending time in different spaces and participating in culture – for example, they walk around exhibitions in different ways. In

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2   The principles of universal design include: equitable use, flexibility in use, simple and intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and appropriate size and space for approach and use, and the eighth principle consists in the perception of equality, according to which the proposed solutions must not stigmatize disability or other conditions that limit their users' capacities, https://www.fuzers.com/post/projektowanie-uniwersalne-czym-jest-i-dlaczego-to-jedyna-w%C5%82a%C5%9Bciwa-droga.

a cinema or theater, some people like to sit at the front of the room, whereas others prefer to sit at the back. Such flexibility in use should be taken into consideration – for example, by allowing a person in a wheelchair to choose a place that they like (and ensuring that their companion can sit next to them). It is recommended that you provide free access to seats in the space of the exhibition, in the lobby, and in the foyer. Some museums show how they recognize the need for rest in a flexible manner by offering folding chairs to their visitors, which they can also use for support if they need to.

Similarly, you should look for flexible solutions while with respect to the needs of people with sensory disabilities. By way of example, an institution may provide access to audio descriptions prepared for the exhibition by offering audio guides. However, for some people it will be much more convenient to listen to audio descriptions from their own mobile device, such as a phone. When materials related to the exhibition are published on the institution's website, visitors have a chance to use them in advance as well as during or after the exhibition so that they can go back to the objects that they have already seen or recall something that they have learned. You have to pay attention to the way you share the recordings as well, e.g., activating a QR code usually requires the help of a sighted person, so it does not provide for independent use.

It should be remembered that people with visual disabilities have different experiences with respect to their participation in culture related to, for instance, their degree of blindness or prior education. Not everyone reads the Braille alphabet, although there are cases where Braille texts are very helpful (e.g., as labels in elevators but also as a way of presenting some content to a deafblind person who might find it challenging to listen to a guide's voice). Not all blind people are willing to use touch aids, i.e., mock-ups or tyflographics. Some will need extra time or encouragement to get used to their new way of perceiving the visual, for others it will not be interesting at all – the story will be more important to them. If you want to make mock-ups available to visitors, you should remember that people of different heights, including children, may want to use them, therefore it is important at which height the mock-ups are located so that a person in a wheelchair can reach them as well.

Solutions for different groups

Generally, with respect to accessibility, we are happy to define specific groups, while certain solutions and adaptations that serve specific groups can in fact be used by other groups as well. For instance, we have done exhibitions that involved touch adaptations. Blind people were the primary audience, of course, but these adaptations were also used by sighted children during workshops. If there are any spatial amenities for people in wheelchairs, mothers with strollers can also use them. Indeed, some of these solutions are universal and can be used by completely different groups. By the same token, texts in plain language can be useful to immigrants from Ukraine who do not know the Polish language well, but a simplified version of a text will help them a lot, e.g., be conducive to learning. This is very interesting because one thing can serve many different groups and there is no need for us to limit ourselves in defining them.

In fact, anyone might have a hard time moving if they break a leg. Obviously, this does not make you a person with a permanent disability but with a temporary one... and there is this cliché, which is often repeated, but I will say it anyway: the most important thing about accessibility is the human being. Sometimes it is not worth it to create audio descriptions and post them on the Internet. Instead, it is better to make an appointment with a blind person so that an assistant performs audio description live because this person is the most important one and provides an opportunity to exchange information. Many people are happy to simply use the opportunity to meet another person, so let's remember about it because some solutions that can be uneconomical can be easily replaced by a person who will help someone or talk to them about something.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Agnieszka Sztorc-Gromaszek from Galeria Labirynt in Lublin**

Public transportation in smaller towns

The city is a much more anonymous place, with a lot more social diversity and a lot more places to go; if something doesn't suit you, you have more choice.

But in the countryside, where there is only one cultural institution, the community is tight-knit and made up of relatives, because in the countryside, it is still the case that people are related to one another, they simply know each other, but they are also one another's aunts, cousins, brothers and sisters – married, born, and so on. They often form one big clan...

In communes there are often much greater distances than in cities, with much inferior public transportation. In our commune, two villages are practically disconnected from the rest of the world. There's just nothing going on there, there's a bus at six in the morning, that's it. Therefore, it is impossible to do events or things that involve non-mobile people without providing them with transportation first. I have never heard of anyone providing anyone with transportation in a city, unless it is some activity with an actually specific aim that is pursued by an organized and large group of people.

[Over here] we have mostly transportation for seniors since the rest of the commune has cars, and because seniors are mostly women, they usually do not have a driver's license, they do not have a car, at best they can ride a bike, and they would have to use the county road, which has no roadside, no sidewalk, and no bike lane. So yes – sometimes we organize transportation for them. If someone else would like to use this transportation, it is not a problem, but it is primarily intended for senior women.

It is one of those good practices of inclusiveness and offering activities in general – providing people with transportation. As much as you can get around in a city, ...you will not even order a taxi in the countryside because we do not have any. These are some of the differences that usually no one thinks of unless they have to organize something. And they organize something three times, and then it turns out that no one comes – not because no one is interested, but because people had no way of coming and going back home at all.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with
Agnieszka Zielonka-Mitura
from the Communal Community Center in Suszec

Promoting solutions

The Act on Ensuring Accessibility and the Historical Properties Protection Act. They only seem mutually exclusive. Here, we go back to the human being again. What do we need to do? Meet the conservator on site, put them in a wheel-chair, cover their eyes and ears, and let them empathize with people who will visit us. This is of course very difficult because most will not want to do it at all, but you need to try to establish contact with them assertively yet in a nice and polite way.

There are always all kinds of construction meetings happening as well as meet-ings of the whole team that joins a given project. This is a good opportunity to talk to this person, try to make them aware of things, provide them with a mi-ni-training and not allow accessibility to be an element that is discussed at the end of the project.

When starting any project, let's immediately think in a multitude of ways – how to create educational paths, how to establish accessibility in a particular space, and not allow construction workers to be the ones to hand over the keys to a new building or the conservator to sign a consent for some renovation work without taking accessibility into account first. We negotiate from the very beginning and cite instances from our own environment as good examples that something can be done.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Elżbieta Lang from the Museum of Krakow**

Communicating

"As I enter the space, I find messages that greet and guide me. They help me feel right, find my way around here, and do what I came here for, or just discover this place somehow."

"[The institution] asks its visitors about their needs, tries to respond to them, and informs its visitors if it is unable to do so."

"For instance, people in the customer service department do not only speak English, but they know the basics of PSL as well."

"The language of communication on social media and other channels is gender neutral and [the content] is available in Ukrainian and English."

excerpts from conversations with **people involved in culture**

An important topic related to inclusiveness is communication. How does an institution make it clear that someone is invited visit it? What kind of communication hinders real contact and does not help in seeing each other and our needs?

Communication refers not only to the language used, but also to what information the institution shares with its audience. It encompasses both the content published on the institution's information channels (website, social media) as well as posters, leaflets, brochures, texts published to accompany an exhibition (curatorial texts, labels seen below each work), the information visible in the space of the institution itself, and what is said by people who work there. This is how you can tell whether the institution actually takes notice of the potential diversity of its audience, whether it takes into account that their visitors may speak different languages, have different levels of knowledge and cultural

capital, or whether it addresses its message only to a small group, e.g., by formulating it in the specialized language of art historians.

The awareness of how diverse the audience is in terms of its needs manifests itself in whether and how the institution informs its visitors about potential challenges and threats as well. If the planned event involves anything that may provoke a sense of discomfort in the audience, this should be disclosed in a reliable manner. The use of strobe lights may serve as an example (the information about their use should be included not only in the description of the performance, but also wherever tickets are purchased and at the entrance to the theater hall so that a person with epilepsy does not miss it), but you should also provide information on unusually loud music or other artistic devices which may be difficult to endure out of consideration for highly sensitive audience members. Moreover, it is crucial to inform the audience about inconveniences, such as technical failures, temporary repairs, and facilities being out of order. It is better that a person with movement restrictions learns about a non-functioning elevator before arriving at the institution. This is what taking the audience seriously is about.

On going out of your way

In my opinion, inclusiveness is about accepting diversity, whereas accessibility is a "subcategory" of inclusiveness... Accessibility is being aware of some limitations that our customers face that we need to keep in mind while setting up an offer of services for them. For instance, the entire collection of audiobooks and books in Braille that you can borrow is dedicated to people with visual disabilities. Moreover, the lowered counters in book rental sections have been adjusted to the level of a person sitting in a wheelchair, and the installed hearing loop is designed to facilitate communication. The offer of educational and cultural services that we provide takes into account various types of disabilities. Not all employees accepted and understood this right away. Some believed that offering a separate scope of services (e.g., Biblioteka bez barier – Library without barriers) would accentuate differences and build an artificial "wall" between us. And it was not the case at all.

Even then, the employees manifested an inclusive attitude, and although they were not aware of it, they accepted diversity and talked about it openly. Training has been extremely helpful and shown what problems people with, e.g., a visual and motor disability face on a daily basis and what help they can expect from us, how independent they can be. Our role was to offer a scope of services that would read like an invitation to the world of books and literature. We wanted to show that our library is a place accessible to everyone and that no one will be surprised if a person in a mental health crisis or on the autism spectrum pays us a visit. And that's what it's all about: accepting all barriers that arise from the imperfections of the human body and mind. And inclusiveness is a process that we experience every day in a cultural institution – just like we experience another human being every day.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Elżbieta Starowicz from the Provincial Public Library in Krakow**

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Our conversations with people who participate in culture have shown that the language used in communication can be an important aspect of inclusiveness.

Inclusive language

Language matters as well, i.e., it is important to address people with their preferred pronouns, e.g., he/him, she/her, they/them, etc., and for people who work at cultural institutions to include such information in the footer of their e-mails, for instance. Cultural institutions have to accept this (in my opinion), respect people's need to be addressed in a certain manner and put it into practice. Moreover, I like it when cultural institutions in Poland use feminine forms of job titles and professions instead of defaulting to the masculine grammatical gender – this is inclusive language.

an excerpt from conversations with **people involved in culture**

To use inclusive language is to choose the right words or phrases in communication in order to express empathy towards another person, respect diversity, and acknowledge the needs of the other party in communication. By the same token, we can define inclusive language as "language that excludes no one, makes it possible to define every person – regardless of gender, nationality, sexual orientation, or living situation – objectively, without judgment."[1]

As has already been pointed out numerous times, language shapes reality – we think in words (in the case of sign language – signs), and words / signs influence our way of thinking, which in turn translates into our behavior. Language affects what we do and how we think. Therefore, it is important to be an empathetic person in speech as well. "Language reflects common judgments about the world, specific to a given community, culture, and tradition – this is how the world is pictured in language."[2] It is important to maintain an open and empathetic attitude towards the different needs of audience members, which are expressed in the language in which we communicate as well.

The presence of feminine forms is becoming something natural, although there are still places that prefer only one way of addressing their audience members, which they often attribute to customs that they have developed over many years. However, audience expectations point to an increasing awareness of how inclusiveness manifests in language. The people that we questioned emphasized the need for feminine grammatical forms in promotional and organizational activities carried out by cultural institutions. It is good practice to use feminine grammatical forms alongside masculine ones, such as "artystka" and "artysta" (artist), "koordynatorki" and "koordynatorzy" (coordinators). You can use the masculine and feminine genders interchangeably as well, e.g., nauczyciele (teachers, masculine), edukatorki (educators, feminine), bibliotekarze (librarians, masculine), trenerki (trainers, feminine) provided that the genders are not always assigned to titles stereotypically, e.g., "dyrektorzy i bibliotekarki" – "(masculine) directors and (feminine) librarians". In writing, you can use

1 https://edumaster.pl/wiedza/jezyk-inkluzywny.

2 J. Bartmiński, *Językowe podstawy obrazu świata* (*The Linguistic Foundations of How We See the World*), Lublin 2006.

forms with gender suffixes in brackets: "koordynator(-ka)," "koordynator(k)ami" (coordinator, coordinators).

Survey participants called for other, gender-neutral language solutions as well, e.g., expressions involving the Polish word "osoba/osoby" (person/people), which helps to avoid gendered speech. We suggest using them with participles rather than with adjectives ("osoby uczące się" – students, "osoby uczestniczące" – participants).

The most important function of language is its capacity to communicate meanings, so first and foremost, it is important for the information that we want to convey to be clear to everyone to whom it is addressed. When formulating a message, we should remember who its primary recipient is.

A change in language brings about a change in thinking. Institutions could introduce some changes to how their facilities are labeled, e.g., move from a "restroom for mothers with children" to a "restroom for parents with children." Such phrases make places more inclusive.

People who speak a language other than Polish

We are a cultural institution, and our mission is to promote culture, while culture should reflect everything that makes up society, that is, all groups that live in it. And I think that's why we focus on those groups that are overlooked and less present in culture, in discourse in general, to give them a chance to express themselves and to compensate for this social imbalance. However, I do not believe that you can stop at accessibility and that's it. It also depends on how you define accessibility... At this institution, we believe that accessibility is an area that includes, for example, people who speak other languages, such as people from Ukraine, people who speak a language other than Polish, international students, e.g., from Zimbabwe, many of whom live in Lublin, or even Deaf people who simply speak another language. It depends on how we approach it. We might think that Deaf people have a disability, or we might simply regard them as speakers of another language. And then we can ask ourselves whether this kind of accessibility considers the needs of Deaf people... Or can we ignore it

because it's just another language? They don't want anything special, after all, just a language that they understand.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Agata Sztorc-Gromaszek from Galeria Labirynt in Lublin**

POLISH SIGN LANGUAGE

Those people that we asked how to recognize inclusiveness in cultural institutions brought up the use of Polish Sign Language (PSL) – the language of the Deaf[3]. This was mentioned not only by Deaf people themselves but also by hearing people who recognized this need as important and who considered the needs of this group of people met based on the visibility of PSL. It actually plays a double role – it is a means of communication, it conveys meanings to people to whom the Polish language is difficult or unknown, and at the same time, it is a clear signal that the institution thinks about Deaf people, while for the hearing audience, it becomes an opportunity to raise awareness of the needs of Deaf people.

It is not always possible for people employed by institutions to know PSL even at a basic level. However, it is important that they know how to communicate despite the language barrier. Openness and willingness to seek solutions, for example by using a sheet of paper, a phone, or an application, is key.

Sign language should be visible on social media, in informational sections on websites, and in exhibition spaces, e.g., in the form of a video guide. It is best that events addressed to the Deaf are announced in PSL. Another crucial thing in communication is mindfulness. For instance, a movie screening, a performance, or an exhibition subtitled with closed captions should not be marked

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3   The term "the Deaf" – written with the capital letter "D," denotes a linguistic and cultural minority. Its members use Polish Sign Language (PSL), which is a visual-spatial language with a grammatical structure separate from the Polish language. They do not regard themselves as people with a disability.

as accessible to the Deaf because such subtitles may be incomprehensible to a person who uses Polish Sign Language (which is significantly different from Polish). Therefore, ever more events, e.g., theatrical performances, are interpreted into PSL. By the same token, a hearing loop is another, separate tool used by people with different levels of hearing loss, but its installation is not equivalent to accessibility to the Deaf. Therefore, different signs and symbols[4] are used to label events – separate for loops, interpreting into PSL, and subtitles. Instead of informing that a given event is addressed to the Deaf, it is better to communicate how the event will be accessible to everyone – what the audience can expect.

In addition to interpreting, organizing events meant to take place in PSL from the very beginning so that they do not require the assistance of an interpreter, is a step in the right direction. A workshop being presented by a person from the Deaf community allows you to achieve stronger audience engagement.

One of the Deaf people who we asked about their understanding of the concept of inclusiveness emphasized that some institutions are "only temporarily inclusive," which is how they alluded to places where PSL appears once a year for a special event, such as a festival. Meanwhile, inclusiveness involves regularity and systemic thinking about the audience. Without consistency, it will not be possible to build trust and relationships that help people develop the habit of using the services offered by an institution. This is often the biggest challenge for institutions. Hiring an interpreter for events is associated with high costs, and it happens that despite the efforts of the audience there is not a single Deaf person present. Some institutions indicate interpreting services as an option available upon request which nevertheless requires prior arrangement. Others choose specific events from their calendar at which they provide accessibility measures. In this case, they focus on organizing them regularly. However, if we choose a broader perspective on the topic, we will see that high costs of interpreting services are a systemic problem, which we have developed solutions to. By way of example, Sweden provides d/Deaf people with bilingual education that is compulsory – Swedish Sign Language is

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4   https://dostepna.malopolska.pl/dostepnosc-informacyjno-komunikacyjna/piktogramy.

their first language, alongside which they learn Swedish as a foreign language[5]. As of 2022, Norwegian Sign Language became one of the national languages of Norway[6] (thanks to this, Deaf citizens have direct access to their language), and in Slovenia, Deaf citizens are granted a statutory pool of hours a year that they can use to receive interpreting services into Slovenian Sign Language for any purpose[7]. It does not have to be an expense in an institution's budget if the state provides interpreting services to all Deaf citizens.

It is important, above all, to build relationships between cultural institutions and audiences because they provide the foundation for inclusive activities. It is not enough to organize inclusive events once a year. Thanks to such activities taking place consistently, people with different needs can feel safe and visit the institution in the knowledge that the hosts care about them.

We want to build the program in such a way as to think about the audience as broadly as possible. One such example is our international project "Pokaż język" (Show your tongue) which is almost two years old now. While conceiving it, we were very strongly motivated to gather the broadest representation of artists with disabilities possible and to show people that there are many substantially different variants of disability out there, as well as very different voices, and very different artistic personalities. This is why the program mentions different tongues, i.e., languages. You can acquaint yourself with the works of Deaf artists, or neurotypical artists, or artists with alternative motor skills. So, we have really wanted to expand the way people think about disability and to get out of a bubble of sorts that Teatr 21 had been stuck in for a long time. We had been very strongly identified with, i.e., seen as representing only people with trisomy 21 because most of the actors at our theater are people with trisomy 21.

5   Source: A. Goc, *Głuchy uczeń ma „słuchać z uwagą" (A deaf student has to "listen carefully")*, interview with Magdalena Dunaj, Tygodnik Powszechny, May 25, 2021, https://www.tygodnikpowszechny.pl/gluchy-uczen-ma-sluchac-z-uwaga-167648.

6   https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/2021-05-21-42.

7   Source: K. Rodacka, *Otwartość zaczyna się w głowie (Openness begins with an open mind)*, Przekrój, February 2, 2020, https://przekroj.pl/spoleczenstwo/otwartosc-zaczyna-sie-w-glowie-katarzyna-rodacka.

We really wanted our Center for Inclusive Art to be open to everyone. This is why it was essential when we were thinking about the projects to come. We thought of our audience in similar terms.

We know that, as a rule, if the program is very diverse, then the same diversity will be reflected on the audience side. And it really is true. All our events, big and small, i.e., performances, lectures, shows, as well as all regular workshops are available in Polish Sign Language. We once told ourselves that this was how things would be, period. Therefore, we do not host events without a sign language interpreter. Now we want to work on adding audio description into the mix. It's not that easy, though, I admit. However, this is another challenge awaiting us: to make more and more of our events accessible to blind or visually impaired people in particular.

Our entire space is accessible to people in wheelchairs or with crutches as well as people with alternative motor skills. We thought about it as soon as we set out to renovate this space. On our website, you will find information written in plain language, which is less complicated and capable of reaching a bigger audience. We work with the Culture Without Barriers Foundation as well as other organizations that deal with accessibility, but we try to increase accessibility at the level of audience members through consultations and expert talks too. We try to be up to date with all new developments to stay ahead of the curve in terms of our audience as well. We feel that this is extra important, but the first results of our determination can be seen already. The fact that all our events are translated into Polish Sign Language has attracted a new group of Deaf people to our theater within six months so that our audience has grown considerably. We have not seen this happen to this extent before. But now the audience is actually there with us, present. There is a community that I think has found its place at the Center for Inclusive Art. The community that feels good here and came to us with an idea to do something in our space – and this is our greatest success. We see that the flow is there, that this group wants to work in our space, wants to meet, show what there is to them. Nothing better can happen to an institution.

This relationship with the Deaf was built through several measures. First of all, we made all events accessible with the presence of a Polish Sign Language interpreter. But we also invited Deaf artists to work with us. We have a clear and very intensive cooperation with Daniel Kotowski, who has already put on his existing performances here as part of our program but has created a new one as a part of it as well.

The Deaf artist figure has attracted a new audience to us. And we realize that, as a rule, if someone is not represented on stage, they will not be there in the audience either. This is a very strong correlation and we recognized it here at Teatr 21 long ago. Our cooperation with Daniel Kotowski confirms this theory because he has attracted a very large audience to us. This audience has seen how great these things are as well, that you can debut here, you can develop, express yourself artistically, that we take this group seriously, that we are curious about it, that we want to make the world of the Deaf, their art, their ways of thinking accessible to a bigger audience.

As part of the program, we have invited Deaf artists from abroad to visit us and it has been something of great importance. In our audience, there are activists from this community who promote our events, who encourage people to come and participate. They spread the word outwards like this. However, it is true that merely interpreting events into Polish Sign Language may be insufficient for cultural institutions. They need artists who represent this language too.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Justyna Wielgus**
from the Center for Inclusive Art (Teatr 21)

INVITING

One of the topics that kept coming back in our conversations was the feeling of being invited. If an inclusive institution is one which everyone is welcome to visit, how do you invite them? Is it enough to create a space without architectural barriers and a program tailored to different needs for people to visit it?

One of the challenges related to publishing a program is to find channels that will help you to reach new audiences. Especially in the case of those who have not yet felt invited over the years of cultural exclusion, it is important to provide them with targeted information and to slowly build their confidence. One of the steps is to work with centers where specific groups are already mapped – NGOs that work with particular groups (e.g., refugees, LGBTQIA+ people, or people with disabilities), integrated schools or special schools, as well as other institutions that have already built a diverse audience. Inviting organized groups is often the first step on the way to building relationships with individuals who are members of these groups. While setting out to announce an event, it should be remembered that even the most interesting program, e.g., for d/Deaf people will not reach those who are not familiar with the institution yet if it does not go beyond its standard communication channels. New audiences will not look for information on the institution's website or on its social media. To attract them, it is recommended to look for groups on social media, portals that promote upcoming events, or other communication channels. Other than that, a new audience can be established by co-organizing a festival or combining a program with that of a partner institution that is more experienced in a particular topic.

The practice of organizing inclusive activities has shown that what seems obvious to the institution might not be obvious to its audience. If the event is meant to cater to any specific needs, they should be clearly addressed. Instead of writing that the event is for everyone, or listing the disabilities that have been taken into account, it is better to point to specific responses to these needs: "a performance with audio description," "a movie screening with subtitles for the Deaf," "workshop interpreted into PSL," "during the event it will be possible to use the support of an assistant," "there are noise-cancelling headphones available on site," "the meeting will take place in a space without architectural barriers," etc. The accessibility descriptions published on the websites of institutions have the same function – they are a way of informing prospective audiences about the needs to which the institution is ready to respond, what it has thought about, but also what it is still working on. Unfortunately, the mandatory declaration of accessibility, which is often the only generally available source of knowledge about accessibility, often seems written

specifically for imaginary officials who assess compliance with the act instead of providing real advice and information about what someone in a wheelchair, for instance, can expect from an institution. It is important to inform people about what they cannot count on when they visit the institution. The information about what is missing is absolutely crucial.

One of the best practices is to use symbols to show which facilities are provided by an institution or at a specific event. They can be found in the calendar, on the website, in a leaflet, or on the map of the institution. With their help, you can quickly indicate an item in the program and whether PSL interpreters, touch aids, or audio descriptions are available, mark the place of silence, the spot where the hearing loop is, etc. Legible infographics may assist you in labeling the space, and they can serve many groups of visitors and attendees – from children to adults for whom using the Polish language is a challenge.

How space is arranged ties into the topic of inviting visitors. The entrance to the building where the institution is located is one of the key things to inform about. Therefore, it needs to be indicated well and easy to use, e.g., without having to ring a doorbell. Open rest areas and (comfortable!) seats will be two more signs of openness towards the audience. Some things that do not feel inviting include many immediately visible restrictions, posts blocking a passage, doors which are difficult to open, or a poorly lit corridor which does not encourage exploration and suggests that a particular part of the building is not intended to be seen.

As always, the attitude of people who work at the institution will be crucial as well. The way they carry themselves, whether they make eye contact, whether what they say is clear, and whether they respond appropriately to needs that may not have been foreseen or addressed yet and may require finding new solutions in a new context.

It should be borne in mind that people who want to use the educational and cultural services provided by cultural institutions must have a choice. They might not be able to attend an event for various reasons (health-related, economic, professional), but will gladly go another time. It is good practice to

organize several events on the same or similar topic at least once a month – this would give everyone a very good chance to attend.

Information on lack of accessibility

Regarding accessibility, anyone who does anything of public nature in an institution should be able to ask someone who deals with accessibility for advice, to ask if what they are doing will be accessible. It is very often the case that people dealing with accessibility have no one to turn to for advice themselves, because in addition to dealing with accessibility, they prepare events as well. It would be ideal if there was one person who only dealt with this topic, but we know that this ideal will be difficult to achieve, and I think that… there are a lot of small elements that we try to do well, but very often it is not possible. In such instances, it is important to simply be honest in contact with the audience and, for example, since we do not have the possibility to invite people in wheelchairs to come to our headquarters, we simply state that this is a place inaccessible to people wheelchairs in the description of the event. If we cannot offer interpreting into Polish Sign Language, we indicate that the event will not be translated into PSL. It seems to be the next level of thinking that instead of announcing what will be available, which is our standard, we start announcing that there will be no interpreting service provided. This is important because if someone already knows that an institution provides interpreting at all events, and then comes to an event where suddenly there will be no interpreter, they will be surprised. Therefore, I believe that it's a change of perspective – to give information about what's going to be unavailable because the rest is available and accessible.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Krystian Kamiński from Galeria Labirynt in Lublin**

Listening and responding

"I feel listened to."

"A place that not only invites all people to participate in what it does, but also allows them to do what they want to do."

"[An institution that] does not exist for its own sake but is strongly geared towards contact with its social environment."

„An inclusive institution is one that knows why it is implementing a particular measure and communicates this awareness – which is how I can feel like a subject who creates this institution and idea through participation as well."

excerpts from conversations with **people involved in culture**

Establishing inclusiveness is a process. Institutions are still learning how to respond to the different needs of their audience, how to create an accessible space and an accessible range of services. For those who started after the act came into force, there are still many solutions to be implemented. But even those institutions that have long thought about accessibility face various challenges. Progress depends on the acquisition of skills by those working in the institution, on openness and understanding people's needs (e.g., by a management that sees or does not see the point of taking certain measures), and on financial resources. Sometimes, in order to meet the minimum requirements of the law or in anticipation of the necessary budget, temporary solutions are introduced. At the same time, technology which helps to improve the tools used previously is being developed. What's also changing is the awareness of people who use specific solutions and who over time know better and better how they want to participate in culture and what tools can help them in this.

As the participants in our survey emphasize – an inclusive institution is one that checks and reacts, asks its audience what works and what does not. It is also willing to try to respond to specific needs even when there are no ready solutions in place yet. As mentioned before, audience members bring different ways of functioning to the institution, as well as different strategies in which they use its services because their knowledge of how they can meet their own needs changes, as does their perception of institutions and their functions.

On listening

To me, one of the most important words is that we listen. We are ready to listen and to subject ourselves to external criticism once in a while because it is very significant and sometimes very painful. We try not to be stubborn and not to say that we always know best but to actually give a voice to outsiders so that they can show us what else needs improvement. This is why this procedure is regulated by law as well, there may be people demanding a particular type of accessibility. This should not be a constraint for us – we should admit that we are not yet accessible in this respect, and we should figure out what we can do to change it. Listening is very important to me, and responding is something that is natural. It is natural to open yourself to society. This is why museums are created too – not just to collect or to protect objects, but to tell their story, to showcase them, and to make a point that they are our common good. We can use do this in multiple ways.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Elżbieta Lang**
from the Museum of Krakow

Audiences of cultural institutions are changing because the reality in which they live is changing – due to the climate disaster, economic crises, health crises, armed conflicts, migration, technological development. The context in which cultural institutions operate should have an impact on what happens in them.

Survey participants indicated that an inclusive institution responds to the challenges and problems of the present day and reacts to everyday life by means of setting up a program that addresses these issues or designing activities as

well. Its task is to search for topics that feel close to their audience, that give them a chance to meet up, that somehow connect people with different needs and from different backgrounds. The key is to find a topic for an exhibition, a workshop, or a project that is important and engaging to the audience. And it is best to do it together, e.g., through an apt conclusion but also an invitation to contribute.

AUDIENCE SURVEYS

Carrying out audience surveys is a dimension of listening. It is about finding out what the real needs of the audience are and how they feel about the institution's proposals and its actions. It is a good idea to carry out such surveys at various stages, from planning activities to summarizing completed events or projects.

You should remember that if the results are to reflect social diversity and show the needs of different groups, it is necessary to make sure that people from specific audience groups participate in the survey. This entails, first of all, that the form of the study needs to be prepared in an accessible way. A survey in an accessible online form, read by a text-to-speech software, with simple sentences, more difficult expressions being explained, translation into foreign languages, and videos in PSL could be an option. You can make sure to diversify how questions can be answered, e.g., give d/Deaf people the choice of uploading a recording in PSL or offer participants assistance with filling in the form (via a phone or video call). Audience surveys, e.g., directly after a workshop, can be arranged as part of the event – then the host gives instructions, and participants can react in different ways to the questions asked (e.g., by raising their hand, drawing, throwing a ball, or treating the question and answer sheet in a particular way – removing its corner or crushing it into a ball depending on the response given by the host[1]).

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1   An example inspired by a survey prepared by Olga Michalik for an inclusive group, which included blind people.

Moreover, a direct conversation is another good form of collecting feedback, impressions, comments, and suggestions. You can spark a short conversation with someone who is on a guided tour with an employee, buying a ticket at the box office, or assisted on the way to a tram stop, or you can arrange a longer conversation to make room for a deeper plunge into the subject. Another idea is to invite a diverse audience to create a focus group that can jointly analyze a project idea.

The other step to take to collect feedback from a diverse audience will be to send out a clear and deliberate invitation to participate in a survey. In order for the institution to be sure that it collects feedback from a specific group, such as people with reduced mobility or foreigners, it is necessary to ensure that the representatives of these specific groups receive a clear message that such a survey is being carried out. After all, the point is not only to collect feedback from people who know the institution and use its services regularly, but also to find out why, e.g., events prepared by the institution do not reach a certain group, even though the program has been adapted to its needs. Sometimes such a broader perspective will help you discover that the dates of events interpreted into PSL at two different institutions overlap, or that a planned film screening with audio description takes place at dusk, which makes it difficult for visually impaired people to move freely, although they could attend the screening in the daytime.

Such data collection and verification of what works and what could work may take place with the help of randomly selected people, regular audience members, or a specific consultation group with which the institution cooperates. Sometimes it is enough to ask a PSL interpreter who works with the institution about their suggestions on how to better organize an event because this person may have a lot of knowledge in terms of how the d/Deaf population in a particular town participates in culture. On the other hand, asking the d/Deaf about their own opinion may show that a particular interpreter is not well received in the community, and this may contribute to poor attendance.

Surveys give institutions an opportunity to verify their intuitions as well as to see a different perspective and take it into account as they design activities.

At the same time, well-thought-out surveys can be an opportunity to establish relationships with individual audience members who will feel more strongly invited to participate in the activities offered. Of course, provided that the feedback heard is duly considered. Especially if the questions are not only about ready-made solutions, but also aim to recognize needs and shortcomings (e.g., what form of action is missing in the institution, or what need would it respond to – that of contact with others? having a sense of agency? physical activity?).

Diagnosing problems as form of bonding

A few years ago, about a year before the COVID-19 pandemic, Jakub Walczyk started a series called "Obrazy wrażliwe" ("Sensitive Images") at ZAMEK. It was a series of socially conscious films screened with an ambition to include people with sensory disabilities, e.g., people with visual disabilities but also people from a cultural minority, i.e., Deaf people or people with hearing impairment, and let me tell you that it always seemed fine... Sometimes there is a cool, nice-looking product with a story that can be told well, even sold, but it does not fully align with the original plan. What do I mean by this lack of alignment? What I mean is that if someone had come to the third or fourth meeting and said: „Let me see how it's going," then it would have turned out that there were a lot of city people present, so to speak but very few, if at all, people from those groups that I told you about at the beginning, so something did not work out there, something went wrong between subsequent events.

The truth is that no one diagnosed existing problems well at the beginning of this project. We referred to our own ideas about them or to stories we had heard... Fortunately, what we have learned has not gone to waste. As soon as an opportunity arose to apply for EU funding, Jakub and Joanna Stankiewicz wrote a separate application regarding the creation of such an inclusive cinema at ZAMEK. At that point, we had one large auditorium and a smaller one for over forty people. It was an audiovisual room, which hadn't been used in a long time since it needed to be renovated. Jakub and Joanna, with a small contribution from me, came up with the idea that that was the perfect time to start work from scratch, to make that place a more integrating, more acces-

sible space, to make room for something new that had previously been called "Sensitive Images," and to write an application to the Culture Without Barriers Foundation. The application was received very well, I believe it got the highest score... It would not have been so appreciated by the community if the right diagnosis had not been set prior to the submission, i.e., one made in cooperation with Poznan-based organizations – the Deaf People Association "TON," multiple branches of the Polish Association of Blind People, and other non-governmental organizations... Moreover, we organized focus groups, i.e., meetings at both ZAMEK and the institutions that these people visit. And only then did we write the application, in which we explicitly referred to those needs that we had learned about.

I am convinced that this also contributed to how well our application was received, and what definitely did was the fact that at the time the project was launched (in October last year), we did not set out with the goal of "let's do it and see how it works" in mind. In terms of attendance, it looked good from the very beginning because the project was created in response to real needs. The other important element, especially with respect to people with visual disabilities, was something that is part of inclusive thinking. It did not just consist in setting up a good program or – although this is important as well and as a sociologist I could not say otherwise – a good study. We immediately treated this study as a building block of a relationship, i.e., a bond that does not involve Joanna and me, Jakub, gracing people with my presence as a wise sociologist so that we can involve you in our study. Instead, we just talk, speak about ourselves, listen to one another, lay the groundwork for a relationship, and this approach has a chance... of getting people to come or to start to perceive us as their place, and not just a cinema or one of many places where you can see this film with audio description, or closed captions, or live interpreting into Polish Sign Language once a week. Moreover, once a month you can take part in a supporting event: a discussion following a screening, an accessible workshop, or a guided tour of ZAMEK which is adapted to people with different sensory needs.

All this was possible thanks to how we came up with a plan of action together, while – I am not going to lie – ...the very structure of this grant competition

helped us along, with the Culture Without Barriers Foundation team... reminding us of what the path of participation looks like... They reminded us that it begins earlier, before the event, and continues after it has concluded. Consistency is key.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Bartek Lis**
from the ZAMEK Culture Center in Poznan

Program evaluation

We evaluate our events every year. The evaluation is conducted by sociologists and researchers – and each year, everything is evaluated... We study the audience of our events too because we are very curious about what works and what doesn't, what reaches them and what doesn't. Where there is movement of people and where there is not... Because things may turn out differently to our expectations and what seems interesting and accessible to us does not actually have to be. Therefore, we are vigilant, and we care very much about such evaluation studies. I believe that such good, constructive, critical feedback is extremely important for the development of an institution. In my opinion, it is a very strong and creative tool of growth. We trust it a lot and find it extremely important at every level, be it at the level of our partners with whom we create the Center for Inclusive Art, or at the level of our audience.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Justyna Wielgus**
from the Center for Inclusive Art (Teatr 21)

Social Committee for Accessibility

The Emigration Museum has a Social Committee for Accessibility... At the moment, it consists of eleven members, among whom there are people with different kinds of disabilities, or those who work for the community of people with disabilities, i.e., representatives of non-governmental organizations. We have three teachers as well, so there are different backgrounds. First of all, they are

our accessibility consultants and verify whether the solutions we introduce are actually accessible. Each year, I consult our plans to implement new accessibility measures with them as well, and if they have any comments, or if they think that something important has not been included, we can change it. On the other hand, if they find something pointless there, we may take it into account as well...

The Committee for Accessibility helps us set priorities too. I have tested our permanent exhibition and websites with them to see if everything there is easy to find. We have tested a mobile application that turned out to be inaccessible to blind people. What else? We have also tested a video guide in PSL, i.e., we test little things related to accessibility as well to see if something needs to be changed there, or to know how to make plans for the near future – because our application is inaccessible, this audio guide with audio description will simply be up on our website, which is accessible. This lets us estimate costs rationally and see what we can offer because (of course) updating our website or creating a new application generates really high costs that we cannot afford. So yes, we look for solutions that... would be a compromise... [Moreover,] they consulted measures with people with disabilities, from their environment, to know what the best ways to reach recipients are and what messages these people pay attention to. We are trying to solve the problem of how to reach our audience, which probably all organizations and institutions have.

...When we applied for a grant to the State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled People for the Culture Without Barriers project, the application contained all or nearly all observations from different audits that I had done with the Accessibility Committee. Together, we have prepared a list of tasks that have mostly been completed or are yet to be done as part of this application. It helped us a lot because thanks to the fact that we had it figured out before, I did not have to quickly come up with something that we could use in the application. Instead, I had specific tips from the committee.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Marta Otrębska from the Emigration Museum in Gdynia**

COOPERATION AND PARTICIPATION

To create openness to diversity in a credible way, first of all, you should ask questions, consult solutions, and verify things. Invite specific people who represent the voice of a social group that is not represented in the institution's own team so that they contribute. If the institution is run by people who look at the world from only one perspective, it is very difficult to make it respond to the needs of a diverse society. The more diverse the thinking within the institution is, the easier it is to respond to diversity that is on the outside.

Audience surveys are one way of giving people a voice. Another is to invite experts and consultants to cooperate, e.g., people with disabilities who will carry out accessibility audits or verify the correctness of solutions prepared (tyflographics, audio descriptions, etc.). The direction that Polish institutions are increasingly taking is to employ people with disabilities on a full-time basis, although usually still in jobs related to accessibility coordination. Recognizing people from different backgrounds, with different needs and experiences, or minorities as those who can shape the program or organize activities can be a powerful move on the institution's part. Moreover, what makes an institution inclusive is the fact that there are different people in it (not just in theory), not only in the audience but also among its employees, activity creators, workshop hosts, guides, or artists. Their presence among the people who represent the institution will translate into the diversity of its audience.

The activity of Teatr 21 is an example of such practice. The play *Cukry* ("Sugars"), based on a novel by a writer diagnosed with autism, attracts people on the spectrum, and inviting Deaf artists to collaborate contributed to the institution reaching a new audience among the Deaf community.

The very strategy for the program "Malopolska. Empathetic culture" for the years 2023–2025 is an example of good participatory practices. It was formed by people with different needs, with local and national NGOs, by coordinators of accessibility in cultural institutions in the region of Malopolska, by experts (who have dealt with accessibility for many years) – they suggested topics and measures, which were later collected and analyzed in depth by the coordinator

of the program, the management of the Malopolska Institute of Culture in Krakow, and by the Department of Culture and National Heritage of the Marshal's Office of Malopolska.

Moreover, institutional participation may manifest itself in an invitation to jointly build a performance or work on an exhibition. It is worth it to ask a selected group that you want to work with about the ideas that they have, what they would like to invest their time in, what they need a particular place for.

If the institution manages to establish trust and credibility, if the audience sees that it is heard, and better still – if it sees that it is represented, then the space opens up to new dimensions of cooperation. In such a case, the audience may come up with their own idea for the institution – for an activity or a project. The question is whether such people are met with hospitality.

Space for co-creation

When we discuss inclusion in an institution, we reaffirm that we want to see... people with different stories, different experiences, and different backgrounds who feel at home in it. This is the story of the metaphorical third place. It still seems very important to me to tell it and to say that you can use this space for yourself, without those who invited you, that you can initiate something yourself from the position of someone who has once been invited and included. Let us make it clear that everyone can organize and do something already without any necessary permit or having to be animated or set in motion by people who work at the institution. This is how I understand inclusion too. It would be great if this was the case – if, in the process of rendering institutions familiar to different people or as the outcome of it, someone told us that they would like to do something with us. And they would then be acting as an author or a co-author.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Bartek Lis**
from the ZAMEK Culture Center in Poznan

On participation

At our institution, talks about participation and community have been going on for years now. We often work as a strategic college. It is a group of employees from very different departments. You could say that it determines the course of our development along with the management and verifies whether we are actually going in the designated direction. Some things work, others don't, but we try to think of how the institution should develop through the different departments thanks to the support of people with diverse experience. Social action is one of the topics that have been discussed in the college.

So is accessibility. While we had not appointed an accessibility coordinator yet, we had such a topic mentioned in our strategy already. Both topics have been developing at equal pace. For instance, participation was the main working method behind the exhibition "Współistnienie" ("Co-existence") in that we involved the local community in creating the exhibition, cooperating in its creation. This was one of the many exhibitions that we have invited the community to contribute to.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Katarzyna Bury**
from the Museum of Krakow

On mutual exchange

An inclusive institution is not one that just hands out tools and says: "Come to us because with us you can understand things, you can feel them, and we will adapt everything to your perception." It is an institution that says: "Alright, we have what you need, and now let's get you here so that you can show us a piece of your world. We want to see things with your eyes." So, we take this a step further, with the institution including such people and allowing them to take charge so that there is a mutual exchange. It is not like watching TV – it is about participation on equal terms.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Krystian Kamiński**
from Galeria Labirynt in Lublin

On representation

For me, it is an institution that understands accessibility and inclusiveness very broadly, which means going beyond the standard thinking about meeting such requirements as removing architectural barriers or providing a Polish Sign Language interpreting service and audio description. This is extremely important, of course, and should always be the case. However, it should not just stop there. I have stressed this repeatedly in many conversations: you have to take a holistic approach to inclusiveness, i.e., you have to consider human resources as well, and take a very broad social representation into account on both sides – on the side of those who create the institution and on the side of its audience alike. This means that the institution has to think of different groups that can co-create it, write its program, and at the same time participate in events as the audience. So, when I hear the expression "inclusive cultural institution," this is the basic idea that I have in mind.

Another point is to think generally about what makes up the social fabric, what groups create it, co-create it, and whether there is a place for all of them in the institution. I would like to say loud and clear that this applies to every level of how the institution operates, i.e., to the implementation, the management, and the program. At each level, in each such department of the institution, there should be a really broad representation of people so that it reflects the diversity of everyday society. It is an institution that corresponds to the social landscape.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Justyna Wielgus**
from the Center for Inclusive Art (Teatr 21)

The wellbeing of people responsible for accessibility in cultural institutions

RESEARCH AMONG COORDINATORS OF ACCESSIBILITY

Taking into account the needs of people working in cultural institutions

An inclusive institution is one that cares about the wellbeing of people who work in it, asks about their needs, cares that they get their rest, ensures stress amortization, a rational scope of duties, decent earnings, a good atmosphere, and a friendly workplace because an inclusive institution should be friendly to those who work in it as well.

an excerpt from conversations with **people involved in culture**

The people who work in a cultural institution are a decisive factor in terms of whether it is seen as accessible and inclusive. They are the ones who ensure statutory obligations being met, set up activities, invite and welcome visitors, provide information, run workshops, organize concerts and performances. Our questions addressed to the audience have shown us an important perspective – that an institution comes to life thanks to its hosts. What matters is whether the people who work in the institution that we have contact with are kind and helpful. The attitude of employees who are the initial point of contact for visitors is key in terms of how an institution is received – whether they work at the box office, wardrobe, or concierge desk, as security at exhibitions, validating tickets and accompanying people to their seats in the auditorium, but this applies to people carrying out educational activities too: be it workshops, guided tours, or the reader service department in a library. They are the face of the institution. Many aspects discussed so far: the feeling of being invited, lack of judgment, or clear communication depend on their skills, experience, empathy,

and openness. These are the people who react to unusual situations most often. It is often thanks to them (even if the space or the program is not fully accessible) that the audience (not only people with different needs) can find their way around the institution because they are the ones who will look for alternative solutions if necessary.

However, whether these people – these hosts of the place – will respond to all the challenges they face does not depend solely on preparation, training, experience, or even on personality traits. To a large extent, the quality of services provided by employees and cultural workers depends on whether they are satisfied with their work, are not tired, have the strength and mental space to contact and interact with the audience. After all, it is not about having conversations with the learned "courtesy of the hotelier," but about sincere, lively contact, mindfulness, flexibility, and curiosity about the other person. A worker whose own needs are unmet (e.g., the need of rest, food, security) will not care for the needs of people who come to them.

What do we know about the wellbeing of cultural workers? To examine the working conditions of people who deal with coordination or – more broadly – with building accessibility in institutions, we invited them to complete an extensive survey. We gathered responses anonymously in the form of a publicly available online form.

According to the statistical yearbook of the Polish Central Statistical Office, in 2022 there were 13599 cultural institutions in Poland (including libraries, museums, galleries, theaters, cinemas, community centers)[2]. Probably there is at least one person who deals with accessibility in most of them (only public authorities have the legal obligation to appoint a coordinator, including administrative authorities and courts). On social media, the group called "Forum koordynatorów i koordynatorek dostępności" (The Forum of Accessibility Coordinators) has about 5000 members, the open group "Sieć liderów i liderek dostępności" (The Network of Accessibility Leaders) consists of about

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2   https://stat.gov.pl/wyszukiwarka/?query=tag:instytucje+kultury.

1500 people. The program "Malopolska. Empathetic culture" itself brings together 23 people who coordinate accessibility at cultural institutions.

35 people responded to our survey. We are aware that this group is not a representative sample of the accessibility community. However, we feel that the people who decided to complete the survey showed great commitment and wanted their voice to be heard.

The vast majority of people who took part in the survey indicated that they were acting as an accessibility coordinator in their institution, while combining this role with other responsibilities (24 out of 35 people, i.e., 69%). The main area of their activity was education (14 people) and coordination of events, projects (12 people), but also promotion (8 people), customer service (2 people), including 5 people employed as head of the education/promotion/dissemination department.

Decisions about who deals with accessibility in a particular institution are made in different ways, as can be concluded from the responses to the survey. Some are appointed by a superior authority ("director's official order," "as per director's order," "because I unfortunately have to," "I have been assigned this task," "responsibilities"). Due to the statutory obligation to deal with the topic of accessibility, many institutions have indicated someone responsible for this field, thereby appointing someone who coordinates the program addressed to the audience or who already works directly with the audience, e.g., hosts workshops or organizes guided tours. More often than not, people involved in education were the only ones in the institution who had previously had contact with people with different needs. Another group of people appointed to this role are communication workers. This can be seen in the analysis of accessibility declarations as well – in many institutions, the person responsible for the website is indicated as the one to contact, and that is often someone who deals with promotion.

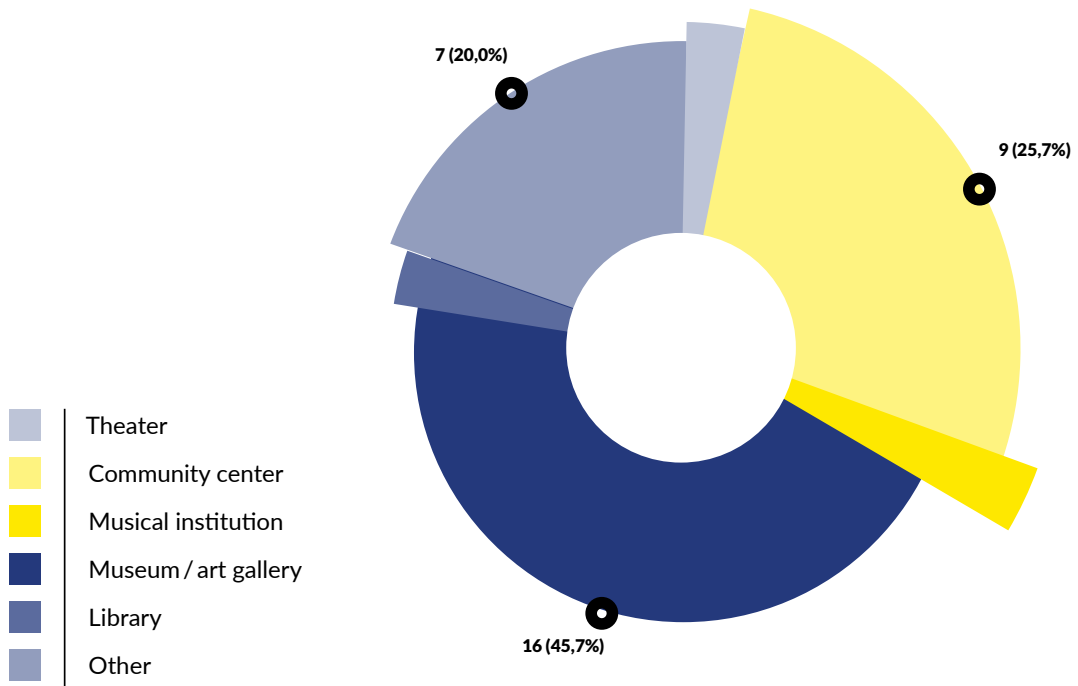**Figure 2.** What kind of a cultural institution do you work for?

7 (20,0%)

9 (25,7%)

16 (45,7%)

Theater

Community center

Musical institution

Museum / art gallery

Library

Other

Figure 3. What kind of municipality do you work in?

7 (20,0%)

18 (51,4%)

5 (14,3%)

Village

Town (population of up to 50 000 people)

Town (population of 50 001 to 100 000 people)

City (population of 100 001 to 500 000 people)

City (population of more than 500 000 people)

Figure 4. Is accessibility part of your job title?

7 (20,0%) 4 (11,4%)

24 (68,6%)

- I am an accessibility coordinator
  but work in another position too
- I deal with accessibility
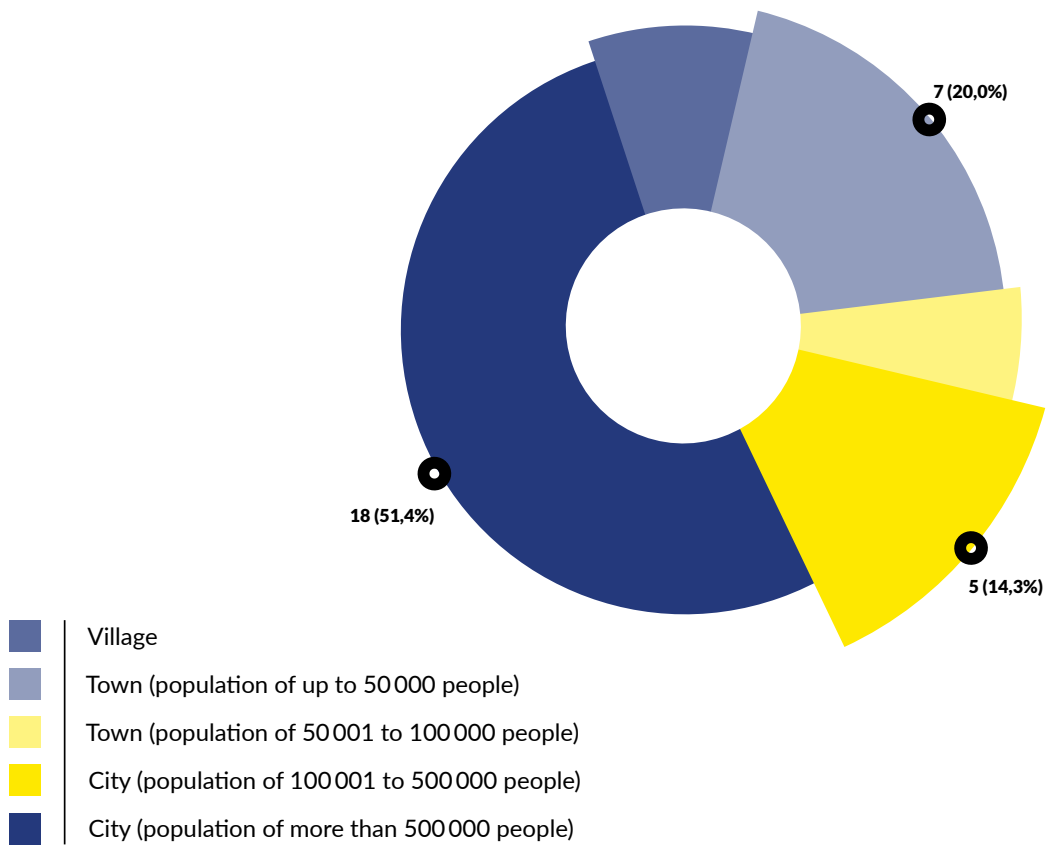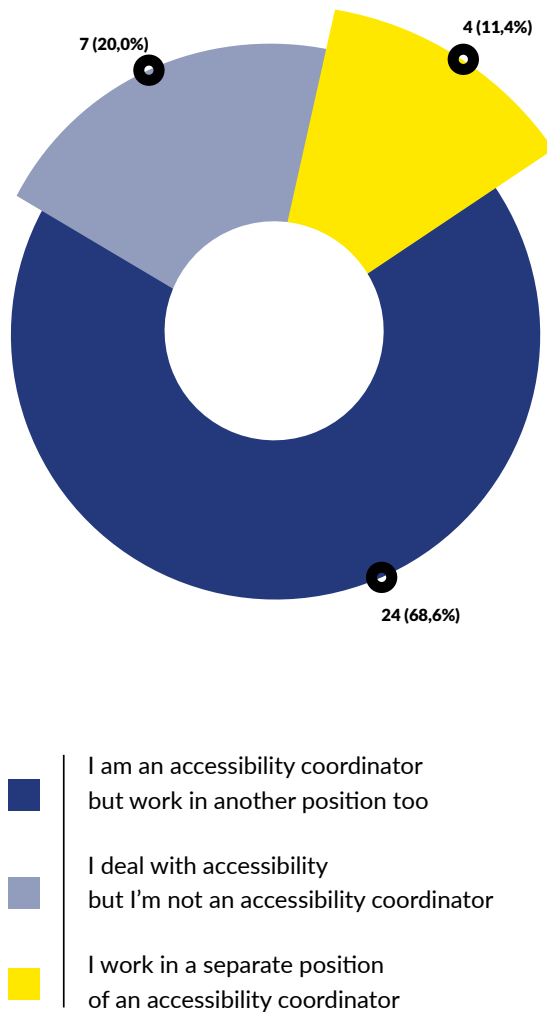 but I'm not an accessibility coordinator
- I work in a separate position
  of an accessibility coordinator

When asked why they work in accessibility, not all survey participants point to the director's own decision. Many people assert that they deal with this topic because they are interested in it, because they feel that it is important, and sometimes their interest in it ties into personal experience, e.g., a disability in their family. Some people mentioned a specific degree in the field of working with people with disabilities, e.g., oligophrenopedagogy, others pointed out that they had gathered experience in building accessibility in the institutions they had worked for before. These individuals either offer to deal with the topic themselves or are naturally recognized in the institution as accessibility advocates because of their individual interests or greater openness.

"Because I want to, because I can, because I see the point of and the
need for these measures."

"I believe that accessible culture is a human right, and a world accessible
to more people will be a better place."

"I feel that this is my mission!"

excerpts from a survey response provided by
people dealing with accessibility in cultural institutions

Four of the people who completed the survey are full-time accessibility coordi-
nators – as opposed to the 11% for whom it is something extra alongside their
actual job. Experience shows that this does not have to be correlated with the
size of an institution (for example, the multi-department Museum of Krakow
has a separate position of an accessibility coordinator, but so does a much
smaller POLIN Museum or the Węglin Community Center). Seven people (20%)
admitted that they are engaged in accessibility-building activities, but do not
coordinate the area within the institution.

In the survey, we asked whether accessibility was part of a person's job de-
scription as well. 25 people said "yes" (71%), seven people said "no" (20%), and
three people did not know. Interestingly, the 20% of people who answered this
question are not the same as the 20% who answered the previous one. Some
people who coordinate accessibility measures do not have accessibility written
into their job description or do not know whether they do. In their case, it is
most likely that additional responsibilities are included in the phrase "executing
other tasks as instructed by the employer."

What we did not ask about in the survey was whether adding accessibility to
one's job description should result in a salary change. Our conversations on other
occasions, such as with our friends who are coordinators (and the two responses
to open questions in which this issue was brought up) show that new responsibil-
ities regarding accessibility do not entail financial gratification most of the time.
Meanwhile, it is a lot of extra work which often requires specific knowledge and

tedious enforcement of legal obligations but also genuine contact with people as well as a willingness to respond to their needs. As we have indicated in the previous part of the text, economic issues are often not the decisive factor behind taking on additional work related to accessibility coordination, which is often motivated by a sense of calling and social responsibility.

"Does anyone else deal with accessibility besides you? If so, with whom on your team do you share your tasks?" More than half of the participants (57%) gave a negative answer. In two cases, there is an accessibility committee in place, in several others – individual people perform part of the tasks each. But in fact, if someone has been appointed (or has volunteered) to deal with accessibility, they carry a lot of responsibilities on their shoulders as well as accountability that not only is not shared, but often is not understood by either colleagues or the management.

> *What is missing is top-down enforcement of knowledge about accessibility and systemic deployment of accessibility measures by the director. I live in fear that upon receipt of a complaint about a lack of accessibility measures (with the minimum requirements stipulated in the [The Act on Ensuring Accessibility]), the director will fire me, while the lack of accessibility adaptations is his responsibility.*

> *If the publication is created, please write in it that coordinating accessibility is a difficult job. It isn't just about people with disabilities smiling as they take part in our events. It isn't just about inspiring conversations among accessibility coordinators. It's reminding my colleagues about the same thing day in, day out, it's looking up amendments to acts of law because the legal team that the institution works with does not have much of an idea about it. It's asking for support, with different results. It's constantly taking on new responsibilities. It's hard work. I do it because it's needed. I'm sorry for this honesty. I hope that maybe someone feels the same, and upon reading this, they will find out that they are not alone. In my opinion, we do not need another publication to remind us that doing accessibility is worth it in the end, that you can and that you have to do it with people with disabilities.*

> excerpts from a survey response provided by
> **people dealing with accessibility in cultural institutions**

SATISFACTION AND FRUSTRATION

In the survey, we asked an open question: "What emotions do you feel at work most of the time?" Only four people identified single word descriptors (loneliness, resignation, powerlessness, and the word "good"). Others wrote about several feelings, often opposing ones ("alternating between frustration and pride," "joy but also irritation and an occasional feeling of futility," "joy and hope mixed with anger at the barriers that I unfortunately have to face inside the institution"). Phenomena somewhat related to emotions, such as "stress," were mentioned as well.

The most common word turned out to be frustration (used 13 times), sometimes juxtaposed with joy or satisfaction, sometimes brought up in the same sequence with other difficult emotions (e.g., "frustration, powerlessness and helplessness, lack of understanding, anger" – this was written by a person who has been dealing with accessibility recently with a conviction that it is an important issue, but no one else wanted to deal with it).[3]

For a while now, frustration has been winning – there's a lack of understanding of the idea of accessibility or universal design, lack of support from the supervisor and the management, lack of resources to create accessibility in the institution. Being overwhelmed with duties means that I always fall behind with something, can't manage to do it on time, or do it after hours at home. Seeing my role in the institution as redundant, or at best difficult and picky, is unbearable in the long run and effectively clips my wings. The salary is also inadequate considering the amount of work.

an excerpt from a survey response given by
a person dealing with accessibility in cultural institutions

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3   Frustration mixed with satisfaction as a phenomenon specific to cultural workers has been described by Izabela Zawadzka – see: https://didaskalia.pl/pl/artykul/sfrustrowani-poszukiwacze-satysfakcji.

Joy or euphoria (9 times) are sometimes related to a sense of agency ("the joy of being able to help others," "that something can be improved"), but most often they are combined with anger or irritation (these words appear 8 times) or uncertainty (uncertainty/anxiety/fear/stress come up 8 times).
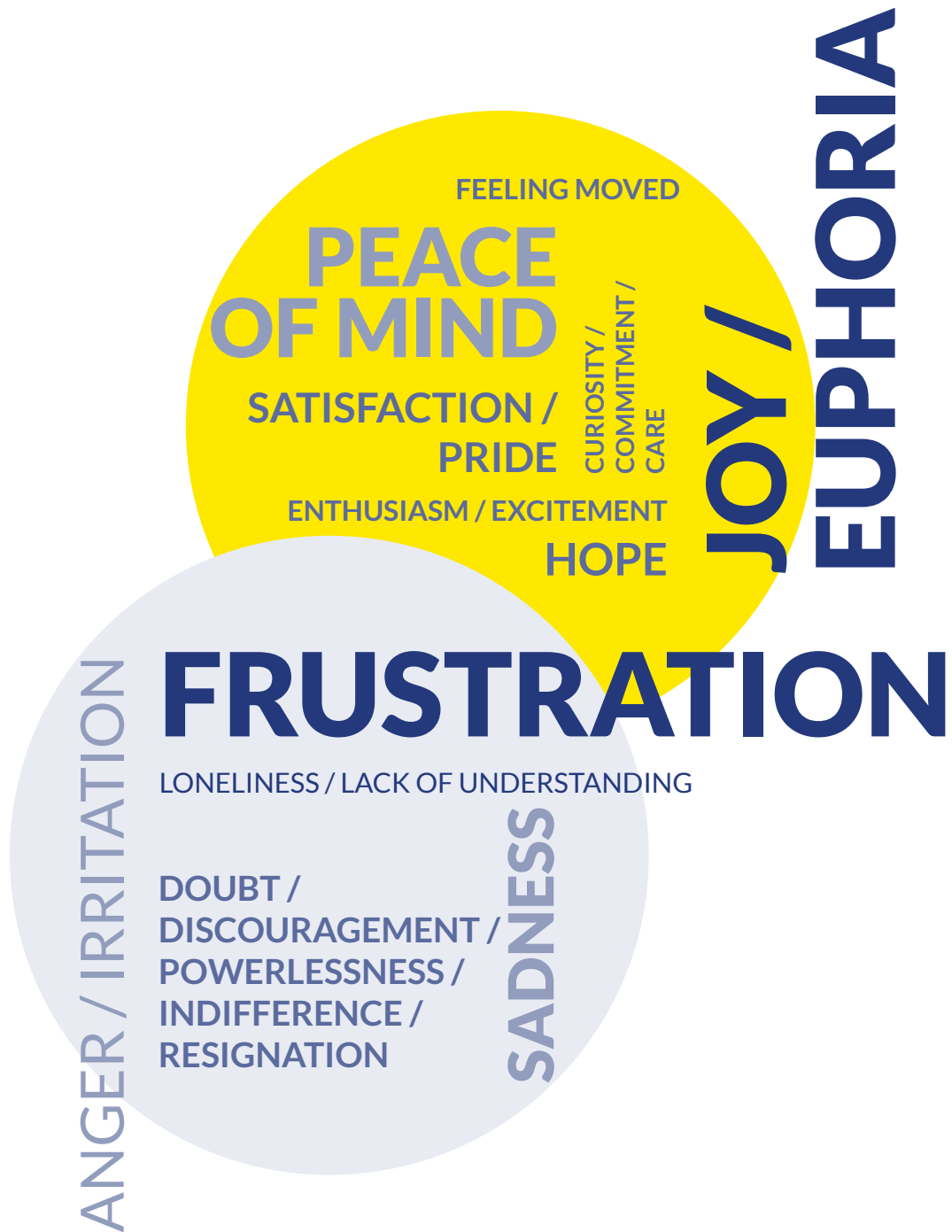
Among the terms associated with positive emotions, survey participants named satisfaction and pride (6), enthusiasm/excitement (6), curiosity, commitment, or care (a total of 4 times), peace of mind, hope, or feeling moved (each once).

Loneliness and lack of understanding were mentioned eight times in total, as were powerlessness, helplessness, and fatigue. Other words that appeared in the responses to our survey included: doubt, discouragement, powerlessness, indifference, resignation.

The survey that we carried out among employees of cultural institutions – although it was not designed to recognize possible factors conducive to burnout – reveals many threats related to the situation in which people coordinating and establishing accessibility in these institutions have found themselves. They are often strongly dedicated to their jobs, with a great sense of responsibility for the completion of tasks that they have been entrusted with, and they often have a personal relationship with the audience that they address their actions to. Among their motivations, they bring up a sense of calling, a strong idealistic commitment ("This is important and significant to me").

Even more risks associated with burnout are related to how work is organized and how institutions function. As the participants make clear – establishing accessibility is related to a plethora of responsibilities that require taking care of many details and having specific knowledge. In response to the question posed in the survey: "What difficulties do you face in your institution when working in the field of accessibility? How do you assess your cooperation with other employees or departments in this respect?", a significant number of people indicated that they receive very little support inside the institution, that they feel overwhelmed by the number of tasks. Tasks for which there is often no additional compensation, and which do not meet with the understanding of others in the team, often including the management.

Figure 5. A collection of words describing different feelings

FEELING MOVED

PEACE OF MIND

SATISFACTION / PRIDE

CURIOSITY / COMMITMENT / CARE

JOY / EUPHORIA

ENTHUSIASM / EXCITEMENT

HOPE

FRUSTRATION

ANGER / IRRITATION

LONELINESS / LACK OF UNDERSTANDING

SADNESS

DOUBT / DISCOURAGEMENT / POWERLESSNESS / INDIFFERENCE / RESIGNATION

...while in terms of empathy, the need for accessibility is obvious to most [people], the additional work that comes with it is not. I can't blame the employees for this attitude, especially since additional processes are not supported by a larger team or encouraged by an increase in salary, which of course boils down to the way people manage and perceive accessibility as a trivial, additional activity.

...marginalization of needs, lack of understanding, lack of resources.

...the attitude of "we will not incur the costs of accessibility for the benefit of few people," subcontractors blatantly lying that they know the rules of building accessible IT systems, while in fact they have no idea about it.

The management often doesn't see the need, that it is the right thing to do; "after all, such people do not visit us anyway"...

Working with the management is the worst.

Co-workers have no time to complete accessibility tasks. Some employees lack the understanding of changes related to accessibility.

...lack of knowledge and experience (my own), lack of funds for activities (the project is still ongoing but will end soon), lack of support and understanding from other employees.

There are no resources dedicated exclusively to accessibility measures in institutional budgets. I am not sure if the planned measures will be implemented in the next quarter because it may turn out that the money was spent on something else. There are too many other tasks, which supervisors often attribute higher priority to. Lack of additional staff support. Consequently, the accessibility improvement schedule has to be revised constantly, which delays the implementation of consecutive steps. Colleagues are showing a willingness to cooperate in terms of accessibility improvement activities. However, they face similar problems, especially when it comes to being

overburdened with duties. Therefore, they are not always able to enforce standards and good practices.

excerpts from survey responses provided by **people dealing with accessibility in cultural institutions**

The long list of challenges faced by accessibility coordinators[4] is strongly correlated with the factors that the Culture Shock Foundation[5] identified as conducive to burnout and shows an inclination towards a self-winding spiral of fatigue. The multitude of duties, often unfunded or funded very poorly, entails that they have to be performed independently because they cannot be outsourced. The lack of understanding for the need to perform these tasks on the institution's part results in a lack of support. And the lack of support or good organization of work (e.g., through a realistic distribution of responsibilities) leads to further overload.

4   At this point, we will again refer to the study performed by the Mazovian Institute of Culture, which recognized similar challenges through interviews with people dealing with accessibility in small community centers in the Mazovia Region: "In the institutions that we examined, this position, if existent at all, was often filled with random people, often the youngest in the team. This role was an additional one for them but did not involve extra compensation. They often had to acquire knowledge in a new field themselves, after hours, by trial and error, unable to count on external support. Almost everyone spoke of a feeling of loneliness that accompanied them because they found it difficult to involve their colleagues in joint activities. Moreover, they mentioned that it is not uncommon that, when they are absent from work, no one is able to replace them, even in the simplest activities." Source: M. Ochał, A. Woźniak, *Tu zaczynają się schody* ("It's all uphill from here"), op. cit., p. 205.

5   The Culture Shock Foundation has conducted research on burnout in NGOs in Poland, Croatia, and Slovenia in recent years. In the conclusions to their expert interviews, there is a list of factors conducive to burnout. The factors are divided into two categories: individual and organizational. The features of people characterized as prone to burnout included excessive dedication to work (working overtime, feeling that you need to be available all the time), no habit of resting or inability to rest, poor coping mechanisms against stress, idealism or a strong sense of responsibility. The organizational factors included unskillful, ineffective management and planning, lack of support, excessive workload, pressure on fast-paced work, lack of feedback, lack of recognition by superiors and colleagues, too few employees compared to the scope of responsibilities and the size of the audience.

As the responses to the survey indicate, people who build accessibility spend a lot of time on further education to increase their knowledge of this field, look for information on the Internet, watch webinars, analyze laws, reach for support of more experienced people in other institutions, cooperate with local government organizations and special schools, interview audiences. Very often, these are people with a lot of knowledge and awareness of the tools that they can reach for. They are prepared to examine areas requiring support and to search for solutions but unfortunately, the system in which they operate frequently acts as an obstacle. If accessibility coordinators do not have an operational budget or a team to support them in carrying out the necessary tasks, they face a great risk of overworking themselves (if they carry out all or most of the tasks on their own) and frustration (when it is impossible to achieve certain objectives unless the employees responsible for a certain area actually cooperate, e.g., an accessible website or exhibition arrangement).

So far, we have used the term "cultural institution." However, we want to make it clear that an institution does not consist of individuals who work in it (even if they are strongly committed). In fact, it is a whole team of people whose tasks are correlated with one another. The assumption that a single person coordinating accessibility will monitor everyone else's work is utopian. Especially if even just a part of the team does not understand that certain actions are substantiated and/or the support of the management, especially the director, is missing. Even those who are in leadership positions reported a lack of support among those working in other departments or a lack of understanding on the part of their superiors in our survey. People working in lower positions are in a different situation, even if they have a clearly defined role of an accessibility coordinator. Without a proper organizational structure (e.g., an explicit order or a formal accessibility committee), they do not have a legitimate capacity to distribute tasks and enforce them. What is left is convincing, insisting, and demanding, which can be completely ineffective without overt support from above.

It is necessary to build support among the institution's entire team, with particular emphasis on its management. Individuals cannot be held responsible for the accessibility of the whole institution. All employees must share this

responsibility, each in their respective tasks – just as they share responsibility for whether the institution acts in compliance with the law or fire regulations. Clearly, institutions need greater systemic changes in this regard: more precise legal provisions, active emphasis on the management's responsibility with respect to creating a place accessible to diverse audiences, provisions that make the need to ensure accessibility part of each employee's job description – similarly to provisions that guarantee compliance with labor law, health and safety rules, or the institution's best interest. Specific standards and guidelines may be some of the tools to this end, whereby people who work in particular areas can see to it that they are observed, and the documents are presented to colleagues as attachments to their contracts (we should consider such data as font size and contrast, for instance, but also the guidelines for designing educational activities).

Shared responsibility should start with the one who is in charge of organizing the institution, who has a say with respect to its budget – the funds needed to ensure accessibility should be secured as soon as the institution's budget for the following year is planned. It may also be necessary that the people who cannot use the institution's services due to its own negligence demand more accessibility from it. *The Act on Ensuring Accessibility* offers specific tools to do this, such as a request to ensure architectural accessibility and accessibility in terms of information and communication, or (in the absence of the public entity's reaction) a complaint that can be submitted by anyone that the act defines as a person with special needs or their legal representative. Furthermore, it is necessary to raise awareness among the institution's employees.

BUILDING A SUPPORT NETWORK

In our interviews about good practices, there was a recurring topic of engaging and building a team within a cultural institution that is focused on work around accessibility and inclusiveness, around a broadly perceived audience and its needs. In an interview with us, Bartek Lis described team building as "co-devising the institution together with the others who are in it," thus accentuating that it requires a lot of work. It would certainly involve an appeal to

values that the team can share. The sharing of responsibility is facilitated by a prior understanding of the ideas based on which the institution works. This can be achieved through sensitivity training, which teaches what accessibility is and what needs the audience of the institution has. It is not just about frontline employees or those who work in customer service and education, i.e., the people who are in contact with the audience most frequently. It is necessary to establish sensitivity to the various needs of people who manage the institution, prepare its program, curate and produce events, who are responsible for exhibition arrangement, communication, graphic design, people from accounting departments, administrative and organizational departments, those responsible for the technical condition of buildings, space layout, and cleanliness. Accessibility is not only a well-installed ramp, but also a ramp whose entrance has not been (even temporarily) blocked. It is an adapted restroom which does not serve as a storage room and is not locked. It is a space in which the creators' artistic vision does not expose the audience to sensory overload (at least not without warning). It is the budget for a performance, which covers the necessary costs related to making it accessible to specific groups within the audience. This awareness of the needs that a diverse audience has is best learned in contact with living people, when you can see their actual struggles, even with inaccessible space; this way, you see that these are not legal provisions but real people.

It is necessary to speak out loud about the fact that accessibility coordination cannot be another task added on top of many others, that it requires the support of colleagues and the management (as well as an adequate budget). We need strong support from the community – from non-governmental organizations and accessibility leaders because together we can improve the position of people who do a great job in institutions all over Poland. A job that usually goes unnoticed unless it is missing to some extent: when someone asks why something is not working, why there are no subtitles, why something is not available…

We want to move on from a narrow-minded idea of accessibility to opening institutions up in a broader sense. To counterbalance frustration and overload, we want to seek support for leaders of change. The challenges faced by

accessibility coordinators show that change, which is the pursuit of inclusive-ness, cannot be introduced by individuals who work in institutions. Culture does not need strongmen and strongwomen, and it cannot (and certainly does not have to) be built on sacrifice. Responsibility for introducing changes should be shared by a (well-managed) team.

On building team engagement

What seems to be good practice to me is to try to involve as many people from the team as possible because on the one hand, it is an opportunity for profes-sional development. On the other hand, [when] we meet with the audience, get to know new people, or notice new perspectives, it prevents burnout a little, i.e., a situation where one person is responsible for absolutely everything and needs to find an idea for all the workshops, guided tours, and other events that are happening. [Instead,] we share responsibility a bit and that is very valuable.

The third important thing about team engagement is definitely good atmos-phere. What this means is that when I remind the actors that the performance is translated into Polish Sign Language, nobody thinks about it, nobody tells me that "some lady will come and be a nuisance on stage," they just invite the interpreter to join them, they come out to applause with her. They're just one team, they're together and they know why she's there. And thanks to this, we have a really fun atmosphere and a lot of understanding. This prevents many difficulties: that the screen with subtitles will spoil the stage design; that this light on the interpreter should not be there because it is time for a blackout; that this audio description distorts the reception of the performance or any-thing else. There is a great understanding and such absolutely positive energy around it.

When it comes to good practice, reliable support in the team certainly counts, the opportunity to meet and exchange experiences, always being there at the workshop with someone, or on a guided tour. It's this cool partnership, where one person can focus on the whole group, while the other is in the workshop and can catch all those glimpses of more difficult situations, react to them and be there. I think that this is very valuable both for our participants and simply

for the hosts who feel comfortable with each other and who have this support in the form of knowledge that if there is any difficult situation, they have a partner who will help them out.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Marta Kurowska from Wrocławski Teatr Lalek (the Wroclaw Puppet Theater)**

On involving employees in action

Invite all employees to classes: accountants, directors, anyone who has something to do with a certain process in the institution. Invite them to an event for the Deaf or for the blind so that they have the opportunity to see what it actually is that you do, what is at the end of this difficult contract that you are preparing, what is at the end of the public procurement process or tender process that is difficult for many employees so that these people can see a person, so that they do not only see legal provisions, but instead, the particular people who benefit from our work, from what we do every day.
...
In our activities, our colleagues often represent different museum departments. You might even think that these are some strange departments. But our fellow computer scientists may come along on our walks as assistants. Such engagement of colleagues who work in office jobs in an educational activity that opens their eyes to our museum guests is worth its weight in gold. Let us involve our colleagues in co-creating educational, inclusive, and accessible events. This way we can learn from each other and from our visitors.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Elżbieta Lang from the Museum of Krakow**

On team diversity

My advice would be to introduce diversity into institutions, including their structures. If we want this unity in the institution, we must feel it, as I have

said several times before. And what better way is there to feel it than by asking my friend from the office if she would like some coffee, but I can't because she is deaf, for instance. Then I have to find a way around it. I have to figure it out as an employee – how to ask her if she would like some coffee. This is how I begin to think about how to incorporate her into the process.

The same goes for the people from Ukraine who work with us. After the full-scale invasion, there were people who came here and worked in a children's common room, for instance, and did not speak Polish at all, so again we had to come up with some ways to communicate with them. Institutional diversity increased. Consequently, we, as people working there, started to think about what to do so that it was immediately clear in which language we could communicate. At the time, we made name tags with flags and the languages we used, for example. This situation... made us immediately more inclusive because life forced us to be this way.

...To hire an expert who is blind, even for the time being, an expert in residence or simply [for good] is another interesting idea. Alternatively, you could invite a group with a disability or a group with a different approach that would tell you what they didn't like in the institution. Such encounters and collisions with this true diversity, natural diversity, and not just with the diversity we read about and see somewhere out there as if through a windowpane.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Krystian Kamiński from Galeria Labirynt in Lublin**

On actual coordination

As an accessibility coordinator, I believe that the role of a coordinator should be to set certain processes in motion, to consult and find consultants outside of the institution who will be self-advocates, and to make it all work – to facilitate communication between different people who do things that are accessible, i.e., the coordinator should be a bit of an expert within the institution... This is how I see it; this is the bright future we want. Even if someone is just

involved in coordinating, i.e., making everything work so that someone might ask, "What do you think about it?", or if they need to contact someone – the accessibility coordinator makes it possible and sets it in motion. This is a full-time job for at least one person.

It also depends on the institution, of course. In the case of ours, which employs over a hundred people and organizes a lot of events already, while there will be even more, with a few concerts and educational events a week – potentially, this is a job not for just one person but for a few. This is the kind of future that I would like to see – with at least one coordinator who deals with just coordination as opposed to everything: writing audio descriptions, alternative texts, and subtitles, inventing accessible and inclusive projects, applying for grants to fund these projects, etc. This is how it works now, and the person dealing with accessibility often has even more responsibilities.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Olga Curzydło from Sinfonia Varsovia**

Work culture

I would like to point out that accessibility is a very broad concept because it applies to the culture of work and to the way we see another person; to me, it is a key aspect of accessibility. Regardless of whether we think of people with disabilities, the elderly, children, immigrants, or other groups – I believe that in all of these instances, we always think of the human being. How do I communicate with another person, how do I treat them? Is there anything abusive happening here, or on the contrary – is this a kind of cooperation that is based on equality, a harmony of voices, on discovering each other's needs, on sharing responsibility, on subjectivity? From my point of view, this is the very core of accessibility thought. Then the measures implemented simply meet the needs of particular groups. Without this attitude, I believe it will be difficult to implement accessibility measures, and I think this is where many institutions that are legally obligated to implement accessibility fail. If the very structure of the

institution is abusive, then it is unhealthy as a whole. Hierarchy makes for an unhealthy work environment, which makes it difficult to talk about accessibility within it.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Justyna Wielgus from the Center for Inclusive Art (Teatr 21)**

Directions and hopes for the future

On the one hand, our publication was meant to be a map that shows different ways of thinking about inclusiveness, different strategies for developing it in an institution, and good practices that are worth sharing. On the other hand, we wanted it to discuss the challenges that institutions face with respect to inclusiveness and to indicate gray areas, those that require a more detailed description, a mindful approach. Certainly, one such gray area is that we must regard people who work in cultural institutions as important figures whose needs cannot be ignored. If the goal of an inclusive institution is to think about everyone's needs, we want to advocate for the needs of people who work in it. With respect to the directions in which institutions should develop in the future, it should be for them to show more attentiveness and care for the wellbeing of their employees. Perhaps a more democratic approach to working in institutions could be the way forward, as well as taking a critical look at hierarchical structures, building strong support networks, setting priorities, and changing the perspective to one in which not the quantity, but the quality of the actions taken is crucial.

Our ways of thinking about institutions and their role have been put to the test in recent years. What contributed to it was the COVID-19 pandemic, but rapid technological advancement, progress in terms of climate discourse, as well as social changes were significant in this context too. The traditional model of a cultural institution assumed that the institution itself was in charge of coming up with types of participation for its audience, thereby defining and imposing rules that had to be observed. Perhaps we are ready to realize that this system needs to be reconsidered. Diversity seems to be an important matter in this regard. The diversity of teams that make up institutions and the diversity within the audience that benefits from their activity. Diversity implies a multitude of ways in which individuals can interact with an institution – they no longer just passively receive its services. Ever stronger emphasis on audience surveys and participatory activities shows that more voices can be invited to design institutions' programs. We can see wealth and potential in their diversity. In order to

counterbalance consumerism, institutions can focus on being more attentive and quality driven. This is evident in various trends currently present in some organizations, e.g., in taking up the topic of environmental protection in the context of overproducing exhibitions or events.

A change in thinking about accessibility, which is still a challenge as we speak, is an esssential area where more work has to be done. But maybe we can imagine a future of institutions in which inclusiveness is invisible, in which it is an autonomous part of its space, its events, its entire program? It is our belief that we will grow to perceive it as something completely natural, integrated into every event. We wish Polish culture a future that is inclusive and open to diversity.

Diversity as the future of institutions

I think that we inevitably have to move towards inclusiveness because we will be becoming an increasingly heterogeneous society, because we are more aware now that we are not the same, especially young people are; different groups are beginning to fight for their rights and saying that they do not identify with the sex assigned to them at birth or that they are non-heteronormative. We will inevitably have to go in this direction. Furthermore, there's more and more foreigners in our country, both because of the war and because of corporations that are coming over here, so we will all have to go in this direction. The question is to what extent, how much of a priority it will be for us, and whether it doesn't crash into some kind of a barrier among employees – at least in some cultural institutions. Because it is a certain change, and perhaps not all cultural institutions employ people with a worldview that aligns with it. Probably not. Another thing is that I feel like more and more museums function a bit like community centers. I think it's fine. It's a shift that's already underway and will be progressing, just a change in their business profile. I know that not everyone thinks so. Not everyone likes it.

excerpts from an in-depth interview with **Marta Otrębska from the Emigration Museum in Gdynia**

Moving away from hierarchy

I think that cultural institutions that still operate in a very traditional model hardly ever go out of their way for people. Their attitude can be described as, "We are here, and you are over there. We rule in this community center, and you only come to visit us." But in the future, when no one visits them anymore, they will become irrelevant. For the time being, this still works for older generations who are used to things being this way: they see a community center as a kind of government building where there are some ladies sitting at their desks, taking phone calls, and moving some papers from one spot to another. But to young people, this is completely strange. We see this in our interns and trainees, for example (there are many people who choose to complete some educational milestones at our institution). They are shocked. They openly ask us why they should do any of this. When this generation enters adulthood, this later kind of adulthood, I doubt that they will want to work in such an obsolete model.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Agnieszka Zielonka-Mitura from the Communal Community Center in Suszec**

Accessibility as a natural thing

I can tell you which way I would like us to go: I want accessibility as an absolutely natural phenomenon, a situation where very different viewers exercise their rights, …where they approach us and say: "Yes, we want to visit you, offer us something." Such accessibility means viewers who open up a little and don't feel distrustful of completely new things…

And when I talk about new things, what I mean is that a theater that had not employed audio descriptions before… or was not accessible at all or was accessible only in the form of a radio play, can become a place which everyone will visit from time to time. My dream is to reach the level of accessibility where it just is, where we don't have to host webinars and conferences about it or apply for big grants and funds, where we have achieved this kind of mindfulness and common space where those who want to be there will just be there.

This is my dream. Which way will we go? Hard to tell. I definitely see considerable competition in this area because now there are additional financial resources allocated to accessibility measures. Therefore, there are a lot of activities in the city that are aimed at attracting a bit of this audience because it will look good in grant statistics. It is not necessarily related to the actual program or to what we want to do. So, I hope that accessibility stops being a bonus, but instead arises from actual needs and becomes something natural.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Marta Kurowska from Wrocławski Teatr Lalek (the Wroclaw Puppet Theater)**

On the issues with the word "inclusiveness"

I dream that together – because this is the work that we all have to do – we can abolish the division into "us" and "you" or "us" and "them." Because the landscape in which we live is not like that, it's not homogeneous. Many groups are still hiding in private spaces exactly because this division is very prevalent. Perhaps this breath of fresh air coming from public places will fill other spaces with such thinking about design too – without a clear-cut separation and in consideration of how different we all are, how we all have different levels of fitness, different sensitivities and abilities. And we should not treat it as a problem but instead – as a potential, we should learn to see that this diversity can enrich an institution. We should realize that fitness is temporary, as is full ability. Assuming that it never changes is false. And to treat the place that I am a part of as one that anyone can enter.

And then, if we maintain this thinking, there will be no need to call anything inclusive. Emphasizing inclusiveness in language very often implies that something is designed especially for someone in particular. This already generates selection, segregation, and separation. It's not always fun to be the extraordinary one, the special one, the one for whom you always have to do something special... Activists campaigning for people with disabilities often ask: who includes whom here? This is another way in which the power of the majority over the minority manifests itself. Even among people with good intentions, this

phenomenon is still very prevalent. And paradoxically, it is not attractive – it's off-putting. Therefore, I think we need to "re-focus." We can start with ourselves, with our own position. If I consider myself a fit, fully able person, I can treat this as something that is not going to last forever... If I think about the institution that I design a program for from this point of view, there's no need to constantly call myself inclusive and make it clear to others.

[The point is] not to create elitist institutions. Because this is a kind of elitism governed by a majority. It's like elitism in reverse because elitism is usually attributed to small groups. But institutions are created elitist because they only think of a very narrow segment of their audience. Those who move on both legs, can hear, see, who don't react to loud music in some [untypical] way, etc. If we start to think in a more open-minded way, then this need to define inclusiveness will disappear.

But now we live in Poland at a time when naming certain things is necessary. That is why we are called the Center for Inclusive Art. We don't love this name, and we would prefer that it didn't exist. On the other hand, [we are] aware that this is a stage at which some people need allies. As an institution, we feel like an ally. We are an allied institution that aims to support artists in their coming out into public spaces.

The word "inclusive" is not fitting, but there is no good word. The English expressions "include, inclusion" are not perfect words – they have stigmatizing undertones. Whenever I meet with different people, I insist that we try and find a better word together, all the time. But we have not succeeded yet. However, it is important to stress things, develop new directions, new practices. So that at some point we can simply call ourselves a Center for Performing Arts, so that it no longer has to be called inclusive because it will be known that it is a place for everyone.

an excerpt from an in-depth interview with **Justyna Wielgus from the Center for Inclusive Art (Teatr 21)**

Survey questions

1. Why do you work in accessibility?

2. How long have you been working in accessibility?

   a) for several weeks/months,
   b) for a year,
   c) for 2 to 3 years,
   d) for 4 to 5 years,
   e) for 6 years or more.

3. What were the beginnings of your work in the field of accessibility?

4. What is the nature of your position?

   a) I work in a separate position of an accessibility coordinator,
   b) I work as an accessibility coordinator, but I combine it with another position,
   c) I work in accessibility, but I do not hold the title of an accessibility coordinator.

5. If accessibility coordination does not comprise the entire scope of your work, tell us what your other tasks in the institution are (e.g., promotion, education, coordination of events…).

6. Is accessibility an item in your job description?

    a) yes,
    b) no.

7. Does anyone else deal with accessibility besides you? If so, with whom on your team do you share your tasks?

8. List five main tasks that you work on in the field of accessibility in your institution.

9. What emotions do you associate with your work on building accessibility most of the time?

10. What difficulties do you face in your institution when working in the field of accessibility? How do you assess your cooperation with other employees or departments in this respect?

11. What are the biggest challenges that you face in working with the audience?

12. How do you make decisions about accessibility? Do you carry out audience surveys? If so, in what form?

13. What are your tips for people who are just setting out to introduce accessibility measures in their institutions, who are at the beginning of this journey?

14. Where do you get inspiration from in the field of accessibility? What are you missing?

15. What do you think the future of cultural institutions holds when it comes to accessibility?

16. Is there anything else that you would like to share?

17. What kind of a cultural institution do you work for?

    a) community center,
    b) museum or art gallery,
    c) theater,
    d) cinema,
    e) musical institution,
    f) library,
    g) other.

18. What kind of a municipality do you work in?

    a) a village,
    b) a town with the population of up to 50000 inhabitants,
    c) a town with the population of 50001 to 100000 inhabitants,
    d) a city with the population of 100001 to 500000 inhabitants,
    e) a city with the population of more than 500000 inhabitants.

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MAŁOPOLSKA

Barbara Pasterak – heater pedagogue, curator of artistic programs, creativity classes instructor, animator of culture. She coordinates and executes educational activities with respect to theater and modern art for people with disabilities. She deals with the audio description of art and theatrical plays. From 2016 to 2022, she coordinated educational programs and accessibility measures at the Center for Documentation of the Art of Tadeusz Kantor CRICOTEKA in Krakow. Co-founder of Stowarzyszenie Dobrze.

Jakub Studziński – historian, museum worker, teacher of the Deaf, main specialist for cultural education. He is the coordinator of accessibility and the program "Malopolska. Empathetic culture" at the Malopolska Institute of Culture in Krakow. Expert interpreter and teacher of Polish Sign Language. Guide to cultural institutions in Krakow. Animator of culture. His primary area of expertise is inclusivity in culture – he tries his best that the cultural institutions of Malopolska are open to people with different needs. To achieve this goal, he educates people, talks to them, supports them, raises their awareness of these issues, and participates in action.

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