

In order to facilitate the research tasks of the ACT Project and to make easier the participation of the blind or partially sighted people on April 30 a focus group has been carried out with the collaboration of the association Assemblea per la Diversitat. Assemblea per la Diversitat is an association of young blind people or with low vision which organises cultural activities and works to improve accessibility in Barcelona. The focus group was organised in the context of a cultural visit to a Village and there were nine participants: Jordi Cardús, Anna Costa, Eudald Jané, Alba Mestres, Maria Petit, Joan Roig, Víctor Sánchez, Marina Vargas and Iris Permuy (helper*).

The activity was organised in three different parts. Firstly, there was an explanation about the ACT Project and their objectives and, after that, participants were informed about its consentment and how to answer the formulaire. Secondly, we carried out the debate about culture, scenic arts and accessibility during one hour. In the end, participants who were interested to answer the questionnaire by an interview had the possibility to do it with the aid of a volontaire.

The idea of the debate was to let the participants speak as free as possible and not to interfere in the discussion. Even though, there were five questions prepared in order to guide the debate and facilitate it mainly at the beginning. These questions were the ones proposed to the participants.

- What do you think about your experience attending cultural events, particularly theatre and scenic arts?
- - What do you think about the accessibility services provided?
- - What are the most positive aspects of your experience? And which aspects are the most negative?
- - Do you feel that these services are progressing properly?
- What do you think about these three aspects: staff training concerning accessibility, planification and communication?

At the beginning the participants needed some help in order to discuss, but ten minutes later there was a fluid debate. The first idea to point out is the opinion that accessibility services are helpful, but these services are not as good as it could. The second idea that came out was people assist to cultural events even if there are no accessibility facilities, in spite of the fact that accessibility is a right.

There were some difficulties and different points of view concerning the opinion of the staff. Some people think that in general all the staff members of a cultural venue has at least good will and some participants were satisfied. Some others (the guide dog user, for instance) explained troubles related to questions such as access to the venue, information, box office staff and ushers. In any case, everybody agreed that there was a lack of training and workers should know some basic information in order to provide a better service to the patrons.

Participants complained the difficulties finding a date to assist to the theatre as well. Most of the times there's just one day in which the venue provides accessibility services, though the play is carried out many different days. The participants understand that there are logistic difficulties such as audiodescription availability, reduced quantity of audiodescription users or economical reasons. Even though, participants highlight it's a problem not to choose the date.

Concerning accessibility questions during the event, opinions varied depending on the fact if the person is totally blind or partially sighted. In any case, people is very satisfied with audiodescriptions and most of the participants are glad with the role of the audiodescriptors. However, some participants pointed out that sometimes there were explanations hard to understand and lacks or saturation of information.

Blind people complained that sometimes (mainly in the opera) they were allocated in the worst places. Besides, blind people explained that sometimes audiodescription devices doesn't work

properly, are not easy to understand or battery runs out during the event. Partially sighted people agree with this opinion, though audiodescription is not as important for them.

Only two participants remembered have used information sheets in braille once or twice. These participants explained that sheets in braille were provided in a special play related to disability and in general venues don't care about this facility. On the other hand, partially sighted participants are not satisfied with the fact that the text could be larger most of the times or there's not enough contrast, which make reading harder.

Information about accessibility is only provided in the web page of the venue and not always. Some participants receive information about cultural events and accessibility through mailing services provided by associations or the public administration. Finally, most of the participants complained the fact that cinema or TV series could be totally accessible, taking into account current technological aids and devices, but there's a lack of organisation and will.