

L'essentiel

A dynamic to be welcomed in favour of programme accessibility, a lag to be made up in terms of representing disability and its diversity

In 2021, Arcom found that - with few exceptions - broadcasters complied with their legal and contractual obligations regarding programme accessibility. Some broadcasters have offered a volume of accessible programmes that is far in excess of their contractual commitments. This encouraging dynamic is a timely accompaniment to the extension of Arcom's jurisdiction into the field of accessibility to on-demand audiovisual media services (ODAVMS) and to distributors.

On the other hand, the representation of persons with disabilities in the programmes (0.8%) remains far below the share of persons with disabilities in society (12 million people according to INSEE, including non-visible disabilities, i.e., about 20% of the population).

Arcom also notes significant disparities between channels and programme genres. In addition, the profile of persons with disabilities in the programmes shows imbalances with regard to other diversity criteria. Thus, it appears that the majority of persons with disabilities are still men (67%) and are perceived as Caucasian (90%).

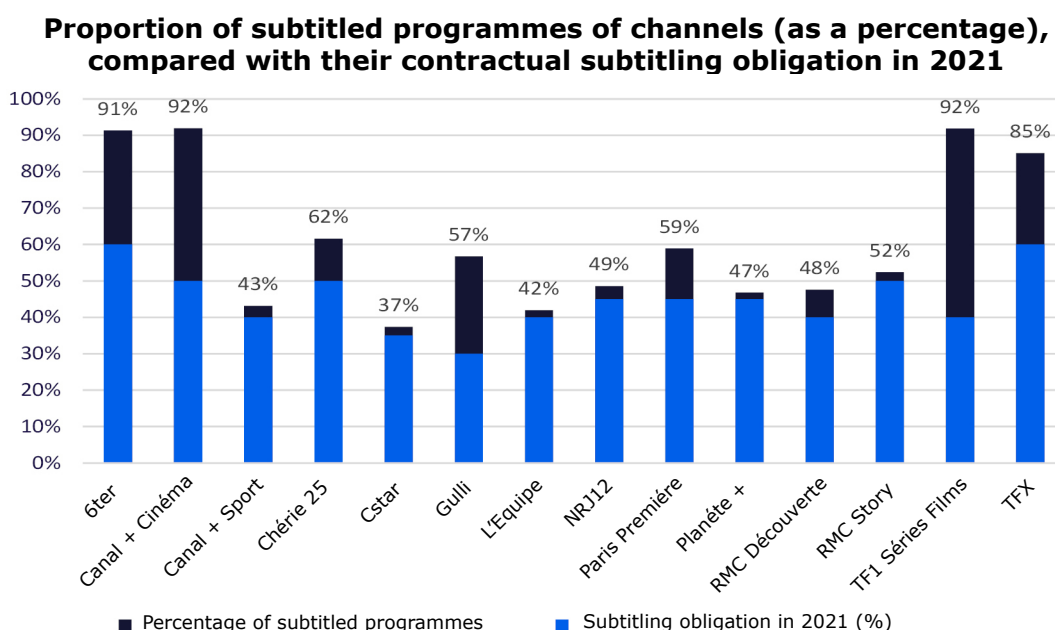
In this context, the Jouons ensemble (Let's Play Together) campaign highlights the value of parasports broadcasting, whose broadcast of the Tokyo Paralympic Games achieved relative audience successes.

Accessibility: beyond compliance with obligations, initiatives to be welcomed

In terms of subtitling, sign language interpretation, and audio description, several channels have exceeded their obligations.

Subtitling

Some channels have gone far beyond their contractual obligations to subtitle programmes.



Sign language

The Act of 30 September 1986 does not impose any obligation on audiovisual operators to provide interpretation into French sign language (FSL). However, some obligations exist in the agreements with Arcom. Nevertheless, some audiovisual operators voluntarily offer programmes interpreted into FSL for deaf or hearing-impaired persons, without any legal or contractual obligation.

Interpretation into FSL

- **France Télévisions** offered two programmes interpreted into FSL each week: the daily news programme *Télématin* on France 2 and the weekly magazine, *L'œil et la main* on France 5.
- **TF1** offered almost 10 hours of special editions with interpretation into FSL, including a special edition devoted to Josephine Baker's induction into the Pantheon¹.
- **The M6 group** has proposed an FSL offering for children: *Mes tubes en signes (My Hits in Signs)*, a programme that offers children the opportunity to learn a song in sign language, and *C'est bon signe (It's a Good Sign)*,

a programme that makes young people aware of the daily lives of deaf and hearing-impaired persons. The M6 group has also made various programmes translated into sign language available on its catch-up television services: on 6play, *Le 10 minutes*, a news programme, aims to inform deaf and hearing-impaired persons, but also to raise awareness among hearing persons of deaf culture and sign language.

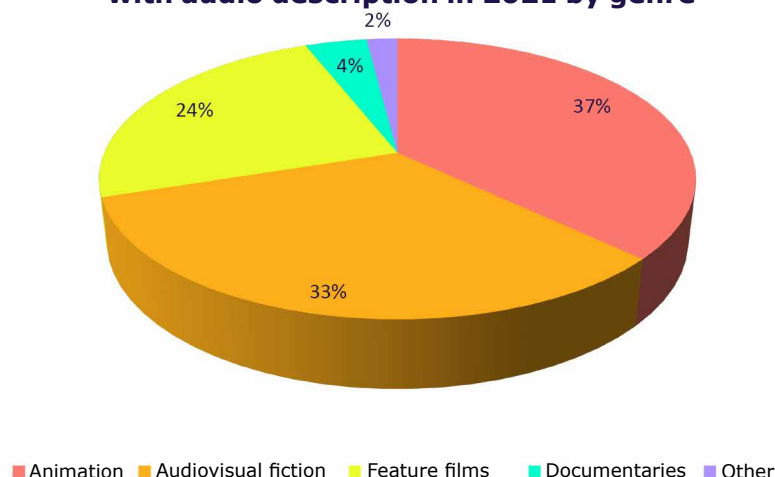
Audio description

According to the information submitted to the Authority, seventeen private channels and the France Télévisions group **met or exceeded their contractual obligations to broadcast audio-described programmes.**

A special effort aimed at young audiences

The Authority encourages channels to make a special effort to offer audio-described programmes for children and adolescents.

Distribution of programmes available with audio description in 2021 by genre



Source: Data provided by the channels in early 2022²

An analysis of the graph opposite shows that 37% of the audio-described programmes are animated programmes, a genre traditionally aimed at a young audience. Moreover, 9% of feature films are animated³, which demonstrates a significant effort to make audiovisual and cinematographic works accessible to blind or visually-impaired children and adolescents.

¹ See below, L'accessibilité des événements importants et du débat démocratique (Accessibility of important events and democratic debate).

² The "Other" category includes the following programme genres: periodic programmes, shows/concerts, short films, sport, entertainment.

³ Source: data provided by the channels in early 2022, analysed according to the Arcom classification system.

Commitments to be extended

In accordance with the AVMS Directive, commitments have been negotiated with the relevant ODAVMS broadcasters. These commitments are contained in the agreements for such services, the first of which were concluded by Arcom in 2022. In parallel with the agreements concluded with ODAVMS broadcasters, the Authority has initiated a process of amending the agreements of cable television services so that they reflect the new obligations laid down by law for catch-up TV services.

The role of audiovisual media service distributors

The extension of Arcom’s jurisdiction into the area of programme accessibility has been accompanied by an obligation for distributors to report to the regulator on their actions to improve the accessibility of the services they distribute.

Accessibility of interfaces

In addition to the accessibility of the content, work needs to be done on the accessibility of the means of accessing the content, so that people with visual disabilities can use the interfaces independently. In the agreements concluded with Arcom, broadcasters have committed to improving interfaces accessibility which enables browsing the ODAVMS programme catalogue

This subject will also be at the heart of the Authority’s discussions with content distributors, so that the accessibility of the services they offer may be improved.

Representing disability in the programmes: a lag to be made up

The latest wave of the Survey on Diversity on Television shows that the share of persons with disabilities was 0.8% in 2021. This proportion, which has risen very slightly compared to previous years, is still well below the proportion of actual disabled persons in society.

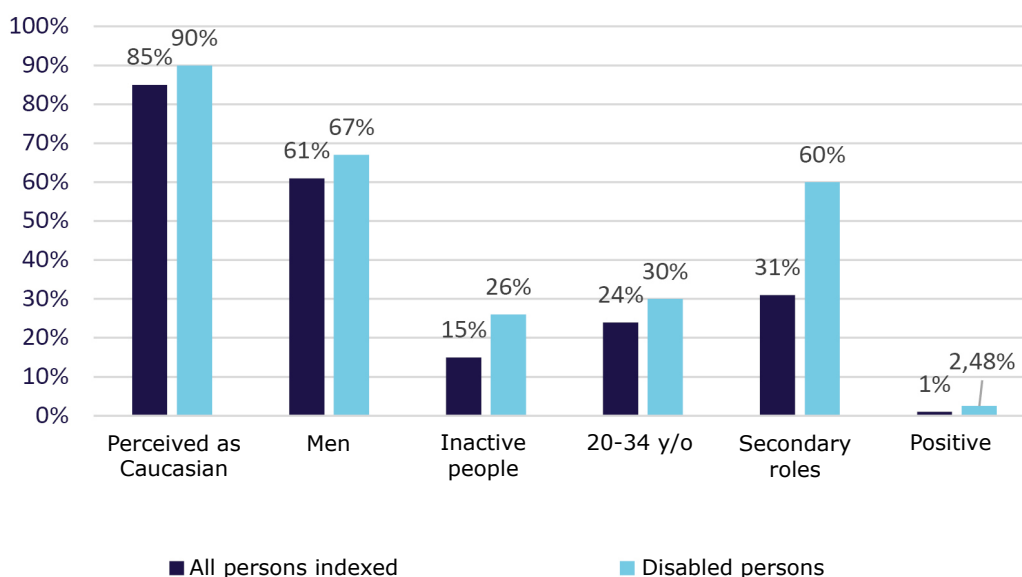
featured the fewest persons with disabilities in their programmes, in contrast to the UK, for example, where 8.3% of the people featured in programmes were shown to have a disability.

Strong disparities and a lack of diversity

In order to understand how far French television broadcasters have to go in this area, we should mention the second study entitled, “Diversity and public service media”, published on 16 May 2022 by the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the main alliance of public service media in the world. The study found that, in 2020, France was one of the countries whose public television services

The Authority also notes that there are significant disparities in this rate between channels and programme genres. In addition, the profile of persons with disabilities in the programmes shows imbalances with regard to other diversity criteria. Thus, it appears that the majority of persons with disabilities are still men (67%) and are perceived as Caucasian (90%).

Typical profile of persons with disabilities indexed



Source: Arcom - Diversity Barometer

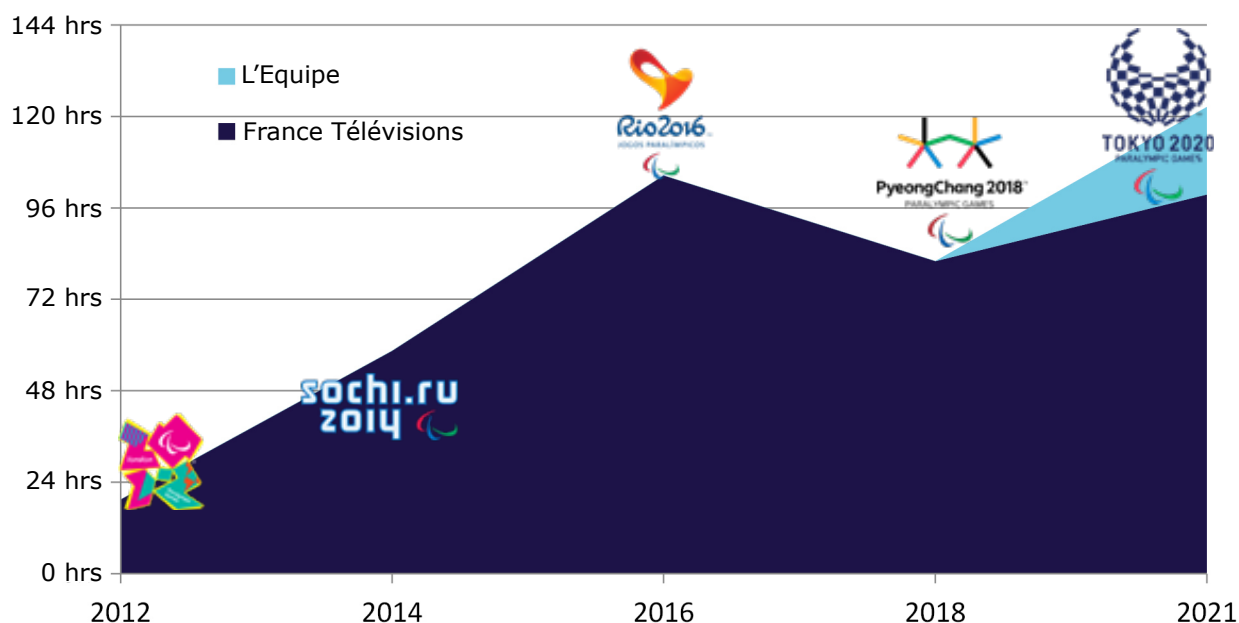
In detail, the latest results of the survey confirm the profile of persons with disabilities appearing in the programmes, already observed in previous waves. Thus, persons with disabilities remain predominantly male (67%*) and are perceived as Caucasian (90%*). Furthermore, inactive people are still over-represented among persons with disabilities (26%* compared to 15%* for all people indexed). Similarly, the share of people aged 20-34 is higher among disabled people than among all people indexed (30%* versus 24%*).

Parasports: a difference in audience

The year 2021 was marked by the first edition of the "Jouons ensemble (Let's play together)" operation and by the Tokyo Paralympic Games, which helped to increase the visibility of parasports in the audiovisual media.

The number of hours dedicated to the broadcast of the Paralympic Games has increased fourfold in less than 10 years, which is very positive, especially as the programmes are finding viewership.

Free television broadcasting of programmes dedicated to the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games over the 2012-2021 period

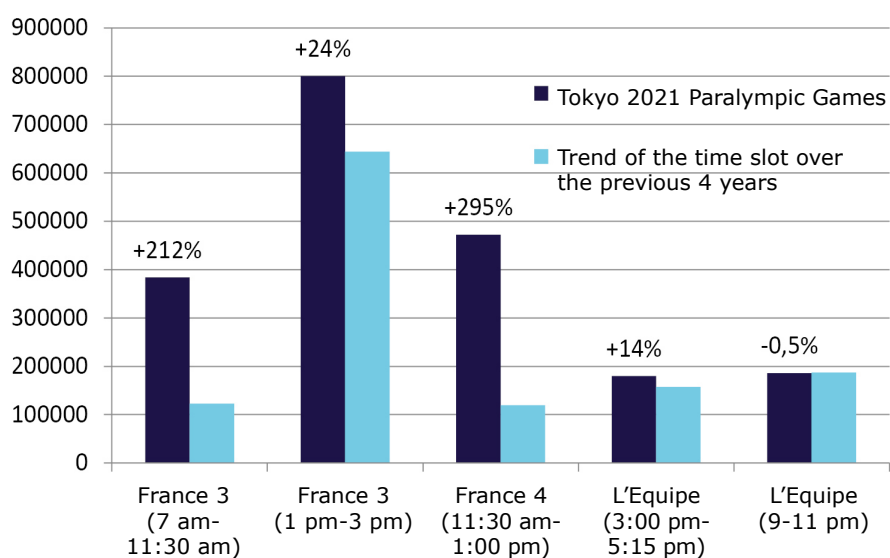


Source: Arcom – DPPCS

The channel France 3, the main channel for broadcasting the event, captured 9.1% of the audience, a record for the Paralympic Games. It should be noted that broadcasting the event generally enabled the channels concerned to improve their audience figures for the time slots in question

compared with normal levels. This is particularly true of the morning broadcasts on France 3 and the midday broadcasts on France 4, where the audience more than tripled compared to normal.

Change in the audience of television services broadcasting the Tokyo 2021 Paralympic Games



Source: Médiamétrie - Arcom processing

Finally, the report mentions **the initiatives of various broadcasters to promote the representation of persons with disabilities in the programmes.**

The Authority particularly welcomes the actions taken to address the shortcomings highlighted by the survey.