



## Intellectual Output 2 – Final Report

# EASIT (Easy Access for Social Inclusion Training)

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<b>Partners:</b>	Dyslexiförbundet (DYS) Radiotelevizija Slovenija Jani Zavod Ljubljana (RTVSLO) Sprachen und Dolmetscher Institut München (SDI) Stiftung Universität Hildesheim (SUH) Università degli Studi di Trieste (UNITS) Universidade de Vigo (UVIGO) Zavod RISA (RISA)





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**Abstract:** This report summarises the results of the project activities conducted during IO2. The goal was to provide recommendations to produce audiovisual information that is easy-to-understand. As defined in the project, IO2 focused on three types of information: news, subtitles, and audio descriptions. The data was gathered qualitatively through focus groups and interviews. The main outputs of this IO are sets of recommendations.

**Dissemination level:** P

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## Contributors

Name	Surname	Organisation	Email
David	Drevs	SDI München	David.drevs@sdi-muenchen.de
Rocío	Bernabé Caro	SDI München	Rocio.bernabe@sdi-muenchen.de
Anna	Matamala	UAB	Anna.matamala@uab.cat
Pilar	Orero	UAB	Pilar.orero@uab.cat
Carme	Mangiron	UAB	carme.mangiron@uab.cat
Elisa	Perego	UNITS	eperego@units.it
Tatjana	Knapp	RISA	tatjana@risa.si
Veronika	Rot	RTV-SLO	Veronika.Rot@rtvslo.si
Ester	Hedberg	Dyslexiförbundet	ester.hedberg@dyslexi.org
Pablo	Romero Fresco	UVIGO	p.romero-fresco@roehampton.ac.uk
Sergio	Hernández	SUH	hernande@uni-hildesheim.de

## Advisory Board Revision

Ms Clara Delgado, from CEAPAT IMSERSO, Spain



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## List of acronyms

<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Written-out form</b>
AD	Audio description
COGA	Cognitive and Learning Disabilities Accessibility Task Force
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
E2R	Easy to Read
E2U	Easy-to-understand
IO	Intellectual Output
IT	Information Technology
PL	Plain Language
W3C	World Wide Web Consortium
WCAG	Web Content Accessibility Guidelines

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# 1 Introduction

This document reports on the aims, development, and results of Intellectual Output 2 (IO2). IO2 applied qualitative research methods to provide a series of recommendations on the creation of easy-to-understand (E2U) content (news) and access services (subtitles and audio descriptions [AD]). For simplification purposes, in this document, we would use the term 'E2U services' to refer to all three. IO2 report focuses on the results of the qualitative study. Detailed descriptions on how to adapt or create E2U content for each E2U service will be the topic in various scientific articles emerging from this report.

The IO development followed a user-centric approach and involved different stakeholder profiles: experts in audiovisual translation, professionals in access services and in simplification methods, professionals working with end-users<sup>1</sup>, researchers, and end-users. The applied qualitative methods included focus groups and interviews. All project partners contributed to IO2 and this report.

IO2 started in October 2019, one month after IO1 since both work packages aimed to deliver the basis for IO3 (description of competences, knowledge, and skills) and IO4 (curriculum design). While IO1 focused on providing a better picture of current practices and training, IO2 focused on defining sets of recommendations to create E2U subtitles, audio descriptions, and news. To our knowledge, none of these topics has been researched before.

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<sup>1</sup> In this document, the term 'end-users' is used to refer to people who use easy-to-understand information.

Overall, IO2 Report aims to present the views and recommendations provided during the discussion groups and the interviews by participants (experts and professionals in subtitling and audio descriptions, multimedia journalists, radio and TV journalists, and users of E2R content). A more detailed analysis of the results will be disseminated through academic articles.

Table 1 provides an overview of IO2.

**Table 1: IO2 Overview**

Item	Description
Output identification	IO2
Output title	Innovation in hybrid services: recommendations in audiovisual media
E2U title	Output 2. Recommendations for audiovisual information
Description	<p>Easy-to-understand information has mainly focused on printed documents, but in our digital society audiovisual content is key to participation and social inclusion and, thus, access should be guaranteed.</p> <p>Some access services such as audio description for persons with sight loss, subtitling (standard and for persons with hearing loss), and news are offered in audiovisual media to a different extent depending on the EU country involved. However, there are still some user needs to be catered for: several segments of the population still find it difficult to read or understand content. There is also a need to define guidelines to</p>



<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
	<p>overcome this challenge.</p> <p>IO2 worked towards developing a series of recommendations on how E2U content may be created or adapted in an audiovisual media context (e.g. to produce more accessible TV news, news), with a focus on innovative access services such as E2U subtitles or E2U audio description. These modalities have been chosen to enable cross-fertilization with the EU co-funded projects ADLAB PRO and ILSA. This approach will allow EASIT partners to go beyond existing projects to create even more innovative or specialized professional profiles in the realm of media accessibility.</p> <p>EASIT will produce training materials that can enable, for instance, a journalist to create E2U TV or news, an audio describer to create E2U audio descriptions, or a subtitler to create E2U subtitles. In this way, it will contribute to expand and fine-tune already existing professional profiles or to develop new ones.</p> <p>The final output of this IO will describe how existing professionals such as audio describers, subtitlers, or journalists, as well end-users think that simplification methods can be integrated into their practice.</p> <p>These recommendations may consider a taxonomy of different types of access services, content, or audiovisual transfer modes as a starting point.</p>



<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>
	The final output will have a two-fold function: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="475 450 1422 539">• it will serve as a starting point for the development of subsequent project IOs and</li><li data-bbox="475 573 1422 663">• it will also function as ready-to-use recommendations for professionals.</li></ul>
Start date	1 October 2018
End date	30 April 2019
Languages	English
Available media	Text file and publications
Leading organisation	SDI München
Participating organisations	All partners



## 2 Accessible content for all

Reading enables access to content. However, not everyone can read, and many people face reading and comprehension barriers.

In our knowledge society, digital information and audiovisual media are key enablers for communication, education, and full social and democratic participation. According to Article 9 and Article 21 of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities<sup>2</sup> (CRPD), accessible audiovisual communication through the Internet and multimedia can be achieved by taking into account accessibility at different levels, i.e. technology, design, and content. The result would be cognitive-accessible audiovisual content. According to the definition of cognitive accessibility provided by Johansson (2016:20), this type of content 'can be used by people from a population with the widest range of cognitive characteristics and capabilities to achieve a specified goal in a specified context of use'.

Article 9 refers to the adoption of 'appropriate measures' (UN, 2018:10) to eliminate barriers in the interaction of users with the environment, which includes not only buildings but also information and communication services. In other words, audiovisual content itself must be accessible, but also the devices, platforms, and digital environments (Bernabé & Orero, forthcoming; Bernabé, forthcoming).

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/convention-on-the-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities.html>

Technical and design accessibility can be improved by following the Web Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) published by the World Wide Web (W3C) consortium. The WCAG provide an extensive catalogue of Success Criteria to assist developers and designers. Currently, the Cognitive and Learning Disabilities Accessibility Task Force<sup>3</sup> (COGA) is the W3C working group in charge of describing Success Criteria to foster cognitive-accessible design and interaction. Its efforts have already translated into four new criteria in the current version, WCAG 2.1 (The Paciello Group, 2018).

Article 21 is related to the 'right of freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information' (UN, 2018:15). To exercise these rights, content accessibility and the individual ability to decode and to understand texts are critical. For instance, a low-sighted person will not be able to read an electoral programme if the font-size is small and pages are overloaded with information. A further example would be a person with reading disabilities or limited language skills, who may not understand the same document because of a complex or ambiguous language or an intricate design. Such barriers can be overcome by considering cognitive accessibility and following text simplification methods.

Plain Language and Easy to Read are text simplification methods that can be used to make information accessible for readers with learning, reading, or understanding difficulties. These text simplification methods aim to improve content readability and understandability by using linguistic and design recommendations as well as guidelines—as is in the specific case of Easy to Read. The use of these methods to create easy-to-understand news and audiovisual content can assist a wide range of users who struggle with comprehension difficulties emerging either from personal, situational factors, or both. Some examples of these user profiles are:

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.w3.org/WAI/GL/task-forces/coga/#publications>



- 1** A person without listening comprehension difficulties and without reading comprehension difficulties) will not need E2U adaptations regularly. However, E2U versions would be useful, for instance, for persons with temporary impairments and for all who prefer a more explicit text that focuses on the essence of the message.
- 2** A person with difficulties in listening comprehension but without difficulties in reading comprehension would be able to use subtitles without any E2U adaptation. However, this group may benefit from E2U subtitles because the reduced effort dedicated to understanding the subtitle would provide more time to enjoy the viewing of the content.
- 3** A person with listening and reading comprehension difficulties would use E2U subtitles to compensate for the difficulties in listening and to facilitate the understanding of the plot or the story by a more readable and understandable E2U subtitle. These users could also benefit from E2U subtitles that use graphical symbols such as emojis as well as from 'extras', meaning additional information in E2R or PL provided through the platform or included in the DVD.
- 4** A person with low literacy and listening comprehension difficulties or who has serious reading comprehension difficulties would benefit from E2U audio descriptions and extra content. This additional information could be provided visually by text that combines text and pictures or aurally by an easy-to-understand audio.
- 5** Blended profiles are possible; for instance, user 3 could also benefit from E2U audio descriptions and user 4 from E2U subtitles. These users would have access to a more customisable service and the choice to select a preferred perception mode, reading or listening. Though a simultaneous use of both, E2U audio description and E2U, is also possible, the question of its usefulness arises.

To sum up, news and audiovisual information often require a level of literacy that makes it cognitive-inaccessible for some audiences. The provision of E2U news, E2U subtitles, and E2U audio descriptions may assist them to overcome such barriers. At a content level, E2U audiovisual information can be produced by using current recommendations and guidelines in text simplification. This IO focuses on collecting views and recommendations from end-users, professionals in access services and in simplification methods to extend current recommendations in making audiovisual content cognitive accessible.

### **3 Aims**

IO2 has aimed to provide recommendations on the creation of E2U content (news) and access services (subtitles and audio descriptions). The development process included these stages:

- 1** Drafting protocols and ethical documents for the discussion groups and the interviews.
- 2** Collecting data through discussion groups. The groups discussed the feasibility and viability of creating E2U subtitles, audio descriptions, and news.
- 3** Collecting data through semi-structured interviews with experts in both text simplification methods, Easy to Read and Plain Language, and media accessibility experts, subtitlers, audio describers, and journalists.
- 4** Drafting of individual reports.
- 5** Data analysis, collation, and provision of recommendations.
- 6** Drafting a final report.

## 4 Key performance indicators

All Key Performance Indicators associated with IO2 during the project submission were fulfilled. These were:

### **1 Number of hybridisation candidates identified: audiovisual media areas**

IO2 results show that Plain Language and Easy to Read methods can be used to create subtitles, audio descriptions, and content for news. Though all modalities and types of content were identified as feasible candidates, some were considered less viable, such as live modalities, films with complicated plots, or certain journalistic content types such as opinion articles or debates.

### **2 Protocols for interviews and/or focus groups have been developed and translated, if needed.**

Two protocols, one for the discussion groups and one for the interviews, were created collaboratively and followed through during implementation. The protocols were written in English. Discussion group and interview questions were part of the protocols (see section 5.3.1). Discussion group questions were translated into Catalan, German, and Slovene. Interview questions were translated into German, Spanish, Italian, Swedish, and Slovene.

### **3 Number of qualitative interviews carried out**

A total number of 23 interviews were conducted (see section 5.3.2 for detailed information).

#### **4 Representativeness has been taken into account in the focus groups/interviews**

Interviewees matched the identified expert profiles and included: 9 subtitlers, 1 video accessibility expert, 6 audio describers, 1 AD course coordinator, 1 expert in accessibility working for an end-user association, 1 expert in AD and audiovisual translation, 1 expert in news and in E2U news, and 3 journalists. (See section 5.3.2 for detailed information).

#### **5 Visual representation of the suggested taxonomy, if considered, of hybrid profiles is accessible through the project webpage.**

The visual representation is included in this report under section 7.5. This report will be available from the project website.

## **5 IO Development**

The development of this IO2 drew on the assumption that experts in both simplification methods—Plain Language and Easy to Read— and media fields—news, AD, and subtitling—have the knowledge and expertise to provide advice and recommendations about how to create E2U audiovisual content and to identify necessary skills for future training.

The adopted methodology was, hence, qualitative and included the two data collection techniques: discussion groups and interviews (see sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 in this document). The discussion groups took place first and aimed to gather general views about the need for easy-to-understand audiovisual content and how to create it. Semi-structured Interviews were then conducted to obtain a deeper understanding of the topics already explored in the discussion groups.

IO2 development encompassed these phases:



- 1** drafting protocols (Annex I and II) and ethical documents for the discussion groups and the interviews (Annex III),
- 2** data collection through discussion groups,
- 3** data collection through semi-structured interviews,
- 4** drafting of individual reports,
- 5** data analysis, collation, and provision of recommendations, and
- 6** drafting the final report.

The sections below provide a more detailed description of each stage.

## **5.1 Protocols**

Protocols were developed for both discussion groups and interviews in order to (Harrell and Bradley, 2009):

- be clear about the aims,
- prioritise research questions,
- identify participants,
- guarantee consistency
  - across facilitators/interviewers and
  - across participants.

The protocols are adapted versions of the protocol by Boyle and Neale (2006). They are included in Annex I and II of this report.

Both protocols shared the same structure and provided instructions about:

- 1** What to say when recruiting potential participants,
- 2** What to say to participants when setting up the discussion group/interviews,

- 3** What to say to participants at the beginning of the discussion group/interviews,
- 4** What to say to participants at the end of the discussion group/interviews,
- 5** What to do during the discussion/interview, and
- 6** What to do following the discussion/interview.

### **5.1.1 Recruitment**

This section of the protocols provided three types of information: key points about how to approach participants, a list of necessary documents for recruitment, and an example text for the recruitment email.

Each partner was in charge of recruitment. The four defined categories of participants were:

- access services professionals: subtitlers and audio describers,
- journalists: multimedia news editing,
- professionals in Easy to Read (E2R) or Plain Language (PL), and
- End-users of simplified content, either by PL or E2R.

### **5.1.2 Beginning of the discussion/interview**

This section provided key points to begin the discussion groups/interviews and example texts for the facilitator/interviewer.

For the discussion groups, partners identified the need to start with a short presentation about the main topic “easy-to-understand audiovisual content”. The presentation described how the concept “easy-to-understand” is used in the project and provided general information about the audiovisual mode (subtitling and AD) and accessible TV and radio news. Each partner adapted the presentation to the needs of the individual discussion groups.



### **5.1.3 Questions guide**

This section presented the topics and the agreed questions.

### **5.1.4 Concluding the discussion group/interview**

This section provided key points and an example of closing remarks and questions for both discussion groups and interviews.

### **5.1.5 Actions following the discussion/interviews**

Facilitators and interviewers received a list of instructions about how to proceed with the collected data, how and where to store the data, and the creation of individual reports.

### **5.1.6 Drafting the final report**

This section provided the IO leader with a series of key points for the creation of the final IO2 report.

## **5.2 Ethical aspects and documents**

Based on the ethical protocol approved by UAB ethical committee<sup>4</sup> two documents were used:

- an informed consent form to participation in the discussion groups/interviews

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<sup>4</sup> Comissió d'Ètica en Experimentació Animal i Humana (CEEAH)  
<https://www.uab.cat/web/ceeah/presentation-1345735629010.html>

Participants were requested to sign the forms before the discussion groups and the interviews. All participants were given the possibility to ask questions concerning privacy and confidentiality issues, to withdraw at any time, and to decline to answer. By signing the consent form, participants agreed to the terms and conditions of the discussion group/interview.

The consent text was in Plain Language. The form informed participants about the confidentiality of the collected data, their right to stop at any time and to answer only the questions they had chosen to, and about the applicable data policy. The form also provided contact data to request further information about the project and to request a copy/deletion/change of the provided data.

- an audio/video consent

The form educated participants about the purpose of the photo and audio, video, or sound recordings, and about their use for dissemination, training, educational or scientific purposes.

Participants were given the possibility to limit their consent to one of the recording methods.

The document included contact data to and information about how to exercise their rights of access, rectification, cancellation, opposition, limitation of treatment and data portability.

The forms are included in Annex III.

### **5.3 Data collection**

This section describes the qualitative research techniques for data collection used in IO2: discussion groups and interviews.

### 5.3.1 Discussions groups

EASIT discussions groups aimed to gather the views of experts about the need for easy-to-understand audiovisual content and to gain an understanding of their views about:

- which genres are the most relevant and needed by end-users,
- pathways for creating easy-to-understand audiovisual content and content for news,
- the different tasks and professional roles in the E2U process, including quality assurance, and
- a possible name for the professional.

In IO2, the term 'discussion group' was chosen to help participants understand the underlying concept 'focus group', which 'is a group discussion on a particular topic organised for research purposes' and moderated by a so-called facilitator (Gill, Stewart, Treasure & Chadwick, 2008).

Table 2 shows the topics and questions. They aimed to gather views about the implementation and need for E2U content and to identify necessary skills. The first question (**Do you think audio descriptions/subtitles/news could be made easier to understand?**) should help participants to start the discussion by making a general statement. A unanimously 'No' answer to this question by all participants would have led to the end of the discussion and the exclusion of the modality or of news editing as possible simplification candidates.

The second (**What genres are the most relevant?**) should filter those genres which are considered more necessary to support participation and inclusion, and those which might not be suitable for adaptation or less viable.

The third question (**How would you approach implementation?**) allowed participants to approach implementation from their own experience and views. Answers should provide implementation categories and outline a viable framework for implementation.

The fourth question (**What skills should the new expert have?**) should describe the knowledge, skills, and abilities which an E2U professional in subtitling, audio descriptions, or news editing should have. Answers would provide input for a better understanding of the professional profiles and for the creation of skills cards (IO3).

The fifth question (**Like any other type of text, the quality of easy-to-understand audio descriptions/subtitles/news needs to be assessed. How would you approach this task?**) allowed approaching quality from different perspectives. In the field of Translation, quality is usually assessed during the production process by other translators and focuses on linguistic revision. In Easy to Read contexts, however, the overall aim is to evaluate the readability and understandability of texts for the intended target group.

The sixth question (**How would you name this new expert? Is there a need to name him/her?**) would allow clarifying to what extent E2U content can be created by current professionals, with the necessary added skills, or if a new profession and professional are needed.

**Table 2: Topics and questions**

Topics	Question
Need for easy-to-understand audiovisual content	Do you think audio descriptions/subtitles/news could be made easier to understand?  To what extent may be an option to make easy-to-understand audio descriptions/subtitles/news?



Topics	Question
What genres are the most relevant?	Which would be the most relevant and necessary genres for easy-to-understand audio descriptions/subtitles/news?
Implementation	How would you approach implementation?
Skills of the new expert	What skills should the new expert have?
Quality assurance	Like any other type of text, the quality of easy-to-understand audio descriptions/subtitles/news needs to be assessed. How would you approach this task?
Name of the new expert	How would you name this new expert? Is there a need to name him/her?

### 5.3.1.1 Participants

The number and profile of participants in a discussion group influences the outcome. However, interaction is the key factor (Gill *et al.*, 2008). EASIT discussion groups followed general recommendations regarding size (between 5-8 participants) and profile mix. The number of recruited participants ranged from 4 to 6. The total number of participants was 18. Participants were experts in:

- the corresponding access service or media field, e.g. subtitling, audio description, or news editing,
- text simplification methods (Plain Language or Easy to Read), or
- both.

Though three discussion groups were planned, RTVSLO and RISA were able to organise a fourth one with a radio journalist and a TV journalist.

The discussion groups were:

- 1** RTVSLO and RISA, Ljubljana: 2 multimedia journalists and 1 expert in Easy to Read, 1 user of E2R information.
- 2** RTVSLO and RISA, Ljubljana: 1 radio journalist, 1 TV journalist, 1 expert in Easy to Read, 1 user of Easy to Read.
- 3** SDI München, Munich: 2 experts in pre-recorded subtitles, 1 expert in live subtitles, and 3 experts in Easy to Read.
- 4** UAB, Barcelona: 2 audio describers and 2 experts in Easy to Read.

### **5.3.2 Interviews**

'The purpose of the research interview is to explore the views, experiences, beliefs and/or motivations of individuals on specific matters.' (Gill *et al.*, 2008:292). For IO2, partners chose semi-structured interviews, which comprise prepared questions but also allows interviewees exploring other ideas and interviewers including *ad hoc* questions. The aim of the interviews was to obtain a deeper understanding on the topics already explored in the discussion groups. To do this, new questions emerging from the discussion groups were added. All agreed questions were included in section 4.1 Items guide of the protocol.

EASIT partners in charge of the interviews were: UNITS, DYS, RISA, UVIGO, and SUH.

EASIT partners agreed on the following workflow and terms to support data collection:





- 1** Each EASIT partner would conduct 5 interviews. If fewer interviews are conducted, partners will have to make sure that they cover all three areas: subtitling, audio description and news.
- 2** Type of interviewees: 2 audio describers, 2 subtitlers and 1 journalist.
- 3** The interviews will be conducted after the discussion groups.
- 4** The interviews can be conducted face-to-face, also online or on the phone.
- 5** Partners in charge of the interviews will follow the approved protocol to ensure consistency, and thus increase the reliability of the findings.
- 6** Interviews will be conducted in the local language. In such cases, each partner will translate the materials.
- 7** Partners will report on the results according to the provided template.

#### **5.3.2.1 Interviewees**

The interviewees were recruited according to the protocol. The table below provides an overview of the partners in charge, the type of interview (online, phone, face-to-face) and the interviewee profiles.

**Table 3: Interviewee profiles and type of interviews**

Partner	Type of interview	Interviewee profile
Dyslexiförbundet	Skype  Face-to-face	Subtitling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 video accessibility expert</li> <li>• 1 subtitler</li> </ul> Audio description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 course coordinator in AD training</li> <li>• 1 audio describer</li> </ul> News: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 expert in news and E2U news</li> </ul>
SUH	Face-to-face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 subtitlers</li> <li>• 2 audio describers, and</li> <li>• 1 journalist</li> </ul>
UNITS	Face-to-face  Online  Phone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 journalist</li> <li>• 1 audio describer, and</li> <li>• 1 subtitler</li> </ul>

Partner	Type of interview	Interviewee profile
UVIGO	Phone	Subtitling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 real-time subtitler,</li> <li>• 1 expert in accessibility working for a user association with journalistic background,</li> <li>• 1 subtitler for persons with hearing loss.</li> </ul> Audio description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 expert in AD and audiovisual translation, and</li> <li>• 1 real-time subtitler</li> </ul>
RISA	Face-to-face	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 subtitlers</li> <li>• 2 audio describers, and</li> <li>• 1 journalist</li> </ul>

The total number of interviews was 23. They were processed and analysed by partners. The results were gathered in individual reports.

## 6 Results

This section reports on the results from the discussion groups and the interviews according to the field of expertise: subtitling, audio description, and news editing. The information is ordered by the six key topics: the need for easy-to-understand content, genres, creation, skills, quality validation, and name. This section ends with a summary of the conclusions. The recommendations emerging from the activities in IO2 are included in section 6.

### 6.1 Subtitling

This section summarises the data collected during the subtitling discussion groups and the interviews. Participants agreed on the need for easy-to-understand subtitles and for content (film, show, theatre play, other) which is produced according to simplification methods.

Participants described implementation as challenging. Current subtitling guidelines must be followed while simplification strategies, which also include elaborating and adding new information, are applied. The challenge is threefold. First, to define own recommendations for E2U subtitles which allow deviations from the standard subtitling rules (subtitling speed, number of characters, synchronicity, font-sizes, other) while still preserving their subtitle idiosyncrasy. Second, to distribute E2U subtitles through platforms that meet end-users' needs in term of technical accessibility and operability. Third, to consider that written E2U subtitles can also be better understood if they are combined with audio subtitles and audio descriptions.

As for the E2U subtitler, this professional should acquire skills that go beyond simplification or subtitling guidelines.



### **6.1.1 Easy-to-understand subtitles**

The question of whether subtitles can be made easier to understand was answered with 'Yes' in both the discussion groups and the interviews.

Participants considered that even if subtitles are made easier to understand, existing subtitling guidelines and rules must still apply, meaning that viewers must still be able to recognise subtitles as such.

Participants identified synchronicity of the spoken content and the E2U subtitle as a major challenge. E2U subtitles should always relate to the spoken content while providing as much information as possible at the necessary reading speed. Though subtitles already use simplification methods (Díaz-Cintas, 2003; Chaume, 2003; Díaz-Cintas and Remael 2007), participants stressed the need for specific simplification rules and technical parameters which consider, for instance, reading speed and line lengths.

The subject is regarded as socially relevant, but challenging to implement without substantial support from stakeholders in the value chain.

Participants consider the higher production costs as a critical factor and point out the need for higher social awareness and public funding, especially at this early stage in which it is still uncertain if the service will be a success.

Participants considered that E2U subtitles are different from subtitles for persons with hearing loss. One participant from Sweden said: "Since 1970 Swedish television has done easy-to-understand subtitles. The target group back then were persons with sign language as first language." The participant explained that the target group had Swedish as a second language. Therefore, in Sweden, to make easy-to-understand subtitles for people with hearing losses appears to be an established service. Though these subtitles are different from subtitles used for translation, the latter still are normally written in Plain Language.

The differences identified are related to the linguistic implementation, conventions, timing, and to the need for providing additional content (glossaries, explanations, other) and for technical features which allow users to interact with the content in a more controlled way. For instance, users should be able to stop their multimedia devices at any time, activate/deactivate the display subtitles option, re-rewind and re-read subtitles, listen to additional audio explanations, or use audio subtitles.

### **6.1.2 Relevant genres**

All participants consider that all genres are relevant and explain that to exclude some genres would expressly disagree with the inclusion concept. However, they conclude that the complexity of the topic and genre type might challenge viability. Most participants define live programmes such as parliamentary sessions or live TV shows as 'very challenging'. Regardless of the genre, participants state that adaptations must keep the original meaning and context: 'The essence of the content must not be lost.'

The genres mentioned as most relevant and viable included educational products (learning programs, training videos), TV and broadcasts (news, documentaries, advertisements, political debates, legal content and talk shows), informative content (e.g. civic information, how to use public transport, move in the city, weather forecasts, cultural events forecasts). Some participants claimed that simpler formats like casting shows or soap operas are easy to follow without subtitles in the most cases.

Opera and theatre were also mentioned by some participants as possible genres. Participants in the discussion groups and the interviews identified the need for providing additional information to support understanding. Whereas some participants discussed the possibility to provide oral explanations and summaries of the plot before or during intermissions to support the audience; others argued that breaks are needed to rest and that providing written accommodations, such as E2U summaries or descriptions, could be an option.

### **6.1.3 Creation of E2U subtitles**

Participants considered necessary that subtitling standards and guidelines must still apply; meaning that a subtitle must still fulfil the aim of a subtitle and be recognised by the viewer as such.

Current recommendations to create subtitles published by Inclusion Europe (2009) and the International Federation of Libraries (IFLA) (2010) demand that subtitles should follow the standards for Easy to Read written information. As for the design, the documents provide recommendations that are in line with the existing guidelines for subtitles, as claimed by participants. The design recommendations by Inclusion Europe include:

- Do not put too much information on the screen.
- The screen should not be too light or too dark, meaning to provide good contrast.
- Viewers should have enough time to read the subtitles. Subtitles should be on the screen as long as possible.
- There must be a strong contrast between subtitles and the background. This is difficult because the background of a video is changing. One way is to have a dark line at the bottom on which the subtitles appear.

The answers provided in the discussions groups and interviews share these views and expand on some of them. As for the amount of information on the screen, participants suggest a maximum of 1 to 2 lines, which is in line with current subtitling practice (AENOR, 2012). The length of the subtitle, however, does not find consensus amongst participants. Some participants advise using short sentence whereas others suggest that an increased number of characters, as compared to standard subtitles, might be useful.

Participants also agree on the use of E2U simplification methods and consider them 'an integral part of subtitling'. Experts call for strategies to reduce the visual load of the subtitle in general. The suggested strategies converge with existing E2R and PL recommendations: the use of short words, active tense, simpler syntax, among other features.

Most participants also considered technical aspects of implementation and the need to provide a multimedia device which can be controlled by the user throughout the whole show and which allows for adjustments of the subtitling speed.

Though the provision of additional information and explanations are considered useful, participants point out that they might lead to overload.

As for the use of guidelines, all participants agree that guidelines facilitate creation since they serve as reference, are useful for technology providers and contribute to maintaining quality standards. The harmonisation of existing E2U guidelines seems to be challenging but worthwhile.

The topic of implementation leads to the question of whether adding E2U subtitles to standard content makes sense at all and whether users would accept them. Some participants view E2U subtitles as support that aids comprehension whereas others are sceptical, especially regarding the acceptability of the service by end-users.



#### **6.1.4 Skills of experts in E2U subtitles**

Participants agreed that E2U subtitles need to be created by trained experts, either subtitlers who undergo additional training, or experts in E2U content who would need to acquire the necessary subtitling skills.

Participants identified the following skills:

- Knowledge about accessibility, including the varied target groups, their needs and priorities and the specificities of accessibility in the audiovisual context as well as about accessibility within the audiovisual media context.
- Linguistic skills with a focus on simplification methods, language proficiency, and grammar, content reduction skills, and summarising skills.
- IT skills, which include knowledge about how to use subtitling software to create, edit, and timecode subtitles as well as basic knowledge in digital accessibility requirements.
- Personal skills, including communication skills, empathy, and awareness of their role and contribution to inclusion, efficiency, professionalism, desire to learn.
- Subtitling-related skills, such as knowledge of existing guidelines and types of subtitling and ability to apply subtitling techniques/strategies.

Participants agree that acquiring these skills would open up new perspectives for professionals who, nonetheless, would not work exclusively in this field. As in section 5.1.3, participants point out at the need for reception studies to better understand users' preferences and ultimately the skills that need to be acquired.



### **6.1.5 Quality validation of E2U subtitles**

Answers showed a need for quality validation. However, participants explained that this need may depend on the complexity of the topic. Two possible points in time for validation were identified. The first, during the creation process. In these cases, validation can be done by another subtitler or by end-users, the latter being considered more time-consuming and expensive. The second, after creation, which could be done by reception studies involving end-users or by means of informal feedback forms or emails.

Participants also identified the need for validation methods which do not focus on word-error rates but on idea units (concept units) instead (Eugeni, 2017).

Lastly, participants considered that validation in live settings is not feasible.

### **6.1.6 Name of the new expert**

Participants did not share a common view on this topic. They stated that it might or might not be necessary to find a new or a specific name for the new expert.

The suggested names for the E2U subtitler were:

- Translator for barrier-free media,
- PL subtitler,
- E2R subtitler,
- Language accessibility specialist,
- Accessibility specialist, and
- Accessibility expert with focus on audiovisual media.

According to the answers provided, E2U subtitles can be created for different genres and by different simplification methods. The use of existing guidelines seems to be a viable pathway until specific easy-to-understand guidelines for subtitling emerge from reception studies, as pointed out by participants. Professionals appear to be open to this new type of content, although they must overcome the hurdle of learning simplification methods and need to know more about target users and their needs; a skill they all considered necessary. As next step, it is recommended to harmonise existing E2U guidelines and provide training.

## **6.2 Audio description**

Data collected during the audio description discussion groups and the interviews are summarised here. As in the subtitling groups, participants identified the paradox of having to explain more while dealing with time constraints. Some participants presumed a shift from the original concept of audio description to a new AD form, which might be more informative, or even be replaced by audio guides, as a comment to the product which focuses on the essence of what have been said.

### **6.2.1 Easy-to-understand audio descriptions**

The data show different views about this topic. While there are similarities in the way accessibility experts both in AD and E2U create their texts (mainly short, syntactically simple sentences, or the use of one same word per referent, for instance), some participants considered that a simplified adaptation may be problematic or even impossible in some cases.

On the one hand, some participants consider difficult having to explain more and, on the other, having to deal with space constraints as the main concern. The speed of the AD voice, if slower, would add another hurdle. On the other, some participants state that all ADs should be easy-to-understand, recommend having one simplified audio description but agree that the concept of 'easy-to-understand' also depends on the target audience.

As for their view on the need for three different types of AD — standard, PL and E2R —, participants agree this would not be economically viable and suggest having two types instead: a standard AD and a simplified version which reaches the widest possible audience. The goal of E2U AD would be to transfer the most relevant information, but not to make the content simplistic or use language which is meant for children. Whilst the provision of two types of AD is considered not possible on TV, it could be done on streaming.

Participants also pointed out that the concept of standard AD might differ from that of E2U audio description, the latter being less descriptive and more informative, which might lead to a new term such as audio adaptation.

### **6.2.2 Relevant genres**

Participants suggest that E2U AD should be a separate option as opposed to traditional AD in order to avoid patronising people with sight loss. They consider that E2U AD can be part of any accessible production if planned from the beginning.

Data showed that E2U AD is feasible for all genres but not always viable. E2U ADs are considered to be more challenging in films with complicated plots or structures based mainly in visuals, whereas E2U AD for theatre, opera, dance and museums, are regarded as easier to create.

The genres which were identified as relevant include TV shows and news bulletins, opera, dance and museums, documentaries, cartoons, films for children, cartoons, and movies.

### **6.2.3 Creation of E2U audio descriptions**

Participants consider that E2U AD starts with training professionals for this task and should include the use of E2U guidelines and specific guidelines for AD, as those by Inclusion Europe (2009).

Participants agree that the space constraints of this modality could be approached by providing audio guides with additional information.

One way of implementing E2U AD would be to provide extended AD. As already described in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, extended AD stops the audio and video briefly to provide 'critical information' which cannot be included otherwise due to time constraints (W3C, 2016).

Another way would be by means of audio introductions before the reproduction of the audiovisual product.

Participants suggest leaving pauses and not filling out every space in the AD. The proposed idea of rearranging the audio description by combining ideas and information to avoid overload is shared by most of the participants. Overlap between AD and the original soundtrack could also be an option in those cases in which the part of the soundtrack to be substituted with AD is not be relevant.

### **6.2.4 Skills of experts in E2U audio descriptions**

The suggested skills are:

- Linguistic skills: language proficiency, lexical richness, and reformulation, visualisation and simplification skills

- Personal skills: self-confidence, empathy, curiosity, objectivity, persistence, observation skills
- AD-related skills: prosodic skills (melody, intonation, rhythm, other), thorough knowledge of AD guidelines, ability to gather information about a given topic, how audiovisual products communicate.
- IT skills

E2U audio descriptions may become audio adaptations and be delivered as audio guides. Answers show that an alternative and easy-to-understand way of communicating through the audio channel is viable and needs innovative solutions to overcome constraints, especially when the pauses in dialogue are insufficient. Though E2U AD might differ from the standard modality in terms of prosodic, descriptive level, or amount of information provided, they can also build upon commonalities. An interesting topic brought into light by participants and which could be studied is the reception of E2U AD in combination with other access services such as E2U subtitles.

### **6.2.5 Quality validation of E2U audio descriptions**

All groups and interviewees agreed on the need for validation. They identify two different types of validators —end-users and audio describers—, two forms of validation —by a single person or a group of validators—, and two points in time for validation — during the AD creation or afterwards (surveys, comments, informal feedback through email, other). Though validators should have skills in both text simplification and AD, this might not always be the case.

Participants identify text coherence and understandability as the overall validation goals. To assist validation, which is described as a challenging task, participants suggest the use of recommendations as a reference, for instance, the 31-checkpoint list which will be presented by one of the Swedish interviewees at the Media for All conference in Stockholm in June 2019<sup>5</sup>.

### **6.2.6 Name of the new expert**

Most of the participants share the opinion not to give the expert a specific new name, but rather to define a specialisation.

The suggested names were:

- AD editor,
- Audio describer,
- Audiofacilitator,
- Content adapter,
- E2U Audio describer, or
- Expert in audio description for easy reading

## **6.3 News**

This section summarises the results emerging from the discussion groups and the interviews. Participants agree on the viability of linguistic adaptation. Among other challenges, participants point out the fact that news is already summarised information and that previous knowledge is always presupposed.

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<sup>5</sup> To this stage, the content of the list is unknown to EASIT partners.



### **6.3.1 Easy-to-understand news**

The prevailing opinion was that it is possible to create easy-to-understand news in both PL and E2R. Participants pointed out that basic E2U standards for language and design (font-size, alignment, other) are already used for instance in Teletext and some news web-platforms for the elderly, for instance in Slovenia. Moreover, in some countries, such as Sweden, public broadcasting services already produce news in easy-to-understand language on both TV and radio. Though it is considered necessary to offer E2U news as an alternative to standard news, participants agree that there should be only one version, either PL or E2R.

Answers also revealed some constraints, for instance, the complexity of news itself, especially without prior knowledge, and the fact that they are already summarised. Participants also discussed that special copyright protection applies to some types of journalistic texts such as opinion articles, columns, and interviews, and it may not be possible to adapt them without previous consent. Lastly, some formats such as radio or TV are considered more challenging.

### **6.3.2 Relevant genres**

Unanimously, participants consider daily news as the most relevant genre. Other types mentioned included news in specific topics, culture, sports, and entertainment news, news about important events of the day (local, European-wide, and international) and service news such as news about traffic and weather.





### **6.3.3 Creation of E2U news**

Participants approached this topic from different perspectives. From the journalistic point of view, they agree that E2R or PL news should follow the rules of creating journalistic texts and consider the author's rights in some genres such as opinion articles. Participants also pointed out that the selection of news to be delivered through E2U language and the way of writing them should be carefully planned.

From a technical point of view, the preferred distribution platform is the Internet. Online solutions such as own news spaces within an existing news platform are suggested. They provide users with the possibility to control the operation of the multimedia device (rewind, stop, speed, other), and authors with space to add additional features, content, and pictures. However, the pre-requisite is that the news platform itself is easy to use and to find. Some participants advocate a more inclusive and generic approach with one simple but attractive platform for all users.

Regarding the type of language, participants agreed that using only one type of E2U language, meaning PL or E2R, will always exclude some audiences, and, thus, both should be offered. The viability depends on the distribution platform. Online implementation should not be difficult. TV implementation, however, is less flexible and must adhere to sending times, lengths, and the restriction to broadcasting only one show at a time. One Swedish participant explained that Swedish television broadcasts one news show in easy language, one more like PL and one standard. They are broadcasted on different times but can be seen on the play channel. Lastly, some participants suggested that services which target wider audiences such as Teletext or news could be provided initially in PL.

As for the method, both adaptation and creation are considered possible. It is important that the content always covers at least the 'W' questions What, When, Where, Who, Why. Participants believe that there should be a special editorial unit for accessible information for the different target audiences.

#### **6.3.4 Skills of experts in E2U news**

The suggested skills are:

- Linguistic skills: language proficiency, writing skills, and simplification skills
- Personal skills: empathy
- Writing skills in journalistic text types: type of journalistic texts, type of roles (commentator, radio journalist, tv journalist, other), and guidelines.

#### **6.3.5 Quality validation of E2U news**

Participants agreed on the need for validation and differentiated between validation of the usefulness (understandability of the news) and validation of the professional quality of the content type (structure, organisation of the information, others). The first one needs to be carried out by end-users, which is not viable for daily news. For these cases, other alternatives should be found, for instance, gathering users' feedback *a posteriori* through the webpage, via questionnaires, online evaluation, or click counts, or validation groups with end-users to compare. As for the second (text structure and journalistic style) editors could participate in this type of validation and should be in charge of assessing the quality of the journalistic content type.



### **6.3.6 Name of the new expert**

Participants do not see the need for a new name, which would depend on the educational system, but also on the work the journalist is performing.

- Journalist/Expert on accessibility,
- News editor for news in E2U,
- Expert in linguistic simplification,
- Accessible content specialist, and
- Journalist for accessible content.

Content adaptation for news is different from creating E2U modalities. Though E2U news stands alone once it is created, content must remain faithful to the journalistic principles and rules. Participants outline the challenge of simplifying news, as already summarised information which draws on prior knowledge of users, and, at the same time, but also the opportunities of online platforms to provide suitable solutions.

## **6.4 Conclusions**

This section summarises the conclusions ordered by the same structure as the results: the need for E2U content, genres, creation, skills, quality validation, and need for a name.

Data show that there is a **need** for E2U subtitles, audio descriptions, and content for news. Until now, E2U services have focused mainly on written information on paper. Only in countries like Sweden, they also produce both E2U radio and E2U TV news. Now, increasing digitalisation, mainstreaming of accessibility services, and the work accomplished by stakeholders and end-users associations have allowed for showing the gap of E2U digital information in general and audiovisual content in particular. Hence, participants identify a need for E2U modalities as well as for E2U news.

As for the **genres**, participants considered that all genres can be adapted and that excluding genres would be inconsistent with the concept of inclusion. However, they agree that, in some cases, adaptation might be highly demanding or not possible, for instance, subtitles for live shows or movies with complicated plots, or audio descriptions for movies which use images as the primary way of transferring meaning. In such cases, participants consider that the creation of new E2U content should be prioritised over adaptation.

Regarding **creation**, participants approached it from three different perspectives: the chosen simplification method, the distribution channel, and the use of existing guidelines for the access service (subtitling or AD) and of rules for the journalistic content type. As for the type of E2U simplification method, participants identify the need for having both PL and E2R versions but understand the financial constraints and agree on having one simplified version. However, this way of proceeding will always exclude some audiences and raises the question of what type of simplification method is more suitable and viable in what cases.

Participants agreed that content creation for news might be the easiest to implement since it is closer to printed information and is more flexible in terms of providing additional information, distribution, and accessibility during the interaction. However, answers describe implementation at this very early stage as challenging for all of them—subtitles, AD, and news—because there is a lack of specific and harmonised guidelines and of empirical data about what it works best and what is preferred by end-users.

As for the distribution channel, participants preferred online solutions such as streaming or web-platforms to distribute content and for the access modalities. On the one hand, the use of the Internet as the distribution channel grants users a greater control during interaction (stop, rewind, pause, other). On the other, they provide authors or adapters ways of incorporating additional aids such as linked additional information, videos, pictures, other.

The third topic discussed by participants regarding creation was the use of E2U guidelines. Answers show that E2U guidelines should be followed even if they are still not harmonised, neither across Europe or nationally—as it is the case in Germany<sup>6</sup>—. On the one hand, existing E2U guidelines provide language-dependent recommendations, which can be extended by language-specific research and documents such as the Spanish standard on Easy to Read UNE 153101 EX. On the other, they encompass language-independent recommendations, be them related to paratextual features or technical accessibility of the digital product. Though participants recommend the use of guidelines, they also identify the need for reception studies to support their development and to verify the assumptions provided here as recommendations.

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<sup>6</sup> Bredel/Maaß (2016), Netzwerk Leichte Sprache ([http://www.leichte-sprache.de/dokumente/upload/21dba\\_regeln\\_fuer\\_leichte\\_sprache.pdf](http://www.leichte-sprache.de/dokumente/upload/21dba_regeln_fuer_leichte_sprache.pdf))

As for the needed **skills**, participants suggested skills that go beyond simplification methods. These can be grouped in the competence areas: a) linguistic skills, b) knowledge about accessibility and target users, c) personal and interpersonal skills, d) IT skills, and e) skills related to the field of expertise — subtitling, AD, or news editing—.

Regarding **quality validation**, participants identified two different types of validation: a) validation to check the extent to which subtitles, AD, or news are understandable by end-users, and b) validation as linguistic revision and as level of compliance with the underlying text type rules or modality guidelines. Respondents suggest that the first one should be carried out by end-users during or after production. The second can be done by editors or colleagues during production. In AD, participants underlined the need for also involving persons with sight loss in the validation process.

Lastly, concerning the need for a new **name**, participants agreed that it might not be necessary.

The detailed data gathered in this IO has been used to create two types of recommendations: a) for creation of E2U subtitles, AD, and content for news, and b) for the development of the next IOs. The following section presents them. These are presented in the next section.

## **7 IO recommendations**

This section includes general and specific recommendations for creating E2U subtitles, AD, and content for news as well as recommendations for IO3 (skills cards) and IO4 (curriculum design).

### **7.1 General recommendations**

The overall aims in the creation of easy-to-understand audiovisual content should be to keep the original meaning and context in the adaptations, and to avoid simplistic solutions. To do this, professionals should be experts in their fields (subtitling, AD, or news editing) and know simplification methods, they should understand the heterogeneity of the target groups and their needs, and should be aware of their role as mediators and advocates.

E2U access services (AD and subtitles) and the creation of content for news should:

- use simplification guidelines,
- follow the rules of the text type: e.g. journalistic, subtitles, and AD,
- be distributed through an accessible platform, and
- provide a media device (player) which also supports cognitive accessibility.

As for the distribution of E2U content, web-platforms, digital archives, and DVDs should be the preferred solutions. They allow users to have more control over how use the player (pause, rewind) and read the content (stop and read again) during the interaction. Internet also allows for the inclusion of other accommodations such as spoken explanations or additional text, which could open in a separate window.

The next sections show the recommendations, ordered by service.

## **7.2 Recommendations for easy-to-understand subtitles**

The recommendations emerging from the data are summarised in this section.

### **7.2.1 Simplification of subtitles**

- Follow E2R recommendations for subtitles (Inclusion Europe, 2009):
  - Do not put too much information on the screen.
  - The screen should not be too light or too dark.
  - Video and sound must be high quality and clear.
  - Viewers should have enough time to read the subtitles. Subtitles should be on the screen as long as possible.
  - There must be a strong contrast between subtitles and the background. This is difficult because the background of a video is changing. One way is to have a dark line at the bottom on which the subtitles appear.
- Subtitles should provide content related to the picture.
- Subtitle and picture must still be synchronous, even if subtitles stay for longer on the screen.
- Subtitles should follow language-specific simplification rules concerning lexis, syntax and grammar.



- Technical parameters<sup>7</sup>:
  - Display times of the subtitles: estimate the times according to the reading speed of the target groups. This might exceed the standard times that apply for standard subtitles.
  - Lines: maximum two lines.
  - If possible, each line should be a full sentence.
  - Font-size should be as big as possible without interfering with the picture.
  - Consider adding name labels to identify speakers when necessary.
  - Consider exceeding the standard amount of characters for understandability purposes.
- Always involve end-users in the validation of the understandability.
- If possible, validation should take place during production. However, it can also be done afterwards.
- Build teams that include persons with and without disabilities in the validation of the content.

### **7.2.2 Additional features of the service**

- Provide the possibility to turn on/off the subtitles at any time.
- Consider providing also audio subtitles.
- Consider providing subtitles in combination with audio description.
- Consider providing subtitles in combination with audio description and audio subtitles.

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<sup>7</sup> These emerge from the discussion groups and interviews and not from reception studies.

- Where possible, provide access to additional information before and during the show, for instance, information about the content of the show, the speakers, characters, location, other.

## **7.3 Recommendations for audio descriptions**

The recommendations emerging from the data are summarised in this section.

### **7.3.1 Simplification of audio descriptions**

- Audio descriptions should be more informative (essence of what has been said) and less descriptive (describing what you see).
- The AD language should follow language simplification and design recommendations and acknowledge the use of strategies such as repetitions and a less ornate use of the language to enhance understandability.
- Consider not to audio describe part of the content to avoid cognitive overload.
- E2R recommendations for audio descriptions should be followed (Inclusion Europe, 2009):
  - Video and sound must be of high quality and clear.
  - Do not speak too fast.
  - A background voice should be slow and clear.
  - A background voice should only be speaking about things that people can see on the screen.
  - If you use a background voice, it can be helpful to present the person first.
  - Make sure that the sound has a good volume.

- Make sure the sound is good, without interference or background noise.
- Make sure the person speaking speaks slowly.
- Make sure the voice of the person speaking is clear, not too low, not too high.
- Make sure the person speaking does not have an accent which is too strong.
- Audio description. Make sure that the person speaking has good pronunciation and articulates clearly.
- Read the text in a way that emotions can be perceived.
- It is very important to leave pauses at sensible points.
- Interferences and background noise should be avoided.
- Always involve end-users in the validation of the understandability.
- If possible, validation should take place during production. However, it can also be done afterwards.
- Build teams that include persons with and without disabilities in the validation of the content.

### **7.3.2 Additional features of the service**

- Provide the possibility to turn on/off the audio descriptions at any time.
- Consider providing audio descriptions in combination with subtitles.
- Consider providing audio descriptions in combination with subtitles and audio subtitles.
- Consider providing an audio guide with the service.
- Consider providing an audio guide instead of an audio description.

- Where possible, provide the possibility to access additional information before and during the show, for instance, information about the content of the show, the speakers, characters, location, other.

## **7.4 Recommendations for easy-to-understand news**

The recommendations emerging from the data are summarised in this section.

### **7.4.1 Simplification of news**

- E2R or PL recommendations for written information should apply.
- E2U news should follow the rules of the journalistic principles.
- When creating news, talk, or ask interviewees to talk slowly, use every day words when possible or explain things that are difficult.
- Give time to the user, do not change subject, clips or pictures too quick.
- E2R and PL recommendations for accessible web design (page layout, paratextual features, etc.) should apply.
- Use pictures that support the understandability of the content.
- Produced content must adhere to authors' rights protection laws.
- Always involve end-users in the validation of the understandability.
- If possible, validation should take place during production. However, due to the time constraints related to the production of daily news, validation after production might be a better option.
- Build teams that include persons with and without disabilities in the validation of the content.

### **7.4.2 Additional features of the service**

- If provided through the Internet, the web platform must be easy to find, easy to navigate.
- Provide a text-to-speech feature to read aloud written content. If possible with an option to highlight content as it is read.

Whenever text-to-speech technology is used, it is important to consider that:

- The user needs to be able to control the quality of the voice: pitch, volume, etc.
  - The user must be able to pause and restart the reading at any time.
  - If a synthesised voice is used, the voice should be clear and as natural as possible.
- Where possible, provide the possibility to access additional information before and during the show, for instance, information about the content of the show, the speakers, characters, location, other.

## **7.5 Recommendations for the following IOs**

The recommendations provided by participants can also be integrated into the development of the next IOs.

The skills cards to be developed in IO3 could include the skills suggested by participants. These go beyond techniques and guidelines, and include knowledge about accessibility as well as the needs and particularities of the target groups, linguistic skills, IT skills, personal skills and interpersonal skills.

Knowing end-users and their needs is a key factor of user-centred approaches (Norman, 2013) as it is the creation of easy-to-understand content. In this sense, this report suggests considering these skills in IO3 and the curriculum (IO4):

- Knowledge in psychology of language (how persons process and understand any information in different formats: writing- reading, speaking - listening) and in language disorders (especially those language disorders with consequences in listening comprehension and reading comprehension).
- Knowledge in language disorders, mainly in relation to persons with disabilities, but not only about them.
- Knowledge about basic cognitive processes (closely linked with language: memory, attention, perception, etc.).

The curriculum (IO4) could follow a skills approach with a focus on practical training and learning activities, for both higher education and vocational training.

As for the need for harmonised guidelines for implementation, EASIT could focus on aligning non-language-specific guidelines and capitalise on the best practices from partners such as Sweden, Germany, and Spain, with more experience in the field. EASIT partners could discuss the possibility to integrate in the training materials the 31-checkpoint validation list, which will be presented at the upcoming conference Media for All in Stockholm.

Data obtained allow to provide a first taxonomy which identifies the parameters to be considered when creating easy-to-understand content. However, the two different product types studied in this IO, subtitles and audio descriptions versus content for news, calls for different categorisations. Subtitles and audio description are access services which depend on characteristics of the original show, film, theatre play, other, and cannot be understood otherwise or exist on their own, whereas content for news does not have these dependencies. Thus, E2U subtitles and audio descriptions will always be dependent on the characteristics of the original content and, thus, be adaptations, whereas news can also be created from scratch and, thus, be categorised as 'adaptations' or 'creations'

**Table 4: Categorisation parameters**

Parameter	Explanation
Simplification method	This parameter will yield access modalities that apply text simplification methods versus those methods based on graphical symbols (pictograms or ideograms). The E2U version would use a different semiotic code with regard to the standard modality or content. For instance, written subtitles or written content which is adapted into a pictogram version.

Parameter	Explanation
Point of time of creation	<p>This parameter will yield services which can be created at the same point of time as the standard ones.</p> <p>For instance, E2U sign language and sign language versions would be synchronic forms, since they both can be created at the same point in time, whereas E2U real-time subtitles might not be always possible to create.</p>
Channel equivalence	<p>This parameter will yield access services or content which use the same channel(s) as in the standard services and, thus be isosemiotic, and E2U services or content which use a different channel o channels as compared to standard and, thus, be diasemiotic.</p> <p>For instance, a written text which is provided as audio version.</p>
Operable by the user	<p>This would deliver services that can be turned off/on by the user.</p>
Accessible service	<p>This parameter considers services which consider accessibility throughout all steps. Platforms which provide E2U content (e.g. E2U audio description, E2U subtitles) but do not consider cognitive accessibility in their design (e.g. menus, design) will be not be considered fully accessible.</p>



**Table 5: Graphical representation<sup>8</sup>**

	<b>Text-based simplification method</b>	
No		Yes
Pictogram service		E2R service
		Plain language service
		Mixed service
	<b>Same point of time of creation</b>	
No		Yes
Asynchronic service		Synchronic service
	<b>Same channel</b>	
No		Yes
Non-channel-equivalent service		Channel equivalent service
	<b>Operable by the user</b>	
No		Yes
Non-customisable service		Customisable service
	<b>Accessible service</b>	
No		Yes
Non-fully accessible service		Fully accessible service

<sup>8</sup> The graphical representation leans on Bartoll's (2008) presentation of AV modalities.

## 8 Conclusions

This document has reported on the results of the qualitative study about the need and creation of easy-to-understand audio descriptions, subtitles, and news. The work of IO2 towards developing a series of recommendations has opened innovative paths for further development of E2U content. The protocols, tools, and IO2 methodology can be replicated or adapted in future projects. Moreover, the data collected from a total of 41 experts, professionals and end-users, from 5 different countries (Germany, Italy, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden) can serve as a departing point for creation but also for the needed reception studies, as outlined by participants. Presentations and scientific publications emerging from IO2 will reach a broader audience, as already shown at the EASIT Multiplier Event 1 in Munich (Germany) and will enable external quality validation, for instance, by the blind peer-reviewed articles.

IO2 results have also contributed to making the skills and competences of these new enhanced professional profiles more visible. This innovative step is also the first action toward new job opportunities and business models for all, but particularly for persons with cognitive disabilities who work as validators. The professionalisation of their role will promote its recognition in the employment market, will strengthen its acknowledgement in professional teams and, ultimately, will raise awareness and foster inclusion and participation.

## 9 Dissemination

Dissemination activities carried out during IO2 development are listed below, sorted by the partner in charge.

### **Dyslexiförbundet**

Hedberg, E., & Lundgren, T. 2018-12-03. Eskilstuna. Introducing EASIT during a presentation under a local activity on The World Disability Day.

Hedberg, E. 2019-01-16. Presenting shortly ongoing and upcoming activities within EASIT during a presentation for workgroup within Begriplig text project.

Hedberg, E. 2019-01-21. Presenting shortly ongoing and upcoming activities within EASIT during a presentation for Begriplig text project steering group.

Hedberg, E. 2019-02-15. Introducing EASIT and shortly presenting its activities during a presentation to scientific advisory board of National Agency on Accessible Media.

Hedberg, E., & Lundgren, T. 2019-03-12. Introducing EASIT and shortly presenting its activities during a presentation at the conference of the Association of Technical Information.

### **Forschungsstelle Hildesheim**

Hernández Garrido, S. 2018-11-16. Class presentation: Barrierefreie Internertrnutzung. Class for three master programs ("Medientext und Medienübersetzung", "Barrierefreie Kommunikation", and "Sprache und Technik"). Hildesheim (Germany).



2019-07-01 - Facebook post: Facebook Account of the Research Center for Easy-to-read German (SUH). Hildesheim (Germany). 07.01.2019.

Minkov, M. Winter term 2018/19. Die Verständlichkeit geht vor. Journal Die Relation 4 – Journal of the University of Hildesheim. Hildesheim (Germany). [https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/media/presse/relation/2018\\_DIE\\_RELATION\\_Journal\\_Uni\\_Hildesheim\\_Ausgabe\\_04\\_WEB-s-v.pdf](https://www.uni-hildesheim.de/media/presse/relation/2018_DIE_RELATION_Journal_Uni_Hildesheim_Ausgabe_04_WEB-s-v.pdf)

Email to all subscribers of the Newsletter LEICHT NEU-Newsletter Forschungsstelle Leichte Sprache (Research Center for Easy-to-read German) disseminating the Multiplier Event 1 in Munich and the IO1-questionnaire.

### **SDI München**

Bernabé, R. 2019. EASIT project: IO results. Presentation at ME1 in München, 7. 3. 2019.

Bernabé, R. (forthcoming). Article presenting IO2 results on subtitles and news, MDÜ journal.

Bernabé, R. 2019. IO2 dissemination via mail, website and Facebook to advertise ME2 in Stockholm.

Bernabé, R. 2019-04-5. Dissemination of ME2 in Stockholm at the EFHOH Conference in Zagreb.

Bernabé, R. 2019-05-23. Dissemination of ME2 in Stockholm at the New European Media Initiative in Zagreb.

Bernabé, R. 2019-06-18. Presentation of IO2 results at the Media4All conference in Stockholm.

Bernabé, R. (forthcoming). Cross-reference to IO2 results in the article New taxonomy of easy-to-understand services.

Bernabé, R. 2019-09. Presentation at the Intermedia conference

Email to all SDI professional contact lists for disseminating the Multiplier Event 1 in Munich and the IO1-questionnaire.

## **UAB**

IO2 dissemination via website, Facebook and Twitter.

Project dissemination in various newsletters and blogs: Klaara Blog (October 2018), Trans-Kom Newsletter (February 2019), Media for All newsletter (March 2019).

Dissemination of ME, in which IO2 results were presented: programme on website, mail to stakeholders list, Mention of IO2 in the Intellectual Outputs promotional video uploaded in the project website.

Presentations of the project in which IO2 was also mentioned:

Matamala, A. 2019-02-15. Making specialised discourse in audiovisual content accessible for all: how to deal with terminology. Invited keynote at Specialised Discourse and Multimedia Conference, University of Salento, Lecce.

Bernabé, R. & Orero, P. 2019-03-20. Presentation Easier audio description: An easy listening and easy understanding access service. Presentation at ARSAD conference.

Matamala, A. 2019-03-07. Concluding remarks. Presentation at EASIT Multiplier Event 1, SDI Munich.

Orero, P. 2018-11-16. EU Research on Audio Description. Presentation at Europe Disability Forum.

Forthcoming article:

Arias-Badia, B. & Matamala, A (forthcoming). Audio description meets Easy-to-Read and Plain Language: results from a questionnaire and a focus group in Catalonia.

## **UNITS**

Perego, E. 2019-03-27. La traduzione per i sottotitoli: i risultati della ricerca empirica. Seminario per Corso di studi in Mediazione Culturale (CdL triennale), nell'ambito del corso di Lingua e Traduzione inglese 3, Dipartimento di lingue e letterature, comunicazione, formazione e società, Università degli Studi di Udine (2 ore).

Perego, E. 2018-12-6. Presentation of EASIT to students of English translation, and class translation of IO1 questionnaire. Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies, University of Trieste

Perego, E. 2019-01-18. Progettazione europea, teoria e pratica: ADLAB PRO e EASIT [European projecting in theory and in practice: the cases of ADLAB PRO and EASIT], Dottorato di Ricerca Interateneo (Trieste-Udine) in Studi Linguistici e Letterari [Joint Udine-Trieste doctorate in linguistic and literary studies]/ Presentation of ADLAB PRO and EASIT in PhD lecture on EU projects. PhD course, Department of Legal, Language, Interpreting and Translation Studies, University of Trieste (January 18, 2019)

UNITS: IO2 dissemination via mail, website and Facebook to advertise ME2 in Stockholm.



## RISA

IO2 dissemination on website, Facebook and Twitter.

Haramija, D. & Knapp, T. 2019. Lahko je brati: Lahko branje za strokovnjake. Zavod RISA, Podgorje pri Slovenj Gradcu. (eng. It is easy to read: Easy-to-read for professionals) E-book:

<http://www.lahkojebrati.si/Portals/1/Knjige/Lahko%20branje%20za%20strokovnjake.pdf>

Knapp, T., Haramija, D., & Fužir, S. 2019. Lahko je brati: Nasveti za lahko branje v slovenščini. 2: Pravila. Zavod RISA, Podgorje pri Slovenj Gradcu. (eng. It is easy-to-read: Advice for Easy-to-read in Slovenian. 2: Guidelines.) E-book:

<http://www.lahkojebrati.si/Portals/1/Knjige/Lahko%20je%20brati%20%20-%20Pravila.pdf>

Knapp, T. 2019-02-12. What is Easy-to-read? Invited presentation at SOPA 2nd meeting of the local stakeholder network for LO Ravne to Kor. at National Institute of Public Health, Ravne na Koroškem.

Knapp, T. 2019-03-11. Inclusion is impossible without information. Invited lecture for Promoting social inclusion of children and young people with special needs in the local environment at Centre for Education and Rehabilitation of Physically Handicapped Children and Adolescents, Kamnik.

Knapp, T. 2019-03-25. Inclusion is impossible without information. Invited lecture for Promoting social inclusion of children and young people with special needs in the local environment, Ptuj.

Knapp, T. 2019-03-07. EASIT project: An overview. Presentation at ME1 in München, 7. 3. 2019.

Knapp, T. 2018-09-10. Reading together: conference of Slovenian reading association. Ljubljana. Project announcement and short presentation.

Knapp, T. 2018-11-12. Association for adapted communication LABRA- the annual meeting. Ljubljana. Project presentation.

## **10 Impact, transferability and sustainability**

This document summarises the viability of creating E2U audio descriptions and subtitles, and E2U content for news. The identified recommendations and outlined limitations provide the basis for the description of the required skills (IO3), the curriculum design to train the new experts (IO4) and the creation of the training materials (IO5).

The qualitative data gathered from 23 interviews and 3 focus groups during the development of IO2 is expected to have a significant impact on the profession and overall on the development of E2U since only a few empirical data is available at the moment. The results will be disseminated through the EASIT webpage as well as academic and non-academic publications.

IO2 results will be maintained after the end of the EU funding and they will be available and disseminated as follows:

- IO2 Report on project website.
- Journal articles
- Dissemination at conferences.
- IO2 outputs are available in the open access repository with a permanent link at UAB which enables all outputs and data to be open and reusable for future analyses and research (project information will not be closed but sustainable).





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## Annex I. Discussions groups protocol

This annex is provided as a separate document.

To download it please use this link: <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/204739>.

## Annex II. Interviews protocol and questions

This annex is provided as a separate document.

To download it please use this link: <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/204739>.

## Annex III. Ethical documents

This annex is provided as a separate document.

To download it please use this link: <https://ddd.uab.cat/record/204739>.

## Annex IV. Interview questions

The tables below show the interview questions ordered by E2U service.

**Table 6: Interview questions: subtitling**

Topic	Questions related to the topic
Need for easy-to-understand audiovisual content	Do you think subtitles could be made easier to understand?
	It is not clear yet if it is possible to create E2R subtitles or plain language subtitles for standard audiovisual content. One possibility would be to adapt content at the production stage instead, which



Topic	Questions related to the topic
	<p>in turn might subvert the idea of inclusion. Other possible solutions to this conundrum?</p>
	<p>The Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing people prefer verbatim subtitles. Sometimes users experience simplifications as “not necessary” or even “offensive”. To what extent do you think that users will welcome simplified subtitles?</p>
	<p>Can subtitles, as they are created nowadays, be useful for people with reading and learning disabilities? Or is it necessary to redefine the concept of “subtitles” and understand them as an aid to audio content and not as a substitution?</p>
	<p>The creation of easy-to-understand subtitles is expensive. Creating subtitles is an additional production cost. The creation of E2U subtitles, especially if end-users revise them, might increase these costs. Can this new modality survive given the high production costs and the limited financial aid provided by the Government? Would better lobbying efforts help? What other approaches do you see?</p>
	<p>In your opinion, what distribution channels or platforms are more suitable for distributing this type of content? (YouTube, Internet, DVDs, digital archives, other)</p>

Topic	Questions related to the topic
What genres are the most relevant?	Which would be the most relevant and necessary genres for easy-to-understand subtitles?
	Learning programs, learning videos and educational shows have been suggested as good candidates. News and political shows have been named as especially important to be subtitled in an easy-to-understand language. What are your views on this?
	Other interviewees have suggested opera and theatre as suitable genres. Can you think of different genres?
	It seems less feasible to adapt movies and live shows. Do you share this view? To what extent do you think that it is possible to create E2U versions of movies and live shows?
Implementation	How would you approach implementation?
	Subtitles require viewers to read at a certain speed. This might be a problem for people with reading and learning difficulties. Can you think of any implementation solutions?
	Some providers, such as Amazon Prime, have a feature that allows viewers to stop the show and display additional information, e.g. about the actors. Could this be an option for easy subtitles or easy-to-



Topic	Questions related to the topic
	<p>understand recorded shows?</p>
	<p>In the theatre and opera, intermissions could be used to provide the audience with the necessary input to understand the play. What is your opinion?</p>
	<p>Subtitling must be written according to a maximum line length. How do these limitations affect the creation of easy subtitles? Subtitles must be written according to maximum line length, number of lines and also synchronized to the video. How do these limitations affect the creation of easy subtitles?</p>
	<p>It is necessary Do you think that it is necessary to provide training in text simplification methods to audiovisual content experts? What are your views on this?</p>
	<p>Plain language subtitles have been implemented already in countries as Sweden. Do you think that E2R subtitles can also be implemented?</p>
	<p>At the moment, there are different recommendations and ways to implement (German) Easy to Read. To what extent should recommendations be harmonised?</p> <p>At the moment, there are different recommendations and ways to implement Easy to Read content. For</p>



Topic	Questions related to the topic
	<p>example, there are different guidelines within Europe and within some countries, as it is the case in Germany. To what extent should recommendations be harmonised?</p>
	<p>Since the production of subtitles is always linked to tight deadlines, how would this affect the quality of the E2R subtitles?</p>
<p>Skills of the new expert</p>	<p>What skills should the new expert have?</p>
<p>Quality of the texts</p>	<p>Like any other type of text, the quality of easy-to-understand subtitles needs to be assessed. How would you approach this task?</p>
	<p>E2R printed texts are usually revised by people with learning difficulties. This could make it impossible to create E2R live subtitles. What are your views on this?</p>
<p>Name of the new expert</p>	<p>How would you name this new expert? Is there a need to name him/her?</p>





**Table 7: Interview questions: audio descriptions**

Topics	Questions related to the topic
Need for easy-to-understand audiovisual content	<p>Do you think audio description could be made easier to understand?</p> <p>To what extent may be an option to make easy-to-understand audio description?</p>
	<p>Should there always be two types of AD available or should it depend on the content and/or target audience?</p>
	<p>Does it make sense to have a simplified audio description if the audiovisual content is not simplified? (From SDI discussion group)</p>
What genres are the most relevant?	Which would be the most relevant and necessary genres for easy-to-understand audiodescription?
Implementation	How would you approach implementation?
	<p>How would you deal with the needs of diverse audiences, i.e. persons with cognitive disabilities, persons with sight loss and persons with cognitive disabilities and sight loss?</p>
	<p>In case it should depend on the content, who would decide on it? Which would be the guidelines to decide so?</p>



Topics	Questions related to the topic
	<p>Should a kind of audio guide be created and be available online?</p>
	<p>Which lexical and syntactic features would make up a useful E2U AD?</p> <p>What about its prosody and voicing? How would text presentation /</p> <p>design aspects be conveyed orally? Which elements may be easier to understand by using spoken/written language?</p>
	<p>Could the introduction of pauses in audiovisual material be considered to create an E2U AD?</p>
	<p>Could the reordering of audiovisual material be considered to create an E2U AD?</p>
	<p>In audiovisual language, what would you consider to be a simple AD script? What would you consider to be a complex AD script?</p>
	<p>In relation with news, there are recent research works dealing with terminology and specialised discourse adapted to news for children.</p> <p>Could that also be explored and/or taken advantage of?</p>

Topics	Questions related to the topic
Skills of the new expert	What skills should the new expert have?
Quality of the texts	Like any other type of text, the quality of easy-to-understand audio descriptions/subtitles/news needs to be assessed. How would you approach this task?
	How would you gather the users' feedback? Would you professionalise the role of validators? How would a validator intervene in fast broadcasting products, for instance?
Name of the new expert	How would you name this new expert? Is there a need to name him/her?

**Table 8: Interview questions: news**

Topics	Items
Need for easy-to-understand audiovisual content	Do you think news could be made easier to understand?  To what extent may be an option to make easy-to-understand news?
	Is there a need that everything should be in both versions: ER and PL and how would you make a selection?



Topics	Items
What genres are the most relevant?	Which would be the most relevant and necessary genres for easy-to-understand news?
Implementation	How would you approach implementation?
	Should there always be 2 types of news: radio in PL and ER, TV in PL and ER? How to make a selection what is appropriate for PL and what for ER?
	Adaptation of existing content or creating accessible content from the beginning – which approach do you think is better?
	How would you make a selection of news/ content to be created/ adapted in PL and/or ER?
	How to make a selection of the content – is this the work of an editor or a journalist?
	In the news portal – would you make 2 separate subportals, one for PL and one for ER?
	Is it better to adapt existing texts to PL or ER or to write original texts directly in easier to understand language?
	What do you consider most important in making easy-to-understand radio news/TV news?



Topics	Items
	<p>Do you think there is a need to have an editorial unit for accessibility at news company/ TV and radio station/ National broadcaster?</p> <p>What would be the main tasks of this unit?</p> <p>How to get experts in easy-to-understand content for TV and radio?</p>
Skills of the new expert	What skills should the new expert have?
Quality of the texts	<p>Like any other type of text, the quality of easy-to-understand news needs to be assessed. How would you approach this task?</p> <p>How would you include test readers in the process of your work?</p>
Name of the new expert	How would you name this new expert? Is there a need to name him/her?

**<END-OF-DOCUMENT>**