



GRUPO PARA A ACESSIBILIDADE NOS MUSEUS

MUSEUMS AND SENIOR PEOPLE IN PORTUGAL

PERCEPTIONS, USES, RECOMMENDATIONS

by

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Over 65: Trends, occupations, participation

A sociological framework

by

Pedro Moura Ferreira

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PERCEPTIONS, USES, RECOMMENDATIONS

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A. INTRODUCTION

In 2050, one third of the world population will be over 65. Portugal is now the 7th most aged country in the world (aging is defined as the imbalance in the ratio of people over 65 years of age in relation to people up to 25-30 years of age; or the relationship between life expectancy that increases and birth which decreases or stagnates¹). Along with increased life expectancy, the years of healthy and autonomous life also increase. This trend is a huge challenge for museums. This audience should not be ignored, because it is growing and it is very varied in preferences, knowledge, skills and expectations.

However, when preparing the annual seminar of GAM in 2010, entitled 3rd, 4th, 5th age ... – *Senior Audience and museums*, it became clear that data on the relationship of this audience with museums was virtually non-existent. In addition to data on the number of visitors, there was no other, neither socio-demographic nor qualitative data regarding insight, needs, use, accessibility - both physical and cognitive. Thus, following the challenge set to GAM by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, a study was proposed to assess the relationship of the senior audience with museums, as well as the current situation of museums in relation to the senior population they serve.

1. GENERAL PRESENTATION, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

Without knowing the context and the public with whom we work, as well as those whom we wish to involve, we can not plan and develop our business sustainably, consistently and efficiently. Thus, through this study, we intend to develop a basis for reflection on the specific needs of seniors, so as to guide museum programmes, and more broadly speaking, cultural programmes, in view of this specific audience.

The study is twofold - a) analysis of the senior population with museums and b) analysis of the adequacy of the Portuguese museums to senior visiting population - with the following specific objectives:

a. To evaluate the relationship of the senior population (visitor and non visitor) with museums

- To understand some cultural habits (or leisure time habits) of senior people;
- To verify access to knowledge, lifelong learning (reading habits, television viewing, use of internet, attending open courses, attending senior universities, amongst others);
- To know how their relationship with museums was established– with which museums, when, how, with whom or with which institution;
- To identify how often they visit museums and how they do it;
- To ask about the type of experience they seek by going to the museum (intellectual, social, emotional, recreational);
- To assess the reasons that encourage and motivate them to visit museums (influenced by family and school education, knowledge, curiosity, to socialise, etc.);
- To assess the major impediments and constraints (physical / mobility, cognitive / intellectual, symbolic, economic);
- To understand which information channels are used and privileged when accessing museum-related information;
- To assess the perception (representation) that museums have in Portugal (comparison past / present).

b. To conduct a diagnosis of the current panorama of museums in the relationship with the senior population:

- To identify how the business plans of the museum include the senior population;
- To quantify the weight of the senior population in the universe of visitors to Portuguese museums (number of individual visitors and in organized groups);
- To identify the existence of specific programmes for senior people (courses, exhibitions, specific guided tours, etc.);
- To identify accessibility conditions aimed at the senior population (spatial and physical, content, lighting, contrast, font size, etc.);
- To identify strategies and media used to attract senior people;
- To identify the existence of partnerships with institutions supporting the senior population;

- To carry out a survey and analyse all available documents and statistical information.

c. To evaluate the relationship of museums with senior visitors

- To determine together with the Directors of some museums which are the objectives included in their programmes to represent the senior population;
- To verify the representations and uses of senior museum-goers;
 - To understand the cultural habits of senior public;
 - To understand how they view and the reasons that encourage and motivate the senior public to visit museums in general and that one in particular;
 - To understand what the main impediments and constraints (physical / mobility, cognitive / intellectual and symbolic) of senior public;
 - To understand which are the information channels used and preferred by the senior public.

d. To present the findings and make recommendations to improve the accessibility of Portuguese museums regarding the senior population

- To identify the main factors that motivate senior public to visit museums;
- To identify the main factors that may be decisive for the inclusion of senior public in museums.

The study was conducted using qualitative (focus groups, interviews), quantitative (statistical data provided by museums) and mixed (self-administered surveys) analysis methods. The museums participating in the study were selected according to the following criteria:

- member museums of GAM;
- museums that receive a significant number of senior visitors;
- museums that offer a greater number of programmes for senior visitors;
- various types of museums in terms of tutelage (national, foundations, private, municipal) and collections (art, history, science);
- museums representing the various regions of the country (except the autonomous regions), eleven in total: National Museum of Ancient Art; National Museum of Contemporary Art – Chiado Museum; Dr. Anastácio Gonçalves House-Museum; Calouste Gulbenkian Museum; EPAL Water Museum; Seixal Municipal Ecomuseum; Network of Municipal Museums of Loures; Michel Giacometti Labour Museum; Paper Money Museum of the Dr. António Cupertino de Miranda Foundation; Botanical Museum of Beja / Regional Museum of Beja; Municipal Museum of Faro.

More specifically:

A - On the demand side: analysis of the relationship of the senior population with museums

- Self-administered survey to visitors of the abovementioned museums;
- Focus groups:
 - Ten focus groups, one for each of our sample of museum-members of GAM (to visitors, without discrimination of schooling);
 - Ten focus groups, divided into five regions (North, Centre, Lisbon and Vale do Tejo, Alentejo and the Algarve), involving visitors and non visitors, half with people with at least the 9th grade and the other half with persons with less than 9th grade. These focus groups were conducted in day care centres, senior academies and Universities of Third Age.

B - On the supply side: analysis of the adequacy of Portuguese museums to senior visiting population

- Interviews with directors / heads of museums in the sample;
- Self-administered survey to museum-members of the Portuguese Network of Museums.

B. OVER 65: TRENDS, OCCUPATIONS AND PARTICIPATION

by Pedro Moura Ferreira*

The Portuguese society is currently an ageing society. Since the last decades of the last century there has been a continual increase of the population over 65. The combination of decreasing fertility, increased life expectancy and the emigration in the 1960s and 1970s justifies the importance of the numerical weight of this age group in society. But an ageing society is also a society where people live longer, making ageing a positive phenomenon that witnesses humanity's progress in economic, social and biomedical terms. Longevity opens new perspectives for individuals and for societies, but also poses problems and challenges.

Indeed, greater longevity brings radical changes to the living environment as regards, in particular, health status and participation in social and collective life. Living longer means not only to be more exposed to chronic non-communicable illnesses, but also to the risk of loss of autonomy, which often leads to situations of dependency and limited family or neighbourhood sociability, or even, and this does not only occur rarely, to situations of complete social isolation or to old age institutions disconnected from social life.

From a collective point of view, ageing threatens the sustainability of health systems and especially of social security, from retirement and pension to personal care to the dependent elderly, which makes the reviewing of social and economic foundations inevitable, taking into account the required equity of intergenerational relationships. But more than its cost, the problem posed by an ageing society as a whole is the place of old age in society and the refusal of exclusion of older people from social life and of the definition of old age as a social condition of dependency. Stigma, whether discrimination by exclusion or patronizing bias, condescending and belittling, in relation to the so-called 'old people', is thus assumed as a denial of the right to citizenship of any person, regardless of their age.

The risks to ageing cannot, however, overshadow the prospects of life in a horizon of longevity with better economic and health conditions. The organization of this phase of life will depend greatly on the changing demographic, social and economic conditions, but also on the reactions of individuals to changes that affect the ageing processes. It is therefore necessary to outline the trends that lie ahead for ageing and conduct a foray on the occupation of time of the current senior population as a preview of possible developments of lifestyles and their appropriateness to today's dominant gerontological orientation - active ageing.

1. DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL TRENDS OF AGEING

According to the provisional results of Census 2011, the population aged 65 or more consists of 2.023 million people, representing about 19% of the total population. This number represents an increase of 19% over the last decade and confirms the dynamic ageing of the Portuguese population, which will tend to increase in the coming decades as shown by the demographic projections. According to some of these projections, the population aged 65 or over is expected to reach values above 30% in 2050¹. The ageing of society, i.e., the weight of older people on the population, is an inevitable process. This increase is both a result of lower fertility, which demographers designate as ageing at the base, and increased longevity. There are fewer births and people live longer.

Indeed, the birth rate, measured by the total fertility rate (ISF), has drawn for at least four decades an almost continuous line of descent which, in the early 80s, exceeded the threshold of

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¹ Magalhães, M. G. (2002). "Projeções da população residente, Portugal, 2000/2050 — que tendências de base para a construção de hipóteses?". In *Revista de Estudos Demográficos*, 32, INE, pp. 51-57.

generation replacement (2.1) to attain in 2010 one of the lowest values on a global scale (1.37)². In contrast to the decline in fertility, life expectancy increased. In 2010, life expectancy was 79.5 years. This number reflects a remarkable evolution, if we consider that there was a gain of more than ten years in about three and a half decades³, which has resulted in increased longevity over 65 years. In 2010, life expectancy at this age stood at 18.6 years⁴.

The extension of longevity has implied the strengthening of the older age group, the so-called Great Age. Indeed, the group above 85 years has revealed a growth rate above that of the group of 65 or over. The elderly are not only more numerous but also increasingly older. The boundaries of life are pushed further, creating conditions for the expressive assertion of lifestyles associated with age, particularly with the post-work period of life, where individuals free from the constraints of work and responsibilities directly associated with family reproduction can organize their lives quite differently. Given its size, diversity and duration, this phase of life seems to assume completely new contours, creating demands and challenges that societies must meet.

One of the most striking aspects of the emergence of new ageing conditions concerns the number of people over 65 living alone. In 2011, according to the Census, they accounted for 19.8% of the age group in question, which corresponds to an increase of 29% when compared to the past decade. In terms of housing, about 10% of households in the country are inhabited by people of 65 years of age or over. But if we join the 39.8% of individuals living exclusively with people of this age group, the number of occupied homes rises to 20%. A rise of 28.3% in relation to the penultimate population census. The ageing trend of the population appears well accompanied by greater social and generational isolation, at least as regards the residential context. There are more people living alone or with others of the same age, which, apart from not promoting the extension of social networks, seems to promote a certain isolation of this age group within its own boundaries.

Both the relative closing of generations and social isolation tend to affect more the women, because they live longer than men. Even though life expectancy has increased for both, the temporal difference has remained significant. In 2010, life expectancy was, respectively, 82.3 and 76.4 years, and at 65 it was 16.8 for men and 20.1 for women⁵. Living longer means increasing the probability of staying alone, especially when one cannot count on family, particularly on one's children, who in many cases simply do not exist. In this regard, the data of the last census indicate that although the number of families has increased⁶, the average number of people decreased, reflecting, although not exclusively, the continuous decline in fertility. This means that there will be an increasing number of childless elderly thus, reducing intergenerational networks and contacts, not to mention the possibility of having informal family support as they get older.

These conditions, together with the fact of leaving the labour market, favour a representation of the group of 65 or over as a self-centered age group with lifestyles different from those of other age groups. A comparative term is possible with youth, which is also defined by the exclusion from work and largely from family reproduction, as it presents distinct lifestyles and cultural habits. This does not mean that life after work represents a second youth, but retirement, by ensuring minimal economic security, enables the organization of one's life in a very different manner from the one followed along one's active life, especially when it is associated with good health conditions.

Living longer is only part of the story, because one also lives better and healthier, although there are major differences between social groups in terms of mortality and morbidity. Longevity is not always an indicator of quality of life. To age in a healthy or active manner as envisaged by

² INE – Death statistics. Available on: <http://www.pordata.pt>

³ Actually, in 1976, life expectancy was 69 years, although registering slightly more acute differences than the actual ones between men (65.3) and women (72.6). INE - Death statistics. Available on: <http://www.pordata.pt>

⁴ INE – Death statistics. Available on: <http://www.pordata.pt>

⁵ See previous note.

⁶ Between 2001 and 2011, the number of families increased by 11.6%, although the average number of people per family decreased from 2.8 to 2.6 (INE, Highlights – Census 2011, Preliminary results, 30/6/2011. Available on: http://www.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=INE&xpgid=ine_destaquas&DESTAQUESdest_boui=134582847&DESTAQUESmodo=2).

the current gerontological standards is still largely a goal to reach; not a practice accessible to or incorporated by all those who are getting older. Health is still a condition that heavily penalizes the ways of ageing in Portugal. However, progress in recent decades in the health field, particularly in what concerns measures within public policies, predict more favourable health conditions in the future, that will allow to take more advantage of the period of life after work. At least, this is what one is allowed to foresee from the evolution of the self-reported health recorded by various health surveys carried out in the country in recent decades. Referring to health surveys (INS, 1995/96 and 1998/99), self-reported health - measured according to the categories *very good, good, fair, poor and very poor* - reveals a positive trend between the two surveys. Whilst in the first 70% of respondents indicate a level lower than *good*, in the second this percentage comes down to 58%⁷. As there is a correlation between self-reported health and education, the continued increase of the latter allows one to foresee an approximation to European standards (EU15), in relation to which it is still quite distant. For example, only a minority of respondents considers having a very good health condition, when in European terms, the same assessment is made by 18.3% of men and 14.5% women⁸.

Another aspect that will be felt significantly in the terms in which ageing occurs, especially with regard to lifestyle and cultural habits adopted during the post-work life, is education. In general, higher levels of education are visible from generation to generation. The number of people with higher education has greatly increased in the last decades, so the elderly population will be increasingly educated, also because its more feminine composition contributes toward this, because currently women of the younger generations present higher literacy levels than men⁹. Higher education will involve different lifestyles and, especially, a more demanding and active cultural consumption. The impact of schooling may be anticipated based on the current occupations of leisure time which will be discussed further down. What one can admit is that schooling will enhance certain forms of cultural consumption and occupations of leisure time, that may still have an embryonic expression in the current generation of pensioners.

A good example of the combination of education, cultural consumption and the occupation of leisure time is represented by the phenomenon of senior university which emerged in the 70s with the aim of promoting interaction amongst seniors, tackling social exclusion and providing older people with the possibility of learning or teaching. The movement of Senior Universities, a term that has been gradually replacing that of University of the Third Age, has recently gained more prominence with the consolidation of the European project of lifelong learning¹⁰. Given the development of technology and knowledge, education is increasingly viewed as a lifelong process that involves values and other contexts and educational agents, exceeding the vision of education as exclusively confined to formal education or preparation for the labour market. As an "ongoing uninterrupted" process, it includes, on the one hand, the temporal dimension of learning and, on the other, the multiplicity of spaces and learning environments. In this sense, cultural institutions such as libraries, museums or educational associations constitute non formal or informal spaces of learning and of modern citizenship throughout life, insofar as that the idea that learning is necessary at any age encourages social participation.

Despite having appeared in the 60s, the number of Senior Universities in Portugal remained very small and limited to Lisbon and Oporto. The real explosion only occurred in the late 90s, as evidenced by the emergence of dozens of new universities, which was due to the awareness of the state and society in general in relation to ageing and the position of the elderly in society¹¹. According to data from RUTIS (Association Network of Universities of the Third Age), in 2011 there were 192 universities, involving about 30,000 students, of whom the majority were women

⁷ Santana, P. (2005). Geografias da saúde e do desenvolvimento. Evolução e tendências em Portugal. Coimbra, Edições Almedina; Fernandes, A. A. (2008). *Questões demográficas. Demografia e Sociologia da População*. Lisboa, Edições Colibri e Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humana da Universidade Nova de Lisboa

⁸ Santana, P. (2005). Geografias da saúde e do desenvolvimento. Evolução e tendências em Portugal. Coimbra, Edições Almedina

⁹ Actually, in 2011, the female population with a higher education was 15.1%, while among men it was 11.5% (INE – Survey on Labour), available on: <http://www.pordata.pt>

¹⁰ See, for example, COMISSÃO DAS COMUNIDADES EUROPEIAS - Memorando sobre Aprendizagem ao Longo da Vida. Bruxelas: Comissão das Comunidades Europeias, 2000.

¹¹ Jacob, L. (2012). *Universidades Seniores: Criar novos projetos de vida*. Edição especial para o III Congresso Mundial do Envelhecimento Activo, Realizado na Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

(76%), aged between 60 and 70, retired or housewives (80%) and with qualifications from the 4th grade to the doctoral level, but with a predominance of medium level education¹².

This movement, taken here as an example of the changes affecting the social condition of seniors, finds its justification not only in demographic reasons but also in social ones. Life expectancy is higher, economic conditions have improved for a growing number of elderly, health care is more widespread than a few decades ago, as well as access to culture and education. The widespread institutionalization of retirement, even for those that are most deprived of social security schemes, due to the guarantee of a minimum pension that allows to ease the pressure of struggling to survive, secured the foundation to organize the period of life after work in an entirely new manner, especially when the actual retirement ages were shortened through schemes such as pre-retirement or early retirement, so that today's pensioners are younger than those of the previous generation.

This apparent 'juvenilization' of pensioners is reflected in the average age of the new old-age pensioners. To mention just two numbers, the average age in 2011 was 62.1 years¹³, whilst a decade earlier it stood at 64.1 years¹⁴. However, it is unlikely that this trend of relative 'juvenilization' of retired persons will extend into the future. Governments, more in some cases than in others, but almost everywhere, have been promoting reforms to raise retirement age and extend working life as a response to the problems of the financial sustainability of social security, which, in the current context of the policy of intergenerational transfer and low fertility rate, requires the extension of contributive careers. In this sense, the fact that individuals live longer and enjoy better health conditions has been the argument to justify the extension of professional activity¹⁵. In spite of being strongly driven by the financial pressures of the social security system, reforms related to the extension of working age also aim to make individuals and society adapt to a scenario in which individuals live longer and remain healthier for longer.

The advantage of keeping active is the ability to integrate more broadly in society, preventing or at least delaying, the reduction of social and institutional contacts that normally result from retirement. Maintaining links with the working world is to continue connected to society in a much stronger manner than that resulting from inactivity. Thus, inactivity should arise as late as possible. The time horizon of life after work also seems to be reformulated, and shall also put in question the ground on which ageing should be based.

2. ACTIVE AGEING: A NEW REFORMULATION OF BEING OLD?

Aware of the problems and challenges that result from increased longevity, even considering the new opportunities for the lives of individuals, international organizations like the UN, through the World Health Organization, the European Commission or the OECD, have been drawing the attention of societies toward the problems of ageing and indicating measures to shape public policies that aim to address these problems. The framework of principles and guidelines developed by these organizations is known as 'active ageing' and now constitutes a paradigm necessary to understand the issues that ageing poses to societies and the solutions that must be developed.

What is 'active ageing'? According to the OECD, active ageing should be understood as "the capacity of people who grow older to lead a productive life in society and in economy. This means that people can themselves determine how to divide time between learning activities,

¹² Jacob, L. (2003). *Caracterização das Uti*. Estudo distribuído no II Encontro Nacional de Universidades e Academias Seniores, Universidade Sénior de Almeidim, Almeidim e Santarém, 20 de Março de 2003. Versão policopiada; Jacob, L. (2012). *Universidades Seniores: Criar novos projetos de vida*. Edição especial para o III Congresso Mundial do Envelhecimento Activo, Realizado na Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian

¹³ We only refer to social welfare pensioners. For pensioners of the Caixa Geral das Aposentações (CGA), average age is slightly under 60 in 2011, although there has been registered a certain aggravation in the last decade. Source: CGA/MFAP, available on: <http://www.pordata.pt>

¹⁴ Source: CNP/MTSS, available on: <http://www.pordata.pt>

¹⁵ Longevity is at the base of the increase in the number of pensioners in relation to the active population. Referring only to the last decades, in 1990 it was 49.2%; 55,6% in 2000; and 66,2% in 2010. Source: INE-CGA/MFAP-IGFSS/MTSS (up to 1998); INE-CGA/MFAP-CNP/MTSS (from 1999), available on: <http://www.pordata.pt>

work, leisure and care for others"¹⁶ (OECD, 1998, p.92). The definition emphasizes the need to extend one's active life provided that the conditions for exercising one's profession can accompany the constraints resulting from the ageing process. Dividing time between productive and non-productive tasks, according to the preferences and needs of the individual, implies a gradual disengagement from the labour market.

In a somewhat different logic, the World Health Organization defines it as a process of "optimizing health opportunities, participation and safety in order to enhance the quality of life during old age"¹⁷. The quality of life is clearly the dominant focus of the definition, and even though health conditions are emphasized, they are far from contemplating only the medical aspects. Active ageing is not limited to the scope of health-promoting behaviors, but takes into account the environmental and personal factors that interact with health conditions. The environment that frames ageing, such as family, community and society in which the process occurs, have a huge impact on how one ages. Indeed, for WHO, "the term *active* refers to the continuous participation in social, economic, cultural, civic and spiritual issues, and not just to the ability to be physically active or to be part of the workforce."

The objective of active ageing is thus quite broad and aims to increase the expectancy of healthy life, maintaining autonomy and independence, as well as "the quality of life of all people who are ageing, including those who are frail, physically disabled and who require health care. "In short, the concern of WHO is to respond to problems arising from the fact that people live longer and from the crucial importance of preserving health, without which one can not guarantee quality of life. Far from limiting health to the perimeter of the individual and biomedical assumptions, health encompasses "the physical, mental and social well-being", and so policies and programmes that promote health and social relationships are as important as those that improve physical health conditions. This aspect is particularly important in a society like the Portuguese. Indeed, the ageing of the Portuguese population has been, as mentioned, in recent decades accompanied by a continuous decline in fertility, which made Portugal one of the most ageing societies in the world. Older people will live, even more than now, alone or with others of the same age. Due to the decline in fertility, a trend that will not change in the near future, adults without children will tend to increase, so intra-generational relationships will gain prominence in relation to intergenerational relationships. The social side of active ageing will thus lead to the readjustment of solidarity and sociability networks over age.

As a programme of intervention in society focused on changing ageing processes and which at the same time seeks to respond to the problems of increasing longevity, the paradigm of active ageing is not merely a justification for the increase of professional and contributive careers, but instead an invitation to reshape the relationship between activity and retirement, between work and health, between participation and exclusion, so that we may move in the direction of a society of all ages.

3. SENIOR PEOPLE AND LEISURE TIME

Demographic trends leave no doubt as to the increase of the population over 65. This growth is likely to be accompanied by an improvement in the levels of health and income, even if we make a discount for the drops registered in the latter because of the economic crisis and the process of adjustment of the Portuguese economy. Gains recorded in these areas in recent decades allow us to foresee increased longevity as a period of leisure opportunities, even if uncertainty persists regarding the impact that working longer may have on the retirement age. Indeed, the improvement of health levels of the working population and the problems of sustainability of the social security have made powerful arguments to raise retirement age and ease the transition between working life and inactivity. However, the increase in life expectancy and the improvement in health conditions of individuals in the top half of the age pyramid may not compensate the tendency to raise retirement age. If it rises close to 70 years of age, when at the beginning of this century it was at around 60, individuals, at least in certain social groups, may have a retirement period, in the sense of permanent withdrawal from working life, shorter

¹⁶ OCDE (1998). *Maintenir la Prospérité dans une Société Vieillissante*. Document de travail awp 3.2 f, OCDE, p.92

¹⁷ OMS (2002). *Vieillir en Restant Actif: Cadre d'Orientation*, Genebra, OMS, p.12

than at present, even if they live longer. Whether voluntarily or involuntarily, the start of retirement can occur at a later age than the present one and involve a gradual withdrawal from working life, and not abruptly as it happens nowadays. Regardless of how this transition takes place, retirement time will not fail to contemplate and prolong the trends that today are recorded in the occupations and leisure time of the elderly.

3.1 Leisure time activities

The study on leisure activities of the Portuguese elderly population is mainly based on a recent survey¹⁸ that provides indicators of participation in a number of activities (cultural, social, expressive, physical and instrumental) held in individual or collective context.

According to the global values of the activities practiced during leisure time, presented in chart nr.1, the ones practiced more frequently are, predictably, watching television (98.2%) and performing household chores (84%). Other than these daily routine activities, there is *going for a stroll* (76.6%), *reading* (73.4%), *visiting friends and acquaintances or invite them over* (61.8%), *listening to music* (55, 2%), and *listening to radio* (53.9%). Other activities are practiced less frequently and in many cases there is practically no practice. Among the activities carried out by less than half of the respondents, are the following: *gardening / harvest a vegetable garden* (47.9%), *to take care or go to walk a pet* (44.3%), *do handicrafts, homemade crafts and repairs* (36.5%), *practice sports* (26.1%), *do crosswords / puzzles* (24.9%). Less than a fifth of the respondents are interested in *table games* (19.1%), *going to movies, concerts, theatres, museums, galleries or art exhibitions* (16.6%), *attending sports events* (15.2%), *using the computer* (13.5%), *performing an artistic activity* (9.2%), participating in *events organized by political parties, trade unions and civic movements* (4.1%) and, finally, *attending courses or training sessions on their own initiative* (2.7%).

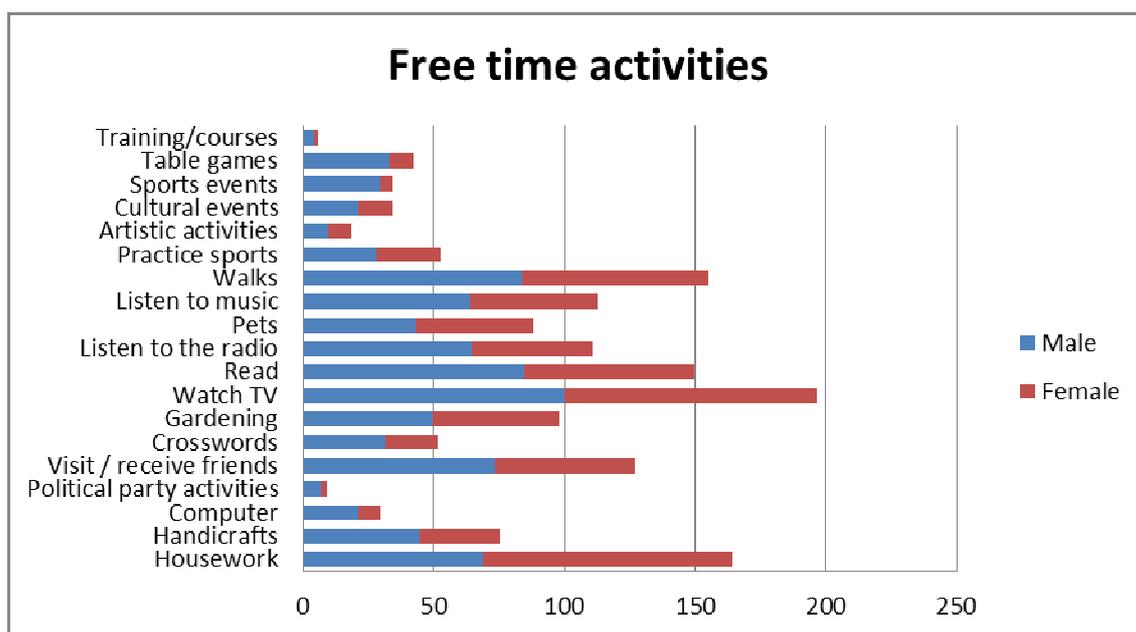


Chart 1

Leisure and free time activities vary significantly according to the sociodemographic characteristics of individuals. Men practice more often most activities and there are significant differences between male and female practice. *Attending sporting events* (23.8%), *playing board games* (23.6%), *visiting / receiving friends* (19.9%) or *reading daily* (19.7%) are the activities in which men are further apart from women, if we exclude the activity that reveals greater amplitude that it is precisely performing household chores, carried out mainly by the

¹⁸ We refer to the survey *Processos de Envelhecimento em Portugal: Usos do tempo, redes sociais e condições de vida*, carried out in 2011 at the Instituto de Ciências Sociais, with the support of Fundação Francisco Manuel dos Santos, the results of which will be published soon. The data here presented refer to the population aged 65 or more.

latter (26%). These differences are also reflected on the levels of satisfaction in relation to leisure. Although overall satisfaction is high, with the majority of respondents ticking *very satisfied* (12.1%) or *satisfied* (54.7%), women show a little more dissatisfaction (8.1%) than men (6%). It is also possible to show that satisfaction varies with other sociographical variables, in particular, the greatest satisfaction of younger respondents, married ones and the more qualified respondents in relation to older, less qualified respondents and widowers. That is, although satisfaction with leisure and free time activities is very high, with a percentage above 60%, men, younger respondents and those with less schooling are however those that are more satisfied.

3.2 Indoor and outdoor activities

An interesting dichotomy to analyze leisure and free time activities is one based on the indoor / outdoor criterion. Although this classification is not fully coincident with the one that establishes an opposition between the activities of active and passive nature, the criterion adopted allows one to draw attention to some implications that arise from the social contexts in which they occur. The outdoor activities usually involve engagement with others and a certain social participation that, in some cases, can be quite intense. Rather, the indoor activities are characterized by the fact of often raising a more passive stance, such as the case of the television, but especially because they are carried out or practiced individually. In either context, however, it is also important to consider the number of activities carried out in that they reveal the degree of involvement with indoor / outdoor nature of leisure and free time activities.

When asked if they usually go out during the weekend, 29.4% of the respondents answered negatively and 70.6% positively, whatever the time spent away from home. Most respondents point out (53.4%) that they do not leave the house on the weekend for more than 3 hours; nearly a third does not go beyond 7 hours; and the remainder (14%) indicate that they are out of the house for more time than the latter. The distribution of weekend outings features significant differences of the same type of differences recorded in relation to leisure and free time activities. Thus, men go out more often than women; younger persons more than older ones; the more qualified more than the less qualified and the married people more than widowers.

Considering the practice of indoor and outdoor activities, one notes that the number of indoor activities is higher (4.7) than the number of outdoor activities (2). Of course, this tendency is, one way or another, strongly moulded by sociographic variables. On average, considering the total of respondents, men practice more activities than women, whether indoor (respectively, 5.1 and 4.4) or outdoor (2.1 against 1.9). Differences are also clear with respect to age: the older, the less active. The younger ones tend to be more active outdoor than indoor. Regarding education, the more qualified individuals stand out from the less qualified in the average number of activities practiced indoor and outdoor. This value at times doubles between these two groups. With regard to marital status, the widowed stand out due to low activity, while the divorced are the most active both indoor and, mostly, outdoor. Differences are still visible in socioeconomic terms. As expected, the higher the income, the greater the number of indoor and outdoor activities. Individuals who declare a low income level indicate less activity, both indoor and outdoor, in relation to those who have a higher income and feature a more intense level of activity. It should also be pointed out that people with wider social networks reveal a more intense involvement in outdoor activities.

Besides these sociographic constraints, the propensity to perform leisure activities, especially outdoor ones, is, of course, dependent on the state of health. Considering the subjective state of health and the presence of physical and psychological impairments that prevent the normal practice of activities, the results point to expected correlations between them and the level of involvement in activities. Those with good or fairly good health and little or no physical or psychological impairments have a higher level of activity both indoor and outdoor, in relation to individuals who indicate a poorer health condition or whose physical and psychological impairments prevent a more intense level of activity.

It becomes evident that there are correlations between the activities, their sociographic profiles, the spaces in which they occur and health condition. For instance, going out on the weekend introduces differences in the number of activities carried out. On average, those who do not go

out during the weekend, perform one activity less, whether indoor or outdoor, when compared with those who usually go out. Thus, levels of activity and mobility go hand in hand, mutually reinforcing themselves and differentially marking the paths of ageing.

3.3 Association membership

According to data of the study *Ageing Process in Portugal: Uses of time, social networks and living conditions*, a little more than half of the subjects aged 65 or more belonged (28%) or belong to one or more associations, the membership being currently passive (13%) or active (10.3%). The first transforms the associate in a mere user of the services or activities provided by the association; the second is expressed in roles such as manager or a driving force of the association. The other half (49.7%) never belonged to an association throughout their lives. The type of association to which respondents adhere to most are sports clubs, trade unions, charitable, cultural and parents associations. Heritage protection associations, political parties, consumer and outdoor associations are the ones less chosen by individuals.

This profile of belonging to an association is, in a way, shaped by the course of life. Joining associations such as trade unions, political parties, parents and residents associations is greater at earlier stages of life. With age, we witness a weakening of the involvement of individuals with regard to institutions with which they establish disruptions, such as labour and, equivalently, institutions connected with the education of their children, who, in the meantime, have grown. After retirement, individuals are linked to other institutions, which compete with other objectives and promote distinct feelings of usefulness and participation and so cultural associations, heritage/environmental protection associations and charitable associations are the preferred ones.

Considering the current association membership, there are significant participation asymmetries between men and women. There are more male members in associations than women and preferences are also differentiated. While men adhere to sports clubs, women adhere more to social solidarity associations. As expected, belonging to an association decreases significantly as one ages, according to the differences found among younger individuals (65-75 years) and older (+75 years). Education is also a critical variable that limits adhesion to an association in the sense that this adhesion increases depending on the level of education.

The time they spend in associations varies greatly according to the respondents. Regarding the association where they spent more time in the last 12 months, about a quarter of the respondents actively participate in events or meetings at least once a week, about half less than once a week and the rest have no involvement in the last year. The differences are mainly due to education level and marital status, where individuals with higher education engage more than those with less education and the single less than the married and divorced / separated.

3.4 Participation in institutionalised activities for the third age

Besides the associations, it is necessary to consider another type of participation that includes institutions that deal directly with the problems of the poorer elderly population with various shortages, including loneliness. A little over a quarter of the respondents participate in at least one entity or organization that promotes activities aimed at pensioners or the third age. The institutions mostly referred are the church / parish centres, local authorities and recreational services of the municipal council. Other institutions or entities, such as private social welfare institutions, day care centres, INATEL, Senior Universities, present substantially lower adhesion levels (below 5%).

These institutions are sought in a differentiated manner by men and women. In general, men tend to have a stronger presence than women, except in the case of religious organizations and Senior Universities, where female participation is more expressive. Women participate more in activities promoted by religious entities, followed by the services of the municipal councils and the parish councils. Men, in turn, participate in local recreation and in parish councils. It is also noted that, on the one hand, it is people between 65 and 74 years of age, and, on the other, those who are married or widowed that mostly participate in institutions / entities oriented to provide activities for the retired population or the third age.

Regarding to the time spent in these institutions / entities, one in every ten respondents indicates daily frequency; slightly more than 40% is present at least once a week; slightly fewer than the latter, less than once per week; and only 6.3% did not participate last year. It is thus evident that the time they spend in the institutions / entities concerned are quite variable and, for most of them, far from filling their free time, because only a portion of the population aged 65 or more attend them.

3.5 Support activities and provision of care

Part of the senior population occupies its free time with activities that take on a more binding than optional nature, as in the case of caring for children, especially the grandchildren, and unpaid support to adults. A great portion of the contributions of the elderly to society comprise these activities which require time and energy. Despite not involving cash flows, these activities represent forms of unpaid work and therefore can also be seen as voluntary, although more circumscribed to the family rather than the public environment.

Occupation with children, who are often their grandchildren, followed by nieces and nephews and friends' children, represents a more widespread activity than caring for adults, involving, according to survey data, about a quarter of the population. Women, especially those from a lower social environment, are, unsurprisingly, more involved in this activity, which tends to intensify depending on the size of personal networks: the more extensive, the greater the tendency to take care of children. The time spent caring for children is naturally variable, but in the most extreme case, it can reach up to nine hours a day, which is undoubtedly a major constraint to the management of leisure.

The care provided to adults appear to involve a lower percentage, that is less than one fifth of the population. The recipients of such care are usually family members, especially parents or the spouse, but also, to a lesser extent, friends and neighbours. In terms of occupation, women dedicate more time than men: on average, an extra day per week, and almost 3 more hours daily, although care tends to be provided by younger individuals of the age group in question. As in the case of occupation with children, taking care of other adults is usually a regular and binding activity which conditions the availability to carry out leisure activities according to one's personal interests.

4. AGEING AND SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

According to the indicators analyzed, the diversity activities in the senior population's free time, which do not always mean leisure, tends to be formatted by some social variables. The first is, undoubtedly, age, in that there is a change in the type of activity used to occupy time depending on it. This change is visible in the type of associations and entities to which people adhere along the course of life. Whilst during working life the connection to unions and professional associations, as well as parents associations is more expressive, after retirement, there is a disassociation of such associations and an adhesion to sports, cultural and social solidarity associations. This freeing can also be offset by carrying out institutionalised activities for the elderly, including activities promoted by the services of local councils, parish councils, religious organizations and recreational communities. Thus, with age people tend to participate less and differently and so the younger individuals show higher levels of participation when compared with older ones. Retirement age is an important variable to determine the degree of activity, especially with regard to social participation, but preferences regarding the participation or the type of activity are also conditioned by gender or by level of education. The latter are relevant in cultural preferences, while gender is crucial in the intensity of involvement in the outdoor / indoor nature of activities.

Encouraging participation in public life and avoid the relegation of the elderly are undoubtedly objectives of active ageing. The changes in the social condition of older persons, including increased longevity, improved health condition, a more favourable economic situation and especially the increase in school attendance, will encourage this participation. However, for this to develop, one needs deeper institutional responses in order to meet social and cultural

demands that a more ambitious population will inevitably require. Undoubtedly due to the impact of schooling on the profile of the activities of the senior population, but also to other changes, such as those relating to type of roles. Within this perspective, the concept of lifelong learning gains special relevance because it points to the need for a vast cultural offer that will be based on cultural institutions such as libraries, museums, senior universities or associations of cultural or educational nature. The institutional answers will have to overcome the assistance based scope that public policy seems to come down to and point toward broader goals of integration and participation in public life, especially when the drop in fertility will not be able to strengthen the intra-generational networks of sociability and solidarity as a way of avoiding loneliness and social isolation.

Although they are becoming more numerous, elderly have been gaining prominence in society, basically staying away from decision-making processes. Participation in public life, as advocated in the gerontological standards of active ageing, would thus constitute the antidote that would not only contradict the sense of exclusion due to the prejudice that condemns the elderly, but would also develop a citizenship of the elderly and of their rights to participate in society.

C. MUSEUMS AND SENIOR PEOPLE

One of the most significant trends in recent decades in museum theory and practice, internationally, has been the fact that they have become visitor-oriented, people-oriented. When defining what is a museum, the functions directly related to people (to exhibit and communicate) have always been included, but this relationship has earned a special mention in the redefinition or adaptation of the definitions developed by ICOM itself, but also by national museum associations.

The ICOM definition¹⁹ refers to an institution at the service of society and open to the public. However, we believe that the paradigm shift is best reflected in the current definition of the British Museums Association, which replaced the previous one in 1997²⁰, and which withdrew the emphasis from the functions and placed on people, because people are the final recipient of any museum function of the museum and its *raison d'être*.

Contrary to what one might think, this is not exactly a recent development in museological thinking. Each area has its visionaries and, amongst others, museology had John Cotton Dana, director of the Newark Museum. In 1917, Cotton Dana wrote²¹:

“Today, museums of art are built to keep objects of art, and objects of art are bought to be kept in museums. As the objects seem to do their work if they are safely kept, and as museums seem to serve their purpose if they safely keep the objects, the whole thing is as useful in the splendid isolation of a distant park as in the centre of the life of the community which possesses it. Tomorrow, objects of art will be bought to give pleasure, to make manners seem more important, to promote skill, to exalt handwork, and to increase the zest of life by adding to it new interests.”

Almost a century later, we can say that even when the constraints in terms of financial and human resources condition the practice, in theory, in their way of thinking, most museum professionals, and particularly those working in educational services, have integrated the concept of "museums for people." A museum that opens the door, that seeks to communicate, inspire, amaze, but also engage people, to be relevant to them, to be a meeting point and a space for discussing ideas, sharing and socializing.

“Which museums will survive in the 21st century? Museums with charm and museums with chairs.”

Kenneth Hudson

Kenneth Hudson was another visionary. Based on the above, his words can be interpreted metaphorically: the chairs can represent that open, warm, friendly and engaging museum. These museums will survive in the twenty-first century because they understand that sustainability is also a question of affection, relevance and access. Museums without people are not museums. They are distant, cold, incomprehensible and therefore irrelevant places.

However, Kenneth Hudson's "chairs" can also be interpreted literally. Considering the ageing of the population in all countries of the so called 'first world', increased life expectancy, increased free time after retirement and the need to occupy it with activities that provide socialization, fun, but also new knowledge and challenges, one can easily conclude that the so-called 'third age' represents for museums a potential audience that is growing and which should be given special attention in order to boost an effective and lasting relationship.

¹⁹ A museum is a non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.

²⁰ The definition “The museum is an institution that collects, documents, preserves, exhibits and interprets material evidence and associated information for the benefit of society” was substituted by “Museums enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society”.

²¹ Cotton Dana, J. (1917). “The gloom of the museum”. In: *The New Museum Series*. Re-published in Anderson, G. (ed) (2004). *Reinventing the Museum: Historical and contemporary perspectives of a paradigm shift*. Altamira

One of the most comprehensive studies we found – in fact the only one - about the relationship of museums with senior people is an Australian study for the Australian Museum and the National Museum of Australia, published in 2003²². Given the demographic trends described above, and which equally affect Australia (in 2051, 26% of the population will be aged 65 or more), the two museums sought to learn more about this audience in order to prepare a more informed and sustained strategic and programmatic plan. The study identifies leisure habits, level of interest and involvement with museums and other cultural institutions, perceptions of museums, types of programmes that could attract the senior population, issues related to accessibility.

“I never used to go when I was younger. I wouldn’t be found dead in one of those, they smelt bad and were old. Now I have a different view. When we are older, we appreciate the more beautiful things, history. We value things more as we age. ”

In: Energised, engaged, everywhere: Older Australians and Museums

Very briefly, with regard to the relationship with museums, the results of this study show that 35% of respondents have a general interest in museums, 47% actively seek to be informed of new developments that they have to offer in terms of activities. In terms of motivation for visiting a museum, most refer to the search for new experiences (77%), fun (71%), learning new things (71%) and the desire to do something with their grandchildren and family (70%).

The study also includes a sociological framework for the definition of this audience and in the end it makes recommendations on issues such as programming, exhibitions, communication and promotion, services and accessibilities. Here we would highlight an aspect that the authors of the report called "the role of the museums": in the current demographic context, the museums offer senior people the opportunity of being in contact with the contemporary life of the community, thereby contributing toward the reduction of the effects of social isolation in addition to the opportunity for active involvement, particularly through volunteering.

In addition to this visitor survey (as mentioned, the only one we could find and that meets the objectives of ours), there are other articles and studies that explore various aspects of the relationship between museums and the senior public.

In 2010 the article by Deborah Mulhearn "Senior Service"²³ was published in the magazine *Museum Practice*, with special focus on the British context. The author cites in particular the research of Hans Christian Andersen, a professor at Nothumbria University, which reminds us that the senior audience is as diverse in their knowledge, interests, habits and expectations as any other - simply, it is older and also increasingly demanding - and therefore reminds us of the danger of typecasting this audience. She also draws attention to the fact that several studies indicate that, despite the trends mentioned above, museum attendance significantly lowers after the age of 75, a fact to be taken into account, considering that in the senior segment, the age group with the highest growth in the UK is that of the "oldest old", those who are aged 85 or more.

There is another consideration to make here: in addition to the diversity of this audience in terms of socioeconomic level, level of education, habits of visiting museums, it is important to keep in mind that, due to the increasing number of older individuals, it is also a diverse audience in terms of physical and mental abilities. This specific public may involve people with mobility or limited mobility or no mobility at all; people who see and hear well or not to well or nothing; people who maintain their intellectual capacities intact or suffer, for example, from dementia²⁴, people living alone accompanied or in homes. This reality has implications not only

²² Kelly, L. et al. (2002). *Energised, engaged, everywhere: older Australians and museums*. Australian Museum and National Museum of Australia

²³ Mulhearn, D. (2010). "Senior Service: Attracting Older Audiences". In: *Museum Practice*, 49, March 2010

²⁴ We suggest reading the document Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) *The MOMA Alzheimer’s Project: Making art accessible to people with dementia – A guide for museums*.

in what concerns the accessibility of the museum itself, but also the programming of outreach activities.

When it comes specifically to accessibility issues, there are several documents with guidelines and references. It is worthwhile highlighting here a study by the Boston Museum of Science with the aim of creating a new travelling exhibition called "Secrets of Aging", for which the target-audience is the senior audience. The team responsible for the study sought answers to the following questions: How does a science centre create an appealing exhibition for a senior audience? Are the needs and interests of the senior population different from those of the general public? Is it really possible to create an exhibition that works with everyone?

The results of the study²⁵ summarize the critical contributions of the respondents - seniors who had visited three exhibitions of the museum - about aspects concerning the creation and design of exhibitions visited that have, in our opinion, universal application: need for more chairs; larger font size in the captions and panels; an organized/guided tour within the exhibition area; fewer objects and less dense sections, with more room to move; adequate lighting to read the captions; proper height for the positioning of both the objects on display and the labels, taking also into account the needs of wheelchair users; contents that are of particular interest to seniors, of relevance to them²⁶. A review of the exhibition "Secrets of Aging" showed that it had more success amongst the senior audience, both because of the theme and also due to the fact that senior consultants were involved in all phases of construction.

Something not mentioned in the study of the Museum of Science, and which is necessary in general when accessibility issues are considered (usually limited to physical aspects), is the question of language. One of the most serious problems in communication between the museums and the public (senior and not only) is that the language of the panels and labels is a language understood by specialists in the subjects addressed, but incomprehensible to a general audience, non specialist, which is the case of the majority of the people visiting museums. Communication involves a sender and a receiver, and if the message is not understood by the latter, communication fails²⁷.

Considering now the Portuguese context, some data from the last census (2011)²⁸, also referred by Pedro Moura Ferreira in his text *Over 65: Trends, occupations and participation*, are of particular relevance for our study. We thus know that the senior population in Portugal is 19% of the total population (2,023,000 people), having recorded in the last decade an increase of 19%. The vast majority of these people live alone or with other elderly (60% of elderly; 12% of the population), this group has increased by 28.3% in the last decade and the majority lives in Lisbon (22%); in the Alentejo (22%) and in the Algarve (21%). The senior population is mainly concentrated in the northern region (31%), with 26% residing in the centre and another 25% in Lisbon and Vale do Tejo. The National Statistics Institute draws attention to three factors that contribute toward the trends reported here: the increase in life expectancy, desertification and transformation of the role of the family.

Demographic trends registered in Portugal have similarities to what is happening elsewhere in the world. The senior segment is growing significantly and by 2050, one third of the population will be over 60, and Portugal now is the 7th most aged country in the world²⁹. In addition, the elderly are not only more numerous but also increasingly older, which makes this segment even more diverse in terms of physical and intellectual abilities. The senior population is concentrated in large cities and most live alone or in the company of other elderly. There is a lot of free time, there is a great need to fill it with interesting activities, as is the need for people to feel alive and active in society and in their community. However, we should also take into account the changes that the current framework of the economic crisis could bring to families, strengthening

²⁵ The report is available on the museum website (www.mos.org): Reich, S. and Borun, M. "Exhibit accessibility and the senior visitor: assesment session findings for 'Secrets of Aging'".

²⁶ For example, the australian study refers that senior respondents refer to health and wellbeing, as well as history, as subjects of particular interest. The subject of the exhibition of the Museum of Science "Secrets of Aging" was ageing.

²⁷ Regarding the issues of language and the writing of accessible texts, we suggest reading the articles written by Margareta Ekarv, creator of the Ekarv method, and by Helen Coxall.

²⁸ Instituto Nacional de Estatística. *Censos 2011: Resultados pré-definitivos*.

²⁹ Villaverde Cabral, M. (2009). "A política portuguesa para o envelhecimento é pensões e saúde. Não há mais nada". Interview for the newspaper *Público* (19 November 2009).

the role of the older generations. In order to control costs, the elderly can share their homes with their children and grandchildren, helping out financially with their pension and may be responsible for the grandchildren, so parents do not have to pay the nursery .

Pedro Moura Ferreira calls attention to the challenges with which the Portuguese society is confronted due to these demographic trends (the same reported by the Australian study cited above in the case of Australia): "(...) the problem posed by aging to the society as a whole is the place of the elderly in society and the refusal of exclusion of the elderly from social life (...)." And later, referring to the concept of *active ageing*, he adds: "(...) Active ageing is not limited to the scope of health-promoting behaviours, but takes into account the environmental and personal factors that interact with health conditions. The context that frames ageing, such as family, community and society, in which the process occurs, have a huge impact on how one ages. (...) The policies and programmes that promote health and social relationships are as important as those that improve the physical health condition."

Moving on to the museological context, in the early 2000s there were three studies³⁰ that examined the museum panorama in Portugal and whose results are also of great relevance for the present study. The first, *Survey of museums in Portugal*, is the most complete (the other two were a sort of follow-up). Here we highlight very briefly some results that will be considered in our analysis:

Geographic location: 24% in the North, 35% in Lisbon and Vale do Tejo; 18% in the Center; the Alentejo was at the time the region with more museums per 100,000 inhabitants (11.3), followed by Lisbon (5.7).

Front-of-house services: at the time of the study, 28% of museums had no front-of-house services for the public.

Access-internal signage: 45% reported the existence of architectural barriers at the entrance and 28% in the visited areas, 55% had no signage for internal paths, and this was the case for 48% "big" museums, with 10 or more rooms³¹.

Control of entries: 23% had no control; 86% had discounts for specific situations, only 11% had computer control.

Major problems: financial resources (55%); staff (50%), facilities / space (44%), conservation (42%), promotion (22%).

Comparatively analysing the two contexts (sociological and museological), we believe that the question which should be placed is the following: given the special emphasis on the role of museums in society, the fact that they are serving the people, how can - or will - these affect the work developed by the Portuguese museums in relation to the senior people? What can or should be their contribution in the effort that the Portuguese society will have to develop in order to promote active ageing?

There is no doubt that the growth of the senior population represents an enormous challenge and a huge potential for the Portuguese museums. On one hand, they will be dealing with people who, in addition to being older, they will be healthier, more active, more demanding with regard to cultural consumption and perhaps also, due to the crisis, with a new role within the family and in taking care of grandchildren. Museums in Portugal have developed several proposals for this audience (especially in terms of guided tours and workshops), in most cases in collaboration with senior universities, parish councils and day care centres. However, the number of seniors that visit individually (not in organized groups) is still low and the number of those who consider the museum a choice of leisure when they take care of their grandchildren is also reduced. On the other hand, another part of this same segment of the audience will have

³⁰ Instituto Português de Museus (2000). *Inquérito aos museus em Portugal*; Observatório das Actividades Culturais e Instituto Português de Museus (2003). *O panorama museológico em Portugal [2000-2003]*; Neves, J.S. e Santos, A. (2005). *Os museus em Portugal no período 2000-2005: Dinâmicas e tendências*.

³¹ Once again, it seems that no other accessibility issues were considered apart from those related to mobility/orientation.

greater difficulties in enjoying the offer rendered by museums, due to constraints at physical and intellectual level, and also financial.

The senior audience is not only one; they are several. Typifying it, stereotyping it, would be a mistake, and would lead to measures and proposals that would not bring answers to real needs. The adjustment of the offer in terms of physical access (in the exterior, in the interior and outside museums - the so-called outreach), intellectual access (content, language, types of programmes) and financial access (ways to facilitate repeated visits and / or with other family members), but also the elimination of psychological barriers (which involves both the way museums communicate with this audience as well as how they receive it), should take into consideration various profiles of current and potential users.

Thus, the museological context outlined by the IPM survey in early 2000, which presented several difficulties in financial and human resources, has been worsening. The proliferation of museums recorded in the last 10-15 years, the creation of educational services in most of them, the creation of the Portuguese Network of Museums in 2000, the adoption of the Framework Law of Portuguese Museums in 2004, were initiatives that, despite their proven positive impact, are now “deactivated”. The sector is prepared to face one of his toughest moments that will jeopardize their very existence (an existence which needs minimum conditions to maintain a dignified presence in society and to be able to fulfil its role). In spite of recognizing the potential that exists in relation to the senior population, how can the Portuguese museums cope with the investment (in terms of time, money and human resources) that the construction and sustainability of this relationship require?

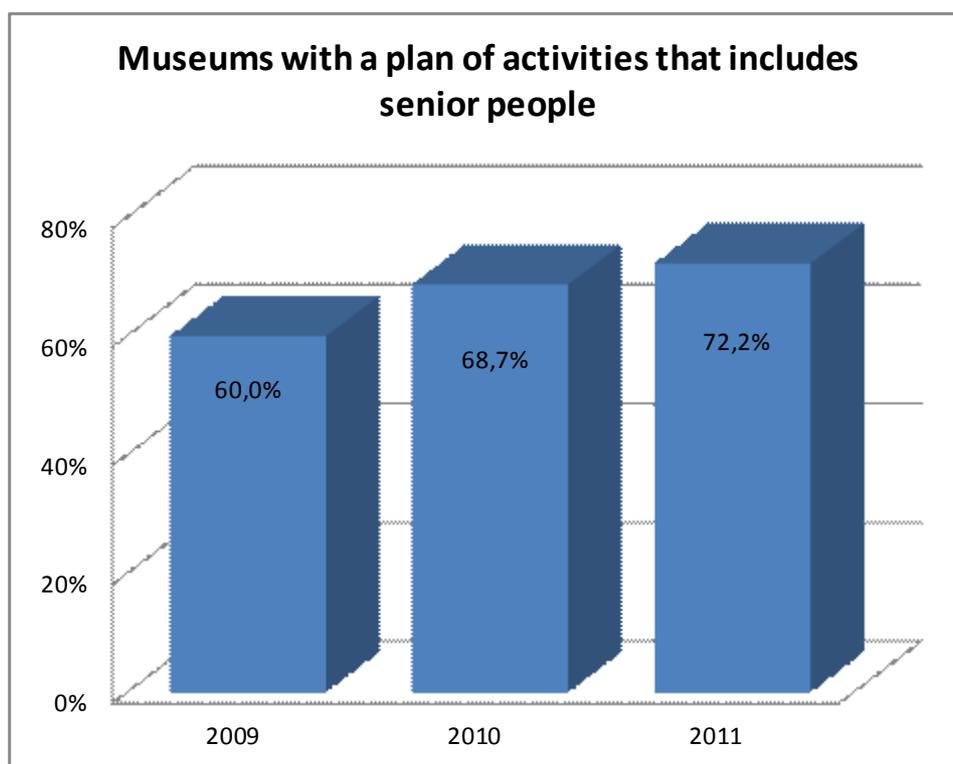
D. MUSEUMS AND SENIOR PEOPLE: ON THE OFFER SIDE

1. SURVEY OF MUSEUMS OF THE PORTUGUESE NETWORK OF MUSEUMS

Within the scope of this survey, we tried to trace the current state of the relationship between the museums of the Portuguese Network of Museums and senior people with regard to the number of senior visitors, contemplating this segment in the business plans and communication strategies of museums and adapting the offer to their needs. The questionnaire was submitted by the Portuguese Network of Museums to its 137 members and response was received from 114 (82%).

1.1 Target audience

First, we tried to find out if senior people had been contemplated in the museum business plans between 2009 and 2011³². Overall (Graph 2), there was a positive growing trend, given that in 2009, 60% of the museums reported having done so, in 2010, 69% and finally in 2011, 72%.

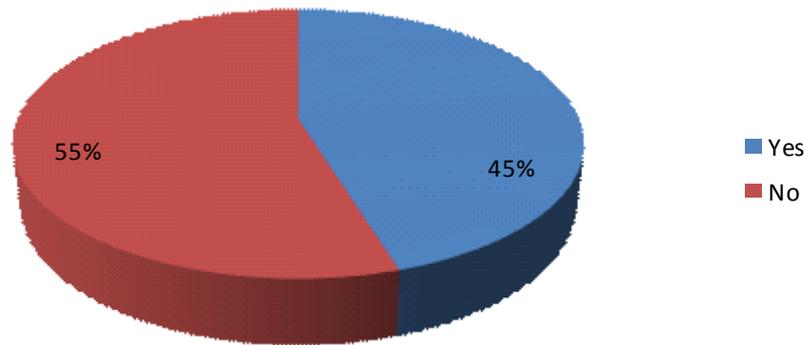


Graph 2

Next, we sought to know if the museums referred senior people also in the objectives, in the programme and in the statistical data (graphs 3, 4 and 5). With regard to the objectives, 55% did not consider senior people amongst the objectives. As pertains the second and third points, the percentage of museums that answered positively was higher, recording 64% and 70% respectively.

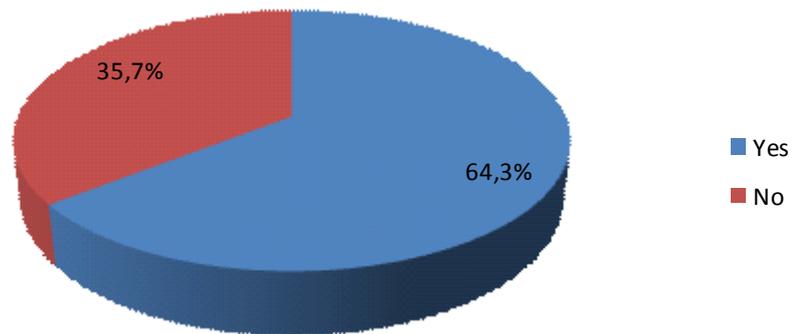
³² With respect to business plans, and given that the survey was sent to the museum in October 2011, the last three years were taken into account (2009 – 2011). In the case of statistics, considering once again the time in which the survey was sent and in order to be able to work with complete years, the answers are relative to 2008-2010.

Museums that refer to senior people in their objectives



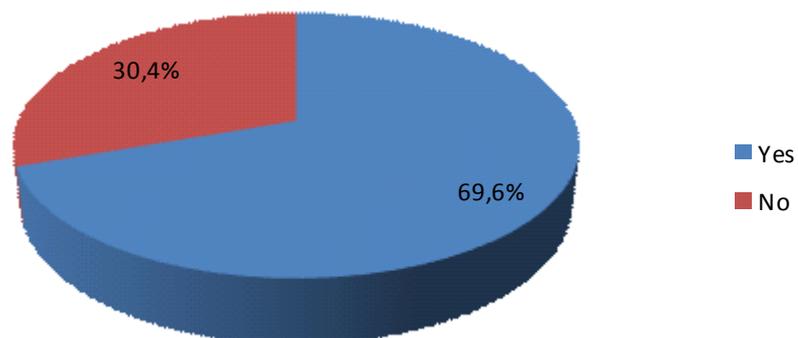
Graph 3

Museums that refer to senior people in their programming



Graph 4

Museums that refer to senior people in their statistics



Graph 5

1.2 Statistics

We sought to obtain statistical data on the total of individual visits of the senior population and the total number of group visits by the senior population related to the total number of visitors (table 1). The results show us that, from 2008 to 2010, there was a decrease in the percentage of seniors who visited individually (from 7.4% to 5.8% of the total visits to the surveyed museums), despite an increase in the total number of visitors. Regarding total visits of seniors in group, the values over the three years, have remained at around 1.3%. Contrary to what was expected, these values appear to be very low, which leads us to question whether they truly represent the number of people (as intended by the survey) or if they erroneously reflect the number of visits. Given this scenario, considering that each group visit has an average of 10 people, we can speculate that the real number of seniors visiting museums in groups may be in reality almost double those that do it individually.

| Total visits to museums | | | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|-----|----------------------------|-----|
| Year | Total visitors | Total visits senior individuals | | Total visits senior groups | |
| | Frequency | Frequency | % | Frequency | % |
| 2008 | 3,585,128 | 266,579 | 7.4 | 38,847 | 1.1 |
| 2009 | 3,772,668 | 224,403 | 5.9 | 53,121 | 1.4 |
| 2010 | 4,422,930 | 255,938 | 5.8 | 53,603 | 1.2 |

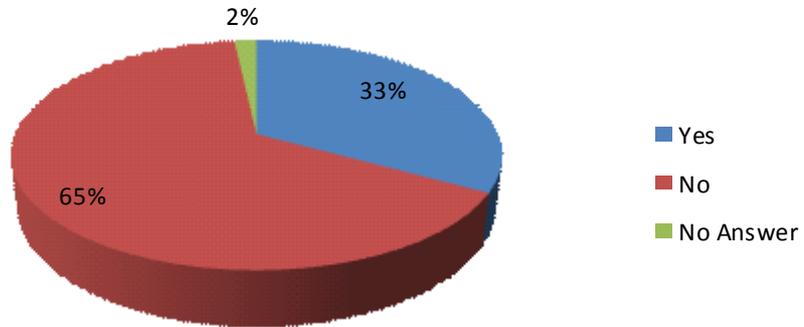
Table 1

1.3. Aecessibility

1.3.1 Outdoors

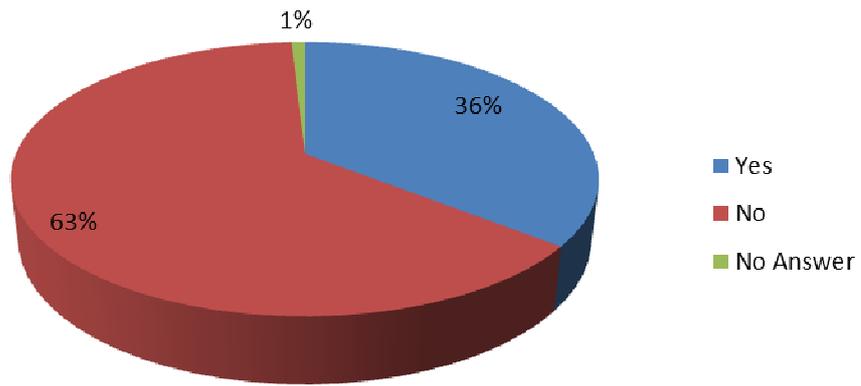
One of the main points that this survey intended to approach and develop was the issue of accessibility, both outdoors and indoors. Regarding the exterior, almost two thirds (65%) of museums declared that they had no specific parking for private vehicles with occupants who have reduced mobility (graph 6). Also with regard to specific parking for buses, only 36% said they had it (graph 7). Most museums that underwent the survey (79%) claimed to be well served by public transport stops near their premises (graph 8). The ramps outside the museums are not as frequent as desirable, since only about half (55%) of the museums have them (graph 9). However, it is necessary to stress that this finding in particular must be analyzed individually according to each museum, as each one has its own architecture, and therefore may not need to have ramps if access is made at ground level. Finally, we tried to find out the percentage of museums with outdoor signs, which resulted in 73% (graph 10).

Museums with specific parking space for the private vehicles of people with reduced mobility.



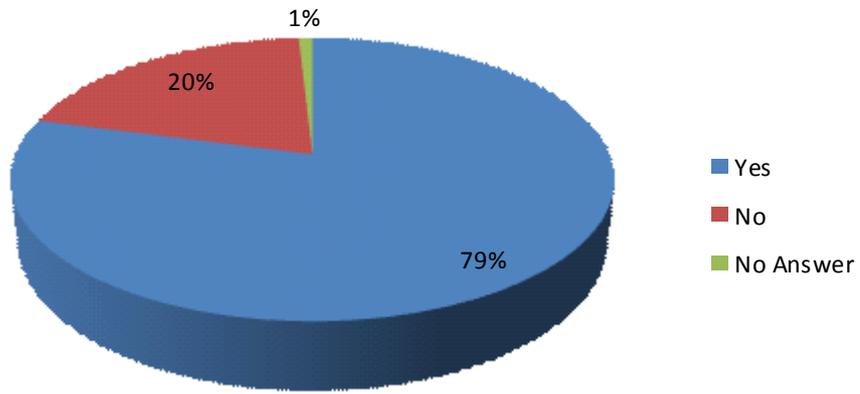
Graph 6

Museums with specific parking space for coaches



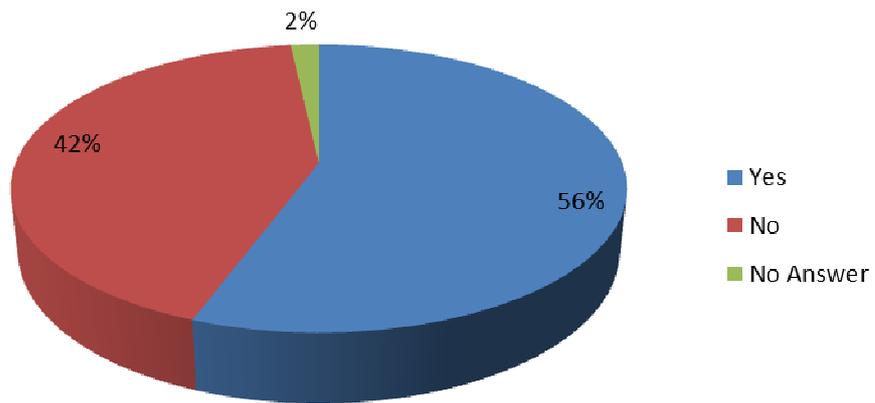
Graph 7

Museums with public transport stops nearby



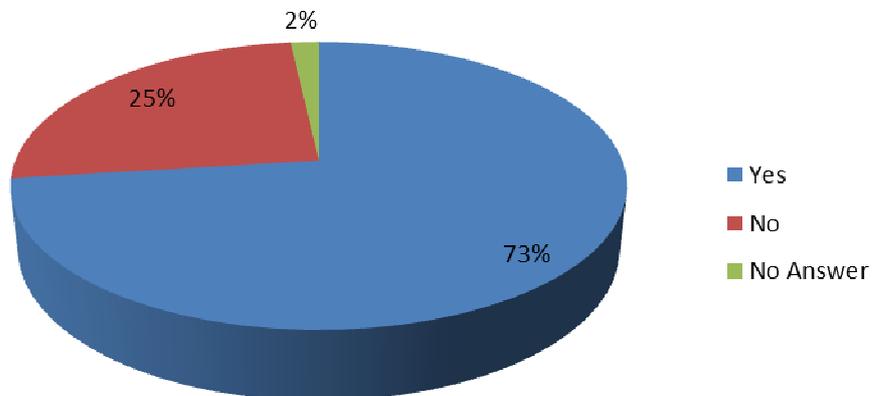
Graph 8

Museums with ramps in the exterior



Graph 9

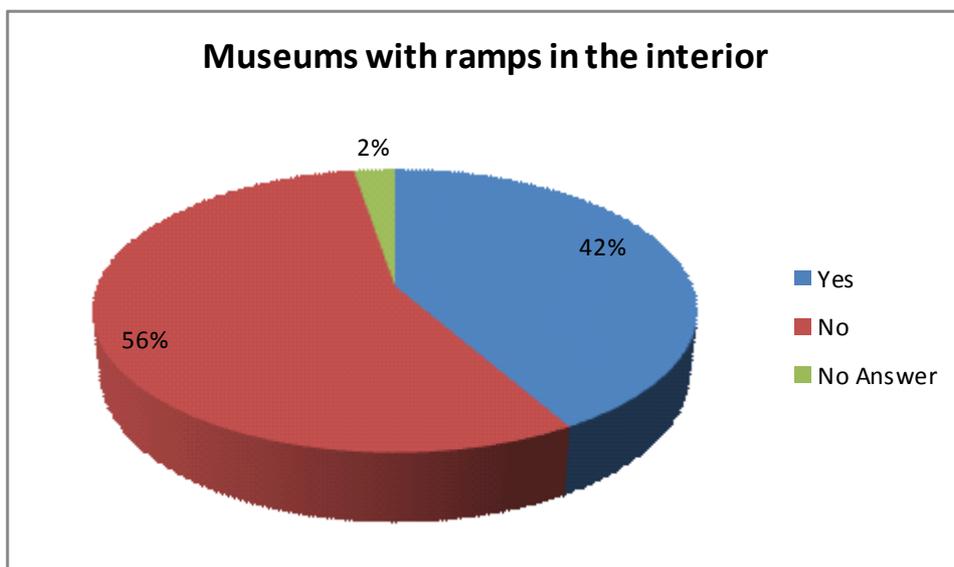
Museums with signage



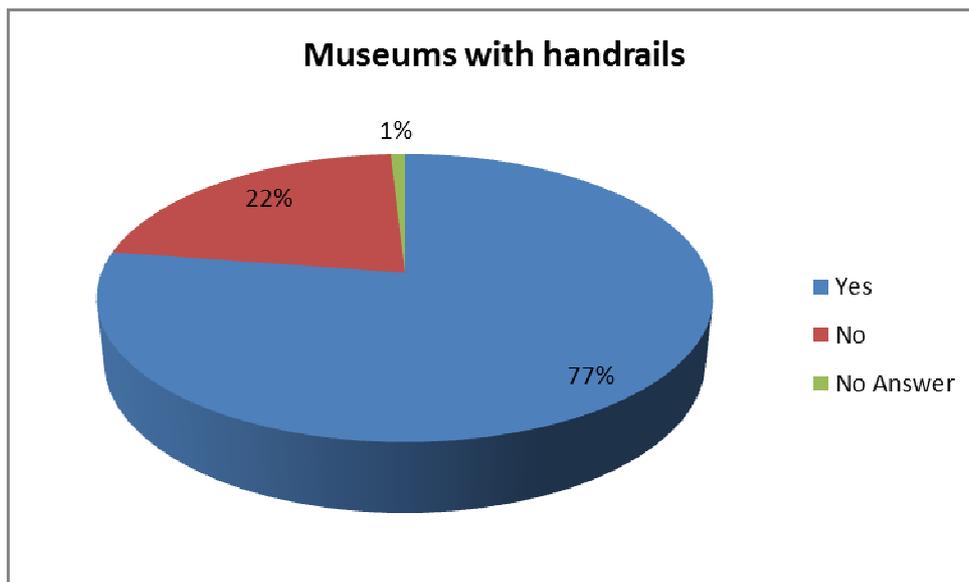
Graph 10

1.3.2 Indoors

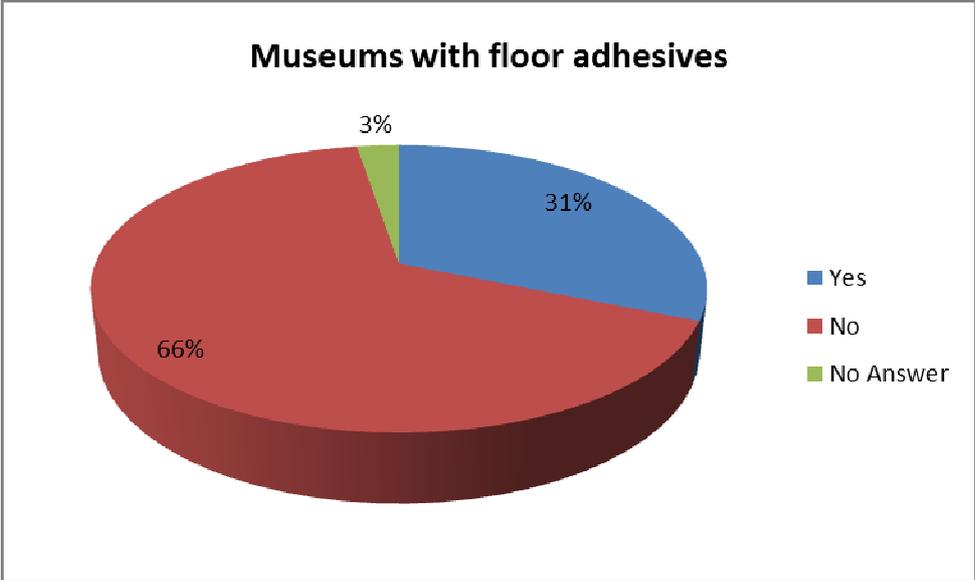
Regarding indoor accessibility, firstly we tried to find out the percentage of museums with ramps. Similarly to the situation outdoors, ramps indoors are not as frequent as would be desirable, since less than half (42%) the museums have them (graph 11). The percentage of museums with handrails is greater (graph 12) and their existence was validated by 77% of the sample of RPM (Portuguese Network of Museums). Substantially lower (31%) is the use of floors with grip within these institutions (graph 13) and also the number of museums (21% of respondents) who make wheelchairs available on request (graph 14). Moreover, half of the museums (49%) stated that they have lifts with easy access (graph 15). As for the portable seats (graph 16), they are present in 24% of the surveyed museums, while 71% (graph 17) have fixed seats. Associated with these elements are the resting areas, present in exactly half (50%) of the surveyed museums (graph 18). Finally, in this context, it was confirmed that the percentage of museums with bathrooms for the disabled and for wheelchair users is 60% (graph 19).



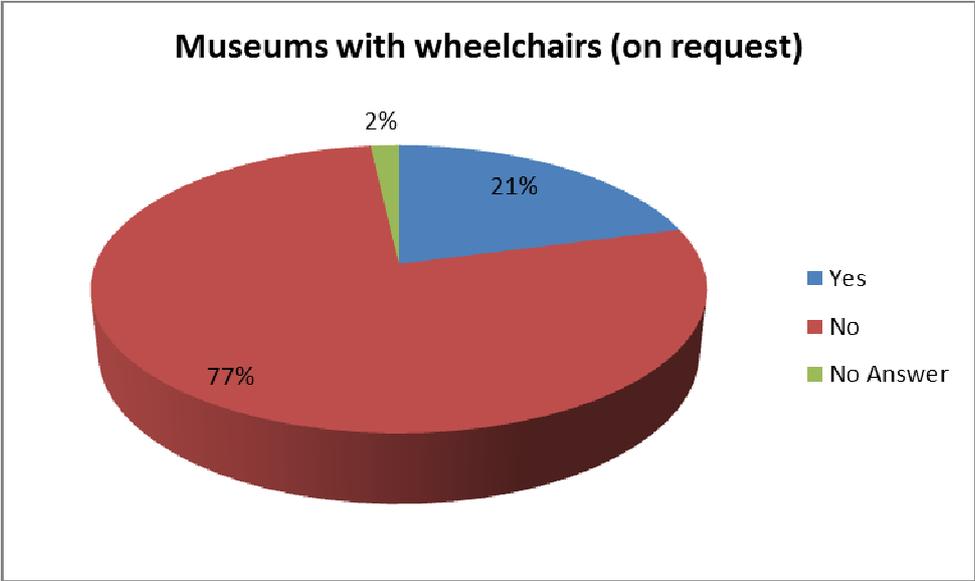
Graph 11



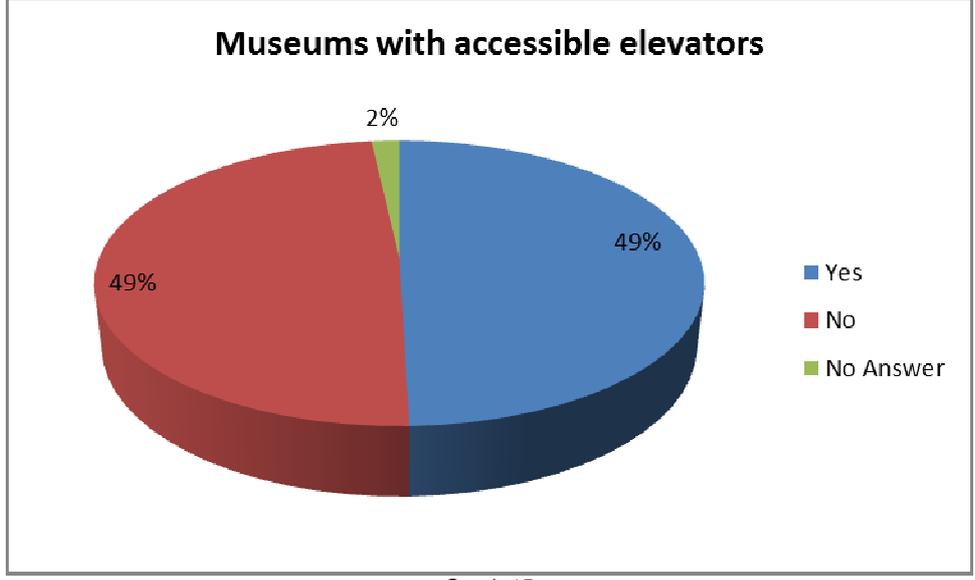
Graph 12



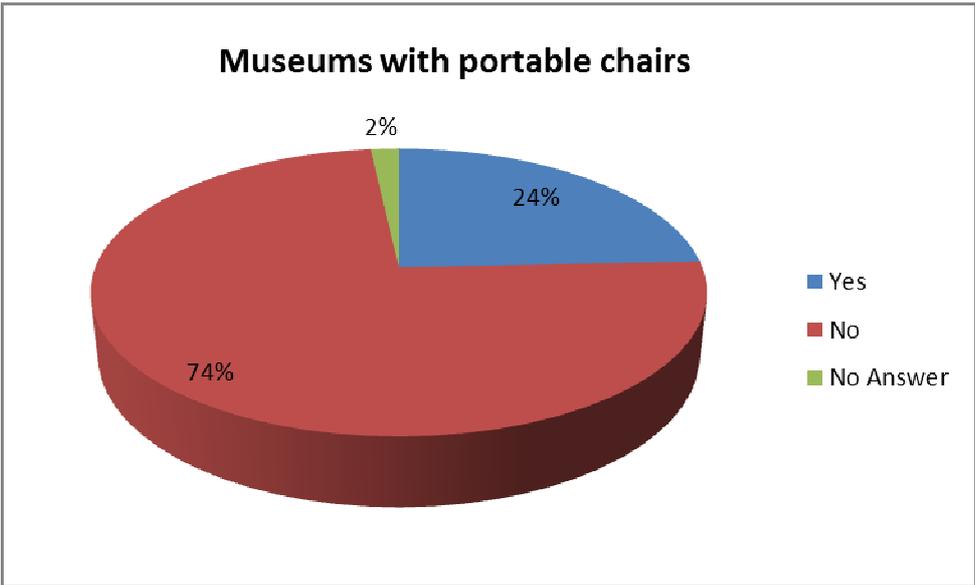
Graph 13



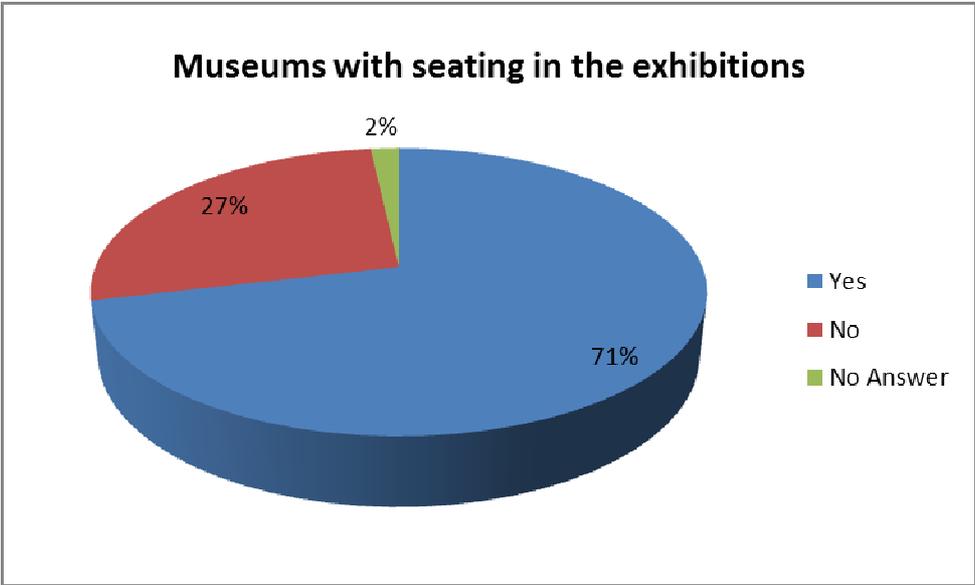
Graph 14



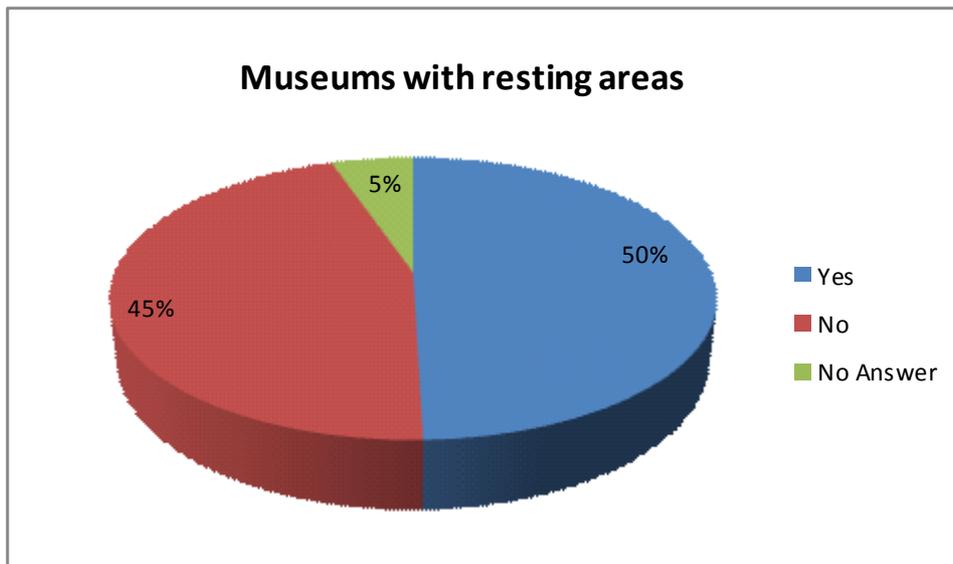
Graph 15



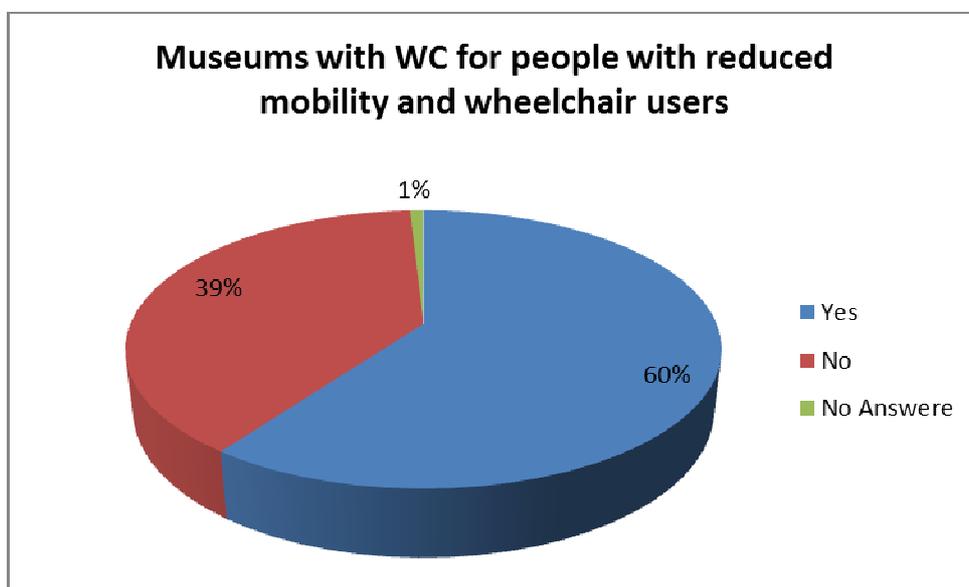
Graph 16



Graph 17



Graph 18

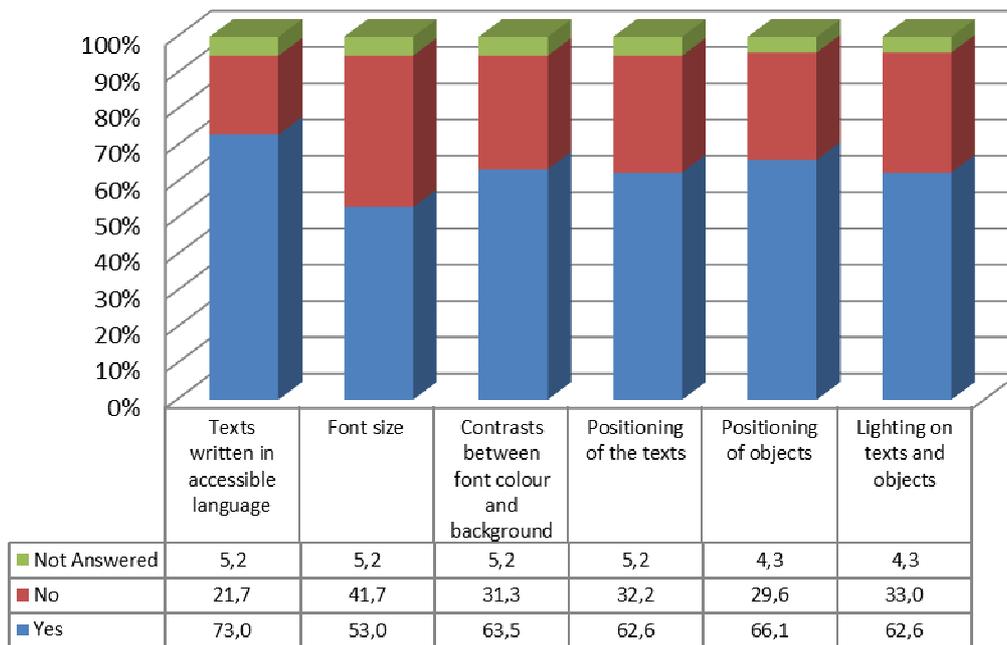


Graph 19

1.4 Information

One of the important aspects of the experience of any visitor in a museum is adequate viewing of the objects on display, along with the understanding of the texts and captions that describe and / or interpret them. In this sense, we tried to find out whether the museums of the RPM followed the directives of the *Museums and Accessibility* manual, published by the Portuguese Institute of Museums in 2004, or another similar manual, on a number of specific elements expressed in graph 20. As shown, 73% considered to have easy and accessible written texts, although only 53% followed the directives regarding the appropriate size of the font in the text. As to the use of chromatic solutions to create contrast between the text and the background panel, 63.5% said they did so. In terms of the positioning of texts, once again, most museums (62.6%) claimed to have fulfilled the requirements, as well as in relation to the display of objects (66%) and the illumination of texts and objects (62.6%).

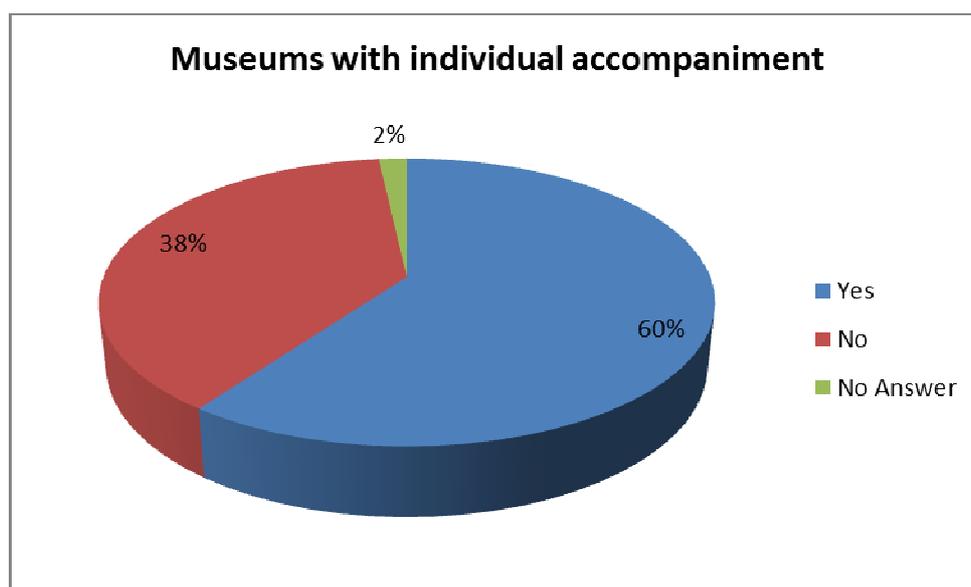
Fulfillment of the directives given in the manual *Museus e Acessibilidade* or similar



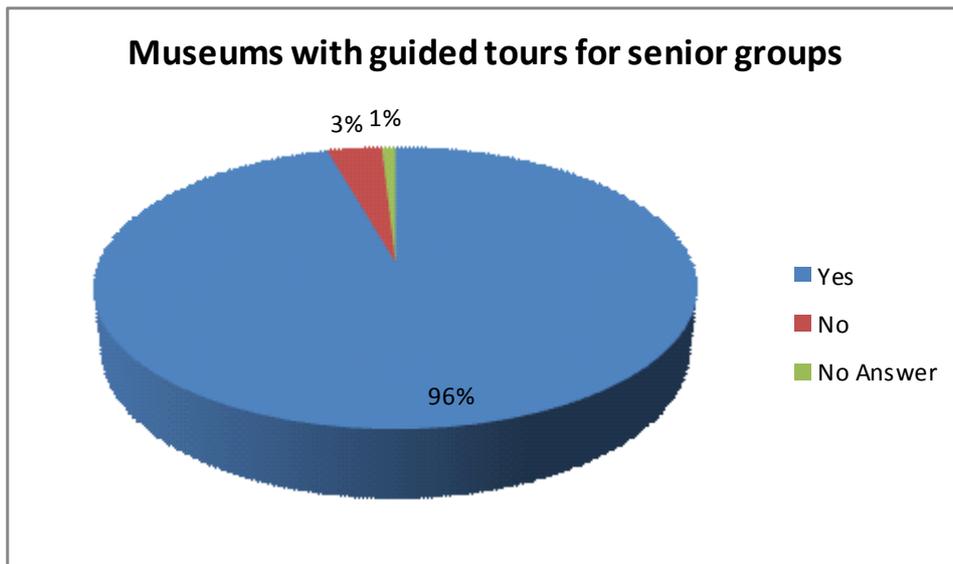
Graph 20

1.5 Reception

The guided tour, either in group or individually, is one of the most common offers of museums to their public and also one of the most sought after by some visitors, because they help them interpret and contextualize the collections. Thus, given their importance also among senior visitors, we tried to find out the percentage of museums that offer individual guided tours, with 60% of the museums already doing so (graph 21). As for the guided tours for senior groups, almost all museums (96%) offer them, given the demand and the needs expressed by part of this specific segment of the public (graph 22).



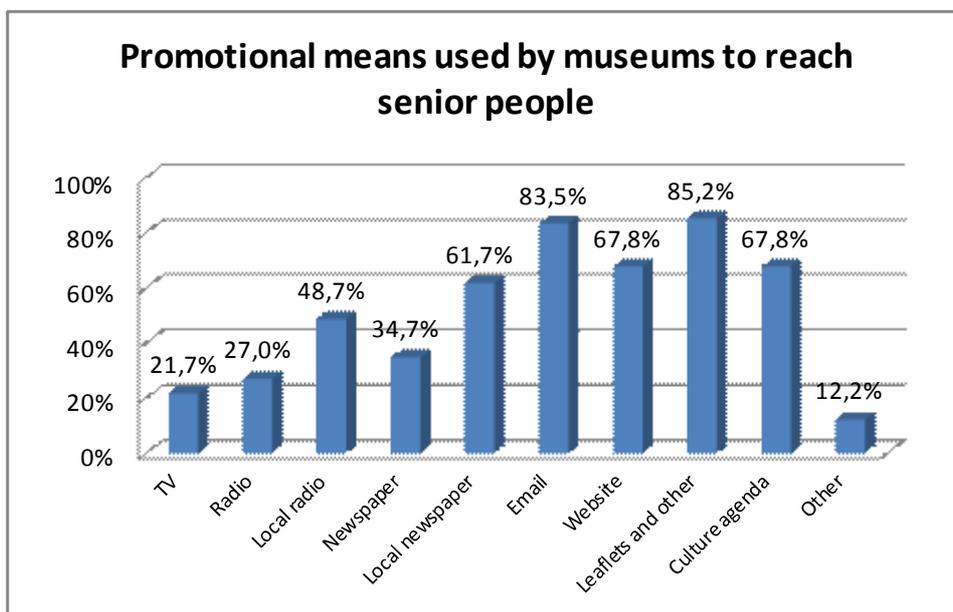
Graph 21



Graph 22

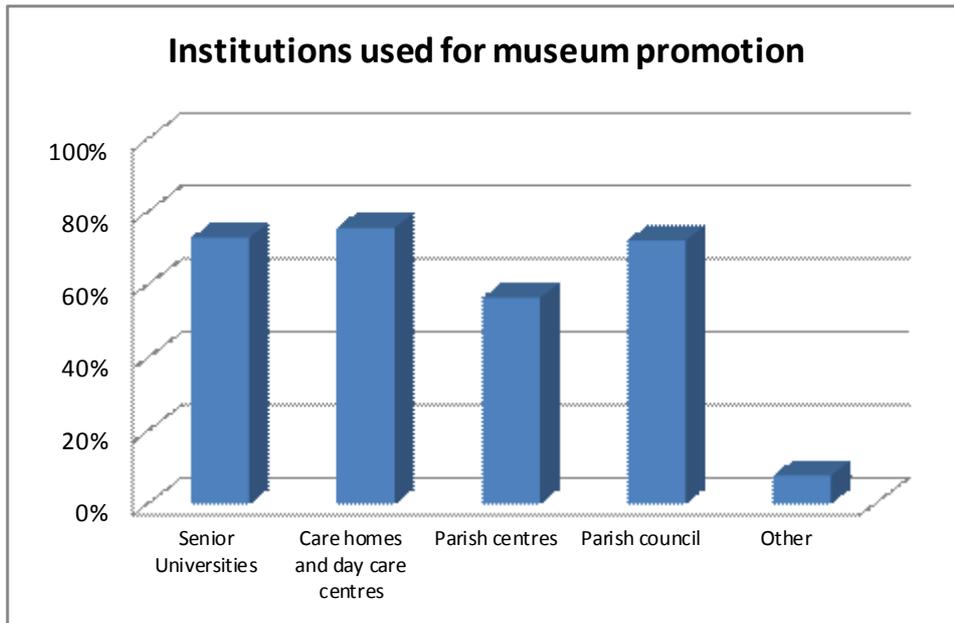
1.6 Promotion

We also looked for information on how museums promote their offer to the senior public. As shown in graph 23, in addition to the usual production of brochures and other promotional material (85%), museums have mainly turned to less expensive means and of easier access, such as the e-mail (83%), the cultural agenda (68%) and the museum's website (68%), in order to reach the senior population. The means of dissemination that are less used are television (22%) and radio (27%).



Graph 23

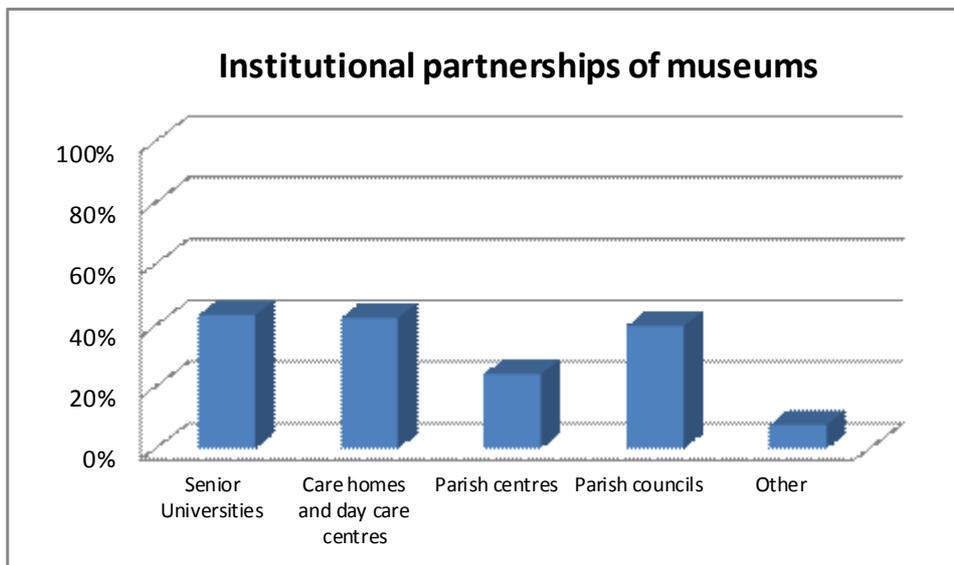
With regard to institutions that museums privilege to disclose their activities to the senior population (graph 24), 76% do so in old age homes and day care centres, 76% at universities and 72% at Parish Councils. The parish centres are less used and were sought by 57% of museums that underwent the survey.



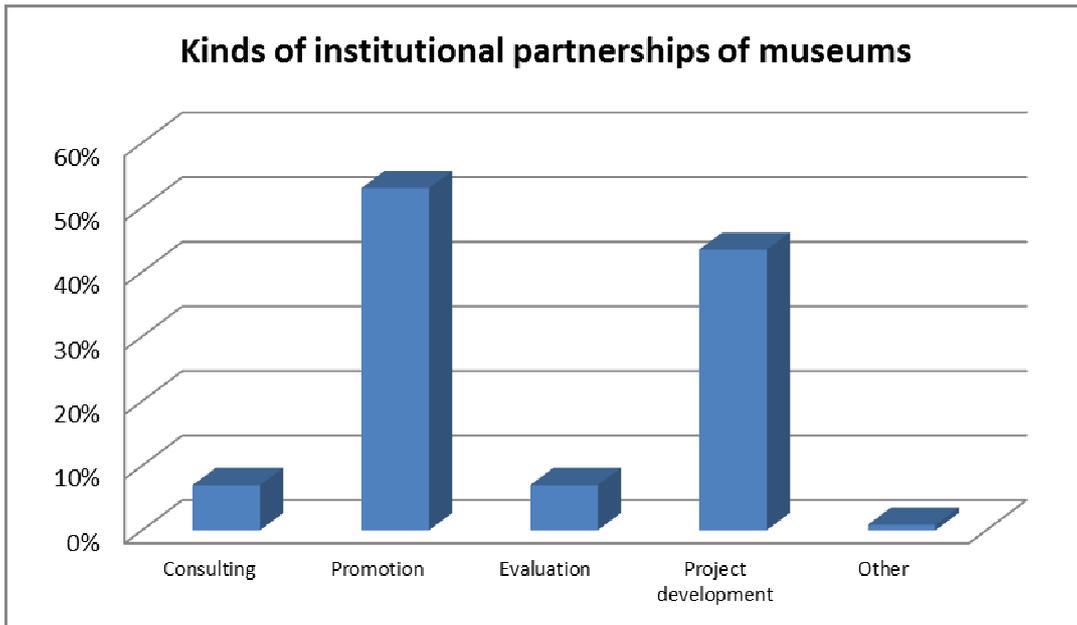
Graph 24

1.7 Partnerships

Based on the same response options, we tried to find out what kind of partnerships exist between museums and these institutions (graph 25). Overall, it was found that on average about 30% of the museums that promote their activities at these places have no formal partnerships. However, 44% have partnerships with senior universities, 43% with old age homes and day centers, 24% with parish centres and 40% with parish councils. As expected, the dominant type of partnership was for the purposes of promotion (53%), although 43.5% has agreements which also consider joint projects (graph 26). Evaluation and consulting recorded residual values of around 7%.



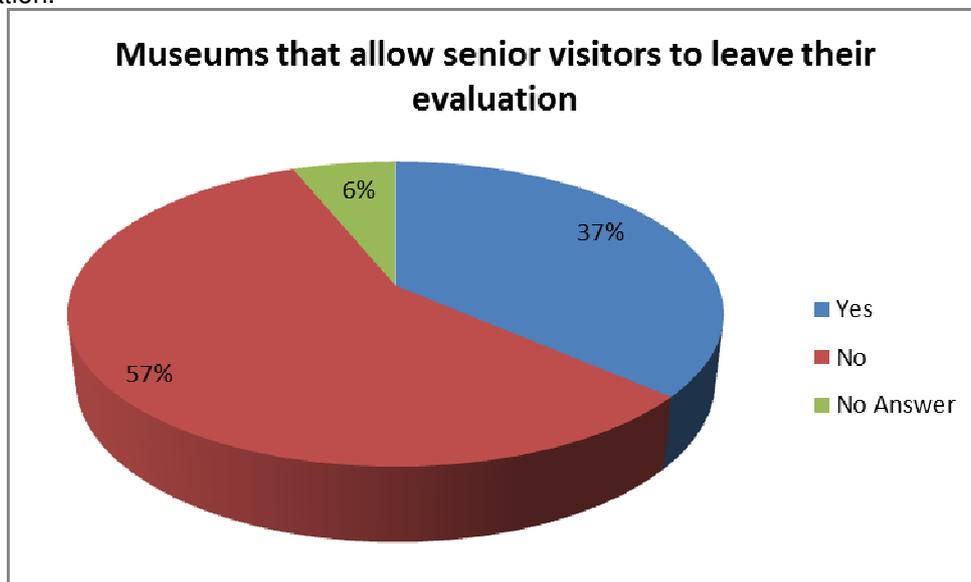
Graph 25



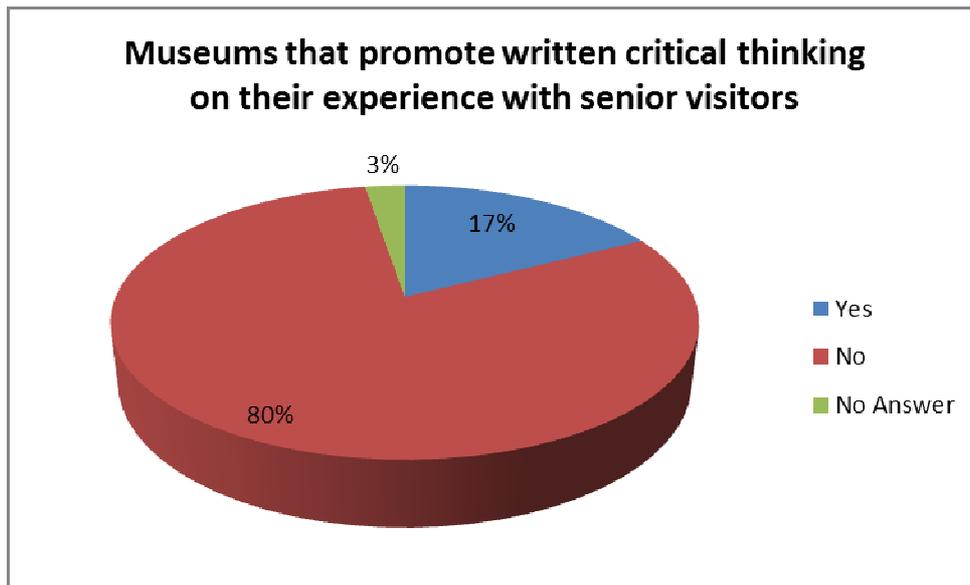
Graph 26

1.8 Evaluation

Finally, our intention was to know if there is any way to assess the experience of senior public in museums visited – an assessment made by the visitors themselves and by the museum. Among the museums surveyed, 37% allow assessment by senior visitors in relation to their experience at the museum (graph 27). However, only 17% declared to have internal written opinion (graph 28), which leads us to question whether the feedback given by visitors is somehow analysed and used in order to improve or adapt the service rendered to the senior population.



Graph 27



Graph 28

2. INTERVIEWS WITH DIRECTORS / HEADS OF MUSEUMS

It was considered to be extremely important to better understand the vision that the leaders of the museums participating in the study (directors or other heads) have with regard to the relationship that museums can or should have with senior people. We also sought to identify how this vision is reflected on the operational and programmatic plan of each museum and understand which, in the opinion of the interviewees, are the limitations and difficulties in implementing the plan.

2.1 How would you define the senior audience?

Most interviewees define the senior audience as an "older" (9) or "retired", regardless of age (6), audience. There were also references to an "audience with more time available" (2), "with some financial availability" (2) or "diversified" in terms of interests, availability and training (2).

"An audience with more time to visit museums. It is older than any other type of audience, although nowadays being senior is relative, we already have a 4th age. They've mainly got more time."

"The older audience, which is usually at retirement age, an audience with more time and financial availability."

"The retired population, has certain disabilities (less social life, because they don't work and they don't know what to do). Health problems, difficulty in walking, seeing, hearing, standing, talking ... "

2.2 How would you define the senior audience that visits your museum?

When they were asked to think specifically about seniors who visit their museum, a large number of interviewees reported the conditions in which they visit, that is, "in groups" (an "organized group") (4) or alone and with friends (4). They also distinguished between people without the habit of visiting (which come in groups) and people who have this habit and feel comfortable to visit alone or with friends, looking for new things.

"They come in groups (day care centres, nursing homes), invited by the Education Service. People who have visited few museums, some first-time visitors. More enlightened and knowledgeable people, come alone or with friends. "

During the interviews, it became clearer that there are museums working mainly with groups of seniors (not providing any special monitoring to individual visitors) and others that are mostly visited by seniors who know them well and who visit individually, also participating in activities prepared by the Education Service.

Two interviewees referred that their museums, located in different areas, receive mainly international senior public.

"The international public has greater weight, because at a national level we have more schools, not seniors."

"...curiously, there are more foreign senior visitors in relation to nationals."

2.3 What does this audience represent for museums?

Interviewees were quite aware of the impact that current demographic trends, i.e. the ageing population, may have in the future of museums. In their responses they mentioned that this audience has more time (4), that it is growing (3) and that it tries to occupy its leisure time also by visiting museums (3). In two cases, it was also noted that there is much to learn from them.

"A target audience to be considered. Firstly because, with the ageing of the population, it becomes a privileged customer. Secondly, because they are interested in consuming our product. They are demanding, interested, they bring experience and wisdom and they bring more people. "

"A huge potential, especially with the new demographic paradigm. Children and youth and seniors often have things in common, in terms of motivations and needs, for example, the attention that they seek. "

"People invest in their own quality of life, they seek to occupy their free time creatively."

"People who do not have ongoing daily obligations, and which we can attract."

2.4 What does this audience represent for your museum?

As to what this audience specifically represents for their museums, there were two lines of response. On the one hand, the need to adapt the museum offer in terms of communication, programmes or access were identified.

"Our guided tours are naturally sought by them."

"People come here depending on the programme (guided tours, conferences)."

"Challenges in terms of physical accessibility."

"We have monitors that know the needs and interests of the senior public."

"We have a specialised person who is devoted to these visits, with a more accessible language, there is a rhythm of its own, different ..."

On the other hand, aspects that concern the museum-senior visitor relationship were referred. This relationship, like all others has two sides: there was much talk on how museums can meet the need that seniors have to give meaning to their life after retirement, but words were also shed on the wealth that seniors, with their knowledge and life experience, can bring to the work carried out by museums.

"The secret of happiness lies in the awareness that we are part of the world. (...) People do not have the same pleasure in working with the elderly as they do with children. They look at them with pity. (...) I want them to feel that they are people. "

"Life does not end when a person retires."

"I like to accompany them, you learn a lot from them and they are also people who want to listen. There are not obliged to come. "

"They are available to share, they bring their work experiences. We are recording to compile an archive of memories. "

"In the case of oral history, because it involves activities that have ceased, we count a lot on the senior public."

2.5 To what extent does the museum programme address the senior audience? What activities / services?

Only one respondent said that some of the exhibitions of his museum are made bearing the senior audience in mind (in terms of themes and possible involvement of this audience in the contents of the exhibition). Another interviewee spoke of an activity carried out twice a week in a old age home.

"The senior audience is one of our priorities, along with school children. They are the two priorities of the museum. The senior audience is taken into account, both in the scheduling of exhibitions, from the content to the themes chosen, and in their possible active involvement in them... (...) Seniors became the privileged source of information and the priority target-audience of the exhibition."

As for the rest, museum programmes address an undifferentiated public and not specific target-audiences. It was mentioned by most respondents that it would not make sense to do otherwise. However, there are at most museums specific activities tailored to the needs of senior audiences (guided tours, workshops, projects). In one case, it was noted that there are the same activities as those that the Education Service prepares for school audiences, duely adapted. The directors of this and of another museum also emphasized on the language which is to be used, because this is not for children or ignorant people. Mention was also made to adaptations in terms of the duration of the visit and rest breaks. There was also a director who spoke about the adaptation of the room temperature and light. There was one respondent who reported the ability and desire to engage seniors as volunteers. There was another who spoke specifically of the wish to develop activities that can be taken to people who are unable to leave their home.

"We can also engage them as volunteers, an area that we are developing greatly. They share our life, from the reception of visitors to the support rendered to the Director. Very qualified volunteer work. "

"One of our concerns this year is to take the museum to those places where these people are, but from where they cannot leave. We have prepared workshops for travelling /outreach and we can adapt them. "

It is relevant to make, in this context, some remarks in relation to the tastes and interests of this audience that emerged during the interviews, but not necessarily in response to this question on programmes and activities.

"There are exhibitions that draw especially older age groups. Contemporary projects do not bring a high level of recognition. These audiences prefer to address what they know."

"I notice that the senior audience has some pleasure in learning history. (...) It is here [in a specific room on local history] that we can retain them longer. (...) We also manage a gallery [gallery name] dedicated mainly to contemporary art, where the seniors practically do not go. (...) The museum is transversal to oral and architectural memories [region mentioned], where there are references [to old professions]... and so for the senior audience it could not be better."

2.6 Are there any concerns regarding accessibility in relation to this specific audience?

All respondents were quite aware of the need to adapt the museum space to people with disabilities in terms of mobility. However, half reported not being able to move ahead due to lack of funds.

Most respondents (8) would have left the issue of accessibility as it is, i.e., would not have gone beyond mobility issues. After some insistence, other issues were considered (visual accessibility - color, lighting, contrast, positioning of captions and panels; cognitive accessibility - writing texts).

Mention was made to the difficulties experienced with exhibition curators, who write their texts (3), and with designers (2). When it comes specifically to the need to communicate through texts that are to be understood by visitors (not just seniors), there were two very distinct reactions: one that defends that visitors should not be underrated through the use of childish language; and another that suggests a less academic and rather lighter language:

"Accessibility is not to belittle and create a language that is more intended to a child (...) This is a vice of the Education Services, quite devoted to children. Strong and serious art and culture subjects have to take people 'higher'. The range of common words is sharply limited. Where will we stop? This trend of infantilization and trivializing ...? Heritage need not be presented as a tale. Heritage is not a story which exists to make us laugh and to entertain us. "

"We are concerned that the language itself is not academic, too restrictive; it should be relatively light, superficial."

We asked the museums under the auspices of the former Institute of Museums and Conservation what are the impacts of the recommendations included in the Institute's publication *Museums and Accessibility*. The interviewees do not consider it to be compulsory, adding that any such requirement would involve investment to ensure compliance.

2.7 What partnerships exist in the development of work related to senior people?

Most respondents said that partnerships are not formal. There is, however, collaboration with senior universities, parish councils, homes and day care centres, mainly to organize visits and to participate in specific activities. In two cases, collaboration with the municipal Social Welfare and Sport Divisions was referred. In both cases there was no follow-up and there was even reference to a certain lack of empathy between the museum and this municipal division.

2.8 What media are used to reach this audience?

Most interviewees mentioned the use of the phone (a medium that is considered quite efficient), Facebook (but in certain cases it is not managed by the museum itself, but by the central municipal services), the museum website and blog. There are three references to cultural agendas of local governments. Three museums referred to the use of traditional mail: one of them expressed concern over the directives to replace this by online media, because, although these do not involve any costs, most seniors in that county were not using these technologies; another museum said that sending information by traditional mail is done centrally, and therefore they are not able to identify senior people in the mailing list in order to send specific mail. In terms of publications, in one case, the work that the Time Out magazine was referred in the promotion of Lisbon museums.

2.9 How do you see the relationship of museums with senior people in the near future?

Once again, the interviewees mentioned the impact and implications of current demographic trends. It is considered that this is a growing segment of the population, and therefore, it has at a first glance enormous potential.

"A segment that will increase more. A senior citizen who moves, who is active, likes to learn and share. "

"An inexhaustible market."

However, they recognize that it is not a homogeneous audience. Some museum directors have referred specifically to the elderly who have a good physical condition, who can move and who seek activities, which presents an opportunity and an obligation for museums to develop their own quality offer, with this specific segment in mind. There was talk about the possibility of developing with them volunteer work. However, concerning this audience which is able to move, one of the interviewees expressed concern about the anticipated effects of the current economic crisis, since the increase in the price of transport tickets together with the decrease in purchasing power will condition access to public transport .

"People attend courses, go to museums and theaters. This has been the trend, but I do not know if the crisis will not reverse some of these trends: reduced mobility (more expensive transport tickets, less access to public transport, end of free access to museums). There may be a setback regarding the cultural trend of the past three decades. "

On the other hand, concerns were expressed regarding the elderly population which gradually loses its physical capabilities and cannot travel. There were two respondents who spoke of the wish and obligation of museums to also provide service to these people.

Finally, two respondents referred specifically to the need to create a real relationship, a relationship of affection, friendship, complicity. According to their perception, this is what many of the elderly seek when they go to a museum.

"The potential of the relationship is huge. Not necessarily an offer-consumption relation, we as the proponents and they as the consumers. There is a possibility to attract these people to do volunteer work. "

"Museums abroad have no activities for 'poor old people', they have very serious activities to attract them. There is even no need to make a great effort, they are curious people."

"It involves human contact. There are people who visit because our employees give them attention, talk to them. "

"To be something more intimate, ongoing, deeper. (...) People are thrown into homes, I want to reach them. It is important, but not easy. "

E. MUSEUMS AND THE SENIOR AUDIENCE: ON THE DEMAND SIDE

1. VISITOR SURVEY

The visitor survey aimed to assess the relationship of Portuguese museums with their respective senior visitors. Specifically, we sought to explore issues such as frequency and the habit of visiting a museum, main motivations, impediments and constraints of the visit, ways of using it, information channels used, cultural and leisure habits, among others. We recall that the museums involved were:

- Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga
- Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea - Museu do Chiado
- Casa-Museu Dr. Anastácio Gonçalves
- Museu Calouste Gulbenkian
- Museu da Água da EPAL
- Ecomuseu Municipal do Seixal
- Rede de Museus Municipais de Loures
- Museu do Trabalho Michel Giacometti
- Museu do Papel Moeda da Fundação Dr. António Cupertino de Miranda
- Museu Botânico de Beja
- Museu Municipal de Faro

The survey aimed at gathering and processing data almost exclusively quantitative and, being self-administered, it was completed by visitors to museums of the sample³³. The questionnaire was given at the end of the visit, at the exit of each museum, to senior respondents who were, of course, over 65 and who could read and write Portuguese and who didn't belong to an organized group. Foreign residents in Portugal were excluded because their museum experience could be *a priori* educationally and culturally different from the Portuguese one. The period during which the survey was carried out varied according to the museum, but globally covered a period of around eight months, during which a total of 340 completed questionnaires were filled in. However, because most Portuguese seniors visit in groups and not individually, there were museums that fell far short of fulfilling the quota (Municipal Ecomuseum of Seixal and EPAL's Water Museum), while the Municipal Museum of Faro obtained no response during the period in which the survey took place.

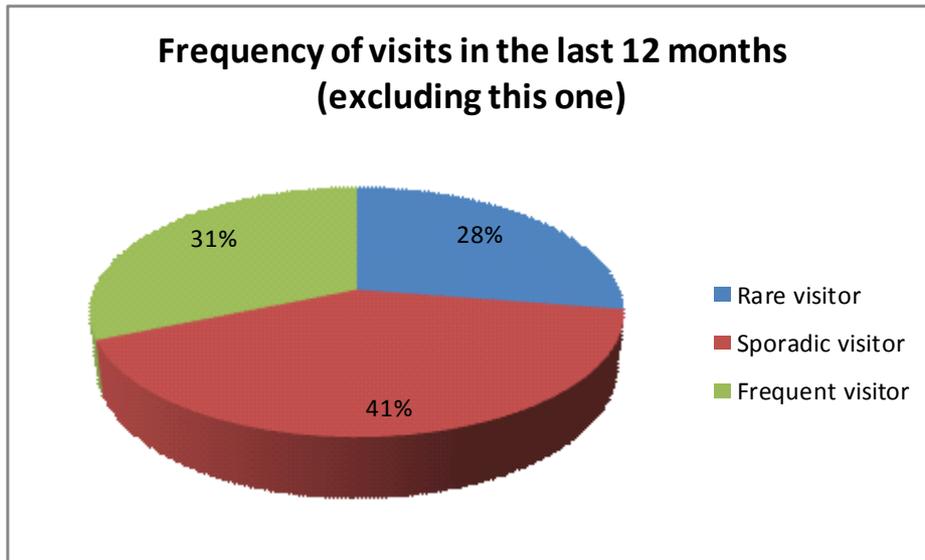
With regard to the processing of data, initially we gathered the global results of the survey, expressing and reflecting a collective opinion of the senior visitors interviewed in relation to museums. In a second phase, to allow for greater understanding of the audience that was surveyed, the data were structured and segmented according to four variables or differentiation criteria: age, educational qualifications, gender and frequency of visits.

1.1 Visiting habits

The average age of the senior respondents was 70 years and the oldest person was 91. The most common age in the universe of our sample of visitors was 68 years. Regarding the gender of the respondents, there was almost a draw, since 53% of respondents were women and 47% men.

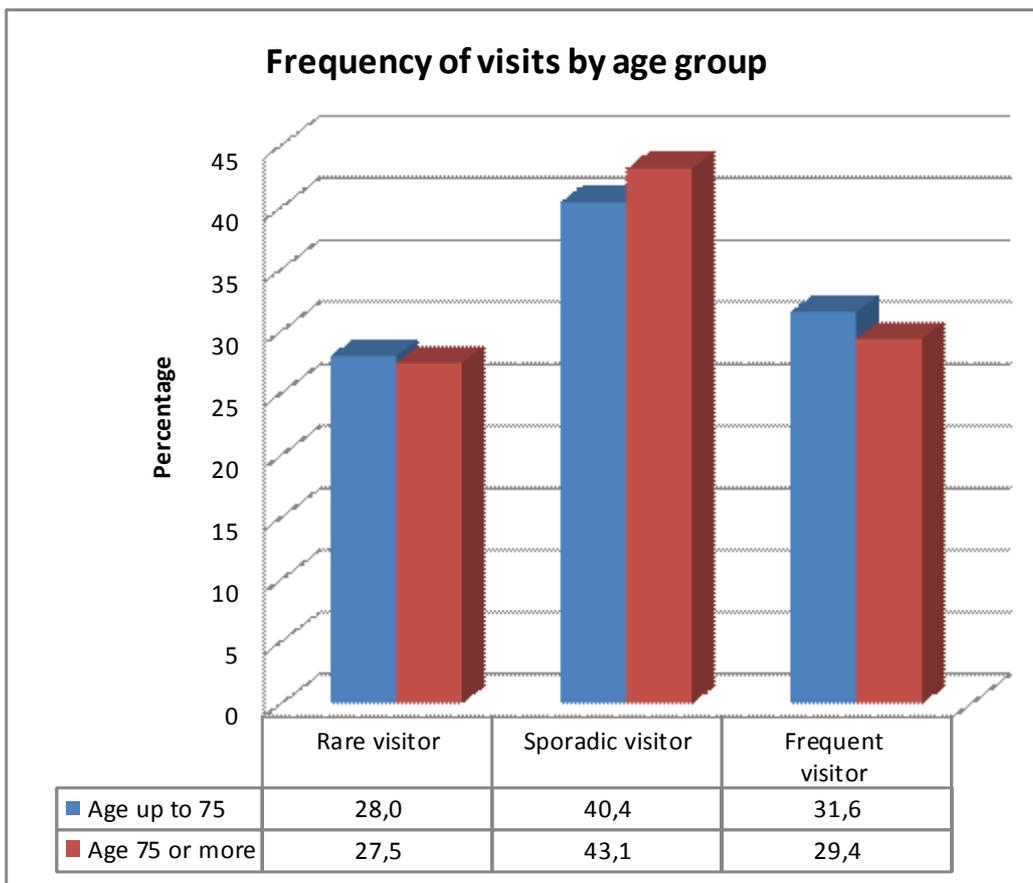
With regard to the habit of visiting museums, specifically in the last 12 months, there is no big difference between the three categories of visitors: *rare visitors* - those who did not go or went once to a museum in the last year; *sporadic visitors* - those went two to five times; *frequent visitors* - those who went six or more times. However, as one can see in graph 29, most respondents were sporadic (41%), i.e., they visited museums two to five times in the last 12 months.

³³ Nota: Dado que o método de amostragem foi não probabilística de conveniência, a amostra não é totalmente representativa dos seniores portugueses visitantes de museus.



Graph 29

Analyzing the frequency of visits by age (graph 30), it appears that the analogy holds in the percentages of rare, sporadic and frequent visitors between the two groups of respondents aged [65-74] and [75 + ∞]. However, as one can see in table 2, there is a substantial difference between the actual number of people in each group: 282 in the first and 51 in the second, representing 85% and 15%, respectively, of the population surveyed.



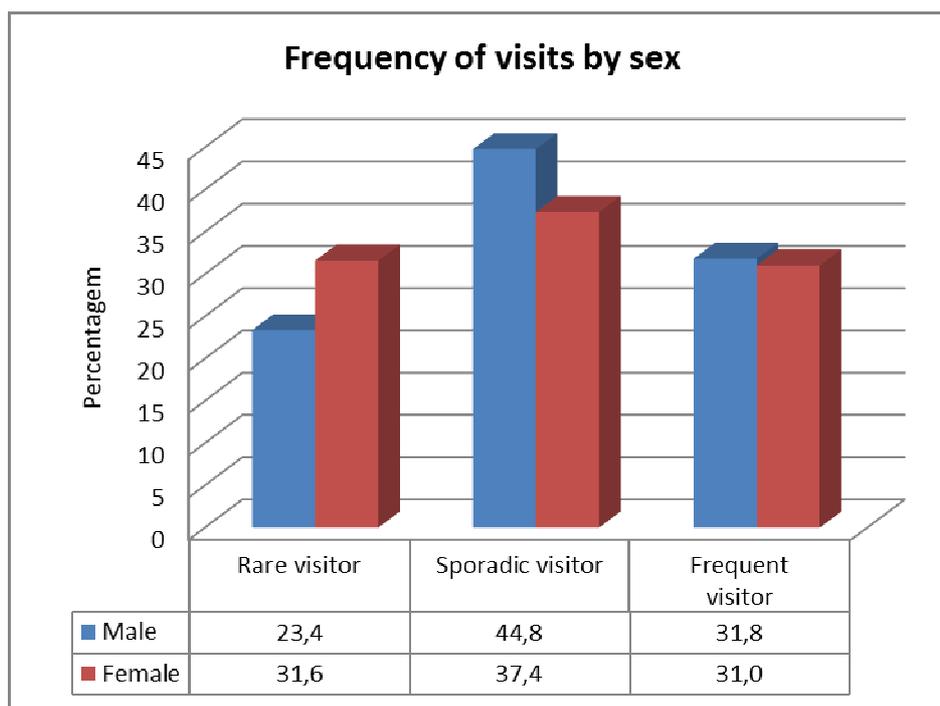
Graph 30

| Number of visits by age group | | | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------|------|--------------------|------|
| Number of visits | Age | | | |
| | Up to 75 years | | More than 75 years | |
| | Frequency | % | Frequency | % |
| Rare visitor | 79 | 28.0 | 14 | 27.5 |
| Sporadic visitor | 114 | 40.4 | 22 | 43.1 |
| Frequent visitor | 89 | 31.6 | 15 | 29.4 |
| Total | 282 | 85 | 51 | 15 |

Table 2

It is naturally and regularly observed by museums in Portugal and abroad that the number of senior visitors aged 75 or more is significantly lower. Incidentally, 74 is the age from which there is a more acute intellectual ageing and when mobility and physical ability problems arise. Notwithstanding these differences, it should be noted that the percentage of people in the range [65-74] that are frequent visitors (32%) is almost identical to the percentage of people over 75 who also visit museums often (29 %), which indicates good physical, and maybe also mental, condition of a considerable number of people in these ages.

In addition to segmenting by age, the profile of the rare, sporadic or frequent visitor may also be characterized by gender and by level of education of visitors. In differentiating by sex, as can be seen in graph 31, the sporadic visitor is percentage-wise higher in both sexes, registering similar values between rare and frequent visitors (31-32%), except those who never went or went once to museums in the past year (23%) within the male universe.

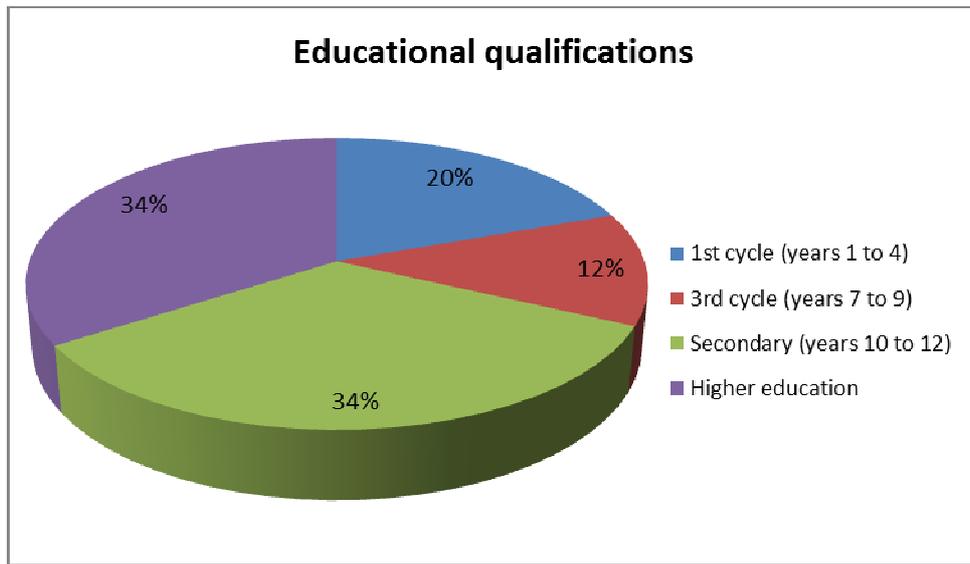


Graph 31

Regarding educational qualifications³⁴, overall in the survey (graph 32), a fifth of visitors surveyed (20%) completed the 1st cycle of basic education, 12% studied up to 9th grade, about a third (34%) completed secondary education, and finally 34% completed a university degree. So we can easily see that there is a tripartite division of school qualifications: 1/3 of people have the 9th grade or less, two thirds have more than the 9th grade. This division (more and less than 9th grade) is important because it was considered, for purposes of analysis of this study, that the

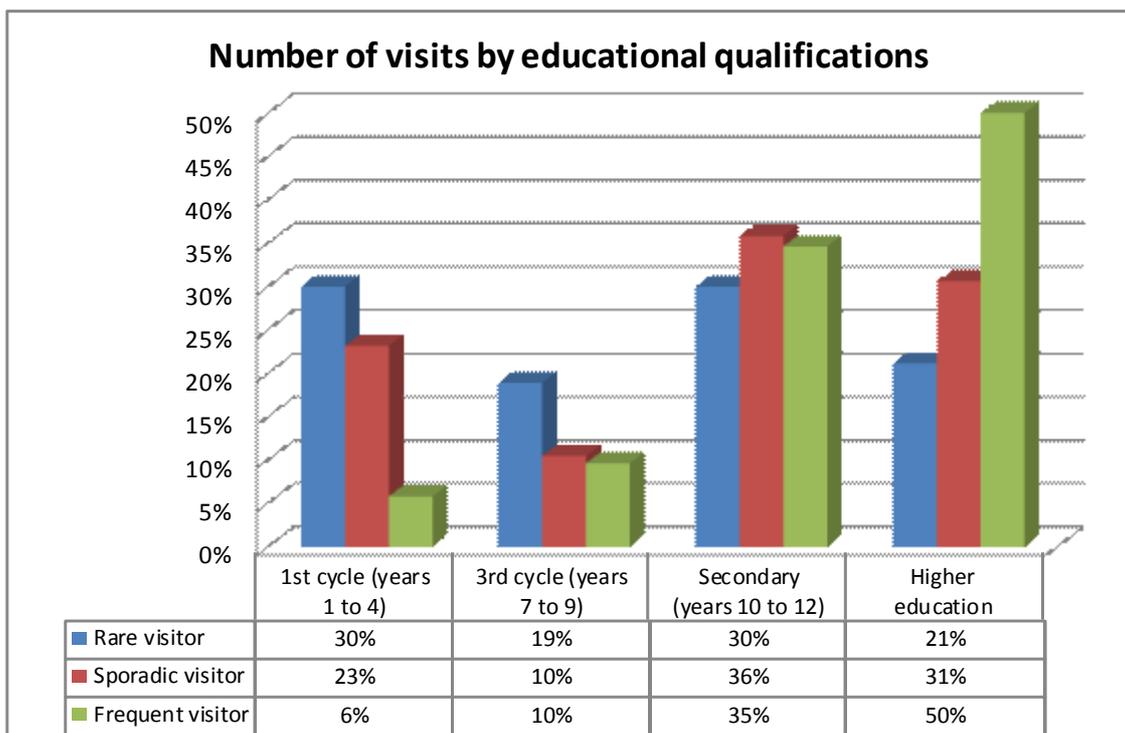
³⁴ Adopted terminology: 1st cycle (complete/incomplete primary school, up to 4th grade); 2nd and 3rd cycles (5th to 9th grade); High School (10th to 12th grade); Higher Education (university degree).

9th grade defined an educational, cultural and socially outstanding “hinge” within the scope of the senior population in Portugal.



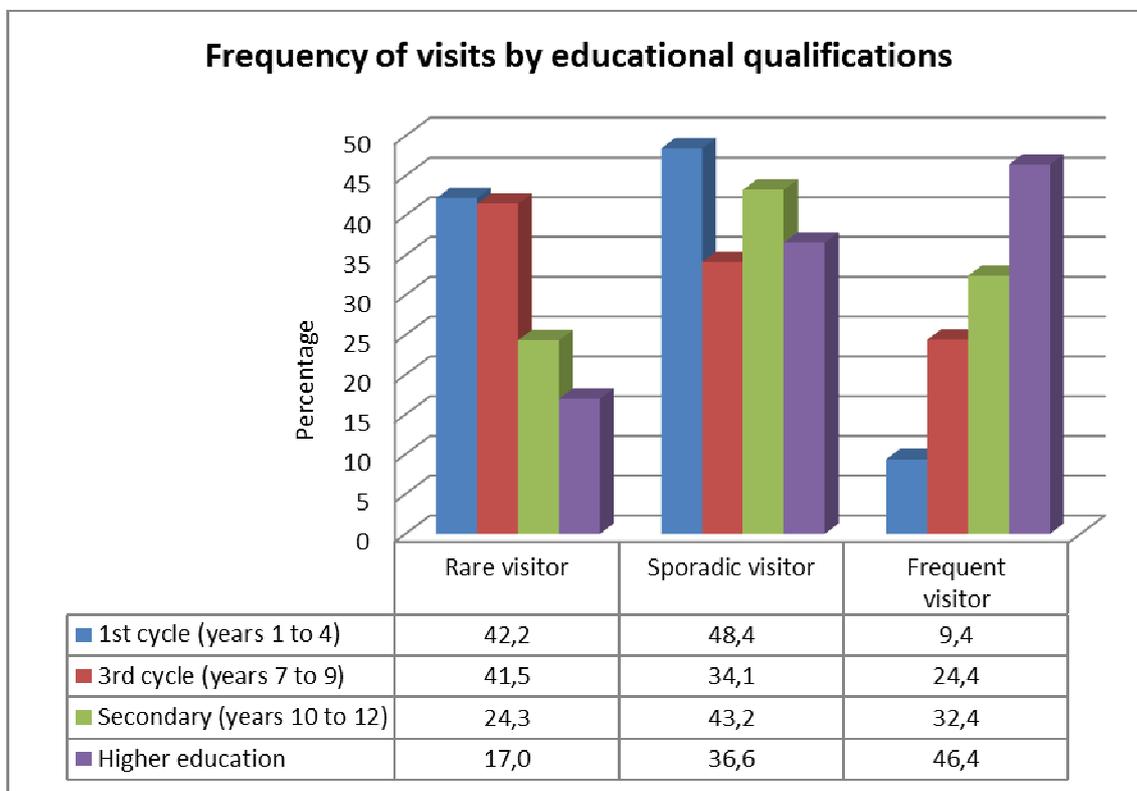
Graph 32

At the intersection of schooling with frequency habits (graph 33), one can see that within the rare visitors, nearly half (49%) completed only the 3rd cycle of education, such as a third (33%) of sporadic visitors and a sixth (16%) of frequent visitors. It was then noted that the percentage of people who only attended school up to the 9th grade decreased as the number of museum visiting frequency increased in the last 12 months. In addition, respondents with more than the 9th grade are predominant in any of the three categories of visitors, increasingly oscillating between 51% (rare), 67% (sporadic) and 85% (frequent). The group of frequent visitors is the only one that has a steady growth trend in the level of education of the respondents, distinguishing itself from the others, also due to the percentage difference that exists between the completion of the 1st cycle (6%) and higher education (50%).



Graph 33

In a contrary perspective (graph 34), one can see that almost half (46%) of visitors with a university degree are frequent visitors, 37% are sporadic visitors and 17% are rare visitors. In the universe of visitors who completed the first cycle, only 9% regularly attend museums and the majority (48% and 42%) are those who visit sporadically and rarely, respectively. Moreover, it appears that in each school group, the percentage of people who visit museums often increases gradually, from the 1st cycle of basic education to university education. This trend is reversed in the case of rare visitors.



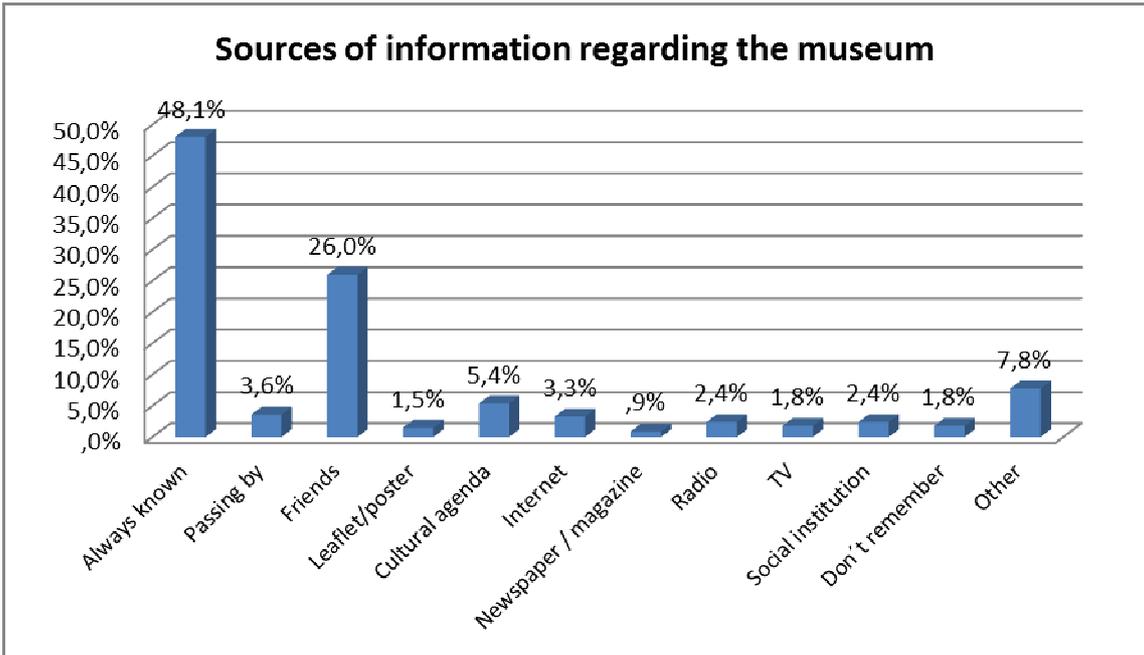
Graph 34

Based on these results, one can see the usual tendency among frequent museum visitors, in which frequent visitors are mostly people with higher education and rare visitors are people with a lower education level.

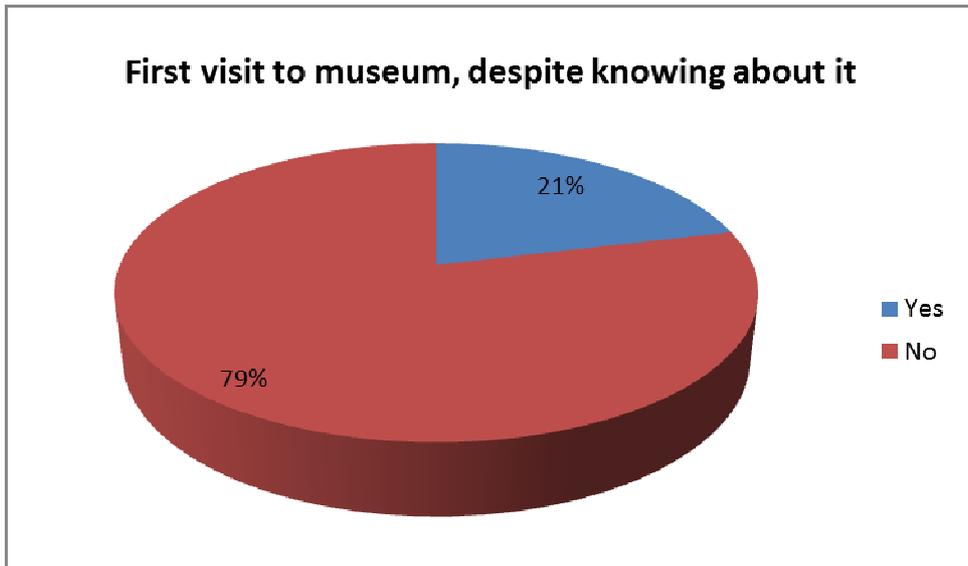
1.2 Sources of information about museums

When asked about how they became aware of the visited museums (graph 35), the large majority of respondents chose the answer *I have always known, it is a well known museum* (48%), followed by the response *friends / family / colleagues* (26%), corresponding to 46% and 25% of responses, respectively (this question allowed multiple answers). Other sources of information had marginal results, in which none exceeded 8% individually.

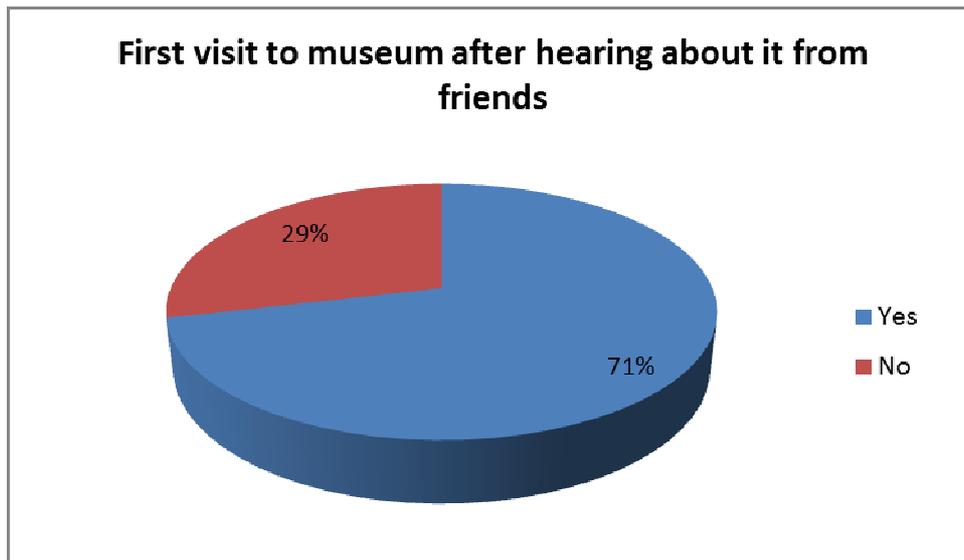
Based solely on graph 35, it is not possible to infer whether both knowledge prior to visiting museums and the influence of friends / family / colleagues are based on purely theoretical knowledge and / or if it was acquired through museum experiences. However, if we look at graph 36, we find that among the respondents who answered *I have always known, is a well known museum*, 79% did so because they had already visited the museum before. Their knowledge was empirical and not only theoretical, as was the case for about one-fifth (21%) of respondents. In a reverse trend (graph 37), of those who chose the response *friends / family / colleagues*, 71% were visiting the museum for the first time.



Graph 35



Graph 36

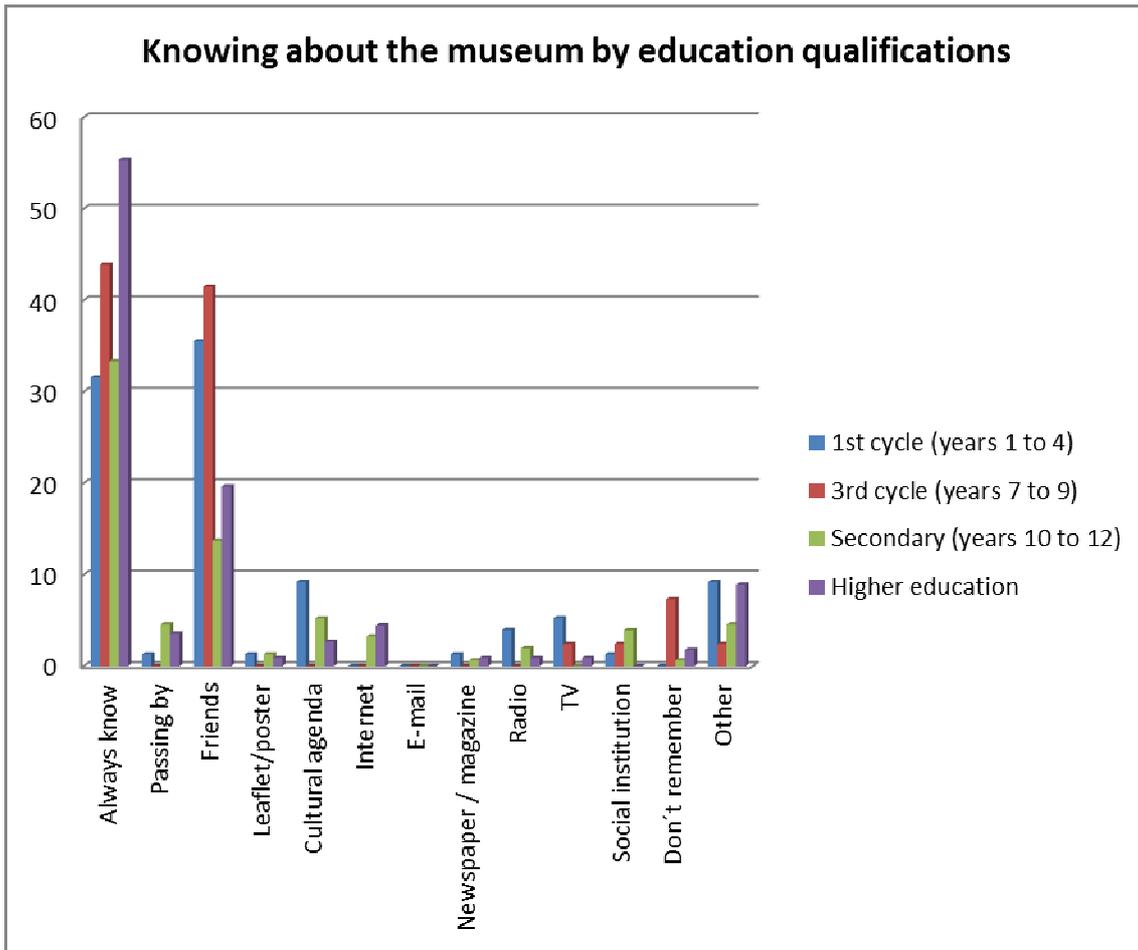


Graph 37

Knowledge of the museums of the sample is transversal to the surveyed audience, regardless of their level of education, as can be seen in graph 38. Of the people who completed higher education, more than half (55%) said they had always known the respective museum.

With regard to the response *friends / family / colleagues*, it is noted that the group of basic education - 3rd cycle - recorded the highest percentage (42%) in this response option. In contrast, the group with the lowest educational qualification was the one that registered the highest number of people (27), corresponding to 36% of the choices. Regarding the group of the 1st cycle, it stands out clearly from the others in relation to how they use and consult the cultural agenda (9.2%), radio (3.9%) and television (5.3%).

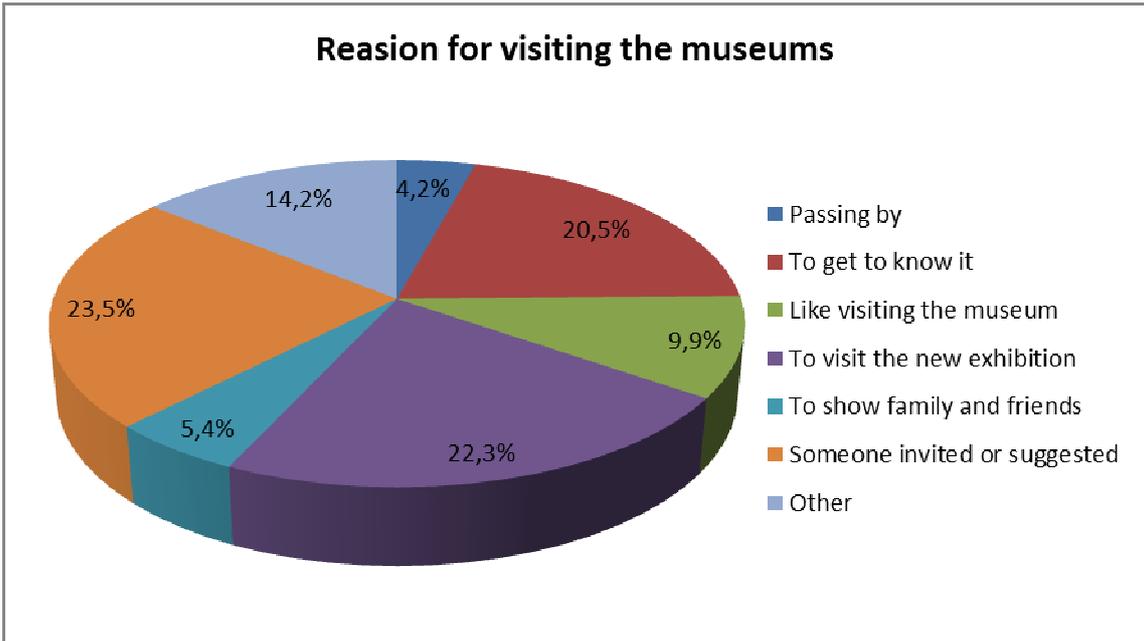
Another indicator that deserves to be highlighted is the fact that the internet was only used as a means of gathering information about the museum by the two groups with higher levels of education (secondary and higher), although in a rather less expressive manner, not exceeding 5%.



Graph 38

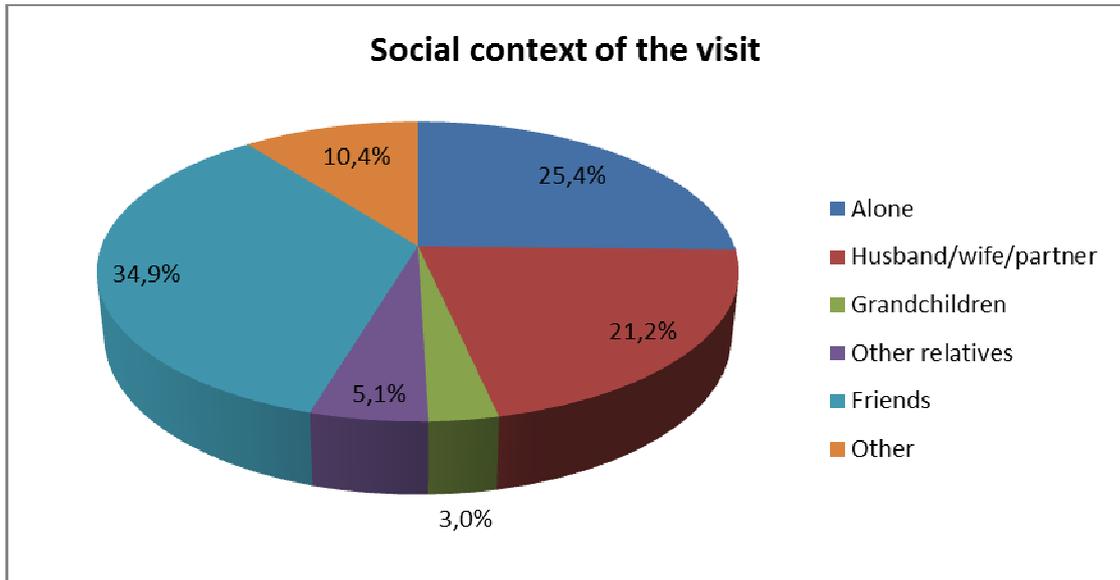
1.3 Context of museum visit

Regarding the reason for the visit, there does not seem to be a dominant one (graph 39). It is important to highlight that this question did not allow multiple answers, because the aim was to identify precisely the motivation factor. The three main reasons given were: *someone invited or suggested* (23.5%), *visiting new exhibition* (22.3%), *wanted to get to know* (20.5%).



Graph 39

Through the survey we also tried to find out the social context of the visit, i.e., to understand with whom the respondents had been to the museum (graph 40). Among the various possibilities of choice, the one ticked most often was the option *friends* (34.9%). On the other hand, a quarter of respondents (25.4%) visited alone and 21% with their spouse / partner. Only 3% of respondents said they had visited the museum with their grandchildren.

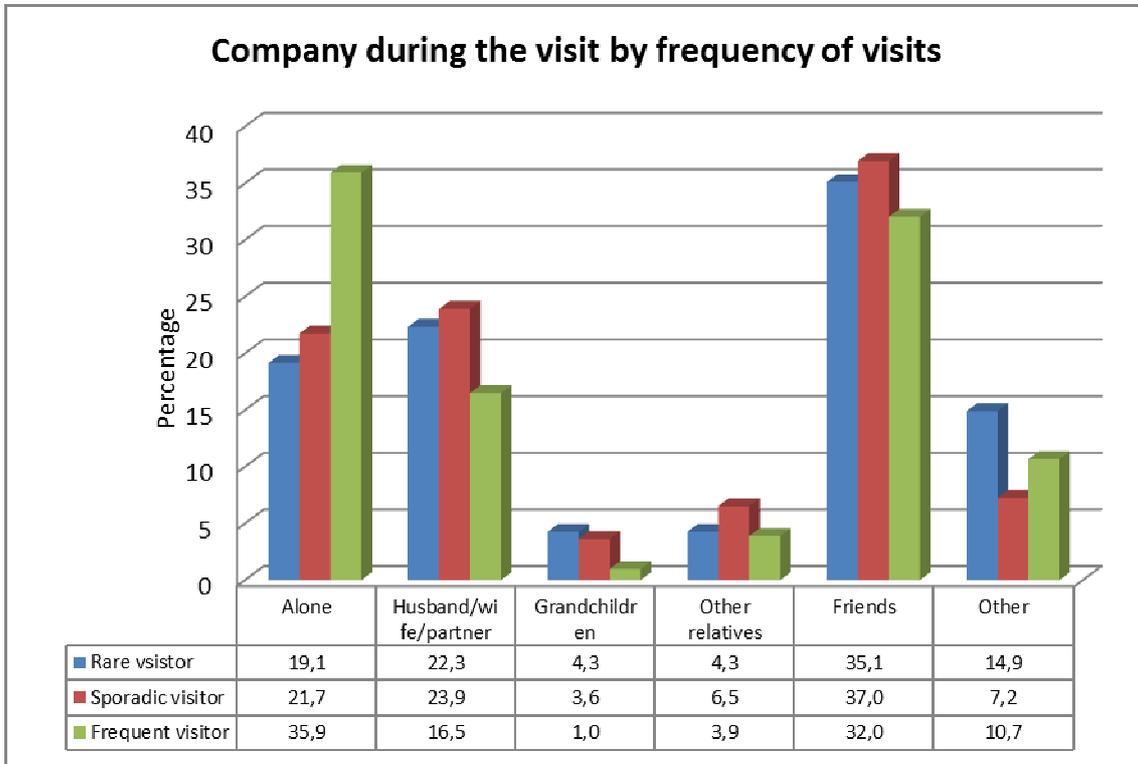


Graph 40

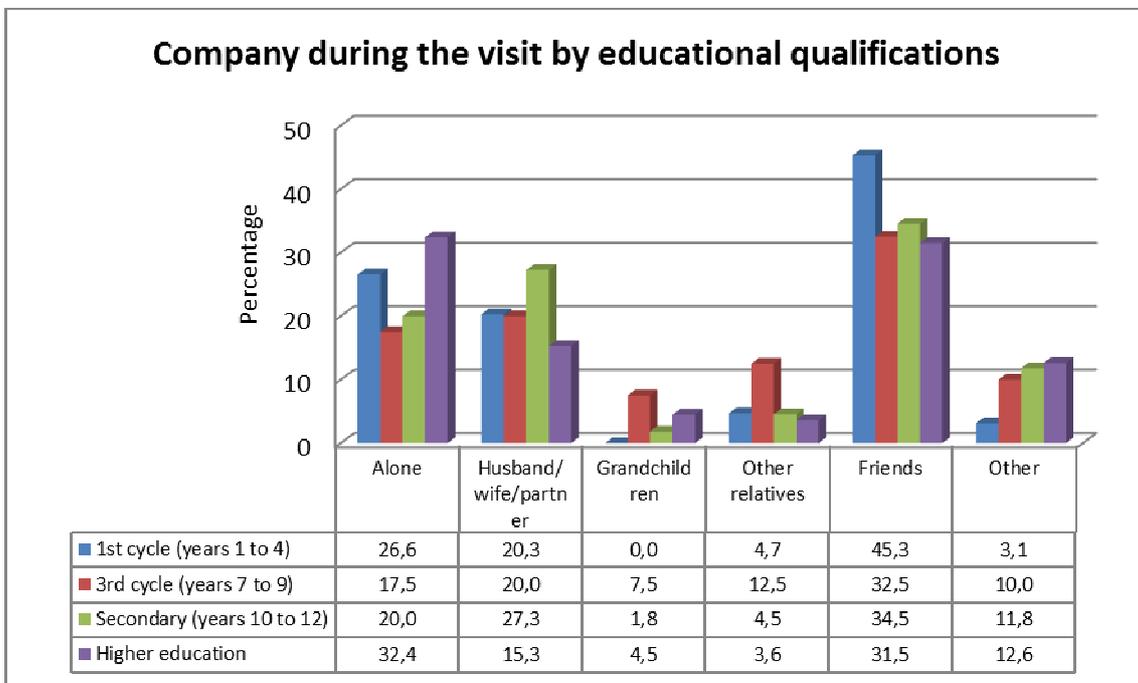
In further analysis of the graph, we can see that, overall, 75% of visitors were accompanied and about half of these by friends. Moreover, if we look again at the graph regarding the reasons for the visit, we find that approximately one third of the people (29%) were invited or encouraged to visit the museum or wanted to show the museum to family and friends. This confirms the trend usually indicated by museum visitor studies, in which the invitation by friends / family or a recommendation for a visit is the most crucial factor in both the awareness of the existence of the museum, as well as the reason for the visit.

In the differentiation by education level and by frequency of visit, there are no significant percentage variation patterns to register, as can be seen in the graphs 41 and 42. What is more relevant is that the percentage of people who go to museums alone increases among the three

categories of visitors, oscillating between 19% (rare), 22% (sporadic) and 36% (frequent). Based on the inversion of variables, it was found that among the respondents who visited the museum without being accompanied, 44% are frequent visitors, 35% are rare and 21% are sporadic, which indicates that the most frequent visitors are also people used to visiting alone or who visit alone by choice.



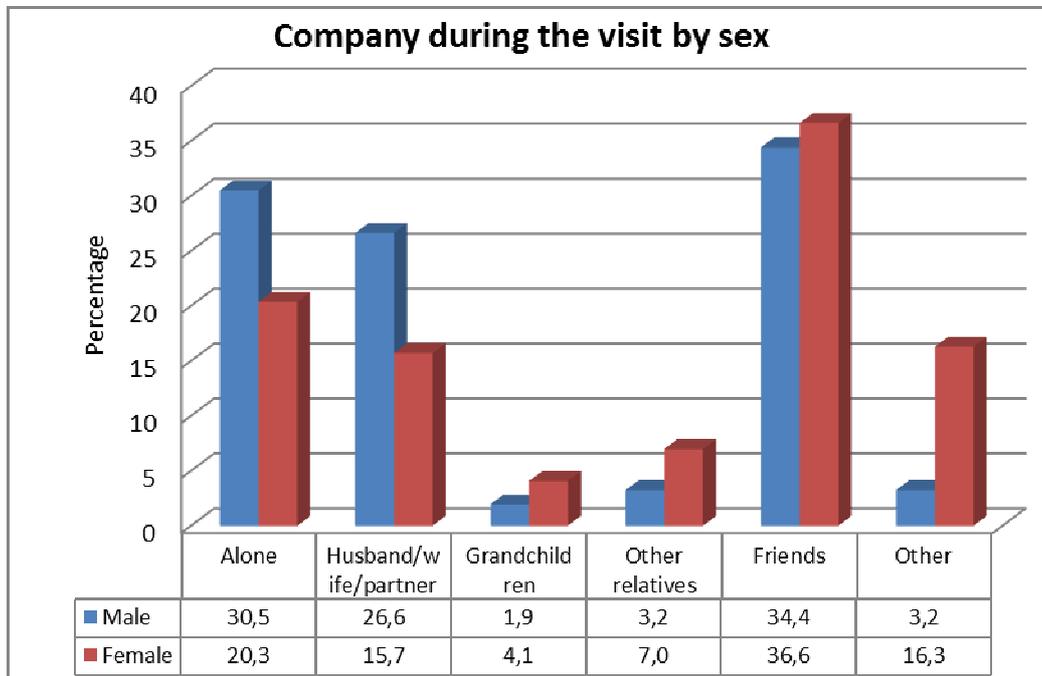
Graph 41



Graph 42

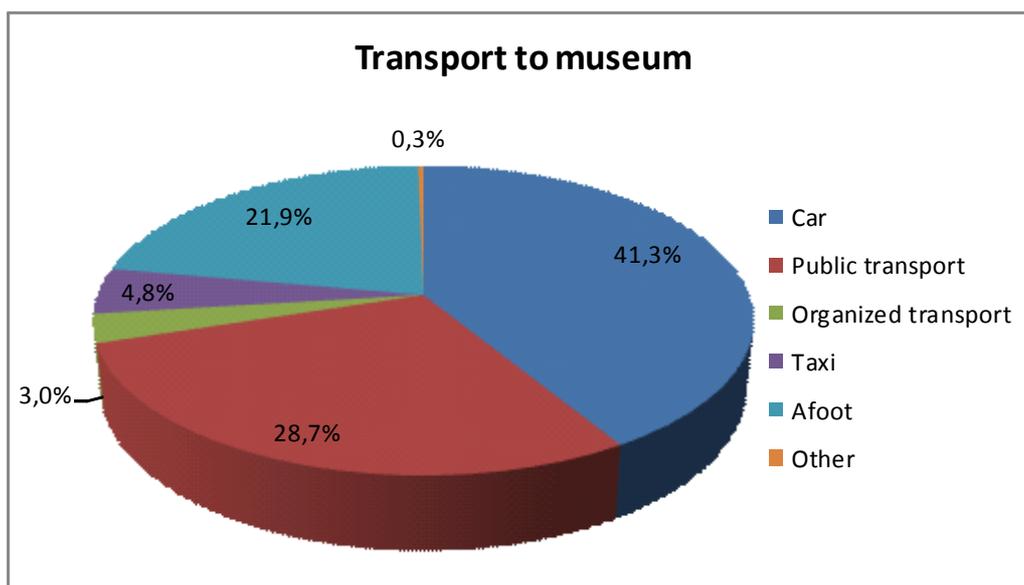
In the analysis of graph 43, we wish to highlight some differences between the male and female universes in terms of the frequency of the responses *alone and spouse / partner*. Thus, 31% of male respondents said they had visited the museum alone, while in the female universe, this option recorded 20% of the choices. In a reverse perspective, in the group of people who come

alone, 57% were men, 43% women. Visiting accompanied by a partner / spouse was the case of 27% and 16% of men and women, respectively, which means that, among people who visited in this context, 60% were men and 40% women. The remaining indicators feature marginal differences except for the option *Others*. Among those who have chosen this option, 85% were women and that made reference specially to colleagues.



Graph 43

When asked how they travelled to the museum (graph 44), 41% of respondents said they had come by car, 29% used public transport and 22% went on foot. This data will be especially relevant and conclusive when analyzed individually according to each museum, since there are many variables and issues to consider, including: the geographic location of museums, the quality of physical access and transport network that serves them, the existence of adequate parking and the area of residence of visitors and its proximity to museums.

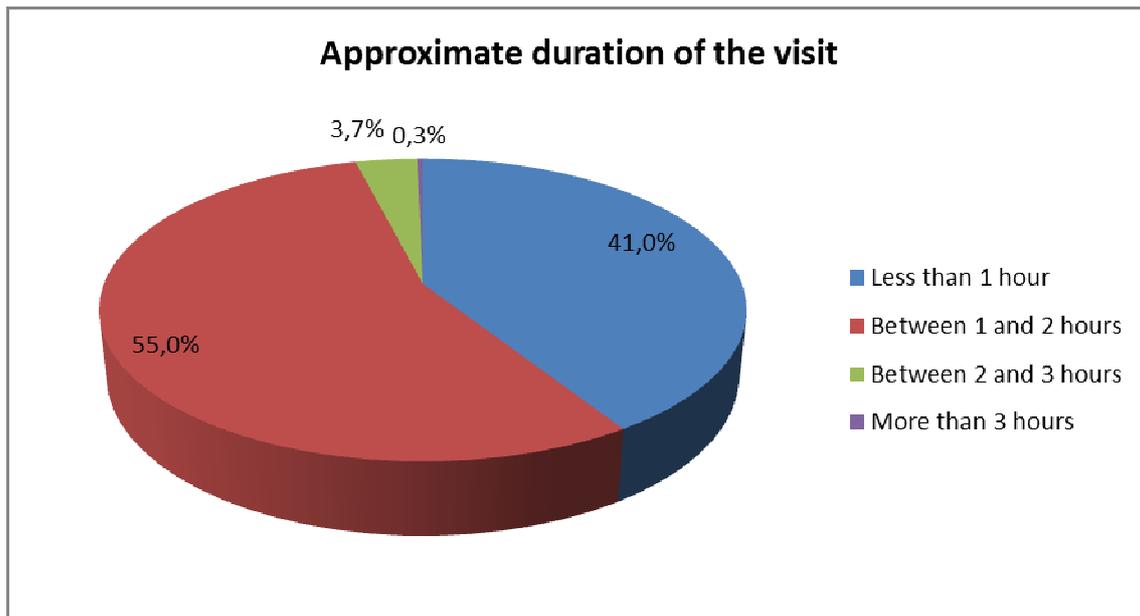


Graph 44

1.4 The visit

One of the major objectives of the survey was to try to get feedback on the museum experience itself, namely, to know how senior visitors interact with the museum, what they do during the visit, if they are confronted with difficulties or impediments.

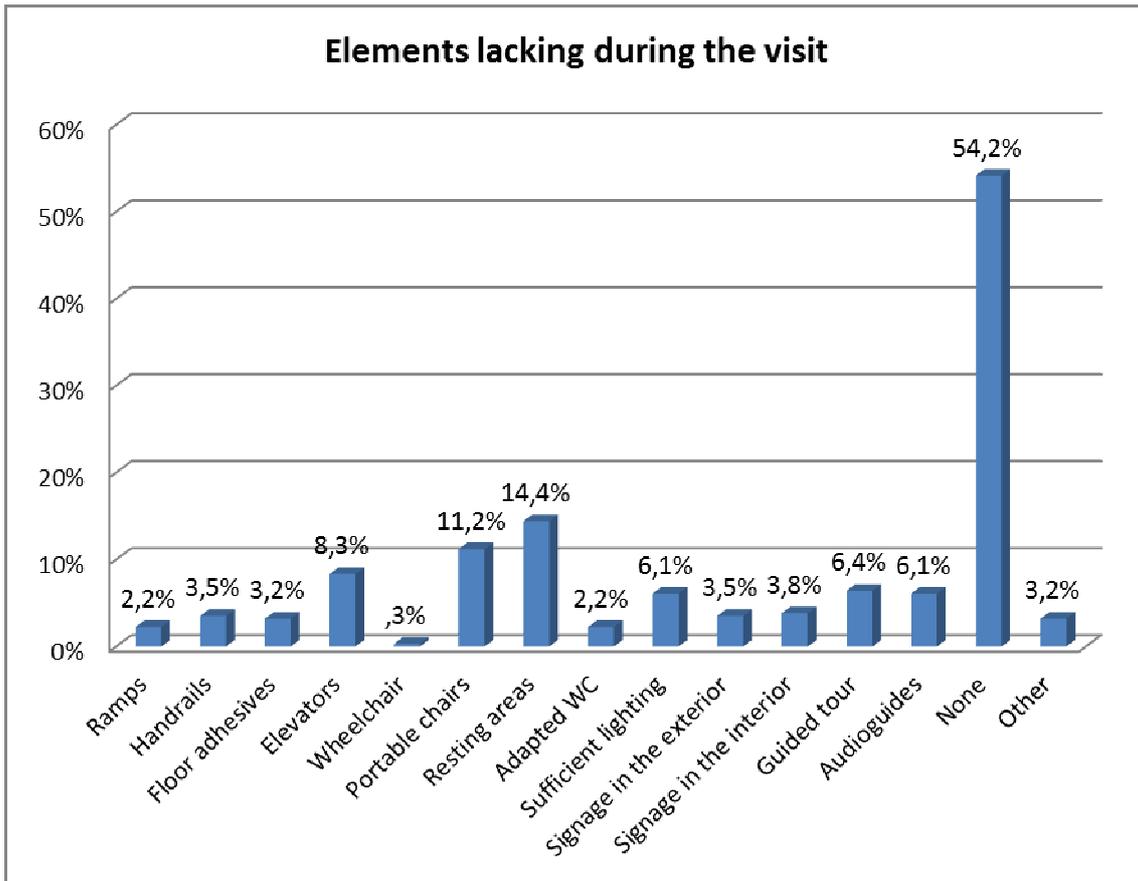
Starting with the duration of the visit (graph 45), for the majority (55%) it lasted one to two hours, whilst for 41% it did not exceed one hour. Although, once again, this data is more relevant depending on the museum they refer to (given the huge number of variables, starting with the size of the museum and its collections), we conclude that, regardless of the museum and the visitor age group, visits rarely lasted more than 2 hours (4%).



Graph 45

Two of the biggest challenges for the visitor who wants to be at the museum for long periods of time are: to fight physical and mental fatigue. Both dimensions of fatigue are transversal to any age group, affecting not only the willingness and concentration of the visitor, but also the flow and enjoyment of the visit. In the case of senior people, resistance and physical mobility is lower in comparison to younger audiences.

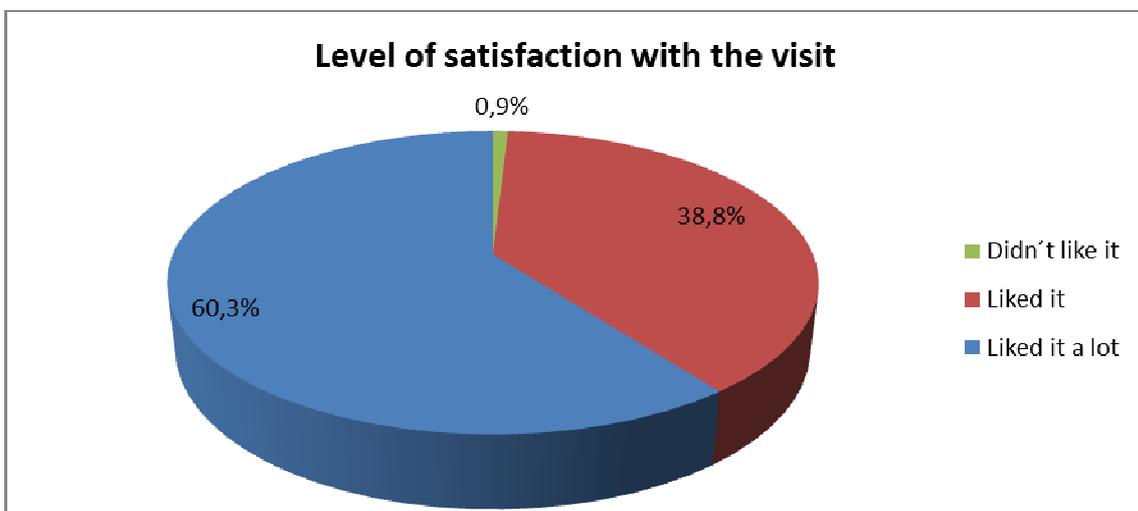
Although we can not draw conclusions as to the weight that certain physical conditions may possibly have on the average length of time of visits to museums, what we can see in the graph 46 is that, from the respondents' perspective, there are some aspects that will condition the visit. Looking at the graph, we see that 15% pointed to the lack of mobile seats and 11% to the lack of resting areas. Other responses related to mobility issues were also selected, although with less significant values: lifts (8.3%); handrails (3.5%); floor adhesive (3.2%); ramps (2.2%); wheelchairs (0.3%). Regarding guidance and interpretation, some of the respondents felt that the signage was not enough and / or sufficiently clear to orient them inside (3.8%) and outside the museum (3.5%), while others felt the lack of explanation and interpretation by means of a guide (6.4%) or an audio guide (6.1%).



Graph 46

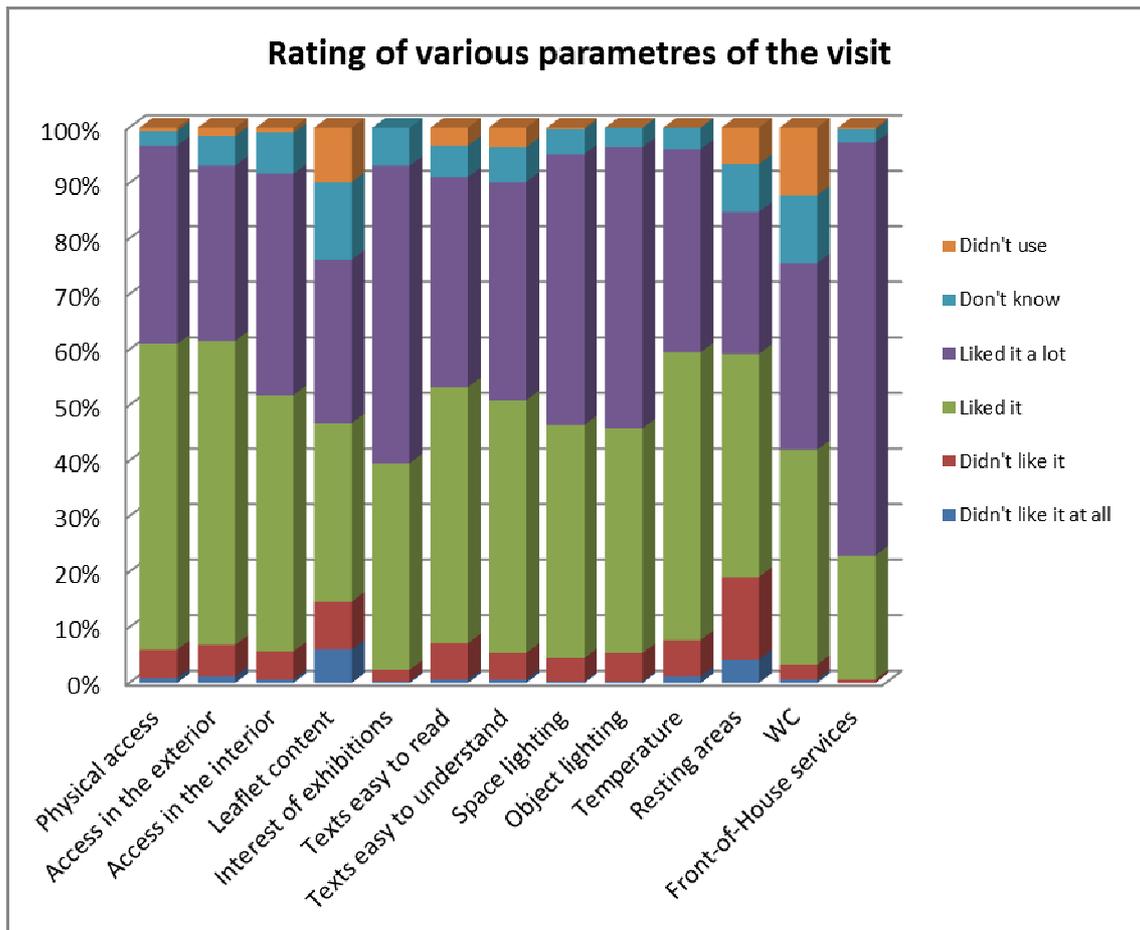
Bearing in mind the importance of cognitive and symbolic constraints, it should be noted that 54% of respondents stated that they did not feel the lack of any of the suggested elements or others during the visit. On the one hand, this could mean that museums are very well prepared to meet the needs of these visitors. However, according to the empirical experience of those who work in museums and with senior visitors, this is an audience that mostly manifests satisfaction with visits to museums, ignoring or even not knowing the 'details' that could make their experience more enjoyable or accessible, but of which museum personnel are quite aware.

Having said that, and in relation to the degree of satisfaction from the visit, 60% *liked it a lot*, a little more than a third (38%) *liked it* and only 1% *disliked it* (graph 47).



Graph 47

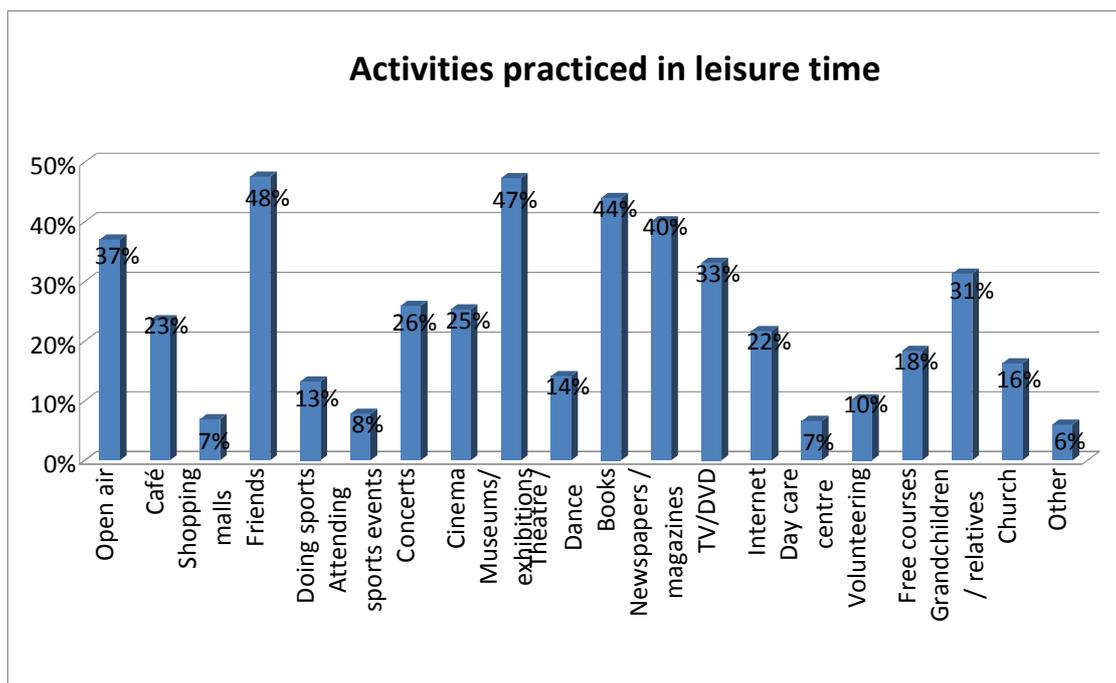
Finally, we sought to assess the degree of satisfaction on a number of parameters related to access, signage, assistance, mobility, comfort, ease of reading and informative content. According to the data in graph 48, one can see that there is a satisfactory and very satisfactory global assessment and very satisfactory of all the aspects concerned. The parameter that was best rated was the *assistance*. It was appreciated and much appreciated by 22% and 75% of the respondents respectively, which makes a total of 97% satisfaction. However, there are still some aspects that had a negative mark, especially the *bathrooms*, the *resting areas* and *informative content*. About 19% of respondents *did not like* or *did not like at all* the resting areas, which, considering also the results presented in graph 46, indicates that the negative opinion focuses not on their quality but on the insufficient number of resting areas within the museums. As for the content of the information in museums, a total of 15% gave a negative mark.



Graph 48

1.5 Leisure Time

One of the consequences of increasing life expectancy and improvement of health conditions of seniors is the increase in the time they participate in leisure activities. In this sense, we tried to find out, among a number of response options, the five most frequent activities that each respondent occupied his/her free time with in the last 12 months. The result is expressed in graph 49, where one can see that most people often prefer: spending time with *friends* (48%), going to *museums / exhibitions* (47%) and *reading books* (44%). Then comes *reading newspapers / magazines* (40%), *watching TV / DVDs* (33%), *taking care of grandchildren / relatives* (31%) and *practising outdoor activities* (37%). The remaining activities differ because they are not practised so regularly and in some cases are virtually residual.



Graph 49

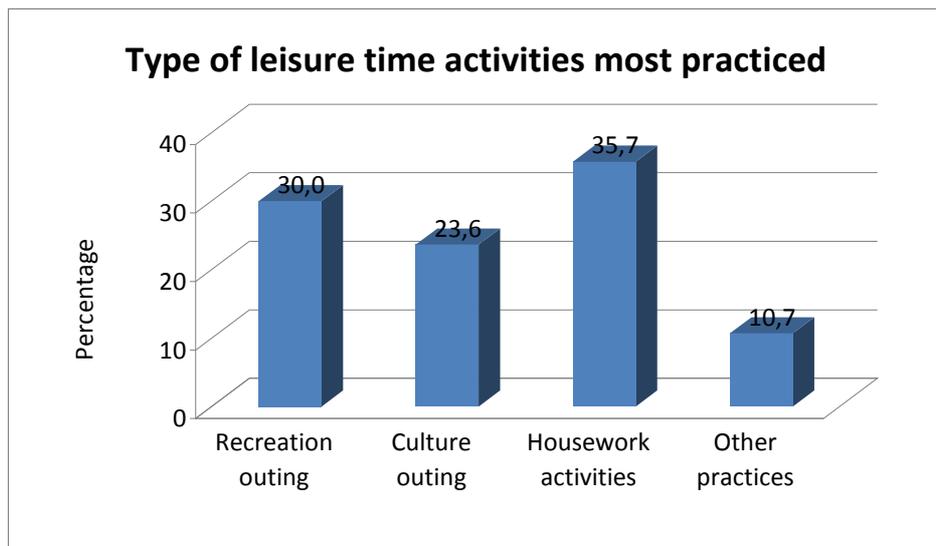
One way of analyzing this relevant wide range of activities is to create categories of leisure practices according to the nature of the activity. The purpose of this type of classification is to try to identify target-audiences, especially in what concerns cultural habits, which include going to museums. With this objective in mind, four categories of practices were created: *practices of recreational outings*³⁵; *practices of cultural outings*³⁶; *domestic practices*³⁷; *other practices*³⁸. This last category covers a range of leisure activities of the senior population that are not always synonymous with leisure, because they are linked to work developed in places such as churches, charitable associations, senior universities and old age homes. The frequency of activities within these institutions may take on a more passive or active nature depending on the type of occupation and involvement of the person, often on a voluntary basis. Graph 50 shows us that *domestic practices* are activities that, predictably, have higher expression within the leisure practices of seniors, representing 35.7% of total responses. The set of activities with the second largest number of participation was *recreational outings* (30%), followed by *cultural outings* (23.6%) and other practices (11%).

³⁵ This category includes: I practised outdoor activities; I went to cafés; I went for a stroll at a shopping centre; I spent time with friends; I practised sport; I attended sports activities.

³⁶ This category includes: I went to concerts; I went to the cinema; I went to museums and exhibitions; I went to theatre/dance shows.

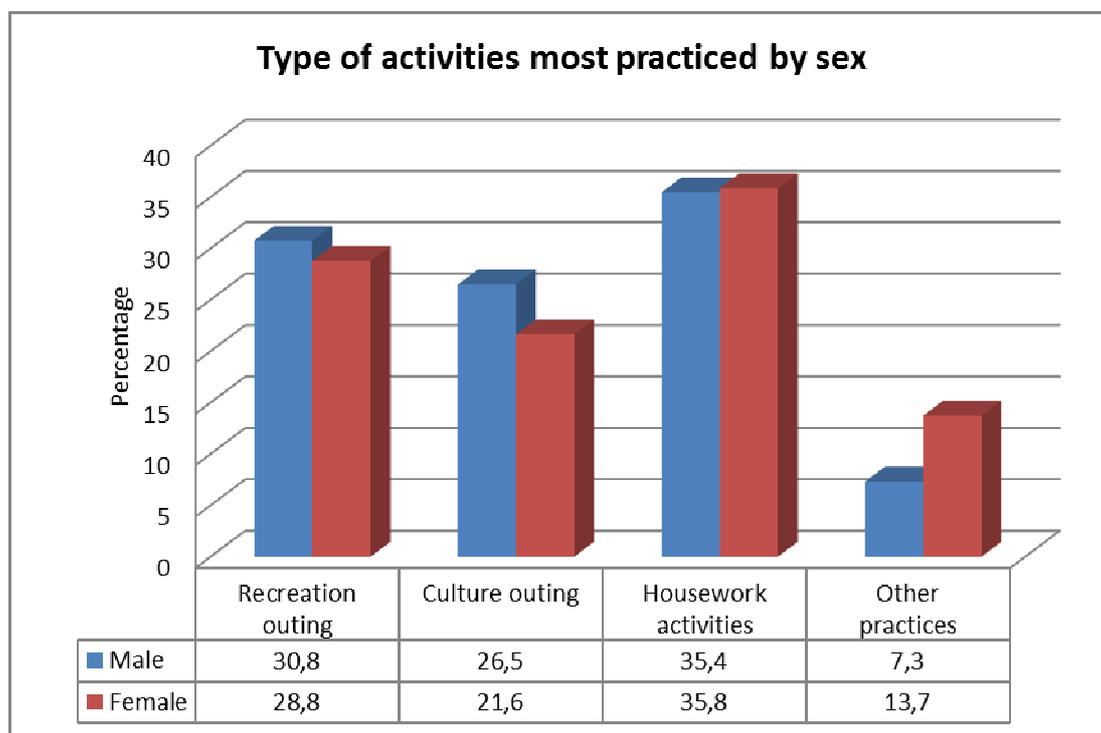
³⁷ This category includes: I read books; I read newspapers and/or magazines; I watched TV / DVDs; I surfed the Internet; I took care of my grandchildren/ relatives.

³⁸ This category includes: I did voluntary work; I participated in free courses (for instance, senior university); I went to church / church-related activities; I went to day centre.



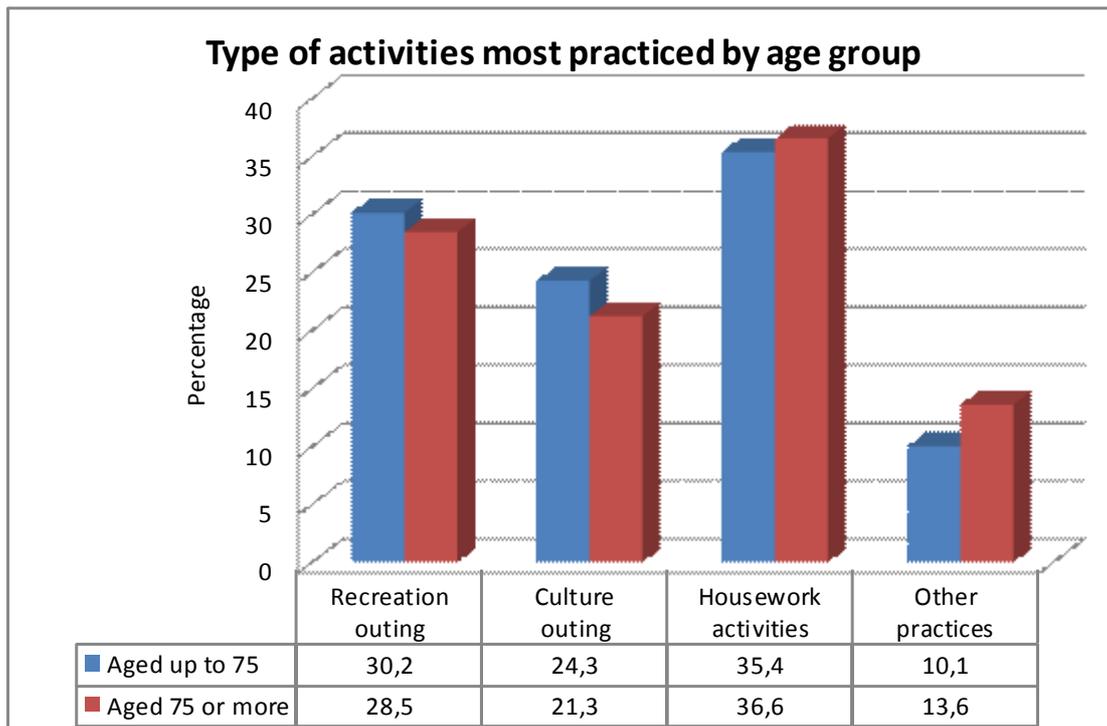
Graph 50

According to a recent survey of the Portuguese population aged 65 or more³⁹, leisure and spare time occupations of the senior population tend to vary according to sociodemographic characteristics, particularly with regard to sex, age and education level. However, in this survey, as one can confer in graphs 51 and 52, the differences between the activities carried out by men and women are not that significant, and they are rather insignificant with respect to age. The only exception is found in the practice of associative nature (category *others*), where there is greater participation by women, especially by the older women.



Graph 51

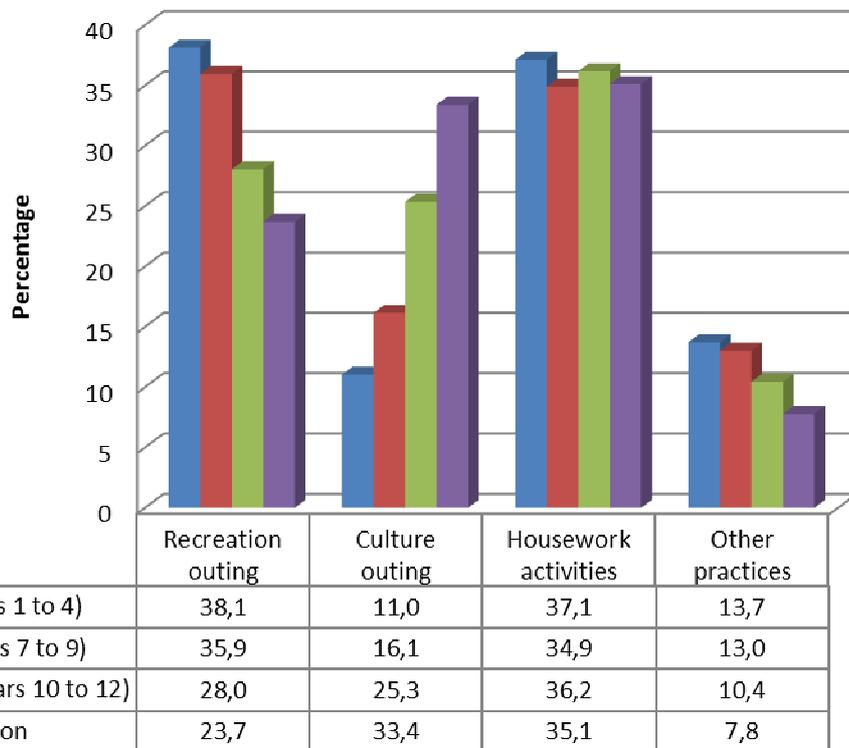
³⁹ Survey *Aging Processes in Portugal: Use of time, social networks and living conditions*, carried out in 2011 at the Social Sciences Institute with the support of the Francisco Manuel dos Santos Foundation, and whose results are in publication phase.



Graph 52

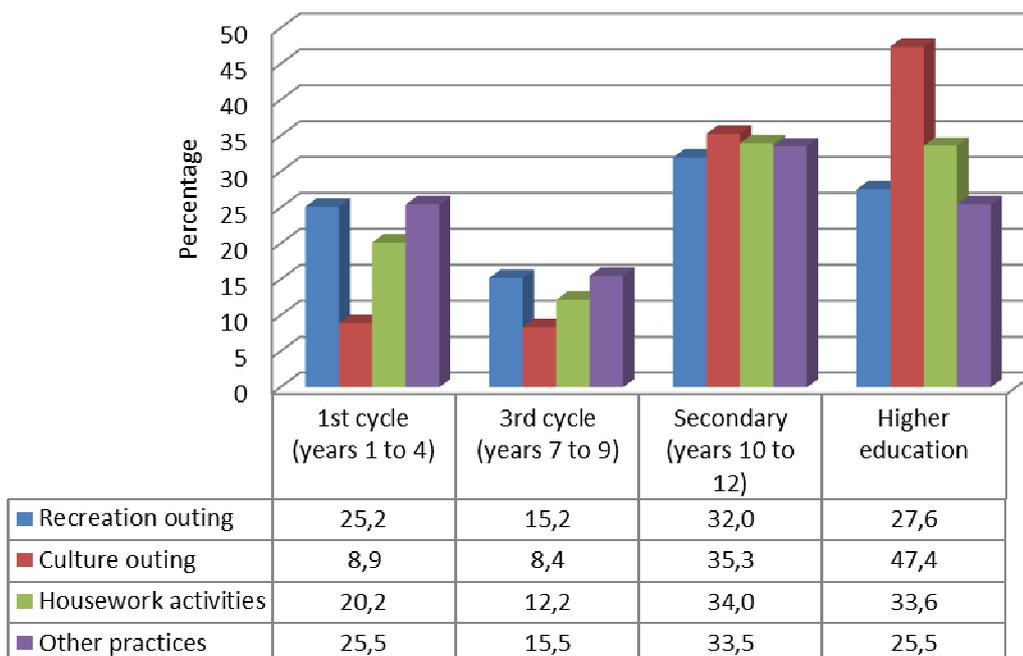
It was noted that certain social variables can influence the choice and implementation of leisure activities at education and frequency of visits level. As one can see in graph 53, there is a great balance with regard to domestic practices, since they are transversal to any person, regardless of the level of education. This happens because seniors spend most of their time at home doing daily tasks and routines. However, this is not the case for cultural activities, since the number of people that practice them increases among the four groups of schooling, ranging at an increasing rate from 11% (1st cycle) to 16% (3rd cycle), 25% (high school) and 33% (higher education). In a reverse perspective (graph 54), one can see that in the universe of cultural outing practices, almost half (47%) are undertaken by visitors with higher education, as opposed to those who completed the 1st cycle, representing only 9% . One can thus deduce that in the universe of senior museum visitors, the higher the level of education, the greater the tendency for people to perform leisure activities of a cultural nature and with the same frequency that they do household activities. Conversely, the lower the level of education, the greater the tendency of people to perform leisure activities of recreational nature and with the same frequency as they perform household activities.

Type of activities most practiced by educational qualifications

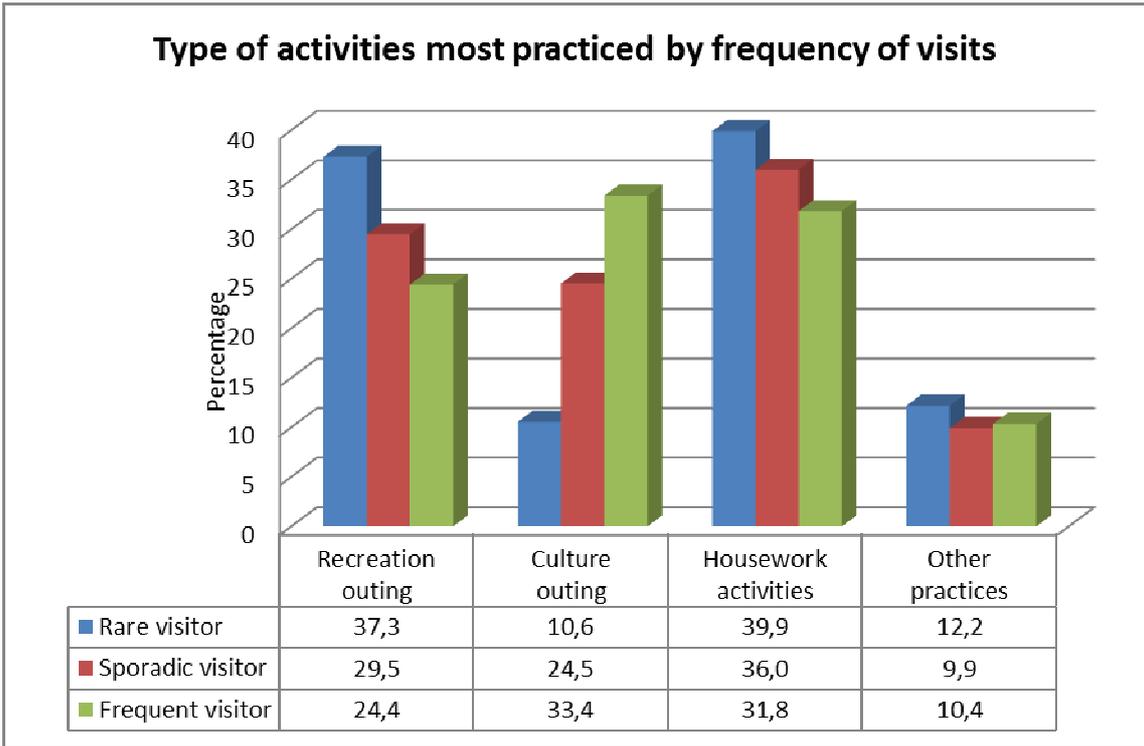


Graph 53

Educational qualifications by type of activities most practiced

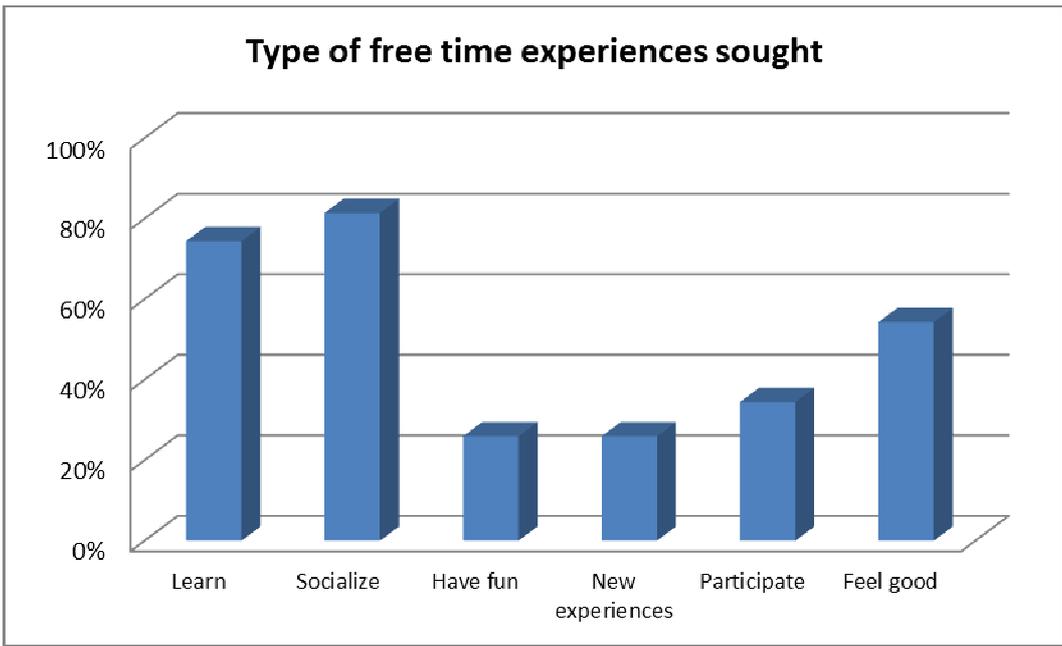


Graph 54



Graph 55

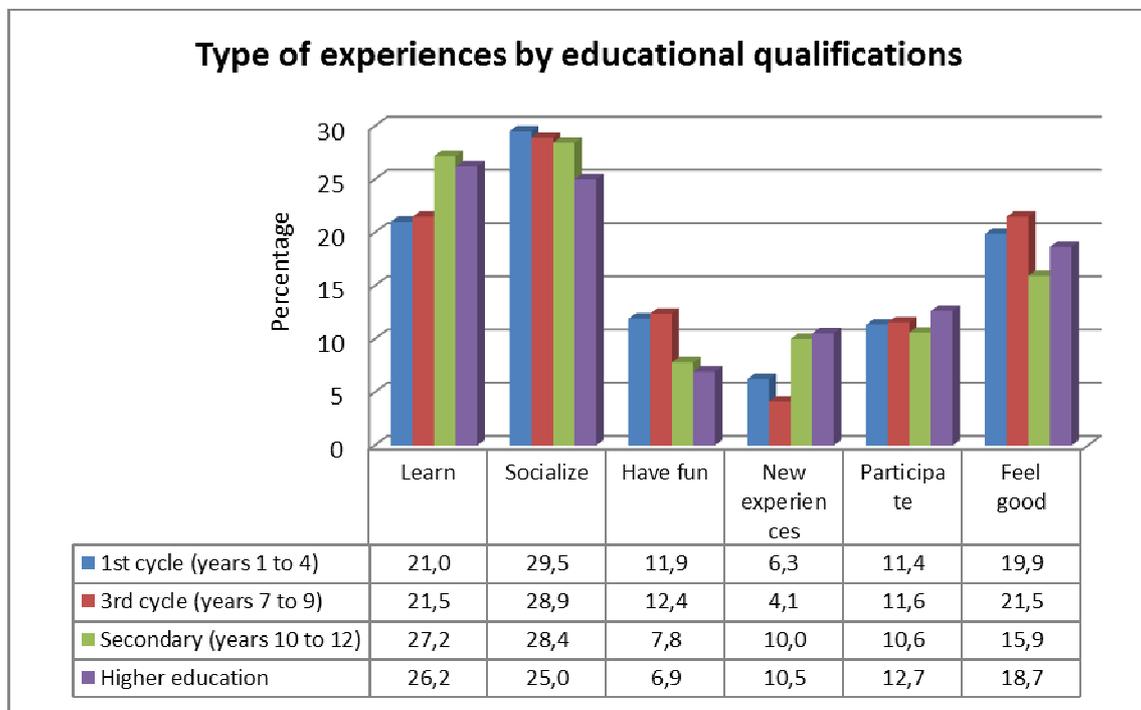
As already discussed above, there is a very strong correlation between the degree of frequency of a visitor and his schooling, since the first factor is accentuated in function of the latter, especially among rare and frequent visitors who assume, respectively, a mainly lower and upper education profile. This correlation is reinforced in the context of leisure activities, since their implementation presents major differences for different levels of education (as seen above) and visiting habits of the respondents (graph 55). Crossing the three variables or indicators, it is confirmed, once again, that among frequent museum visitors and also among those who opt for activities of a cultural nature, to the detriment of those of recreational nature, the majority of respondents have a college degree. Conversely, among people with a lower level of education, the tendency to visit museums is rare and leisure-oriented recreation activities are more sought after than those of cultural nature.



Graph 56

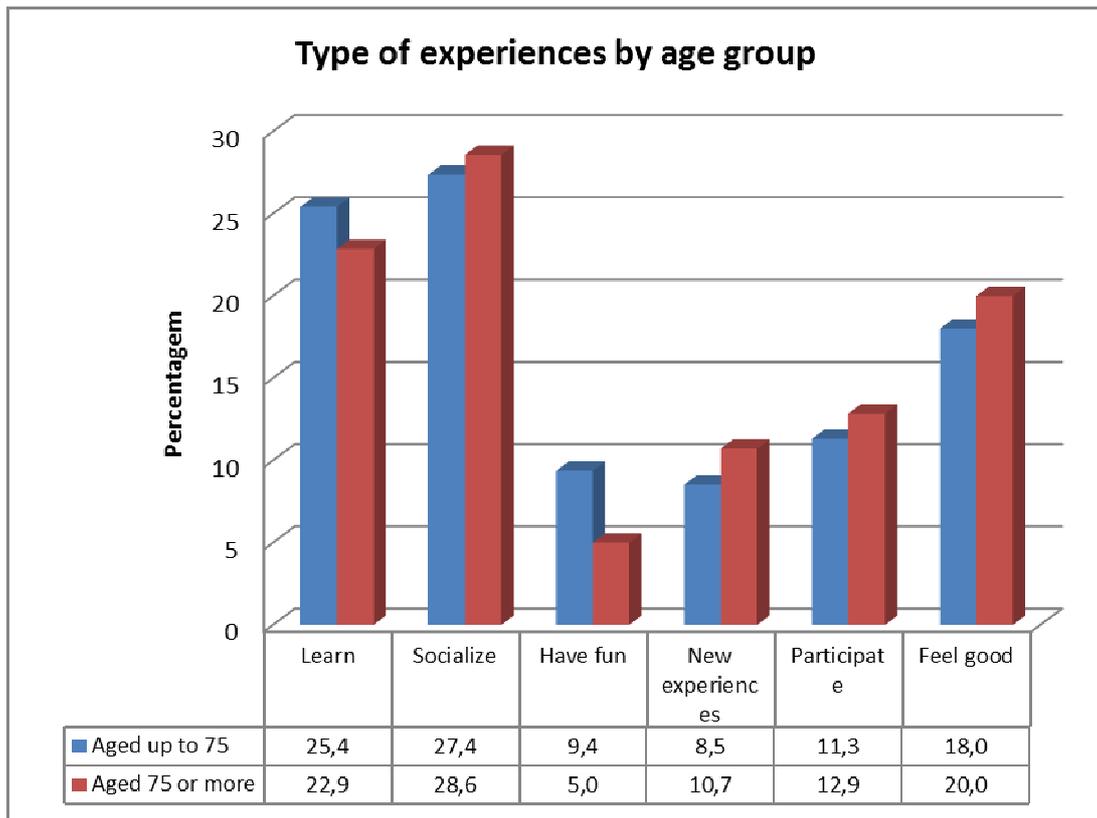
Finally, in addition to knowing which 5 leisure activities the respondents did more frequently in the last 12 months, we sought to further assess what kind of experiences they seek in their spare time (graph 56). Assuming that museums are just a leisure activity among many others, the ultimate goal was to understand if museums offer the kind of experiences visitors seek when looking to occupy their free time. The options were: to *learn*, *socialize*, *have fun*, *have new experiences*, *participate* or *feel good*⁴⁰. Based on the analysis of graph 56, we can note that respondents mainly prefer to *socialise* (81%) and to *learn* (74%) in their spare time. *Feeling good* was the preference of slightly more than half of the respondents (54%), while approximately one-third prefer to *participate* (35%) and about one-fifth to *have new experiences* (26%) and *have fun* (26%)).

For the surveyed senior visitors, the most pressing needs for socializing and learning are transversal to their age, sex, frequency of visits and level of education (graphs 57, 58, 59 and 60). Thus, the museum whilst leisure activity is also perceived by seniors as a place where they mainly expect to have experiences of cognitive and social nature, and, as we have seen, the majority of respondents who said that they seek them frequently have a higher level of education, which necessarily raises questions concerning the degree of adaptability and accessibility of content and experiences proposed for less educated visitors who are less frequent visitors.

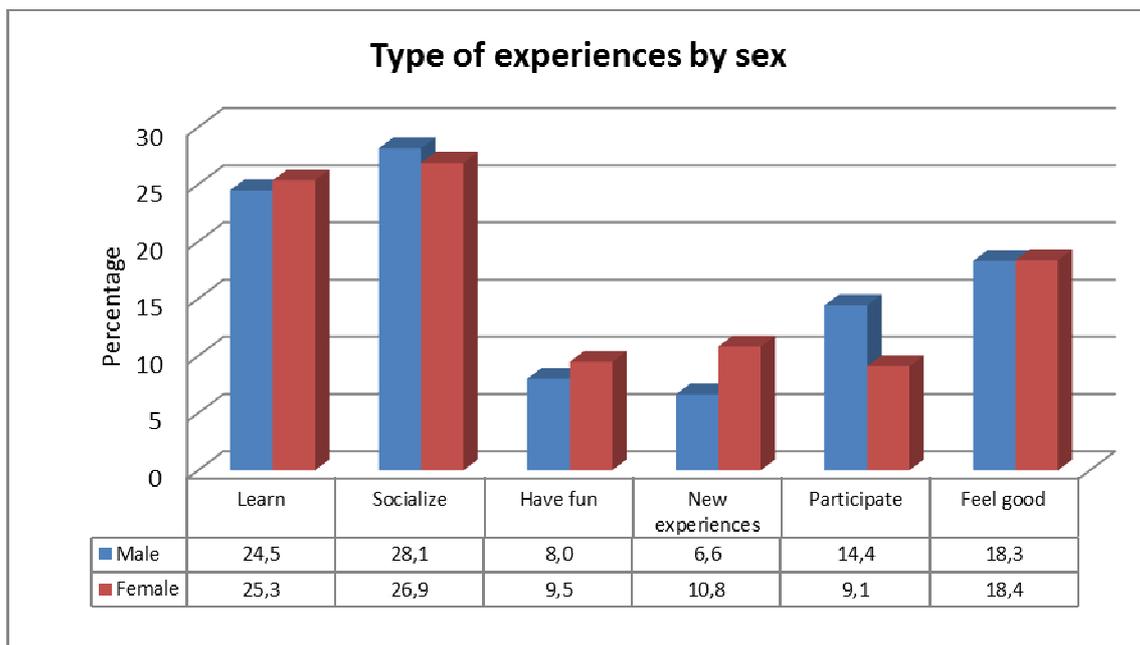


Graph 57

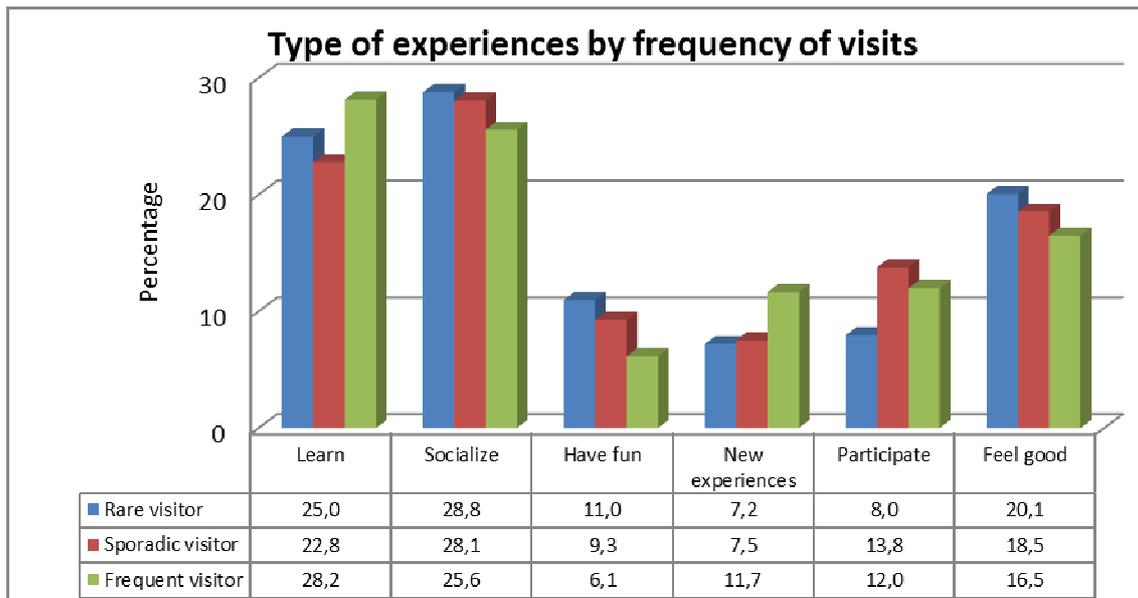
⁴⁰ These response categories were based on Hood, Marilyn G. "Staying Away: Why People Choose Not to Visit Museums." Museum News, Vol. 61, No. 4, April 1983, pp. 50-57



Graph 58



Graph 59



Graph 60

2. FOCUS GROUPS

The technique of focus groups, or semi-structured conversations in groups, allows to collect information relating to a specific group of informers of relatively homogeneous characteristics. Its main advantages are the confirmation of the aspects that define one particular group of individuals, helping to describe its characteristics, and complementarization of opinions / information on the various topics covered, since some individuals usually complete the information provided by others.

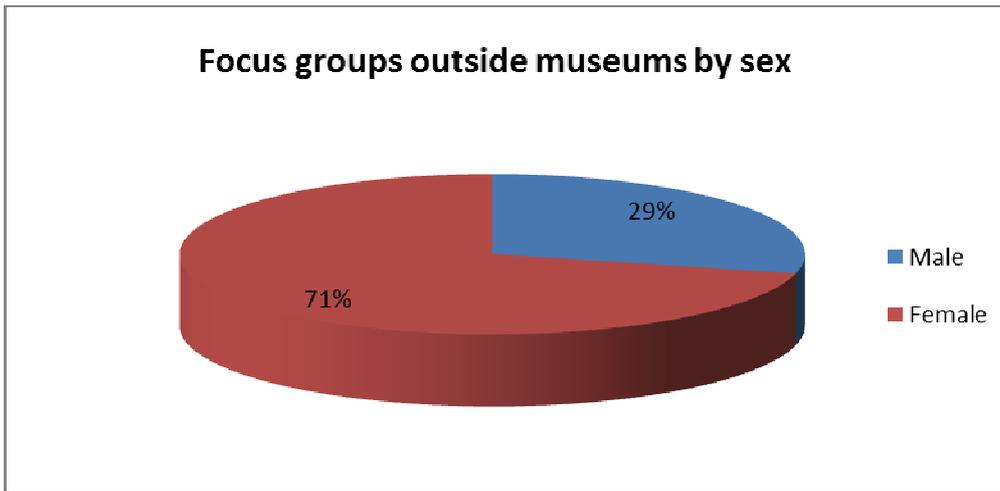
To better characterize the relationship of those over 65 with museums, focus groups were held in five cities: Viseu, Oporto, Lisbon, Faro and Beja. It was decided that they would be carried out inside and outside museums. In the case of the focus groups conducted outside museums, the latter were divided into groups with more than the 9th grade and less than the 9th grade. This division by level of education stems from empirical evidence, rather than accepted by the academic community, that school skills influence the habit of attending museums (see in this respect the text *Over 65 years: trends, occupations and participation* in this same report).

In addition to the 10 focus groups in the above referred cities (5 with people who had more than the 9th grade and 5 with people with less than the 9th grade), there were 10 focus groups inside museums (Museum of Ceramics of Loures, the Michel Giacometti Museum of Labour, Municipal Ecomuseum of Seixal, National Museum of Ancient Art, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, National Contemporary Art Museum, the Water Museum, House-Museum Anastacio Goncalves, Paper Currency Museum of the Cupertino de Miranda Foundation, the Municipal Museum of Faro), with mixed groups (with regard to schooling). In this case, museums was requested to organise the focus groups, so elderly people with a relatively consolidated relationship with each museum were convened.

2.1 Sociographic characterisation of participants

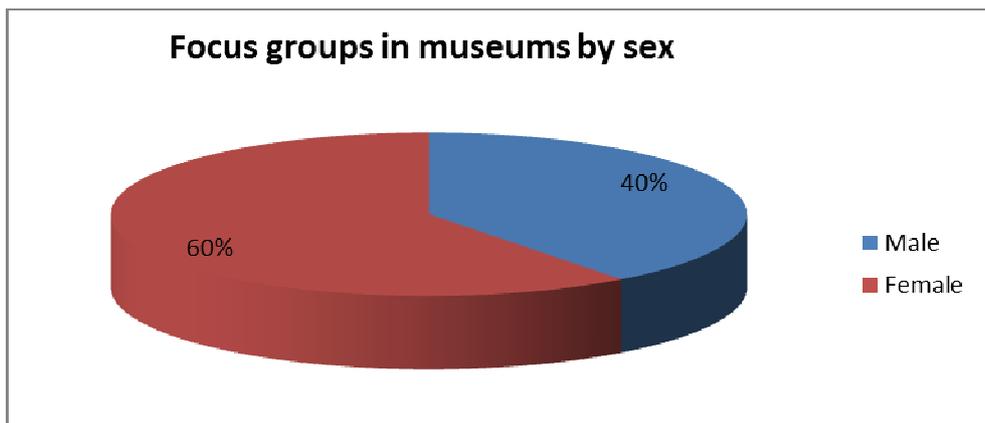
This study included 153 individuals over 65 years of age. Ninety individuals participated in focus groups outside museums (46 with more than the 9th grade and 44 with less than the 9th grade), 64 women and 26 men (graph 61). This disparity in the weight of male and female participants corresponds to the characteristics of the population that attends senior universities, and even more in the case of day centers, because, as mentioned in Pedro Moura Ferreira's text *Over 65: trends, occupations and participation*, "These institutions are sought in a differentiated manner by men and women. In general men tend to have a stronger presence than women, except in

the case of religious organizations and senior universities, where female participation is more expressive."

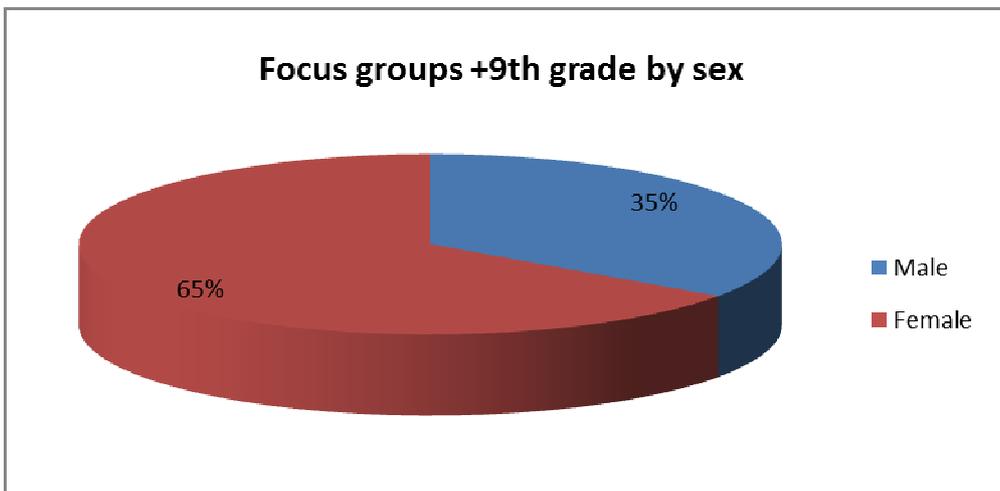


Graph 61

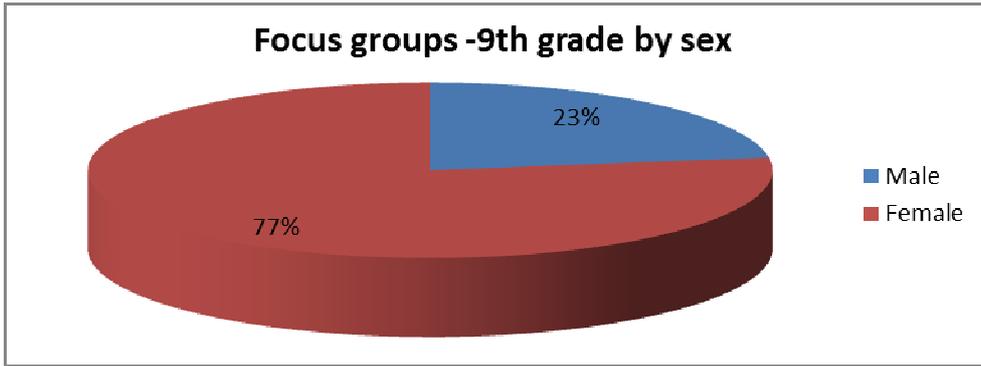
The focus groups conducted within the museums involved 63 individuals, 25 men and 38 women (graph 62). These groups did not experience the effect described above, related to the attendance of institutions according to sex.



Graph 62

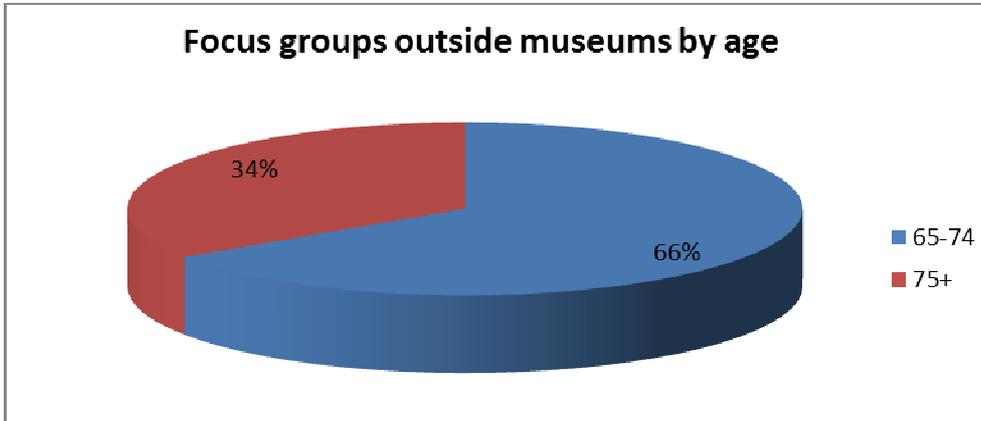


Graph 63

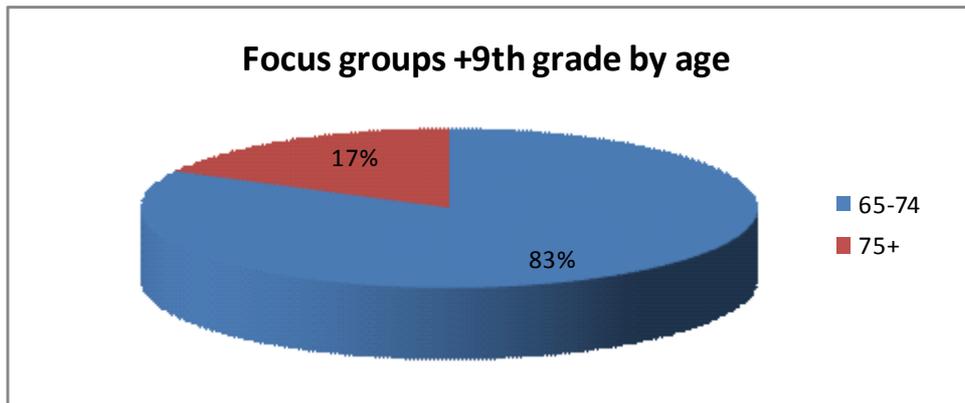


Graph 64

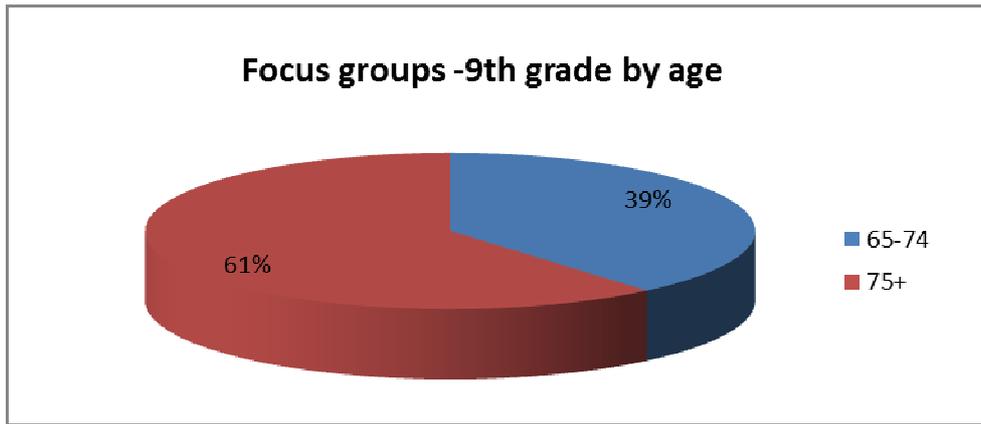
In the case of the focus groups divided by level of education (conducted outside the museum), the disproportion between females and males is more pronounced in the case of participants from groups with a lower education level (graphs 63 and 64). This is explained by the weight of focus groups conducted in day care centres, in which the number of elderly women exceeded by far the number of elderly men.



Graph 65



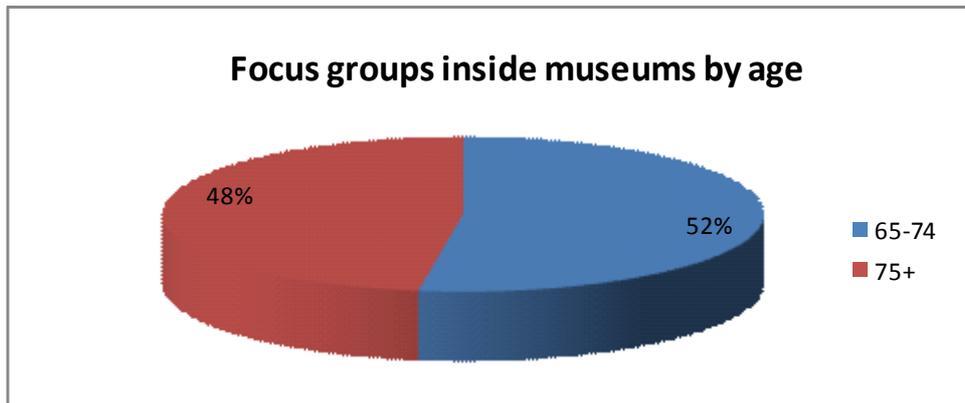
Graph 66



Graph 67

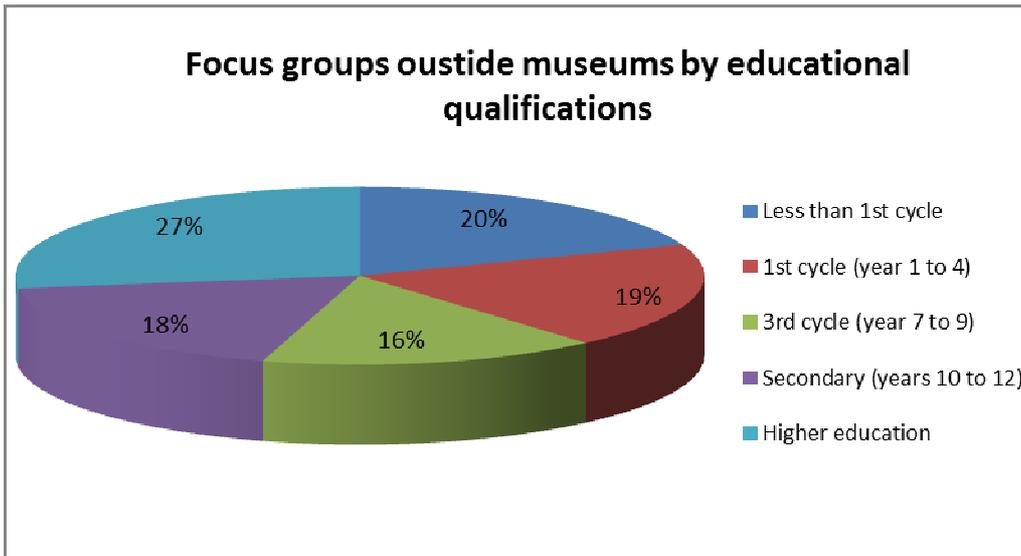
Focus groups participants with less than the 9th grade are on average older (graph 67) than the more educated (graph 66). This result is also due to the fact that we had two focus groups involving very old people in parish centers (cases of Viseu and Lisbon).

In the case of the focus groups conducted within the museums, the age groups (<74 years and >75 years) have identical weights (graph 68).



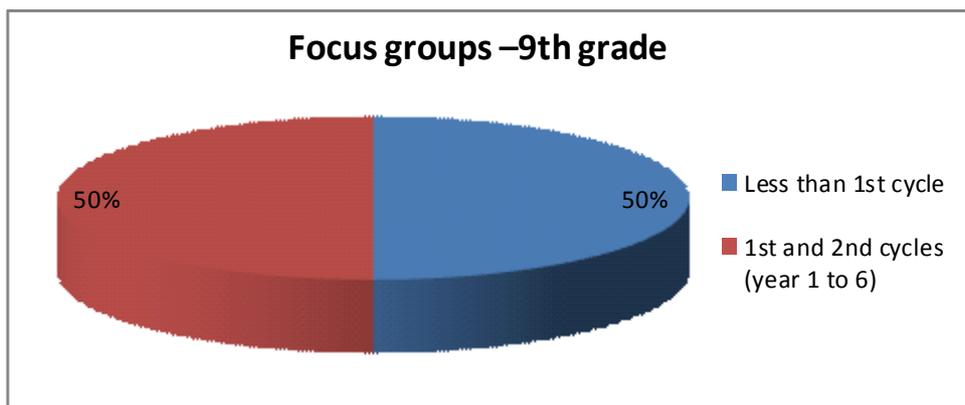
Graph 68

The educational levels of the participants in the focus groups outside the museums are distributed in a fairly balanced manner (graph 69).

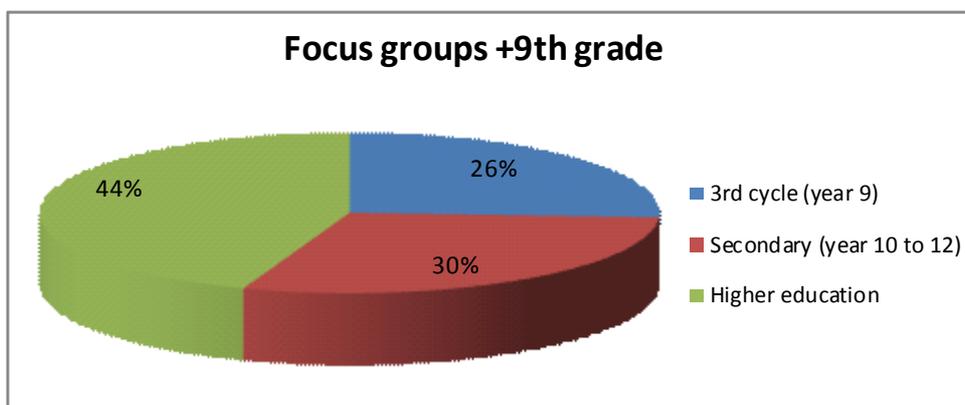


Graph 69

Among the participants in focus groups conducted outside the museums with less than the 9th grade, 50% have less than the 1st cycle and, in the case of those with more than the 9th grade, 44% are graduates (graphs 70 and 71). We have got here extreme situations as to the schooling of two groups that had just been divided by whether they attended or not the 9th grade.

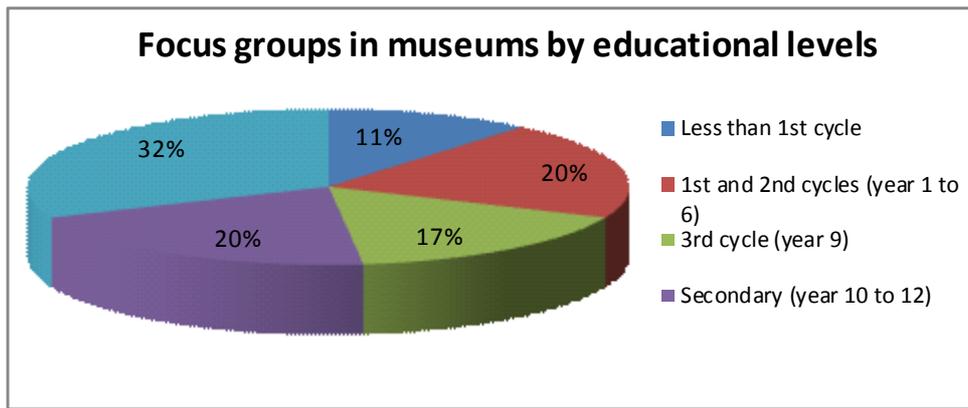


Graph 70



Graph 71

In the case of the focus groups within the museums, there are fewer people with less than the 1st cycle (graph 72).



Graph 72

2.2 Compared analysis of focus groups outside museums (+9th grade and -9th grade)

2.2.1 Leisure habits⁴¹

Attending courses at senior universities or day centers are a specificity of this population that distorts these results⁴². However, it should be noted that many of their habits are not exactly typical of what can be anticipated for a senior population, practicing a variety of activities that we would normally be inclined to assign to a less elderly population. This finding, which reflects a 'young' and 'active' attitude and (in some ways) 'modern' (we refer to their ease with electronic equipment and computer skills, and their openness to new aesthetic / recreational experiences), allows us to emphasize the maintenance of abilities and interests, with remarkable vivacity and energy and even later in life than what one would suppose. We noted, however, some adverse reactions (conservative) to aesthetic approaches due to the topic and its difficult interpretation.

Interesting (and common to both types of focus groups), and this is in fact a characteristic of the age, are some references to activities aimed at counteracting aging, such as daily exercise or mental exercise (solitaire, crosswords), aiming at keeping the body and mind young.

"I do maths. It is a kind of mental gymnastics." (+9th grade, Gaia)

"Crosswords to train mental gymnastics." (+9th grade, Gaia)

"Gymnastics for the knees and legs." (-9th grade, Faro)

The most notable difference between the two groups is that in the groups with a lower education level we recorded references to *doing nothing* or *sleeping* as 'activities' undertaken with satisfaction (as an achievement afforded by age).

"At home I try not to do anything and I don't!" (-9th grade, Beja)

"It's that good feeling of not having to worry about time!" (-9th grade, Oporto)

In these less educated groups, we also registered attitudes of dismay and a wish to give up.

"I used to do a lot before, but now I do nothing." (-9th grade - Faro)

"At our age we don't do much anymore!" (-9th grade - Lisbon)

⁴¹ Before answering this question, we made it clear that we were referring to non-work activities, other than the daily routine, carried out for pleasure.

⁴² Although comprising the over 65 group, the individuals that attend these institutions are the ones that go frequently to museums, the target population of this study.

***"I can't do anything. I don't know how to, no one ever taught me. I can't see."* (+ 9th grade - Viseu)**

We followed the the dichotomy indoors / outdoors suggested by Pedro Moura Ferreira in his text *Over 65 years: trends, occupations and participation*. As this sociologist refers, "the activities carried out outdoors normally require involvement with others and a certain social participation that, in some cases, can be quite intense." In this case, these are always present (in all focus groups), since we are talking about individuals who leave home to spend the day at day centers or to attend senior universities.

Indoor activities

There are no significant differences between the two types of focus groups as to the activities performed in the home environment. Regarding those conducted individually, reference is made to reading books and newspapers and writing (for instance, writing letters).

***"I like to read. I like to learn about culture."* (-9th grade, Viseu)**
***"I only studied till the 2nd grade, but I can read some things."* (-9th grade, Lisbon)**
***"I sometimes read."* (-9th grade, Lisbon)**
***"I put the music low and read, it's fantastic!"* (-9th grade, Oporto)**
***"I read magazines, newspapers, the Bible."* (-9th grade, Viseu)**

Everyone refers listening to music, looking at photos, DIY tasks, collecting. In groups with a lower education level, there is, however, a greater reference to listening to the radio ("as daily company"). As for creative activities also performed alone, no relevant differences were identified. In both groups highlight goes to embroidering, painting, sewing and crochet (mainly performed by women), also DIY tasks, restoration (some participants described these achievements with great enthusiasm and even showed pictures).

***"Painting using watercolour is a true passion."* (+9th grade, Gaia)**

Still indoors, and as to activities that require the possession and use of equipment, they refer watching television (completely integrated in daily routines⁴³); television is also used for watching rented videos and reference is often made to the use of the computer (by both groups, regardless of schooling) for reading and consulting the internet and accessing social networks (facebook).

***"I spend a lot of time on the computer."* (+9th grade , Faro)**
***"Today the computer is essential if you have family abroad."* (+9th grade, Faro)**
***"Internet, because I can't read anything on paper."* (+9th grade, Gaia)**
***"I use the computer to help my grandchildren with their homework."* (+9th grade, Beja)**
***"At home I occupy some of my time with information (computer)."* (-9th grade, Beja)**
***"I spend my evenings on the computer."* (-9th grade, Beja)**

As pertains the activities performed at home, only individuals with less than 9th grade refer socializing with family and "chatting."

⁴³ This finding is interesting because in many cases it was necessary to ask about the consumption of television that has become a part of daily routine that people even forgot to mention it.

Outdoor activities

Among the outdoor activities carried out, highlight goes to, as we have seen, the learning activities that take place at senior universities (regardless of schooling). The courses they attend range between the more theoretical (art history, history of religions, general culture, Portuguese literature, environmental science, English, etc.); and more creative activities (painting courses), as well as activities of physical / recreational nature (tai-shi, ballroom dancing, gymnastics, pilates, swimming, water aerobics). However, there seems to be greater recognition of this learning opportunity among participants of the groups with less schooling.

“There were things that I did not know and now I do because of the academy. I’ve gone on wonderful visits!” (-9th grade, Oporto)

As to outings of social nature, out of the home environment, reference is made to going to the café.

“Whenever I can I go out to have a coffee.” (-9th grade, Beja)

It is in the groups with less schooling that reference is made to solitude and isolation from family.

“I really enjoyed going out with my family.” (-9th grade, Lisbon)

In what concerns outings for cultural reasons, they refer going to the cinema, theatre and visiting museums (the latter usually organised by senior universities), as well as going to the library. There is also reference to going to classical music concerts and attending social gatherings at cafés.

Finally, they repeatedly refer to physical activities, linked to the enjoyment of nature: walking, hiking (in the countryside and by the sea), fishing and canoeing. The largest number of references related to nature has to do with gardening, taking care of vegetable gardens and some agricultural activities done for pleasure (cutting trees, guiding olive trees).

“Some agriculture.” (-9th grade, Faro)

“I like to see plants growing.” (-9th grade, Faro)

“When I’m a bit stressed I like to dig, touch the soil, pull out the weeds.” (+9th grade, Beja)

Some refer to strolling at the shopping centre.

“I like to go for a stroll at the shopping centre because it is has a flat surface where we can walk.” (+9th grade, Faro)

As to the way they practise the activities mentioned (alone or accompanied), there are many references to walking alone because they simply like it (mainly amongst individuals with more schooling).

“I walk kilometres without seeing anyone.” (+9th grade, Beja)

“Sometimes I have the need to go alone.” (+9th grade, Gaia)

Or with a dimension of freedom.

“I like going alone because I like going where I feel like.” (-9th grade, Oporto)

They also stroll with their spouse or friends. There are some that take the dog to keep them company.

“When I want to walk I go with my husband. My friends don’t walk. They’re at the café.” (+9th grade, Faro)

Some people refer going out alone, but that they easily find someone they know (particularly the more educated).

It is among the least educated that there is more reference to going out in groups (this finding also coincides with data for the general population). Some even refer being dependent on the parish center coach to go out (-9th grade, Lisbon).

“Normally I go out accompanied. I’ve already been out alone many times, but now I usually go with company.” (-9th grade, Oporto)

If given the choice on what to do in their spare time (i.e. regardless of any constraint - age, money, etc.), all of them (both those with less and more than the 9th grade) said they would travel. They would love to travel to places consecrated by mass tourism (Italy - "to see art and painting" - England, USA), yet they also make reference to other, less common, destinations (like Russia and the Southeast Asia). Among the less educated, there are more references to trips within Portugal. Egypt is repeatedly mentioned by all groups. They would travel mainly to get to know new cultures (regardless of education level). This appetite for knowledge and innovation is certainly a result of having attended institutions where they had training.

“I am a person who is open to the world.” (+9th grade, Faro)
“It’s important to know other peoples / other cultures / other languages.” (-9th grade, Beja)

They would also travel to places where they could enjoy closer contact with nature. In addition to travelling, and to confirm the 'young' attitude to which we referred earlier, there are still those who mention that if they could choose what to do in their free time, they "would date", they would have a "more intense cultural life" (especially the more educated) and even that they would like to have more "opportunities to dance".

“If I could now, I would jump, dance, shout!” (- 9th grade, Faro)

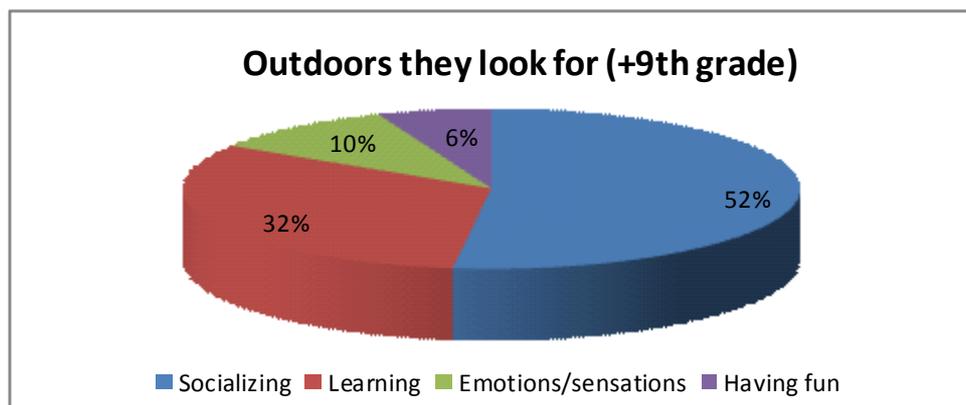
Finally, among the least educated, there are somewhat nostalgic references to activities practiced in the past.

“I would like to do gardening again. Pick olives.” (-9th grade, Viseu)

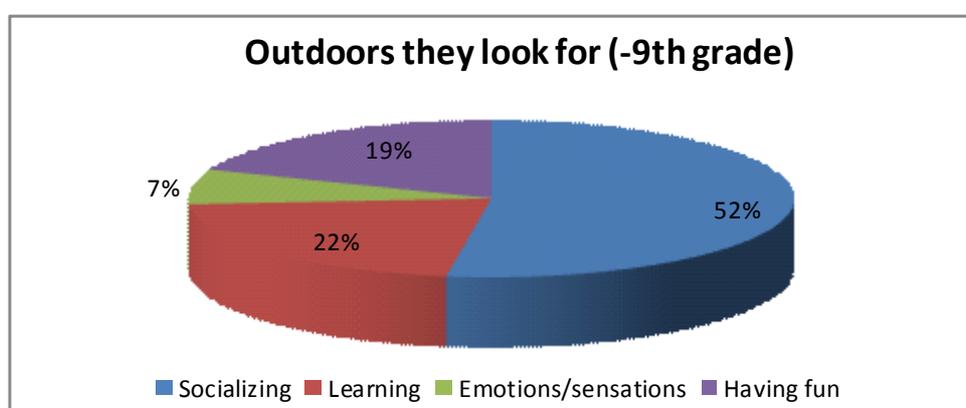
It is also in this group of the least educated that we register more expressions of quitting and pessimism.

“Fifteen years ago, I was at the age when one can dream; now it’s of no interest to me” (-9th grade, Faro)

Faced with the choice of some pre-defined terms, in their occupation of spare time outside the home, they indicated:



Graph 73



Graph 74

All groups seek essentially to socialise and therefore learn (graphs 73 and 74). The ratio of those who prefer to *socialise* (in relation to learning) is, however, higher in the case of the less educated, increasing by about 20% and decreasing by about 50% the choice of *learning*; from the most to the least educated, among which *having fun* increases slightly, practically an equal number of preferences as to *learning*.

2.2.2 Representation of 'museum'

Invited to give a spontaneous and immediate definition/representation of 'museum', they identify it with three keywords: history, culture and knowledge ("environment in which knowledge is taken in", "learning of activities that no longer exist"); they also refer to dimensions of time (the age of collections, the evolution of time), as well as their personal and social sense (memory, ancestors, reminiscences). The most educated refer repeatedly to the handing over from one generation to another and include their own responsibility in that handing over to future generations.

When the less educated are asked to spontaneously say what the 'museum' is for them, they often tend to refer names of specific museums / monuments (Chapel of Bones in Evora, Exhibition of Sacred Art of Beja, Museum of Vintage Cars of Caramulo, Costume Museum, Convent of Mafra, Monastery of Batalha, Aljubarrota). They convey in their representations of 'museum' a sense of grandeur and of 'going beyond' ("an unexplained immensity"). They also refer to objects or collections (art, religious art, plows, cars, crafts, "pretty little things", "old things ") and their value and meaning.

There are also those (particularly among the more educated) for whom 'museum' is sensations experienced by themselves: these are divided between the most introspective (positive -

novelty, curiosity, reflection, respect, calmness, pause, silence; and negative - hassle); and the more extroverted (animation).

“The museum is also a show. Everything is well thought out.” (+9th grade, Beja)

“To learn and have fun at the same time.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

Among the less educated, there are still references to good and pleasant feelings ["things that we like to see" (+9th grade, Beja); "I really like to see" (+9th grade, Viseu)].

There are also (especially among the more educated) people who first think about the quality of the collection (diversity, richness); or the quality of the physical environment/aesthetics (cleanliness, beauty, good taste).

The less educated mainly refer to the building, the space that can be visited, as a shell.

“It is a thing where we see art that is worthwhile and that we like.” (-9th grade, Lisbon)

“It is something that we visit to see what it is like.” (-9th grade, Lisbon)

Finally (in the groups with more schooling) there are references to the human qualities of those who design the museum (commitment, work, organization/methodology, patience, dedication, tenacity) or, finally, to the qualities of the figure(s) around which the collection is displayed ("the museums show us brilliant people, who do extraordinary things.").

2.2.3 ‘Museum’ experience throughout life

If groups with schooling above the 9th grade have a first contact with museums relatively early (in many cases, between the age of 6 and 14), for the less educated this first contact takes place a little later (16 to 35 years). Especially for the less educated, the first contact is often connected to leaving the place of residence (rural or semi-rural) to go live in the city or other important events like going to the army ["It was when I left the countryside for the first time and went to the army in Lisbon."(-9th grade, Faro)], or marriage ["Since I got married, thank God, I got to know more things."(-9th year, Oporto); "I was already married and had my daughter."(-9th grade, Lisbon)].

“I was young. I was 18 or 20. I went on a trip to Lisbon for 3 days. We went to the beach, we went to Nazaré, we went to Lisbon, we saw Terreiro do Paço. Then we went by boat to Cacilhas, I was scared of the boat. I can’t remember anymore, but I think I saw the Coach Museum at the time. It was very nice, but it was a long time ago.” (-9th grade, Viseu)

“I also went to the Museum of Ancient Art, I was around 17. I went with my friends. I liked it a lot. It impressed me. It stayed in my mind.” (-9th grade, Faro)

“Many years ago, I went to the museum where D. Afonso is ...and I read all the words that were there. I read it all but I’ve already forgotten. I was 40.” (-9th grade, Faro)

“I was eleven, I went to do my entrance exam.” (+9th grade, Faro)

In the more educated groups, only in very sporadic cases was there reference to having gone for the first time to a museum at a later age (45-50 years old). In most cases, the first visit was integrated in a school outing or accompanied by family members; they have strong memories of trips to the museum for the first time with a godfather, an uncle, a grandfather. These references do not come up in the focus groups of the less educated population.

It is interesting to see how the memory of the relationship with the adult with whom they went to the museum during their childhood seems to overlap the memory of the museum itself.

“I remember going with my grandfather to the Coach Museum. I was about 10. What I liked more was going with my grandfather. It was more because of the relationship with him.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

“I went with my godfather. On Mondays I would go out for a walk with him and the dog. I was in the 40s.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

“When my grandmother died, my godfather picked me up and took me away from that sad environment and took me to the Zoo and to the Columbano Bordalo Pinheiro Museum.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

Some say that it was the adults that chose the museum or exhibition.

“I think I started with religious art. My dad loved those things.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

The first museums visited were mainly Portuguese, in the county or region of residence (the Ethnographic Museum of Faro, the Museum of Beja and the Beja Castle, the Vasco da Gama Aquarium, the Coach Museum and National Museum of Ancient Art in Lisbon; the Oporto Ethnographic Museum, the Soares dos Reis Museum, the Grão Vasco Museum and the Museum of Caramulo - Viseu). There are, however, those who premiered abroad (Rijksmuseum - Amsterdam and Natural History Museum - London) at the age of 46. But in almost all groups/cities there was reference to the Coach Museum and the National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon. More than one group/city mentioned the Science Museum of the University of Coimbra.

From the museums themselves, many have sensory memories. As the Museum of Ancient Art is a very iconic one, (especially for those with more than the 9th grade, many of these memories relate to it.

“I went to the Museum of Ancient Art which I found very dark, but I remember the little painted boxes that enchanted me.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

“From the Museum of Ancient Art I remember oppression. Ddark, heavy.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

“I recall lack of air at the Museum of Ancient Art.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

Then there are those that recall smells.

“I remember the smell. The smell of wax.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

“They had a special smell.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

In the groups with less schooling, as we have observed, there are several participants that visited museums when they were already adults.

“The first time I went to Gulbenkian. With INATEL, I was around 70.” (-9th grade, Faro)

“Some 15 years ago I visited the Modern Art Museum in Sintra.” (-9th grade, Oporto)

“When I turned 80 I went to Spain.” (-9th grade, Viseu)

There are even those who say they never entered a museum (-9th grade group, Viseu). This focus group was held at the parish center of Canas de Senhorim, with very old ladies and low level of schooling.

For the less educated groups, the 'museums' visited during their childhood are often confused with churches, referring to the Bones Chapel in Evora, the Capuchos Church, the Prazeres Church.

As for the physical sensations, the less educated repeatedly refer to the physical sensation of "chill."

"There were rooms in which I felt a chill down my back." (-9th grade, Lisbon)
"I like it and I get goose bumps. Because we see things there that we thought didn't exist." (-9th grade, Lisbon)

These groups with less schooling refer thematic preferences.

"As I am catholic, I like to see saints." (-9th grade, Lisbon)
"When I was a young boy I liked visiting cemeteries." (-9th grade, Lisbon)

And feelings of "indignation" towards contemporary art exhibitions that they do not understand.

"There was a painting that was completely black and so we think that the guy must be joking with us! Where is art here?" (-9th grade, Oporto)
"I went to a museum in Santa Maria da Feira and it was confusing for me! As soon as I went in I felt like running away! I didn't like what I saw. It's a strange feeling. There was a lady that ran away immediately! If there was someone explaining maybe she wouldn't have run away!" (-9th grade, Viseu)

Of the early experiences of visiting, the objects they recall are fantastic or frightening (for both groups with more or less schooling) and / or are linked to the idea of death: "bones in the chapel of bones", "mummies", "fetuses in jars", "the tomb of Inês de Castro", "the tomb of Tutankhamun", "a mummy in a swamp".

"I remember going to the Science Museum of the University of Coimbra where I saw jars with fetuses and amazing things. I was six. It was in 1952." (+9th grade, Lisbon)
"The Museum of Torture in Germany. They would tie the women that argued by the hands and then would say 'now argue!' "(+9th grade, Lisbon)
"In the Chapel of Bones there was a boy hanging. My mother said 'Look, you know that boy tried to smack his mother and father and his hand fell off.' "(-9th grade, Faro)
"I also saw that (fetuses in jars), but I do not remember where it was. I remember that it moved me a lot." (-9th grade, Faro).
"When I went to Coimbra the 1st time to see the garden where Inês de Castro was killed. I did not know and they paint it in the water ... Quinta das Lagrimas ... I just thought but the blood is still here? And I do not know but it moved me a little bit! "(-9th grade, Faro)
"Head of nails in the Capuchos Church." (-9th grade, Faro)

But they also remember idyllic situations, powered by a child's imagination.

"I remember the coaches and imagining the princesses and princes in the fairy tales."

(+9th grade, Beja)

"I remember the king's bed. I remember the marked floor because there was a king that walked from one side to the other." (- 9th grade, Lisbon)

Among the least educated, there were objects that marked them due to their material value.

"I liked seeing the silver biers. Full of stones." (-9th grade, Beja)

They were also moved by the fact of recognizing an object that they somehow consider "theirs".

"We went to the Pavilion of Expo '98 where our bier was. There was a lady there who said it was from her hometown and I said no, this belongs to our Nossa Senhora da Conceição." (-9th grade, Beja)

As for the most memorable experience of the museum, some recall the familiarity with the collection visited as having been a remarkable experience.

"I went to visit the museum and I recognised all the items there. (...) I have never forgotten the feeling." (+9th grade, Faro)

Or an aesthetic, and simultaneously spiritual, feeling experienced in relation to the works of art or religious environments.

"I have a very special feeling of the picture of S. Jerome by Dürer. The skin has brightness, the outline is simply spectacular! The mysticism of the saint is represented there!" (+9th grade, Faro)

"I was at the Musée d'Orsay and loved the paintings of Monet! The sculptures of Rodin! I was sitting there! What you feel inside is amazing!" (+9th grade, Oporto)

"A chapel. You go in and it looks like you are in paradise!" (+9th grade, Faro)

"It was the Sistine Chapel in Rome. I was amazed!" (+9th grade, Oporto)

"For those who can walk well, it is simply beautiful to see! (Egypt)." (+9th grade, Viseu)

For some (with more schooling), it was the antiquity of the displayed objects that caused them the most striking sensations.

"The fossils impress me!" (+9th grade, Oporto)

"We visited a fortified village and I saw there something that gave me goose bumps: within the same housing the Copper Age and the Bronze Age!" (+9th grade, Oporto)

"I liked the pyramids in Cairo. It has got the smell of time, which is a fantastic thing!" (+9th grade, Viseu)

Among the less educated, the references are mainly national. They remember the "unknown soldier" at the Batalha Museum.

"There was really a soldier doing the rounds." (-9th grade, Lisbon)

Among the experiences that most marked the individuals of this group was the Expo'98.

"It has a very important aquarium there!" (-9th grade, Viseu)

There are also references to experiences that marked them, but because they were not very pleasant, related to the themes exhibited or the difficulty in understanding certain art exhibitions (common to both groups).

"I went to the Louvre, but it was a tremendous disappointment! I imagined something else ... "(-9th grade, Oporto)

"I went to Serralves, but did not quite understand ..." (-9th grade, Oporto)

"I'm never going to the Museum of Paula Rego again! I was shocked! It's scary! I'm never going back there not even for a coffee! "(+9th grade, Lisbon)

"I did not like the surrealist collection at the Dali Museum!" (+9th grade, Lisbon)

"Once in Spain I saw some old pictures and my husband liked the modern paintings. I saw my husband looking at a painting that was completely black with an eye in the corner. I said, 'Why are you there looking at that eye?'. I was already in my forties! "(-9th grade, Oporto)

But some value these avant-garde forms of art such as, for example, realism (including those with less schooling).

"In Casa de Serralves there was an exhibition in which the artist painted a lump of dry land. With all those holes. It was extraordinary! "(-9th grade, Oporto)

Among those with less schooling, some recall not only one but a series of objects, as if it was the set that was building their "imaginary museum".

"There are soldiers, priests, holy scriptures, statues. Some have no head, others have no arm, there are statues that are blind. There are bones in the windows. That didn't belong to history, did it? It belonged more to science. I did not study, but I have two children who graduated. "(-9th grade, Lisbon)

These senior university attendees are generally regular museum visitors (which confirms the idea that this is a sector of the population that museums could benefit more from), universities and day centers playing an important role in this. Among the more educated, there are several references to visits to foreign museums in the last 12 months. This contrasts with the less educated, for whom museum visits in the past 12 months occurred mainly in Portugal and in smaller numbers.

The groups with more schooling that went on visits abroad organised by the senior university went to Amsterdam (Faro), Belgium, Germany, France - to get to know the places of the Council of Europe -, as well as to Madrid (Oporto). All groups visited other counties (Beja visited the Museum of Faro; Oporto, the Museum of Lamego). In the last 12 months, they visited relatively

recent museums (House of Stories - Paula Rego Museum was visited by groups from Beja, Viseu and Lisbon and the Museum of the Orient by groups from Lisbon and Viseu), they went to see a specific exhibition (photography exhibition on Frida Kahlo at City Museum of Lisbon - Oporto group). The Museum of Ancient Art continues, as in the past, to be a much visited museum. They also refer to the Water Museum in Lisbon and the Gulbenkian Foundation, the CCB (Berardo Collection), the Sintra circuit (Regaleira Estate, Montserrat), as well as palaces and convents (Vila Viçosa, Mafra). For the less educated, there were visits to museums close by (S. Brás, Mines of Aljustel - Faro; Douro Museum, Casa Museu Teixeira Lopes, Alberto Sampaio Museum - Oporto). Further away from the place of residence, there were visits to Sintra (Faro), Fatima (Beja, Viseu), to Lisbon to the Museum of the Orient, the Water Museum, the Museum of Ancient Art (Oporto). Most of these visits were organized by senior universities and day centers, although not all of these institutions organize visits.

What motivates participants with more schooling to go to museums is mainly learning. They do consider, however, that this depends on the existence of good guides.

“I prefer a guide instead of an audiovisual display. Without doubt!” (+9th grade, Oporto)
“I like to hear the voice! Specially of someone who speaks with enthusiasm!” (+9th grade, Oporto)

They also like to go to museums to later pass on to others what they have learned. They greatly appreciate socialising and the possibility of having new experiences, recalling history, seeing art. "Feeling aesthetic emotions" is also one of the reasons for visiting. They even speak of gaining inspiration for their own aesthetic creations. There are also references to pleasure in the exercise of imagination when faced with other life forms.

As for the less educated, what motivates them to go to museums is also primarily the acquisition of knowledge (of "general culture") and curiosity, to see something different, unique; also, the value of the objects; the specificity of the collection; the specificity of a culture. They are also motivated by the fact that they have the possibility of a guided tour and of socializing (having the chance to go out, to be entertained).

“To give ourselves some joy.” (-9th grade, Viseu)
“We are already old but we like to see ancient art.” (-9th grade, Lisbon)

The fact that conditions all groups (regardless of schooling) is mainly the price ("it is expensive because to the entrance ticket we have to add the trip") and the schedules ("sometimes they are closed"), but also the location (distance). They do not go more often because of lack of time, mental fatigue, physical fatigue, family occupations or lack of company. They also say that sometimes they don't have access to information about the museum. They are critical in relation to the fatigue they feel on tours and the discomfort caused by other participants who do not let them hear the guides, as well as the excessive size of the groups ("lots of dispersion"). As for the experience of visiting, they criticize those situations where there is poor reception (lack of information and misinformation) and poorly trained guides, who do not take into account the people they have in front of them.

The less educated (and in accordance with the negative attitude and resignation expressed before) say they do not go more to museums "because they have no one to take them" ("now nobody will take us out of here"). There are also (among the less educated) those who mention "lack of knowledge". Physical difficulties are also pointed out ("difficulty in walking") and concentration problems during the visit when the groups are too large.

They also referred the lack of good access.

“Access can also be a constraint. My mother likes to go with me, but sometimes she is just not able. Either because the museum is high up or because the transport leaves us far from the door.” (+9th grade, Faro)

“Gulbenkian also has limitations for people with reduced mobility.” (+9th grade, Oporto)

All the groups referred the lack of resting areas.

“We want to sit in front of a painting but there is no seat!” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

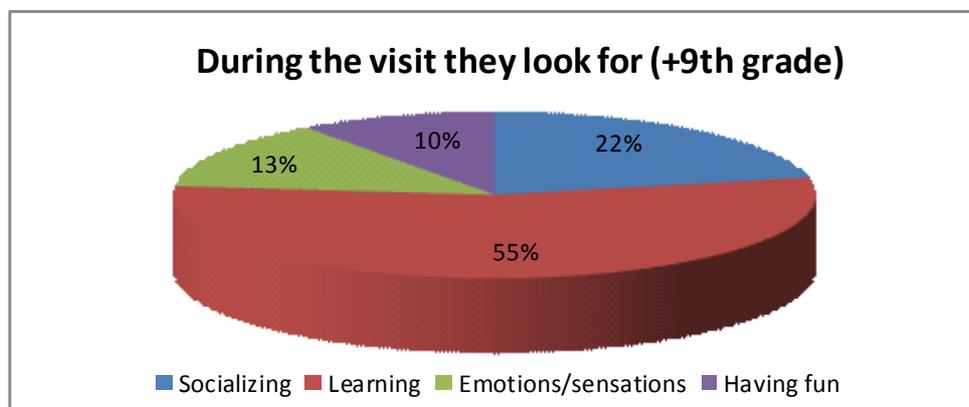
“Resting areas... this is very important! But sometimes they do not let us rest!” (-9th grade, Beja)

In relation to physical comfort, they refer the lack of water fountains, the distance from the toilets and that the latter are not very spacious.

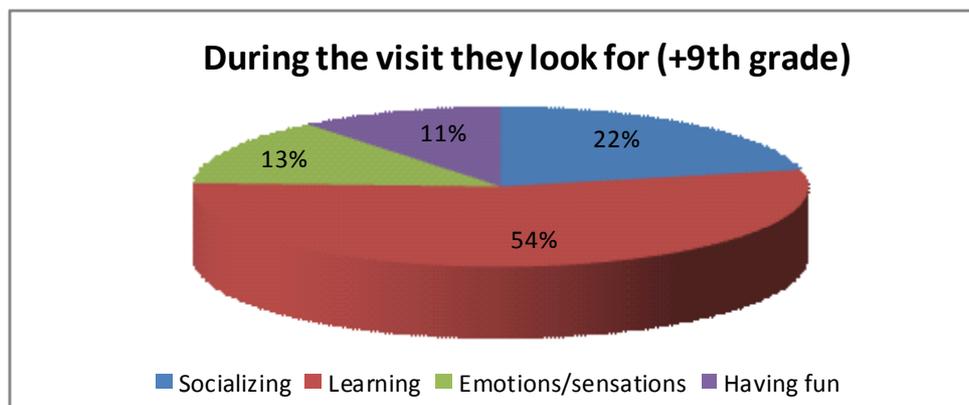
Finally, they refer to the captions which are too small and placed either at the back or too high.

“One of these days we will have to use a magnifying glass to read.” (+9th grade, Viseu)

Whilst in leisure activities both groups (with more or less schooling) sought, as we have seen, mainly to socialise, in museum visits they privilege learning and then socialising, having thus reversed the two terms. These are followed by *new emotions and sensations* and, finally, entertainment (graphs 75 and 76).



Graph 75



Graph 76

The biggest difference between groups with more or less schooling refers to what they seek in leisure activities in general. In the graphs above the proportion of experiences that they seek in museums is very similar in both cases, although learning is more valued in the case of those with more schooling. Visiting museums, therefore, seems to have an autonomous logic intrinsically linked to learning.

2.2.4 Representation of 'museum' in the past and present

Both groups⁴⁴ have a very clear and informed vision of museums in the past and how they differ from museums nowadays. They define museums in the past mainly through physical aspects, sensations and moods (which they still evoke). Among the physical attributes, the following stand out: the proliferation of objects (walls full of paintings, objects without organization displayed in a stacked manner like in a warehouse, poorly exhibited items, poorly identified, poorly lit); as to sensations, there are recurring references to smells (special smell, musty smell), the lack of light (darkness) and noise (creaking floors); finally, with regard to moods, they refer to the feeling of annoyance (boring). Those with more schooling comment over the lack of educational programmes ("there wasn't the habit of taking the schools", "in my youth we did not go to museums") and poor communication skills ("did not arouse great interest", "they were not effectively promoted"). They also refer to the lack of guides ("able to boost the museums"). They only had "guards". The groups with less schooling refer more to physical (dark spaces, cold spaces) and psychological (boredom, "they were sad") sensations. Some of these participants associate the harsh environment of museums with the regime of the time.

"It had to do with the regime at the time. We all went in uniform." (-9th grade, Oporto)

With regards to communication, references to the lack of guides, lack of information on each item and little interpretation are common to both types of focus groups ("Dull guides"). For the less educated visitors, the target-audience of museums in the past were the intellectuals, "they were not open to the public."

"They did not have guides. The door would open and we would see it by ourselves."(+9th grade, Lisbon)

"People spoke softly. You could not speak freely."(-9th grade, Oporto)

"Now everyone talks. Everyone listens. There is a freedom that didn't exist in the past. In the past it was for the intellectuals." (-9th grade, Oporto)

As for museums nowadays, they also use physical references to describe them: spacious, well presented, maintained and clean, well lit, well organized. They value creative programming, with temporary exhibitions and versatility in the use of spaces. They refer to good facilities, with bars where you can have a coffee, as well as to good sanitary facilities. They say that there is greater concern with visitors, greater sharing of knowledge which makes them more imaginative, elaborate, attractive, pleasant. They have better media (audiovisual, new information technologies). Visitors are guided by guides. Employees are younger and better prepared. They are now better places where people can learn.

"Now they already think about the visitor." (+9th grade, Lisbon)

However, as already noted, at the parish center of Canas Senhorim (Viseu) we found people from a rural area with no primary schooling and no relationship with museums.

⁴⁴ Except for the group with less than 9th grade Canas de Senhorim, Viseu, whose participants do not have, nor ever had, practically contact with museums.

“Now they don’t make museums anymore! Oh, do they?” (-9th grade, Viseu)

“We never see one now!” (-9th grade, Viseu)

In Lisbon we also found in day care centres (parish center of Parede) people who usually do not go to museums.

“I haven’t visited the current museums. What I see is on TV.” (-9th grade, Lisbon)

“I’m not used to going to museums, I can’t answer.” (-9th grade, Lisbon)

For the majority of participants in these groups with less schooling, museums improved especially in the interpretation of exhibited items (although they recognize that "information is still hard") and thanks to the use of new technologies ["They have videos and stuff like that." (Faro)]; they also refer to the presentation (the exhibited collections are more "appealing"), to the fact that professionals working in museums are now more prepared ["Today people are more educated" (-9th grade, Faro)], to the greater organization (more illuminated spaces) and comfort. However, they also find negative aspects, especially because there are too many visitors, losing quality in the information.

All groups (with more or less schooling) are unanimous in their appreciation of guides. They would like museums to be "happier", with more guides, in order to have smaller groups.

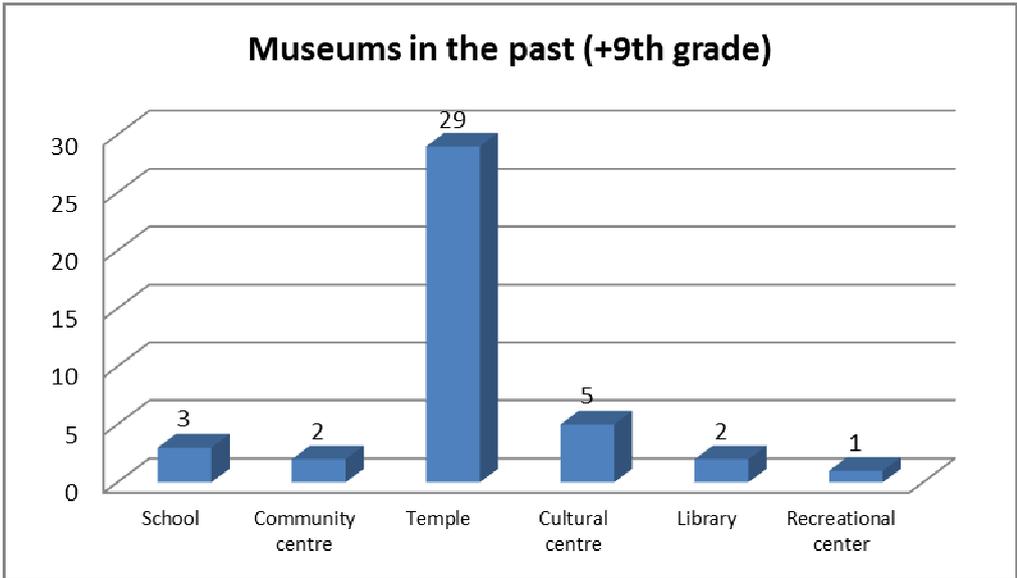
“Sometimes the guide has to manage time according to his activities and there are groups where there is no time for questions.” (-9th grade, Beja)

“Guides are necessary. At least for me they are!” (+ 9th grade, Oporto)

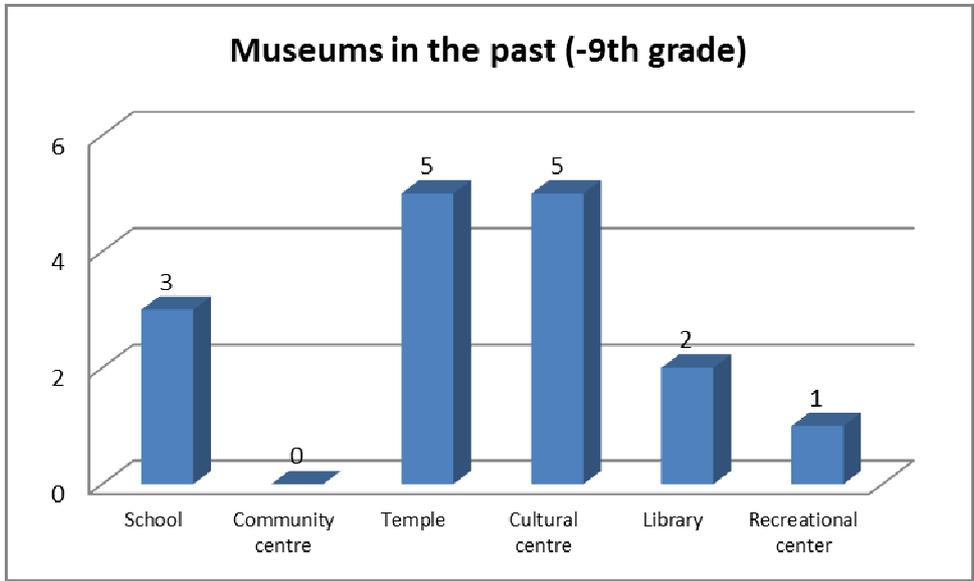
Participants in the focus groups were put before a series of keywords on their representations of museum (past and present). These keywords were inspired by the work of Marilyn Hood⁴⁵ and correspond to the following associations of meaning: *school* (learning space); *community center* (socialising space); *temple* (solemn space); *cultural center* (modern space, multipurpose); *library* (space for files/collections); *recreation center* (fun area).

The groups with more schooling relate museums in the past especially with the idea of the *temple*, followed at some distance by that of a *cultural center* (graph 77). Considering that the designation *temple* relates to immobility and distancing in relation to the public, it is very relevant, in what concerns representation, that participants with less schooling, in addition to *temple*, refer to museums in the past also as *community centers and schools* (graph 78).

⁴⁵ Hood (1983).

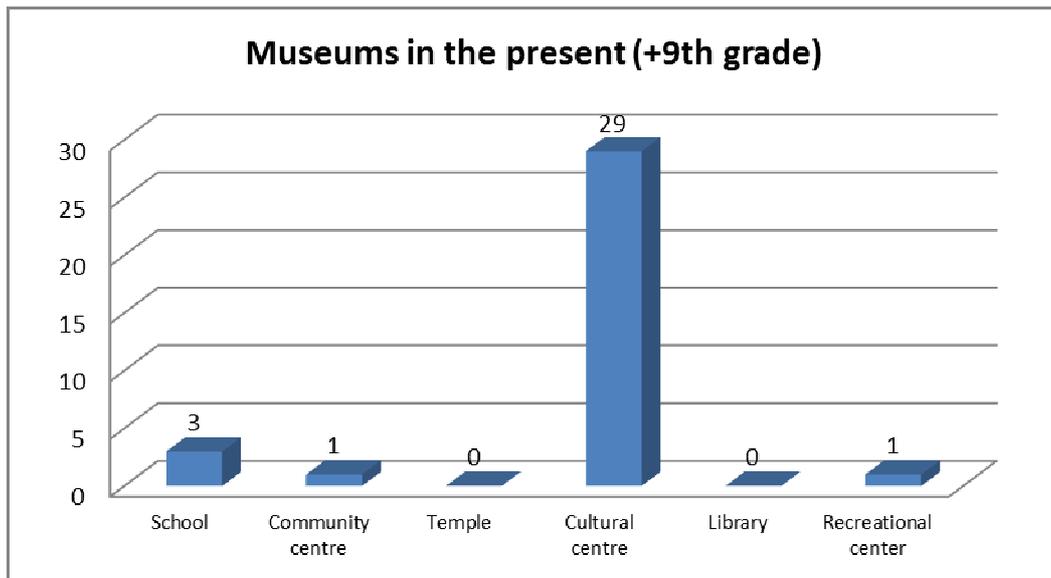


Graph 77

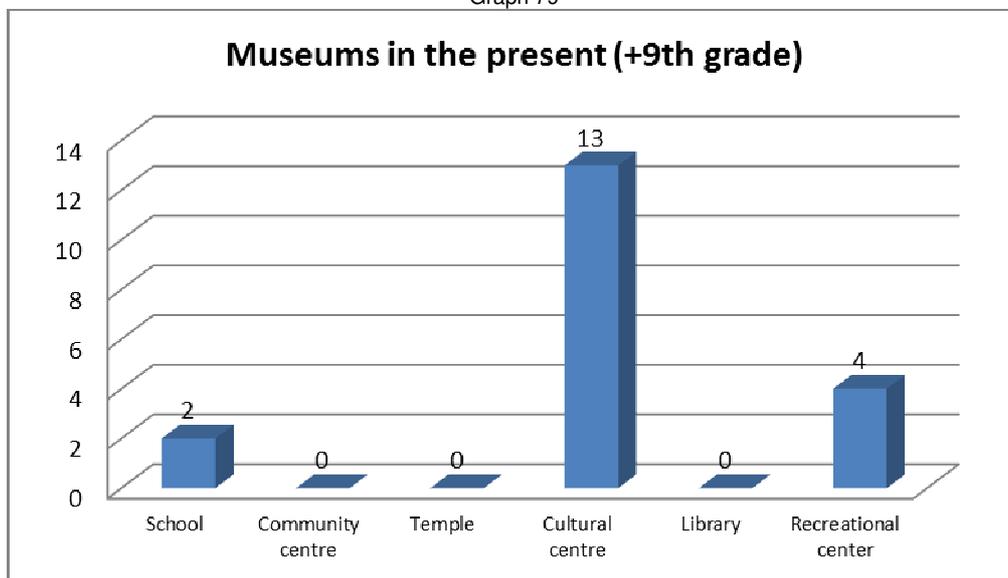


Graph 78

As for museums nowadays, the groups with more schooling associate them especially to *cultural centers* and then to *school* (graph 79). The groups with less schooling (graph 80) also define them mostly as *cultural centers*, but then immediately afterwards as *recreation centers* and ultimately as *schools* (the designations *temple* and *community center* are not chosen by these groups to designate the museums at present) .



Graph 79



Graph 80

When asked how they think the museum could be improved in general, all groups mention the financial aspect, stressing that they should receive more state support. Those with more schooling refer also to the need to improve assistance (emphasizing the need for guided tours and to train guides).

“It is much better to have a guided visit, it’s something else.” (+9th grade, Viseu)
“I think there should be people to give guided tours every hour.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)
“Better guides (according to the group’s age).” (+9th grade, Beja)

All groups, irrespective of their level of schooling, showed the need for greater social access.

“I think they should be free of charge so that everyone can have access.” (+9th grade, Oporto)
“Not everyone can.” (+9th grade, Faro)
“Free access and people explaining.” (-9th grade, Faro)

They would also like better access to knowledge and better ways of transmitting it.

“More knowledge. Easier texts. More direct.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

“They say it is very old, but what I’m interested in is what it was used for. For instance, instead of saying that it dates back to the Bronze Age (or whatever) or Palaeolithic times, it would be more interesting to know that it was a needle to sew furs.” (+9th grade, Faro)

In addition to the contents, especially the participants with more schooling, would like guides to have better training and a better way of communicating.

“They would have to be more dynamic ... and not just someone babbling words. The information is given so quickly that we don’t have time to retain it. Many times it’s not even interesting.” (+ 9th grade - Faro)

“More and better training for professionals working in museums.” (+9th grade, Viseu)

All of them refer the need to extend opening hours (to be open of Sundays and public holidays).

“They should be open till midnight. Instead of going to shopping centres people would go to museums.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

“Dynamic replacement of exhibitions. We are always interested in seeing different things!” (-9th grade, Beja).

They also feel that there is lack of shops where they can “buy things to take home” (-9th grade, Beja).

Still in what concerns access, they refer to better means of transport and a place to park.

“We go to the Museum of Ancient Art, but then there’s no place to park. Even the Gulbenkian Foundation has very limited parking! Sometimes I gave up. So I stopped going there.” (+9th grade, Lisbon)

“When we went to the Museum of the Presidency, we parked on the other side of the road and it was difficult to cross.” (-9th grade, Beja)

Some also refer to the need to improve physical access in the museum.

“Very few museums have elevators, there are narrow stairs and many times no handrails.” (-9th grade, Faro)

They also feel the need for more comfort (more resting areas, hangers and lockers). As to the legibility of texts and captions, reference is mainly made to the need to increase font size.

“The font is sometimes small. Sometimes the text is so long that we can’t see.” (-9th grade, Beja)

They also propose that museums be more promoted by the media. And they refer to the importance of the exchange between museums, so that collections circulate.

When asked about improvements specifically targeted to the senior population, all groups, regardless of education, refer again to the importance of guided tours tailored to this specific population, small groups, and they are once again critical as to the "dull" way in which guides communicate and how they feel discriminated in the way they are treated.

"Sometimes the guides are boring, the memorise their text and then spill it out without enthusiasm." (+9th grade, Beja)

"Less 'infantilization' of the senior population - like 'the poor old people'." (+9th grade, Viseu)

According to their perception, knowledge must be transmitted in a more accessible manner when targeted at this age level. There are still some that point to the diversity of social and schooling situations that define the setting up of senior groups attending museums.

"When language is very technical, communication is lost." (+9th grade, Porto)

"There are many people that know very little. We're all the same age but we're not all at the same level." (+9th grade, Lisbon)

Referring especially to senior visitors, they call attention to the need for more comfort areas. Once again, when answering this question, they suggest more eating areas.

"I'm thinking of the Serralves Museum that has a restaurant... I've already spent a pleasant day there. That's it. Those are the conditions we need!" (-9th grade, Oporto)

Also thinking of the senior population, they specifically refer to the price, as something that has to be improved.

Those with more schooling refer to a need for better collaboration between museums and senior universities. They suggest museology courses, aimed at seniors (at those universities), and museums activities especially targeted at visitors of this age. In the same line, the less educated propose better collaboration between day care centres and museums, so that more elderly can go to museums. They also suggest that museums meet the elderly at the day care centres.

As for museums / exhibitions that they would like to visit or exhibitions that they would like to be planned (this question, extra-script, was made especially to less educated groups who reported having less experience in visiting museums), they make a few suggestions:

"I would like to visit a museum that would show me how a television, mobile phone works..."

"How do we have so many things in a little box [computer]!"

"How I get to my daughter who is in England through a computer."

"How astronomy, the galaxies, the universe, the strength of the sun work."

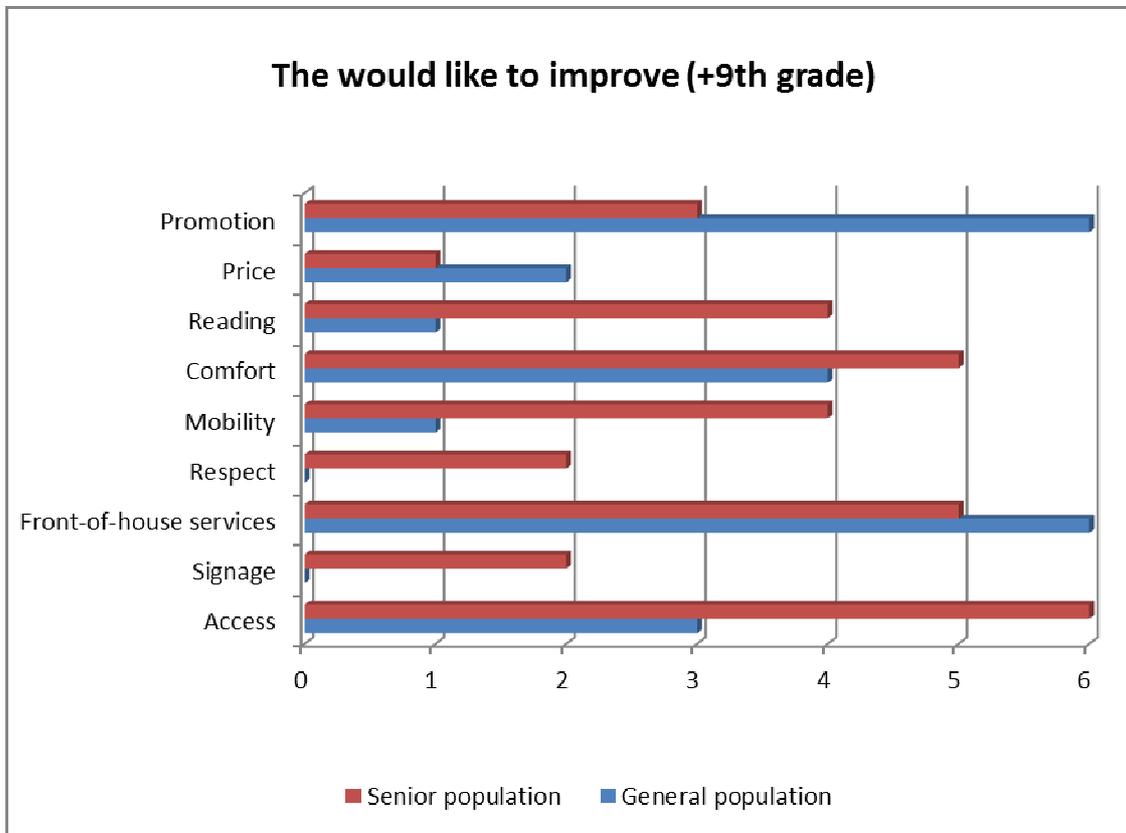
"More rural / ethnographic museums."

"An exhibition that would teach the youth how to save."

After these open questions, they were asked again to choose between pre-defined items relating to aspects they would like to see improved in museums, firstly for the population in general and then for the senior population.

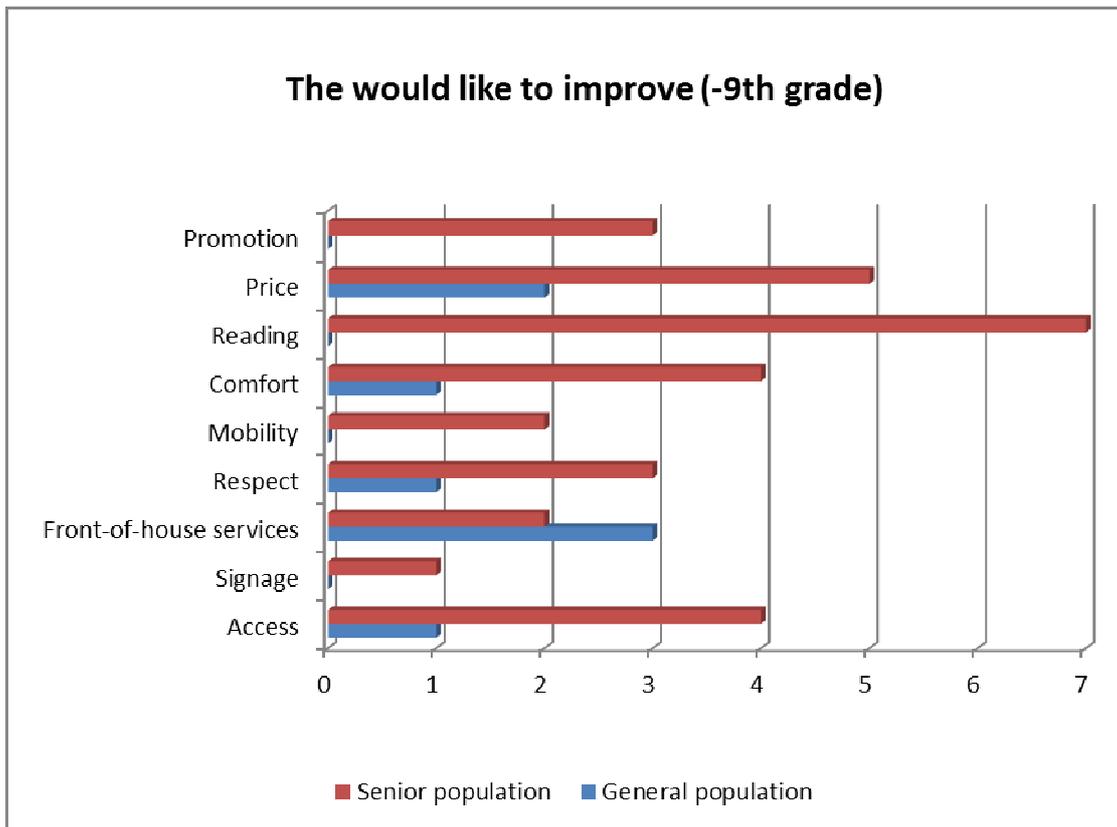
For individuals with more schooling (graph 81), assistance, promotion, comfort and access are among the most commonly reported elements (both for the general population and the senior

population). Price and promotion are more indicated in relation to the general population, but also when referring to senior people. The items mostly marked when asked specifically about the senior population are access, assistance and comfort, followed by mobility and ease of reading (with a disproportion that benefits the senior population to the detriment of the general population).



Graph 81

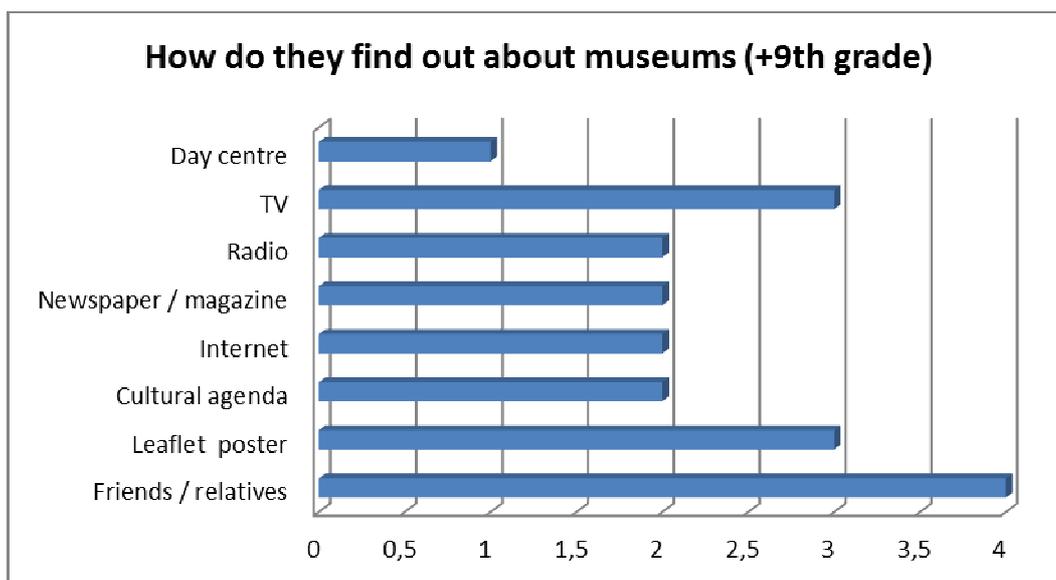
As to the participants of the focus groups with less schooling (graph 82), the most marked item is the ease of reading, followed by the price and comfort, especially for senior visitors. Only assistance is more indicated in relation to the general population than when asked specifically about senior visitors. Access, comfort and respect are also referred in relation to the senior population.



Graph 82

2.2.5 Used and privileged communication channels

Responding to another list of suggested words, those with more schooling say they know about the museums or exhibitions especially through friends, family and colleagues and they themselves also pass on this information [*"When we like it we recommend it."* (+9th year, Beja)]. There follows the information provided by museums (leaflets, posters, newsletters). TV has some importance in promotion (they refer in particular to the programme "Portugal em Directo" by Dina Aguiar or José Hermano Saraiva's programme). There are also some references to the cultural agenda of local governments, on an equal footing with the internet (graph 83).

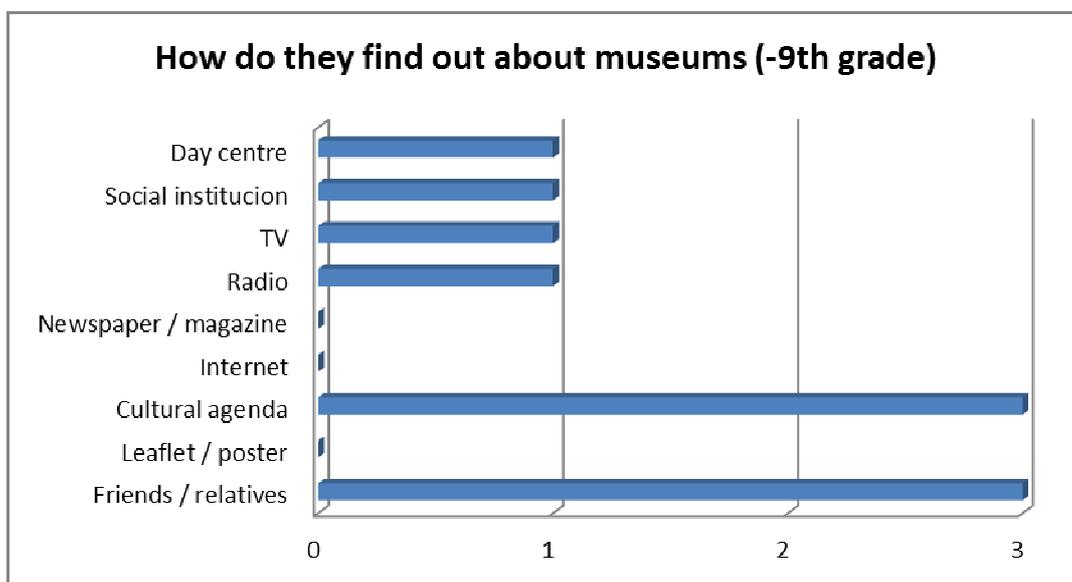


Graph 83

These individuals with more schooling added to the keywords suggested on the card “through hotels” and “through the museums themselves”.

“At hotels! Sometimes there is more information at hotels than at the tourism bureau!”
 (+9th grade, Lisbon)
“When I go to museums they (hotels) inform me of the coming exhibitions.” (+9th grade, Oporto)

In the case of the elderly with less schooling, it is mostly (overwhelmingly) the day centers and parish centers that pass information on museums, followed by friends and cultural agendas of local governments. They are also informed through radio and TV (but with less importance). There is no reference to the leaflets / posters and newsletters of the museums themselves, as well as to print materials and the Internet (graph 84).



Graph 84

When asked on how they would like to be informed of the activities of museums, some refer to cultural agendas published by local authorities as a good example. Some also refer to promotion through posters on the streets and billboards. They also suggest museums should send information to senior universities and that this task should be performed by the "Friends of the Museum." There are also those that refer to television ("it gets to everyone and communicates directly"). Those with less schooling refer to the media, in particular television and printed materials.

“It could get to us via books, magazines, but with large print because many have really small writing.” (-9th grade, Viseu)

2.2.6 Open question

At the end of the group conversation, they were invited to add something that has not been asked. In this open question, participants with more than the 9th grade refer to the need for a greater protection of museums by the State; the need to have more staff; the possibility of having senior guides ("like in Italy"). Also creating the habit of visiting museums during childhood ("there should be one day a month for schools to visit museums"), greater promotion and greater ease in transport. There are still those who feel the need for "more painting and tapestry museums."

As for those with less schooling, they refer that they would like to be invited to go to museums and they would also like museums to visit them in homes / day centers. There are also those who express their desire to one day make a nexhibition on "coins and the value of money" and someone who describes a learning experience at the Prado Museum which now allows him/her to interpret the drawing that he/she has at home.

“I have a painting at home, it’s a drawing. I didn’t know how to interpret it. But when I went to the Prado Museum I saw paintings of the same line and now I already know how to interpret it.” (-9th grade, Oporto)

2.3 Analysis of focus groups carried out in museums

2.3.1 Current habits to occupy leisure time

Indoor activities

Among the activities practiced individually, reference is made in particular to reading newspapers and books (related to health, food, stories, biographies, cosmology, poetry). They practice a variety of crafts (crochet, lace, decorating, knitting, watercolor, DIY); watching television (news, soap operas, movies, series, contests, football) and watching movies (DVDs), listening to the radio (especial reference to the radio station Antena 2); using the internet to research and access various social networks. They do gardening; play “cavaquinho”(small four-string guitar); take care of grandchildren; care for animals.

Outdoor activities

They attend senior universities (computer courses, English, poetry, theatre, singing, crafts). They practice physical activities: gymnastics, swimming, hydrobike, chu kung, bicycle riding. As for the nature-related activities they take walks and hike. They dedicated themselves voluntary activities and associations. They practice a series of cultural activities: going to movies, theatre, concerts (the Gulbenkian Foundation, the São Carlos theatre), museums (where they also take their grandchildren to). As for more social activities, they belong to reading groups, have lunch with friends, go to café. They travel, go to church, some still teach classes, teach catechism. They say that leisure activities of manual nature are meant to distract them from their worries.

“I take my grandchildren to museums.” (EPAL Water Museum, Lisbon)

“I do gardening; it fills up my time and doesn’t give me sleepless nights. While other activities do.” (Paper Currency Museum, Oporto)

As to how they practice them (alone or accompanied) they say that they do it either alone or accompanied. When they go out accompanied, they go with their spouses or friends. There are also those who go out with their grandchildren.

If they could choose what to do in their leisure time, like the other two groups, they mention primarily the possibility of travelling.

“To go to the Holy Land.” (Paper Currency Museum, Oporto)

“I would like to get to know other cultures, other than the European ones.” (Municipal Museum of Faro)

There are still those that refer the wish of doing a diving course, a photography course. Dancing and singing, as well as going to the theatre or cinema, are also referred to as activities they

would like to practice. Also walking more; learn painting. They refer to the lack of time as the main deterrent, but also to lack of money.

“I would like to go to the cinema more often, but it’s expensive.” (EPAL Water Museum / Chiado Museum, Lisbon)

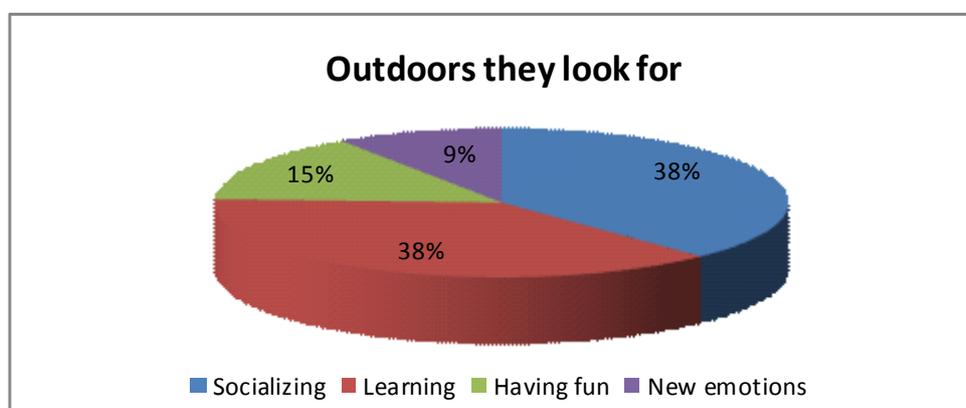
“I’d like to do swimming but it’s expensive.” (Labour Museum, Setúbal)

There are those, however that would like to isolate themselves.

“My choice would be to isolate myself.” (Paper Currency Museum, Oporto)

Or, on the other hand, mingle more with people.

“Activities that allow more mingling with people.” (Anastácio Gonçalves House-Museum, Lisbon)



Graph 85

In their leisure time outdoors (graph 85), they seek to both learn and socialise. To have fun for these groups has more weight than for any of the other focus groups. Some speak of social concerns and willingness to help.

“Give socially.” (Anastácio Gonçalves House-Museum, Lisbon)

“Help others.” (Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon)

2.3.2 Representation of ‘museum’

They associate the ‘museum’ particular to learning (knowledge, enrichment, discovery) and a notion of time (past, seniority, ancestors, memory), with characteristics related to personal experiences (nostalgia).

“It brings me back memories when I see these 20-escudo bank notes, I miss the past.” (Paper Currency Museum, Oporto)

“Museum is to remember.” (Chiado Museum, Lisbon)

They also refer to pleasant and positive feelings, like beauty, peace, relaxation, pleasure. They allude less than the other groups to the objects on display and the collections (they refer to them as “interesting things”, “works of art”). There are two references to culture.

2.3.3 'Museum' experience throughout life

Many of the participants in these focus groups conducted in museums visited a museum for the first time before the age of 10, with their family or with the school. The most visited museums in these ages were the National Museum of Ancient Art, Portugal dos Pequeninos, the Soares dos Reis Museum, the Caramulo Museum, Jeronimos Monastery, Batalha Monastery and the Bones Chapel. Reference was also made to the Nativity Museum of Olhão. There are many references to the Castro Alvarez Museum in Maputo (Mozambique), where many spent their childhood. Some visited museums for the first time when they were teenagers, with their family and school, and there is, again, reference to the Chapel of Bones, the Coach Museum, the Military Museum, the Alcobaça Monastery, the National Museum of Ancient Art. As in the previous groups, there are references to specific life stages related to the experience of the first visit (when they came to Lisbon, when they got married, at the age of 17, when they came from Africa). Those who say they visited for the first in adulthood went to the Coach Museum, others to the Seixal Ecomuseum ("museum of boats"). Individuals who visited museums for the first time when they were over 65 refer the Tile Museum and the Wax Museum of Fátima. Someone said he visited a museum for the first time at the age of 80 (a former employee of Sacavém Cookware Factory, referring to a visit to the Museum of Sacavém).

Of these early experiences of visiting, they remember mainly the objects they saw ("embalmed animals", "weapons", the "little houses" of Portugal dos Pequeninos, "the car that transported the arch of Augusta road," the panels of S. Vicente and the Custodial of Belém" - two iconic objects from the National Museum of Ancient Art, also objects-living specimens), but they also refer to learning (how boats were operated, the history of King D. Carlos I). They also refer to details of works and items seen. As with the previous groups, there are also references to bones (but in a less emphasized manner). They recall sensations (what they felt when they saw the size of the buildings, the golden effects; reference to "bad dreams" related to the colors of a painting of hunting, the size and colors of the paintings of El Greco). They also allude to the feeling of not understanding, not having enjoyed the experience and, at the time, not wanting to return.

"It was interesting to find out how boats work, it impressed me." (Seixal Municipal Ecomuseum)

"My dad would look at the paintings and I didn't have a clue what was going on." (Loures Museum)

"I remember telling my dad that I did not want to visit museums anymore." (Seixal Municipal Museum)

"The bones caused a bit of an impression on me." (National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon)

"I saw an image with a broken head. That's what stayed in my mind." (Paper Currency Museum, Oporto)

"I visited the Queluz Palace and I remember thinking that the beds were very small." (Labour Museum, Setúbal)

"I recall passing underneath the belly of an elephant." (Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon)

"I remember a black pricked with thorns (African idol of nails) that we were afraid of and would run away." (Municipal Museum of Faro)

"It was the colonial exhibition in Oporto, in the 30s. What impressed me most was ... well, the living pieces ... the Africans ... " (National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon)

"I remember the wax figures that looked so real, I felt like touching them." (Municipal

Museum of Faro)

"The lions fighting at the Museum of Natural History in Lourenço Marques." (Museu do Chiado, Lisbon)

As for the objects that most impressed them in general during their visits to museums, they shows, like the other groups, their displeasure regarding painting that they call "modern".

"I don't like modern paintings!" (Paper Currency Museum, Oporto)

As for the most memorable experience of the museum, unlike focus groups discussed above, they refer quite often to foreign museums, including the Museum d 'Orsay and the Jeu de Paume in Paris, the Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, the Museum of Anthropology in Mexico, the British Museum in London, the Dinosaur Museum in Cardiff, the Natural History Museum in British Columbia, the Budapest Parliament. When asked what had really marked their visit, they referred to specific objects they saw in the exhibitions [Bosch and Goya at the Prado Museum and the paintings in the Sistine Chapel (National Museum of Ancient Art) or the Pestrana tapestries, among others], to the collections or how the museum was organized and appealing ("live").

"Te carriage that went to Rome, at the Coach Museum, due to its grandiosity." (Anastácio Gonçalves House-Museum, Lisbon)

"I saw a clock that stopped the revolution of the Navy in 1910 at the Presidency Museum." (Labour Museum, Setúbal)

"In the Living Science Center in Estremoz, I learned how a volcano erupts through a pressure cooker." (Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon)

"I really enjoyed seeing the Pestrana tapestries, they show what we were as a people and rulers." (Ceramics Museum, Loures)

"I really enjoyed the impressionist painting at the Jeu de Paume." (Anastacio Goncalves, House-Museum, Lisbon)

"I loved the Museum d'Orsay, for his collection." (Anastacio Gonçalves House-Museum, Lisbon)

"The Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid is very well organized, very clear." (Anastacio Gonçalves House-Museum, Lisbon)

"At the Science Museum in Chicago went into a submarine." (Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon)

"A Museum of Anthropology in Mexico: large, well presented, a living museum." (Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon)

"I enjoyed visiting the Museum of Neorealism, it is a living museum." (Chiado Museum, Lisbon)

In this group there are, as expected, several references to museum visits in the last 12 months, mostly conducted in Portugal and in the Lisbon area (the Tile Museum, National Museum of Ancient Art, Museum of the Presidency, Bordalo Pinheiro Museum, Museum of electricity, the Museum of the Orient, the Costume Museum); also to the Mafra Convent and Monastery of Batalha. There are still those who visited the Romantic Itinerary of Minho. Foreign museums were mainly mentioned by participants in the National Museum of Ancient Art and the Calouste

Gulbenkian Museum (Turkey, Vietnam, Spain, Germany, England), with an above the average education level when compared to others.

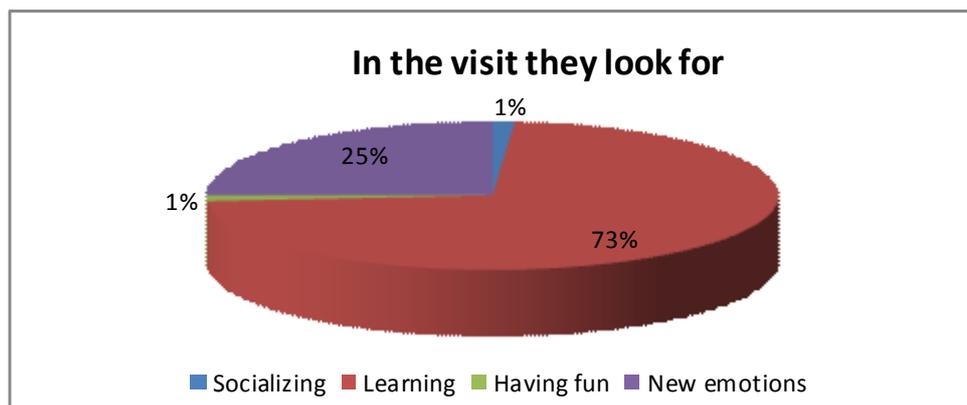
What motivates them to visit museums is mainly learning and knowing; also (like the groups with more schooling) transmitting knowledge to others (grandchildren). They also go to museums because they are curious, to see unusual, beautiful things and "new trends", to "see what's new" (this was the answer of those with less schooling in the groups analyzed above). Some, expressing a certain familiarity with museums, say that they go to museums to understand the perspective of museologists. This appreciation of museum work was also mentioned, as we have seen, by those with more schooling.

"To feel how the authors of the Works or the curators view the Works of art." (National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon)
"I like to show my grandchildren." (EPAL Water Museum, Lisbon)

As to what conditions their visits to museum, they point to the lack of time (mentioned by five groups), lack of money and the opening hours. They also refer to mobility problems: lack of transportation, lack of company, poor weather conditions. There is a single reference (Municipal Museum of Faro) to poor physical access and fatigue during the visit (lack of resting areas).

"In small towns we have to ask for the key to see a chapel, but there is nobody. " (National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon)
"I don't have anyone to go with." (Municipal Museum of Faro)
"I would not dare drive to Lisbon." (Municipal Ecomuseum of Seixal)

As to what they seek in a visit to a museum (graph 86), the overwhelming choice is to learn, followed by experiencing new emotions and sensations, socializing (important for the focus groups discussed above) and having fun being in this case residual. This appreciation of emotions is nonetheless curious and the fact that these conversations took place inside the museums themselves should not be irrelevant.



Graph 86

2.3.4 Representation of 'museum' in the past and present

Like the other two sets of focus groups, they say that in the past museums were deposits or warehouses, since, in their opinion, there was no concern in adapting the space to works of art, in making them sufficiently attractive. They say they were not pleasant, they were closed and dark environments. In the past access was bad.

"The traditional museum had small rooms, it had nothing to do with this museum of today, with all this glass, with all these windows." (Museum of Paper Money, Oporto)

"The traditional museum had rooms with very high ceilings, the construction was old." (Museum of Paper Money, Oporto)

"In the past the walls were full of pictures." (Municipal Museum of Faro)

"In the past, museums were a dead thing ... everything was there ..." (Municipal Museum of Faro)

As to the type of visitors in the past, similarly to what was observed with the other groups, they describe them as having greater cultural capital.

"Generally, museums were visited by schools and only by more cultured people." (Museum of Paper Money, Oporto)

Regarding museums nowadays, they mainly value interactivity with visitors and the greater effort to promote, to reach new audiences. They recognize that today there is more concern with those that have difficulties (Museum of Paper Money, Oporto). They also refer to the architecture of the new buildings.

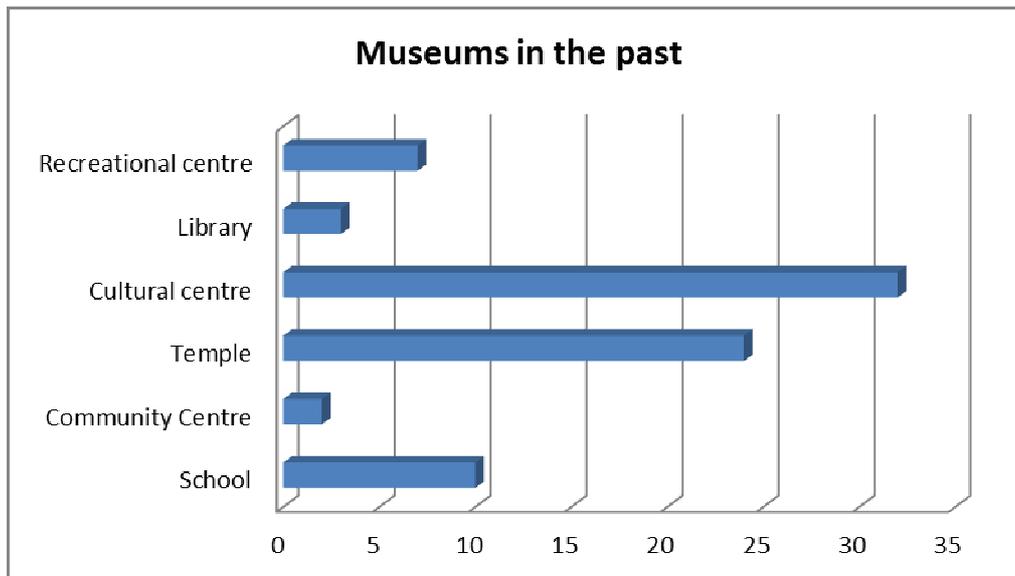
"Today museums are more interactive, more luminous, they want to attract people." (Anastacio Goncalves House-Museum, Lisbon)

"Promoting the object is taken more into account as they create spaces for the items breathe and gain more evidence." (Municipal Museum of Faro)

"Employees today are younger and more committed." (Municipal Museum of Faro)

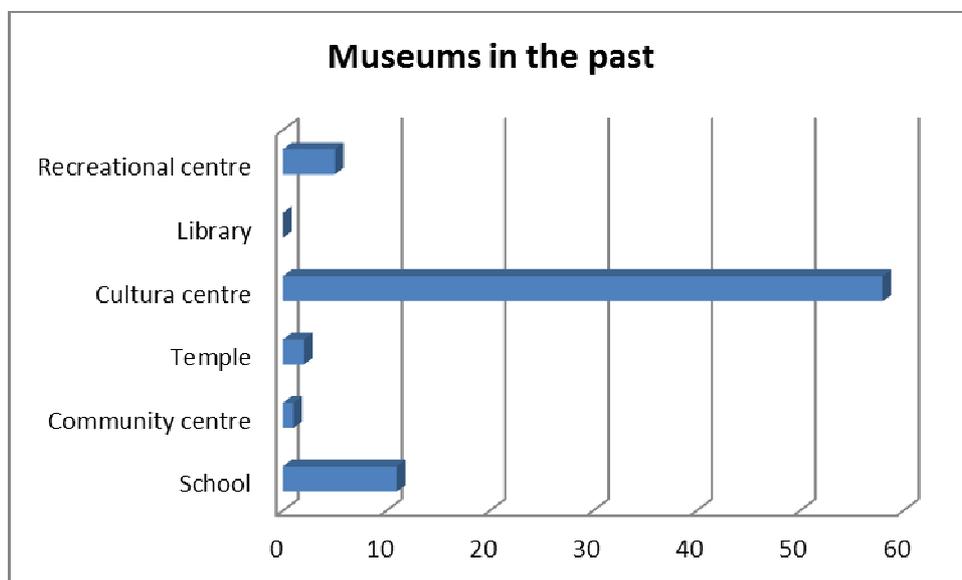
"Today museums are better equipped. They have audio guides, which facilitates understanding for those who are illiterate, for example." (Municipal Museum of Faro)

When confronted with the card of keywords, they defined museums in the past (graph 87) first as a *cultural center* (32) and then as a *temple* (24), followed by *school* (10) and *library* (7) and, at some distance, *recreation center* (1). Here there is an inversion of the most chosen concepts in the other groups, probably also because the conversation took place in a museum.



Graph 87

As for museums nowadays (graph 88), this graph has a similar configuration to that of the other two types of focus groups, although the designation *temple*, albeit residual, was not chosen by the other groups. The fact that they also associate museums nowadays to a *cultural centre* shows that they do not consider that museums have undergone very dramatic changes. This idea is consistent with the fact that the term *temple* was also chosen to represent the museum in the present, allowing the hypothesis that this concept (highlighting, for example, the solemnity of their representation) is either not understood in a pejorative manner or their relationship with the current museums remains critical. It is also assumed that individuals with a regular relationship with museums have greater difficulty in distinguishing between 'past' and 'present'.



Graph 88

When asked how they think that museums could be improved in general (graph 89), like other groups, they refer to the necessity of "those in power" providing more support for museums and the need for some museums to be renewed. They also refer to opening hours, which should be extended, opening on Sundays and holidays, and till later in the evening. They also refer to the need for greater promotion (posters, radio) to attract more people. They are critical regarding captions and panels, which they think should have enough and clear information, although not exhaustive, and should be well situated (near the objects and at good height, larger font size, better lighting, better contrast of the font and the background, more accessible language). There is also concern that museums should be affordable. As for comfort, they would like them to

have more resting areas and small bars, where they still do not exist. They also say that museums should improve signage, giving the example of the one used at commercial areas such as IKEA and FNAC, with colored routes on the floor. As with the previous groups, they also value guided visits and they think that better training should be given to guides and that the elderly groups should not be mixed with others. They also refer to the need for better assistance.

"They should stay open till later." (Anastacio Gonçalves House-Museum, Lisbon)
"They should make better use of the garden, like the MOMA." (Chiado Museum)
"They should create activities that would bring people to the museum or promote them better." (Anastacio Goncalves House-Museum, Lisbon)
"It's hard to find a correspondence between the objects and captions." (Anastacio Goncalves House-Museum, Lisbon)
"The type of information that is given is minimal – identification of the object: what it is and year; no need to be exhaustive, it has to be quick, clear and concrete." (National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon)
"Do not mix visits, school visits are usually very noisy and affect both the other groups and the individual visitor." (Municipal Ecomuseum of Seixal)
"The guided visits are only available when we visit as a group." (Municipal Ecomuseum of Seixal)
"They should put more emphasis on sensitivity than the schooling of employees." (Calouste Gulbenkian Museum)
"Fernando Pessoa Exhibition: very good use of new technologies, attracts a diverse audience, of various ages and cultural backgrounds." (National Museum of Ancient Art)

They strive for better access (lifts, benches, handrails, ramps, electric stairway) and better maintenance of the buildings (which are sometimes degraded). Regarding the subjects of exhibitions, they defend the reservation of space for local artists (Museum of Faro).

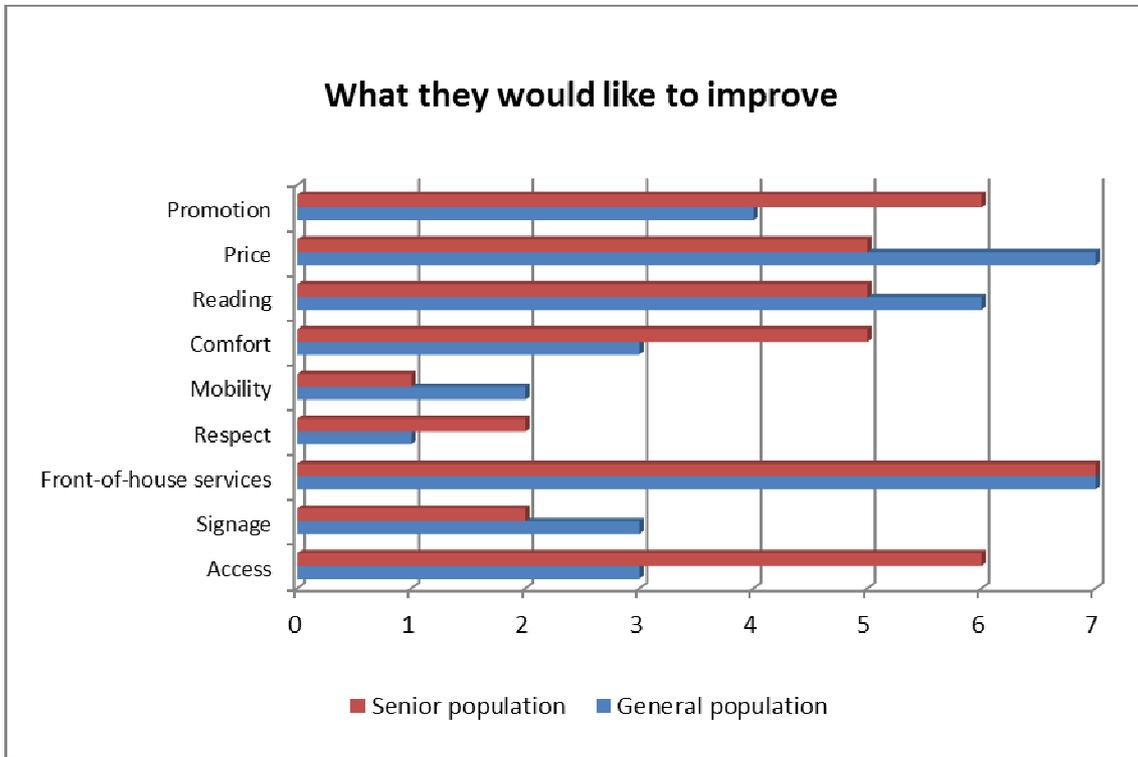
"Increase spaces and the rooms in the museums for local/amateur artists." (Municipal Museum of Faro)

As for improvements bearing in mind the senior visitors, reference is mainly made to better access to museums (parking) and better access within the museums (elevators and better orientation inside, indication of exit); also better resting areas (more seats). The experience of a guided visit should be stimulating and enriching (more appropriate and simple language, slower pace, audible voice). Assistance should also be specific.

"Most of the activities are geared towards children, although there isn't great interest of senior public visiting the museum." (Municipal Museum of Faro)
"The elevators are often broken." (Chiado Museum / National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon)
"Assistance: creating a rapport, a relationship with the visitor from the first moment." (National Museum of Ancient Art, Lisbon)

They advocate the need for more support from the staff and greater involvement of the latter with this age group; more explanation, both personally and in writing. As for readability, they refer specifically to the font size and the need for greater contrast. Also better lighting.

Regarding the price, they say that, although prices for entry are generally cheap for senior visitors, the price of catalogues is expensive. They suggest improvement in interpersonal communication: they say that, when people leave the museum, the museum could suggest to them to talk to their friends or they could be given free tickets to return for a visit. They also refer to better promotion through television, internet and the cultural agenda. Promotion must be "timely", because sometimes when you receive it, the events have already taken place. They also argue that museums should come out and try to meet senior people away from their premises.

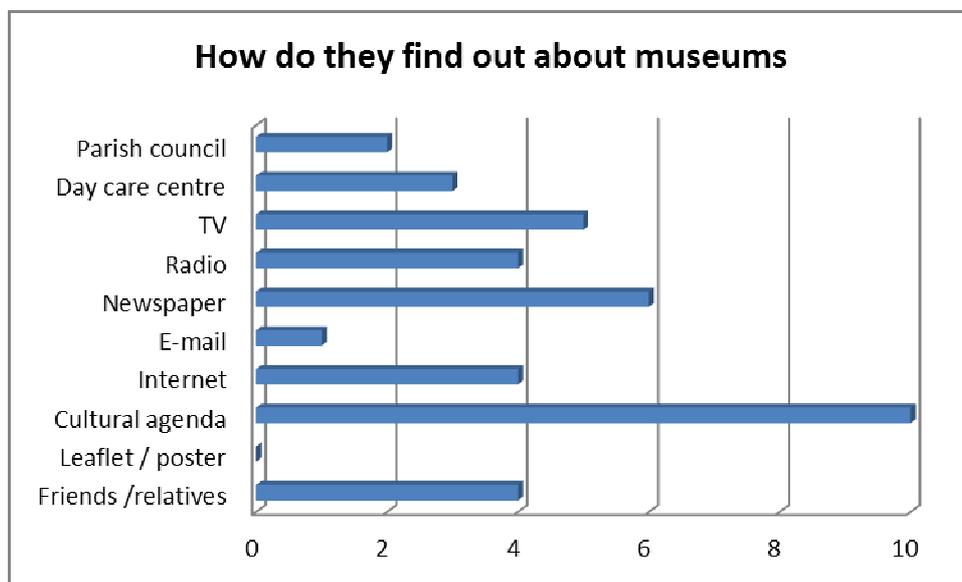


Graph 89

Regarding improvements in relation to pre-defined items (graph 89), they are particularly critical of the service which should be improved for both the general population and for the senior population. They also refer more often to the price (slightly more referred than the general population), promotion (referred more in relation to senior visitors) and legibility (referred more in the case of the general population). Signage and mobility are most pointed out when referring to the general population, in what concerns access; respect and comfort are more marked when asked about the senior population. They would also like to see more and better promotion addressed to senior visitors.

2.3.5 Used and privileged communication channels

In the case of seniors with some habits of visiting museums, the communication channels that work best are the cultural agendas (some mailed), then newspapers and friends (graph 90).



Graph 90

This is the group with more access to a variety of information resources (they receive information by e-mail, which was not registered in the preceding groups). A group added that they get informed through promotion materials available in cafés (Labour Museum).

2.3.6 Open question

When asked to add some information that had not been requested, they refer to the need for the State to support culture and the need to create cultural habits. They criticize the fact that there is more the habit of going to museums abroad than in Portugal (Chiado Museum). There are some that refer that entries should be free, "already paid by taxes" (EPAL Water Museum). They express concern for people who do not have the luck of being able to travel, who are isolated or who do nothing. They suggest that museums could go to old age homes, that are "warehouses for the elderly", to awaken people (Museum of Paper Money, Oporto). Some groups would like the region where the museum is located to be more promoted (the case of the group of the Municipal Museum of Faro). Several groups felt the need to say that they consider this an important study.

“People visit abroad, but not here. There is lack of cultural habits.” (Chiado Museum)

E. KEY CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Leisure habits

- In view of the growing senior population, museums should seek to maximize their relationship with the latter, since it will have an increasing weight among its audiences.
- In addition to being more numerous, the senior population will also be healthier and more active, with more free time and, in some cases, with more money for themselves. It will seek to occupy its leisure time with activities that will address their need for socializing, learning and having fun. Museums can be the perfect option to satisfy simultaneously all these needs.
- Sociologists predict that increased education will enhance the practice of cultural consumption and forms of occupation of free time, that may still be in an embryonic phase but they will tend to become more expressive. This means that even if museums do nothing in this sense, they will be faced with a demand from better informed and more demanding senior visitors and, if the offer presented is of quality, they will be able to build a relationship that is beneficial to both parts.
- The social side of active ageing will require the recasting of solidarity and sociability networks. These may be an important basis for interaction with museums.
- There is a tendency for greater attendance at senior universities and day care centres, increasing the active participation of newly retired population. These institutions are now responsible for creating and sustaining the habit of visiting museums, and most senior people visit them in organized groups and scheduled visits. So close collaboration between institutions and museums makes all the sense.
- With regard to how the senior population currently occupies its leisure time, there is a preference for activities that involve physical exercise, demonstrating their desire to keep fit and “confront” old age, as well as the increasing use of computers (for research, to be informed, to communicate with family and friends on skype and social networks).
- More specifically, among respondents in museums, 47% occupied their free time with visits to museums. The majority of them (41%) visit sporadically (2-5 times per year).
- The visits decrease after the age of 75 due, of course, to the degradation of physical and mental conditions or because they become widows / widowers and have no other company (children or friends) or live in the company of other also weakened elderly. This way they are confined to their homes or nursing homes.

2. The role of museums

- Museums and their heads are fully aware of current demographic trends and their impact on the relationship with the senior population. This segment of the public is increasingly contemplated in activity plans and mentioned in their objectives.
- Although, at first, museums define the elderly as people with more time and more money, they are also aware of how the physical, intellectual and economic conditions differentiate the profile of these people and how they influence the level and form of their involvement with museums. Therefore, we need equally distinct ways of approach and types of offer.
- As above mentioned in relation to leisure, museums are places where one can both socialise and learn. By proposing programmes that consider these two components of experience, giving the senior population the opportunity of participating and expressing itself, museum will contribute to the effort of society for active ageing, ageing that will provide better quality of life, even at more advanced ages.
- In the universe of senior visitors, as seen in most studies regarding visitors in museums in what concerns the remaining adult groups, most visitors have higher education. In Portugal, the number of people with higher education grew tremendously in recent decades, meaning that the senior population is increasingly educated. This is an opportunity for museums and at the same time, a challenge, considering the existence of groups of elderly people with less schooling or illiterate, with whom

museums should also seek to communicate and make their offer accessible and relevant.

- Museums can also offer volunteering opportunities, taking advantage of the need of the senior population for active participation and continuous learning.
- In a society where, due to the crisis, households may increasingly rely on their senior members to make ends meet and take care of the grandchildren, museums may have a very significant role in terms of offers that can meet the needs of intergenerational groups.
- At the same time, one cannot ignore the fact that, with age, people become increasingly limited in terms of travel and perhaps therefore more isolated and excluded from daily social interaction. Within the same concept of active ageing, museums will have a role to play and may promote outreach activities for these people.
- It is important to note that in several focus groups it was argued that the State, "the rulers", should render more support to culture (and museums) and seek to create cultural habits.

3. Communication / promotion

- Considering the will expressed by the majority of the senior population in socialising and learning, museums can promote themselves as spaces that combine socializing and knowledge, which should be reflected in the messages that promote museums for this specific audience.
- There is a social and cultural distinction (due to education and region) that must be taken into consideration when choosing the most appropriate dissemination channels.
- For those with more schooling, there is a valuation of the collection, of the effort of museologists in museum representation. This work of the museum itself could be incorporated in the way the museum presents itself to these groups with more schooling.
- Infoexclusion is still a reality to be taken into account, with regard to how museums communicate with their senior audiences. The 'traditional' promotional means (leaflets, posters, newsletters) cannot be completely abandoned, since they take the information to a very significant number of people who do not use the Internet to keep updated.
- Museums should take advantage of powerful mass media, such as television and radio, that reach the whole country and help increase the visibility of an institution. Considering the costs of advertising campaigns, prohibitive for cultural institutions, it makes sense to create partnerships with the media in order to campaign for free. It will also make sense to invest in the press office, since no costs are associated and, when properly carried out, it not only guarantees visibility and coverage to the initiatives of museums, but also brings a higher level of trust from the public than advertising.
- Word-of-mouth is the most influential means of communication amongst the senior population who are physically, intellectually and financially autonomous. It is therefore essential to identify their preferred information channels, those whom these people are more exposed to because they are the best ambassadors of museums, those with the greatest influence in their circle of family and friends, able to bring or refer more visitors. Museums should also consider specific promotions that allow current visitors to bring their senior friends at a reduced price or even free of charge once.
- For less educated and autonomous people - who are, precisely, rare visitors to museums - the communication that works best is the one that is disseminated through senior universities and day care centres, as well as by local government (cultural agendas). Museums could take better advantage of these close relationships and, in addition to maximizing the promotion made through them, they should build their own programmes with the institutions that assist this population.
- It will be necessary to organize the museum mailing lists and identify in them the elderly, to be able to send information specifically targeted to this audience.
- Although social networks have been barely mentioned by respondents in museums, they appeared quite often in the focus groups, which means that museums have another communication platform which should be adapted to the needs and interests of this audience too.

4. Context of the visit

- As the most pressing needs of socializing and learning are transversal to age, gender, frequency of visits and level of education, visits to museums, whilst a leisure activity, is also perceived by the elderly as a cognitive and social experience. If the needs to occupy free time are the same amongst the senior population and the museum is within the range of possible leisure activities, the explanation for the existence of different visiting habits is that the museum mainly provide and reinforce the occurrence of cognitive experiences (learning) to the detriment of social experiences (interaction), which favours those with more schooling. So, what distinguishes the rare visitor from the frequent one, for example, is that they view the museum as something which meets (more or less) their expectations and leisure needs.
- The skills and the needs of senior visitor who visits the museum more often, with more schooling, are better balanced with the challenges that the museum offers. Conversely, skills and needs of the rare visitor, less educated, are most at odds with the proposals of the museums. This finding partly explains the lower adhesion to the cultural habit of visiting museums by the less educated population. Most senior people in Portugal visit in an organized group. These groups are usually organized by senior universities and day care centres and for some seniors this is the only way of visiting museums.
- These experiences that combine the knowledge and the social side of the visit will be better ensured if the size of the groups is small and if they occur in a context of guided tour.
- Attracting individual senior visitors (and their families, for example, visits by grandparents and grandchildren) is something that museums should consider in order to adapt their offer to their needs and interests, becoming thus more appealing and relevant .
- There are, however, museums that receive more individual visits (i.e., not integrated in organized groups), so it makes sense to have a greater collaboration between museums in the sense that there is a greater sharing of expertise, preferential contacts, communication channels, etc.
- Most senior visitors visit the museum accompanied. Meanwhile, a large majority do so for the first time and especially by direct influence of friends and family, which confirms, as already stated, that the people closest to the respondents, especially friends, are powerful influence and decision-making agents. They are the main driving force, motivators and accompany many people who go to museums and hence very important for the social and cultural life of senior visitors.

5. Programming

- The senior population appreciates dynamic programming (proposing more exhibitions).
- It values local history, recognition of objects and contexts that are familiar.
- It values the contact with rare objects, the unique possibility of the experience sharpened by curiosity of the unknown.
- Senior people are a diversified audience in terms of tastes and interests, like all other audiences. They are interested in topics related to the past and life experience, but are equally curious in relation to themes they are not familiar with and which are related to contemporary life, and in particular with the operation of new technologies.
- In this sense, one should not take for granted their lack of interest or aversion to contemporary artistic creation. What happens with senior people is exactly what happens with everyone else: they do not like being confronted with subjects / objects that they do not know without an explanation / attempt to interpret.
- The Portuguese museum setting is sparse in exhibition programmes, especially for this age group (result of both the survey to the RPM museums, and the interviews with museum directors). The production of specific exhibitions for this audience does not make sense for the majority of the directors / heads of museums, apart from the fact that the scarce financial and human resources make this practically impossible. The option would be to promote guided visits and activities specifically designed for this audience.
- Therefore, there is no doubt that there are issues more relevant and closer to the interests, concerns and needs of this audience, which, if exploited, could be an

opportunity for the involvement of this segment both in museum work or as an attraction.

- The creation of specific content can really have a major impact in attracting this audience. However, if there is no strategy (in terms of programming and communication) to maintain the relationship with them, it will be a one-off initiative with no continuity.
- New exhibitions appear to be a factor that encourages repeated visits. If there is no money to change exhibitions frequently, perhaps the proposal of new activities, less expensive in their preparation, would be a good alternative.
- The development of joint projects with members of the senior population or specific senior groups is still rare, but can make the offer of museums more relevant to them.
- For most senior visitors, their memories are focused more on the museum that they visited as a whole and not specifically on content (generally, museum visitor studies indicate that this is the case for most visitors, regardless their age, education, etc.). This does not mean, however, that they are not also demanding with regard to this issue. They don't like feeling 'childish' and they react to language they don't understand, often referring to the importance of both using an easy language on panels and captions, as well as the proper training of guides, who should not only know about the works exhibited but also about the needs of this age group.
- The involvement of senior people as volunteers in the daily activity of the museum will be another way of making the museum more relevant for this population.
- Outreach activities are needed for museums that want to reach senior people who cannot go to the museum or senior audiences that do not usually visit (something senior people who are in day care centres also suggest).
- Since this is a population that also practices in its leisure time forms of artistic and creative expression, museums could allow such forms of expression in connection with the collections exhibited and promote them.
- Teachers from the senior universities they attend are referred as having a key role in the preparation and success of the visit to museums. There could be greater collaboration between the education services of these museums and these educational agents that have already created a close relationship of trust with each group.

6. Accessibilities and services

- The senior population complains of the lack of signage on the outside of the buildings.
- Still on the outside, they feel there is lack of ramps, but as they are taken by the universities and travel as a group, their biggest concern is the distance between parking and the museum entrance.
- Most people who visit individually travel by car and public transport, which may make it necessary for some museums to improve parking-related issues, as well as the distance of the bus stops and accessibility of the route leading to the museum.
- In the interior, the elderly make reference mainly to the lack of modern and comfortable rest areas. They also report access difficulties to the bathrooms when they are far.
- The lack of requested wheelchairs in most museums (mandatory) should be addressed urgently.
- The lack of bathrooms for the disabled in 39% of surveyed museums, which is also a legal requirement, should also be addressed as soon as possible.
- Regarding the position of the objects and the font size of labels and texts, the senior population is critical, especially when placed out of their visual reach and when the letters are too small.
- It is curious that, in spite of the complaints made by the senior population in relation to access to content (due to the inadequacy of the font size, the contrasts, the placement of text and objects, lighting and language), museums consider that they largely meet these requirements.
- For most directors / heads of museums that were interviewed, accessibility is associated with mobility. Only one interviewee mentioned on her own initiative other issues, such as the font size, the contrasts, the positioning of objects and labels, the language used in them, etc.
- The senior population prefers content in accessible language. This is especially felt when reference is made to museums in the past as "museums for intellectuals."

- In the case of language accessibility, it is important to note that in one particular museum, while its director reacted strongly to what he considered to be a suggestion of infantilization and trivialization of content, the seniors who participated in the focus group held at this museum, and who were among those who had higher literary skills, complained about the difficulty in understanding the language used by the museum in texts.
- Staff who welcome senior visitors at museums (both at the reception and in educational activities) should have adequate preparation to receive them with due respect and to be able to meet their needs.
- Even though they complain about the wrong positioning of labels and texts and legibility problems thereof, as well as about the lack of handrails and elevators, they focus on the guide and hope that he/she will provide them a satisfactory experience.
- Senior people appreciate guided tours, where objects and associated themes are described in a clear, interactive (they refuse "parroted" visits) and committed manner.
- The guide should be adequately prepared to adapt the language and content of the visit to the needs (physical and cognitive) and interests of the group.
- Senior visitors are sensitive to very crowded environments, to guided tours where the visitors themselves are disturbing elements. These characteristics point to the need for this public to have its own time and space.
- They like museums with shops where they can purchase books or other items that will allow them to convey the experience to others (family, friends).
- They suggest extended opening hours and museums open on Sundays and weekends.

7. Costs (for visitors and for museums)

- It should be noted that the 'price' of a visit to the museum exceeds the ticket price, because the cost of transport (especially when it comes to visits of individual initiative) and possibly also the parking, meals, etc. must be added. Thus, the total price may be a deterrent to going to the museum. Joint promotions with partners (transport, car parks, restaurants and cafes) or the implementation of family-tickets may be a solution to this problem, which, due to the financial crisis, will worsen.
- Repeated visits should be facilitated. As with all visitors, when the elderly like something they return and also recommend. The modalities proposed, in addition to the discount for repeated visits may consider offering one free entry or a discount for another senior friend or senior family member in the next visit.
- The adaptation of a space to become physically accessible may involve the investment of large sums of money. However, this should not be an excuse for doing nothing. There are improvements that can be made with minimal investment, such as the placement of non-skid tape on the stairs and on the floor, something that is very rarely used in museums and that can benefit all visitors.
- On the other hand, there are expenses which will occur anyway, for example, the production of panels and labels for temporary exhibitions. In these cases, the adjustment of font size, the contrasts, the positioning of texts and captions, the lighting, will not involve any extra expense.
- Even though online media is free or cheap, remember that many elderly do not have access to a computer or still prefer the more traditional means of communication. It is a mistake to put an abrupt end to the use of these means.

8. Evaluation

- Evaluation is a fundamental part of any planning process, because without it one can not know whether the objectives were achieved successfully, if there is a need to change or adapt something or even if it is necessary to completely change the strategy.
- Very few museums create a written record of their reflection on the work developed with and for senior visitors. Also, there seem to be no indicators that will allow to evaluate success with regard to the objectives outlined in the activity plans.
- Similarly, in order to make this evaluation, the feedback given by the target audience of the planned and implemented actions is important, in this case, senior people. Only 37% of the surveyed museums said that it would be possible to carry out such an evaluation. And even in these cases, and since there is no written reflection on the part

of museums, it is unclear to what extent the feedback given is analyzed and taken into account in order to make improvements and adaptations to what the museum has to offer.

- The assessment also involves the obtaining and maintenance of accurate and reliable statistics regarding visits. It would be useful if all museums, at least those which are part of the Portuguese Network of Museums, had a common record of visitors in terms of categories.

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