Museum Mediators

Research results
The Guidelines for Museum Mediators professionals in Europe, transfer of Innovation project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This document reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.
# Guidelines for Museum Mediators professionals in Europe

## Introduction

## Research methodology

### 1.1 Definition of the field

### 1.2 Definition of the tools

## Museum Mediation in Europe

### 2.1 The European scenario

### 2.2 EU funded projects

### 2.3 Definition of a professional profile

### 2.4 Training at a EU level

## Museum mediation in the UK

### 3.1 History and evolution

### 3.2 Legislative framework

### 3.3 Analysis of training offer

### 3.4 Experiences

## Museum mediation in France

### 4.1 History and evolution

### 4.2 Legislative framework

### 4.3 Analysis of training offer

### 4.4 Experiences

## Museum mediation in partner countries

### 5.1 Museum mediation in Portugal

#### 5.1.1 History and evolution:

#### 5.1.2 Legislative framework:
Guidelines for Museum Mediators professionals in Europe - 5
2012-2014

5.5.1 History and evolution ................................................................. 102
5.5.2 Legislative framework ............................................................... 104
5.5.3 Training offer analysis ............................................................... 106
5.5.4 Experiences ............................................................................. 109
5.5.5 Field research .......................................................................... 118

6 VET (Vocational Education and Training) proposal ................................................................. 131

6.1 Description of the professional figure ................................................................. 131
6.2 Description of the training ........................................................................ 133
6.3 Training Standards ........................................................................ 133

6.3.1 The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) ........................................... 133
6.3.2 Our training courses ........................................................................ 135

Annex I – Survey ................................................................. 137
Annex II - Interviews ........................................................................ 145
Bibliographical references ........................................................................ 149
Introduction

This work was realized as part of the project “Museum Mediators - Guidelines for Museum Mediators professionals in Europe”\(^1\), funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme, sub-programme Leonardo da Vinci, run from 2012 till 2014.

The main goal of project was to create a training course for Museum Mediators/Educators that takes into account their institutional and professional needs in the respective European countries that participate in the project: Estonia, Finnnland, Italy, Portugal and Spain\(^2\).

In spite of the important role that culture and museums play in the identity and economy of the European Union, the role of the cultural mediators is still undervalued. Across Europe, Museum Heritage Educators are typically highly-qualified professionals with a precarious, fluctuating relationship with their employers. They come from diverse academic backgrounds, however, most of them have little or no training in communications or education which is indispensable for their day-to day activities.

The course was based on the experience of a previous training course tested in Portugal in 2009, 2010, 2011, with an international team of lecturers.

By developing this common training ground among museum professionals in the four participating countries, the project stimulated the creation of training and professional guidelines that would sustain the work of Museum Mediation and Education officers.

As results of the project the consortium provided:

- Assessment of training needs;
- Training framework with European lecturers, interactive contents that deal with horizontal and specific issues in different national settings;
- Technical publications and Museum Mediators’ website: [www.museummediators.eu](http://www.museummediators.eu);
- European Network of Museum Mediations and Education professionals;
- European Thinktank;

\(^1\) [http://museummediators.eu](http://museummediators.eu)

\(^2\) At the time of the research Denmark was not part of the project, so the research was not conducted in that country.
- An application for an Erasmus Mundus Master, based in the Polytechnic of Tomar (Portugal);
- Specific proposals for VET courses for unemployed and without formal education people, adapted to the different national settings.

This report contains the findings of the research carried out by the project partners in order to assess the needs perceived by museum professionals and trainers. The report itself was used to design the training courses for museum mediators held in the partner countries.

The working group was formed by the following members of the project partners:

**Portugal** - Mapa das Ideais
- Inês Câmara
- Ana Fernambuco
- Maria João Nunes
- Flora Berei-Nagy

**Italy** - Eccom (European Center for Cultural Organization and Management)
- Cristina Da Milano
- Roberta Agnese
- Maria Guida

**Spain** - University of Barcelona
- Carla Padró

**Estonia** - National Museum of Estonia
- Eva-Kaia Vabamäe
- Indrek Merimaa

**Finland** - Helinä Rautavaara Museum
- Maria Koskijoki
1 Research methodology

1.1 Definition of the field

In order to analyse the topic of museum mediation, the working group decided to start from a common understanding of the word “mediation”, considering that its meaning varies a lot in different countries within the EU and also that it is commonly associated with different activities in the political and social sectors.

From an etymological point of view, the word “mediation” has two main meanings:

1. intercession (the act of mediating): it comes from the Latin word medius “in the middle” and it was originally applied to Christ, who, in Christian theology, “mediates” between God and man;

2. attempt to reconcile disputed matters arising between different subjects: it comes from the Latin verb mediare “to intervene, mediate” meaning “one who intervenes between two disputing parties”.

The working group decided to consider the first meaning as the one most suitable when talking about museum mediation. In this particular case - as it happens in cultural mediation broadly speaking - the mediator acts as a bridge, being part of a linking and connecting process which might also imply the reconciliation of disputed matters but not as its main feature.

Another important aspect to be considered is that within the museum sector quite often there is a sort of confusion about the use of the words mediation and education.

The word “médiation” was used for the first time in museum contexts in France and it was conceived as something different from “paedagogie”. The former is related to informal learning while the latter refers to formal learning. The French term “paedagogie” in museum terms can be assimilated with the Italian word “didattica museale”, with the English word “museum education”, or with the German word “Museumspädagogik”.

The French term “médiation” implies a process in which the central figure is the visitor according to a constructivist approach, based on the knowledge of the different kinds of visitors, of learning styles, of interpretative communities, etc. Cultural mediation is one of the fundamental mechanisms of distinctly human development according to cultural-historical psychological theory introduced by Lev Vygotsky and developed in the work of his numerous followers worldwide (cfr. Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). Mind in society. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, (1978).)


“Médiation” in French can be compared with the English word “interpretation” and with the German “Kulturvermittlung”.

bridge between the museum and its visitors and who provides different visions of the collection of the museum suitable for the different audiences.

In some countries, such as Italy and France, mediation activities mainly refer to activities related to intercultural projects or to activities realised within scientific and contemporary art museums. In Spain the focus of mediation activities is essentially on social and intercultural issues. In Estonia and Finland mediation is not considered as a specific field and the activities connected to mediation are rather thought of in terms of other fields of work - like exhibitions, research, education etc.; in some parts of Germany mediation has to do with critical and transformative practices.

The Museum Mediators’ working group decided to consider museum mediation as a broad concept, embracing activities connected with museum education and communication, aimed at promoting a new social and more inclusive role of museums within the framework of the post-modern and post-colonial paradigm through:

- the widening of the audiences;
- the in-depth work with specific stakeholders (local communities, teachers, institutional partners, etc.);
- the engagement in discussion about museum education and communication from different parts of society;
- the tackling - among others - of intercultural issues, gender issues, etc.

What is non-formal learning?

Broadly, learning outside the formal school/vocational training/university system, taking place through planned activities (e.g. with goals and timelines) involving some form of learning support, for example:

- programmes to impart work-skills, literacy and other basic skills for early school-leavers
- in-company training
- structured online learning
- courses organised by civil society organisations for their members, their target group or the general public.
What is informal learning?

Learning that is **not organised or structured** in terms of goals, time or instruction. This covers skills acquired (sometimes unintentionally) through **life and work experience**, for example.

- project-management or IT skills acquired at work
- languages and intercultural skills acquired during a stay abroad
- IT skills acquired outside work
- skills acquired through volunteering, cultural activities, sports, youth work and through activities at home (e.g. taking care of a child).

1.2 Definition of the tools

In order to investigate the training needs in the field of museum mediation, the working group decided to make use of triangulation, a tool used in social research activities which is based on the use of three different tools in order to have more reliable results. In this particular case, the three tools adopted were:

- **Desk research** on the topic, including bibliographical and documental sources, with specific reference not only in the partners’ countries but also to other EU countries such as Great Britain and France because these two countries have great history in the field;
- **On-line survey** targeted to museum professionals working in the partner countries. Each country disseminated the survey according to its specific context: through the Ministry of Culture, through universities or through Museum Professionals’ Associations. Partners payed great attention on the diversity of the targeted museums concerning their legal status - local, regional, national, public, private - and the typology of their collections, in order to collect as many data as possible;
- **In-depth interviews** targeted to key people within the field who could provide a picture of the history, definition and main actions of museum mediation. The working group developed three different interviews, one addressed to museums and museum educational department directors; the second addressed to museum mediators and the third one addressed to trainers/professors. The number of interviews varied between 3 and 5 for each category.
Both the survey and the interviews were designed using themes as question markers.

The survey themes were Museum Type and Position, Museum Mediation, Visitor studies, Policy, Profile.

The interview themes were:

- for museum directors/curators: Education and Job training, Activities, Audiences, Professional Acknowledgement, Working condition
- for museum mediators: Mission of the Museum, Activities, Mediation, Job title requirements
- for trainers/professors: Museum Mediation in their country, Training context, Professional Profile, Competence, Knowledge and Skills.

In addition to these tools, each country had to select 2 case studies to be merged together with the other sources/documentation.

Each partner sorted out its own data and the results were analysed according to 2 main principles: issues of the specific country and common transversal issues. All these elements were taken into consideration when designing the theoretical basis of the training course, which had a common part and another based on the national context.
2 Museum Mediation in Europe

2.1 The European scenario

The European Union is committed to Lifelong Learning as an integral part of its aim to make Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy in the world. Since the special meeting of the European Council held in March 2000, Lifelong Learning has become a core element of European strategies not only for competitiveness and employability but also for greater social inclusion, more active citizenship and for the fulfilment of personal aspirations. In 2004, an integrated action programme in Lifelong Learning was published. Many national governments also have learning policies and targets, for example on basic skills and language learning for all citizens.

The overall emphasis is on further improving the quality and effectiveness of education and training systems, making education and training opportunities more accessible and flexible and opening up education and training to the wider public.

The role played by informal learning institutions, such as libraries and museums, is the key to this agenda. However, cultural heritage institutions need to respond more actively to policies and developments which are acting as drivers for change. These drivers can be increasingly ‘joined up’ government agendas, the demise of many old traditional industries and the growth of new knowledge-based industries requiring new skills, the need for all active citizens to be digitally literate, the demand for language skills in more open labour markets and the growth in migration, increasing the need for knowledge of other cultures and raising issues of cultural identity and cohesion.

The role of cultural institutions in delivering European policies for Lifelong Learning has become one of the key questions at the interface between education, culture and social policy.

Museums in particular all over Europe have been reviewing their role, adding a new facet to their mission highlighting their relationship with local communities and society in general and have been undertaking significant actions to become agents of social change, and integration, real places for reconciliation, that bring more people back into the learning cycle.

Visitors are now recognized to have a key role in the cultural projects of museums: engaging the public with European cultural works is a priority not only for the European Commission, but also

7 http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/
8 For the role of museums as means of social inclusion see C. Da Milano “Museums as agents of social inclusion” http://museummediators.eu/?page_id=179
for public authorities in Europe⁹ and for most cultural organisations as well. One sees the strong implementation of audience and public development policies; cultural institutions are enhancing their training and social roles, paying extra attention to their local audience and surroundings. A renewed economic and social context is redefining local and global audience policies. At the same time, cultural organizations experiment new management’s models and their ambition is to carry new responsibilities in order to earmark their visitors policies.

This shift of focus from the collections to the people, however, needs to be supported by the skills and competencies of museum educational staff. This new approach of opening up to new audiences (adult learners, disadvantaged groups) calls for the adjustment of museum educators’ training.

The professional and academic stakeholders need to enhance theoretical and practical approaches and new skills to accompany the European museums and heritage development. The question of audience policies’ evaluation underlies the thoughts as a growing problematic.

Audiences’ policies cover a wide range of academic fields (art, sociology, economics, marketing, psychology, museum studies...), and a wide range of services and job opportunities (audiences marketing, mediation, and studies).

Relations between cultural institutions and audiences should be constantly enhanced, as they are unique in time, space and context. Therefore, professionals specialised in audiences policies finally need to develop technical, intellectual and above all personal skills. Educational programs dealing with audiences’ policies and mediation should be permanently updated. A balance must be found between theoretical and practical approaches.

The main challenges the sector is currently confronted with are:

- To contribute to the development of collaborations between universities, experts and practitioners from the museums, the cultural heritage and local communities.
- To exchange information, academic and working knowledge, to study relevant European examples and theoretical approaches on the subject.
- To introduce thoughts on a European program focusing on mediation training, management and audience policies in museums
- To contribute to the global evaluation of European cultural audience policies

⁹ In October 2012 the EACEA-Education, Audiovisual and Culture European Agency has dedicated an international conference to the issue of Audience Development (see http://www.cultureinmotion.eu/European-Audiences/index.jsp).
2.2 EU funded projects

The role of the EU in fostering adult education is clearly demonstrated by the number of funded projects (through programmes such as the LLP Programme, the previous Socrates Programme\textsuperscript{10}, the FP7\textsuperscript{11}) aimed at developing lifelong learning activities addressed to adults in general but also to specific target groups. Most of them also coped with the issue of professional training, dealing with the training needs of museum educators and museum mediators as well.

Some of the most successful and interesting projects realised in the last decades are:

**Museums, Key-workers and Lifelong Learning 1998-2001:** funded through the Socrates Programme, it undertook to explore the role of museums in lifelong learning particularly for people, who are underrepresented in educational institutions. The primary aim was to prove that collaboration with key-workers and the further development of their skills was an effective way for museums to establish permanent links with people with different social background and age, who are currently out of the reach of the institution. Key-workers were meant to be either professionals or volunteers, not employed by a museum, who acted as mediators between the institution and a broad and representative adult public.


**Euroedult-European Culture Mediator 2001-2003:** funded by the Socrates Programme, the project aimed to promote closer contact and integration between adult education providers and cultural institutions. The project was based on the experiences of two former EU projects, which focused on research (AEM) and the analysis of the needs of the public (MUSAEAM). It aimed to put into practice projects identified by qualified staff working in adult education and/or cultural institutions, thus, to create a new breed of educators - European culture mediators. The project sought to develop basic curricula, put them into practice in local contexts and recognise the achievements of successful learners through EU certification.

The work of the mediator focused on the educational programmes and learning activities of museums, in order to ensure that they develop in line with the needs of lifelong learners.


The proposed qualification in European Cultural Mediation was conceived as a framework for approving an appropriate range of learning opportunities leading to certification. This was endorsed by a number of European bodies with a professional interest in the fields of cultural education and lifelong learning.

The EU certification arrangements were based on a set of key domains established through the Euroedult Project that was becoming more relevant across Europe. These key domains were: Language, Project Management, Communication Skills, Personal Development, European Culture and Education, and Supported Learning; at least two of them had to be completed abroad. Trainees who successfully completed all 6 domains were awarded the European Cultural Mediators Certificate.

http://www.dillmuli.feek.pte.hu/euroedult.htm

C&S-Collect and Share 2004-2005: funded through the Socrates Programme, it had particular emphasis on other projects to benefit people who may be disadvantaged in society. Collect & Share was a project about lifelong learning in Europe. Its main focus was on projects related to art galleries or museums, or involving artists (visual artists or others). Its aim was to promote good practice in learning and education for adults (age 16 or over) in or with museums, galleries, visual arts venues and practitioners.


LLML-Lifelong Museum Learning 2005-2006: The LLML project, funded within the framework of the Socrates Programme, addressed museum educators/cultural mediators in charge of adult education in museums or wanting to develop programmes addressed to adults in and with museums. It aimed at designing, delivering and disseminating training and didactic material to support museum educators facing a new challenge in their work.

LLML offered museum practitioners the opportunity to develop the skills to deal with underrepresented segments of the public in a European perspective while exchanging experiences with colleagues coming from different countries and institutional frameworks. It also offered the general public, and in particular adults, a wider and more qualified access to the cultural heritage and to museums through educational offers tailored to their expectations and learning styles.

http://www.dillmuli.feek.pte.hu/euroedult.htm

Museums tell many Stories 2006-2007: Funded by the Socrates Programme, it aimed at developing a critical approach to the interpretation and exhibition of museum collections in order to identify the barriers which prevent visitors of different cultural background from their enjoyment/appreciation.

http://ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/istituto/progetti/progetti-europei/musei-e-beni-culturali/museums-tell-many-stories

Map for Id-Museums as Places for Intercultural Dialogue 2007-2009: this project - supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme - aimed to develop the potential and practice of museums as places for intercultural dialogue and to promote a more active engagement with the communities they serve.

http://www.mapforid.it/

LEM the Learning Museum 2010-2013: this permanent network of museums and cultural heritage organisations funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme, aims at insuring that they can play an active role with regard to lifelong learning and to raise awareness among decision makers at European level.

This space provides visitors the opportunity to learn about museums and lifelong learning, to exchange ideas, information and materials, as well as to find out more about the project. It encourages visitors to participate in discussions available on their website.

It is apparent that museums in the 21st century can play an active role in lifelong learning society by integrating collections, spaces and learning programmes into a new joined up framework that connects formal and informal learning providers, increasing access to cultural life and fostering social cohesion, innovation and creativity. The LEM - Learning Museum Network project aims to create a permanent network of museums and cultural heritage organisations and address the challenges of the EU 2020 Strategy and to play an active role in lifelong learning.

http://www.lemproject.eu/
MeLa - European Museums in an age of migrations 2011-2015: The main objective of the MeLa research programme - funded by the Seventh Framework Programme - is to define innovative museum practices that reflect the challenges of the contemporary processes of globalisation, mobility and migrations. As people, objects, knowledge and information move at an increasingly high rate, a sharper awareness of an inclusive European identity is needed to facilitate mutual understanding and social cohesion. MeLa aims at empowering museums spaces, practices and policies with the task of building this identity.

http://www.mela-project.eu/

2.3 Definition of a professional profile

This considerable amount of initiatives related to the role of museums as a tool to foster and strengthen lifelong learning processes in the EU shows a great diversity of activities and results achieved. They vary quite obviously according to the heterogeneous political, social, economic and cultural situations existing in each country.

The difference appears to be even more clear when looking at the professional profiles of people working in museums: in order to try to identify some common elements starting from different nationally recognized professional profiles, ICTOP (ICOM International Committee for the Training of Personnel) published in 2008 a European frame of reference.\(^\text{12}\)

The study considers Museum Mediation and Education as part of the “Visitor services” area, which is one of the three areas of museum activities identified by ICTOP\(^\text{13}\): “the functions of museum education and mediation clearly need to be distinguished from other functions…” (p. 12).

The professional profiles engaged in the “Visitor services” area are\(^\text{14}\):

- Manager of education and visitor service
- Education and visitor service officer
- Visitor care and security manager
- Visitor care and security assistant
- Library and media centre manager

---

\(^{12}\) A. Ruge (ed.), Museums Professions - A European Frame of Reference, ICTOP 2008

\(^{13}\) “Collections and research” and “Administration, management and logistics” being the other two (Ibid. p. 12).

\(^{14}\) Ibid. p. 14.
With specific reference to the first profile, the “manager of education and visitor centre”, he/she “is in charge of all programmes, activities, studies and researches concerning the presentation of museum artefacts to current and prospective visitors”\textsuperscript{15}. No distinction is made between education and mediation, implying that mediation is part of the broader educational framework and that both are embedded in the concept of presentation of the collections to visitors. The same applies to the second professional profile, that of the “education and visitor service officer”\textsuperscript{16}.

### 2.4 Training at a EU level

During the last few years great changes have been made in the way services, including those directed towards Adult Learning, are delivered by museums and libraries. Cultural heritage institutions need to ensure that their staff has the necessary skills, which would have an impact on their recruitment, retention, training and development policies. Recently Professionals other than museum curators and librarians have been frequently employed in the cultural heritage sector, so their training needs should also be taken into account.

Europe’s ageing population tends to lead to greater competition for good young recruits. Museums and libraries, like other employers, need to offer attractive working conditions, including remuneration which compares adequately, attractive career prospects and flexible working patterns. This can be a problem for smaller organizations with a low staff turnover. Image and outside perceptions can sometimes deter entrants. There is a need to market the positive qualities of working within the sector. Equal opportunity agendas also mean that the diversity of the population should be reflected in the workforce. Free movement of labour within the EC represents significant opportunities for recruitment in libraries and museums.

It has been estimated that, within the next ten years, 80\% of the skills of an employee will be out-of-date. Continuing professional development in its many forms is therefore essential. One of the biggest factors for change has been the integration of new technologies within the services of cultural heritage institutions, introducing powerful implications for the type of staff

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid. p. 24.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid. p. 25.
required and the training they need. However, many other factors affect the range and type of skills required in the cultural heritage sector, including:

- user expectations of services which, partly driven by the commercial sector are becoming more demanding;
- political agendas such as social inclusion, cultural identity and diversity, community cohesion, lifelong learning and economic development;
- changing work patterns: people are expected to change jobs and careers more frequently requiring retraining and the acquisition of new skills.

The broad range of key skills and competences required by people working in museums and libraries include (among others) the following areas: technical; ‘people’ and communication; accessibility and disability awareness; pedagogy (especially for those concerned with adult learning); marketing and promotional; ‘politics’, finance and the law; project management and leadership. To all of these are to be added the continued need for development of specialist skills, in which context newer concepts such as ‘cultural mediation’ are leading to the emergence of new approaches to qualification and certification.

This reality inspired the current project, thus the creation of a training course specialised for Museum Mediators and Educators. The course was designed by the partners to respond to the professional and institutional needs of Museum Mediators. Each of the 6 session focused on a special theme. Theory was accompanied by practical elements and case-studies as well. All these materials were uploaded to the website of the project, enabling participants from all the partner countries to learn from these experiences.

Some of the main goals of the course were:

- Raising awareness of the importance of Museum Mediation among the professional community;
- Improve teaching, learning skills and discovery of innovative didactic strategies in Museum and Cultural Heritage settings;
- Museum and cultural heritage as resources for learning and sharing;
- Methodologies, tools and learning experiences for all;
- Designing educational programmes for schoolchildren and adults;
- Participants could apply for LLP grants.
3 Museum mediation in the UK

Although the educational role of the museum has been acknowledged since the first national museum\textsuperscript{17}, museum education as a defined and distinct domain arose only in the end of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century, in a historical and political context of renewed attention on the educational tasks of cultural institutions and on cultural policy as a vehicle for social change and inclusion. Today, the educational role of museums faces new challenges, new audiences and the use of new technologies and in the UK an important debate has emerged on educational and pedagogical theories to be used in museum education endeavour - sustained and enriched by scholars and professional bodies too.

Nowadays, new learning strategies in museums put together three fundamental concepts: education, interpretation\textsuperscript{18} and communication\textsuperscript{19}. A mediation practice should combine these three domains, in order to bring objects in museums alive and to enable visitors to learn through them.

However, it is important to underline that some difference between museum education and mediation or interpretation can be found sometimes. Museum education in the UK is based on constructivist and active learning theories whereas mediation is considered as a part of the educational and teaching/learning process and of the communication practices as well. The main purpose of mediation is to facilitate the understanding and the learning process.

3.1 History and evolution

Some important legislative steps mark the history and the evolution of the relationship between museums and education in the UK. The first Acts concerning museums and education date back to the mid-19\textsuperscript{th} century: in 1845, the Museum Act gave local authorities the power to establish museums and allocated for the first time public money for national museums. This meant the recognition of the important role museums could play in the life and education of adults. In 1870, the Educational Act dealt not only with the reorganization of educational policy, but also improved the profile of museum education, by connecting education with the curatorial process.

\textsuperscript{18} According to the American Association of Museums, interpretation is “the media and activities through which a museum carries out its mission and educational role. Interpretation is a dynamic process of communication between the museum and the audience. It is the means by which the museum delivers its content. Interpretation includes but is not limited to exhibits, tours, classes, school programs, publications, and Web sites.”
By this time, the South Kensington Museum and the Natural History Museum assumed specific pedagogical purposes for adults and provided for the first “object” lessons that are artefact-based learning. Over the time, several educators were engaged as “lecturers”, and curators were allowed to devote their time to develop scholarship linked with the collections.

In the first half of the 20th century, the interest in the educational purposes of museums declined, curators were only supposed to curate exhibitions and maintain the collections. Educational programmes were similar to “formal” education for children and there weren’t almost any programme for adult visitors. During the 20s and 30s, the experience of the visitor was of no concern in conceiving and developing museums exhibitions.

In the second half of the 20th century the awareness of visitors’ experience arose, educational services were repositioned but the interest in the educational role of museums still remained secondary. This only changed towards the 21st century, when the educational task gained greater significance in museums policies. With the election of the Labour Government in 1997, public cultural policies became more education-oriented and public involvement in determining cultural policies became more and more important. The newly named Department for Culture, Media and Sports (DCMS) and its first Comprehensive Spending Review was clearly guided by the four following principles: the promotion of access for many not just the few; the pursuit of excellence and innovation; the nurturing of educational opportunity and the fostering of the creative industries. Some “key measures” were to be adopted; amongst them there were the “widening access and education at museums” and the “broadening access to the arts”.

Moreover, it was underlined that museums were “about object and for people”, placing the experience of visitors at the heart of museums’ actions and policies. For the first time the educational intent and the social impact of museums were being clearly articulated and developed by the government and they were influencing the cultural policy. Some important policy documents and reports, from 1997, 1999 and 2000, contributed to the debate and set standards for the access to culture. The focus shifted towards establishing a link between cultural participation and social change, while education became the principal instrument in tackling social exclusion.

---

20 Today known as the Victoria and Albert Museum
21 “The Government will invest in widening access to the UK’s museums and galleries and their collections, recognising their potential for education, combating social exclusion and promoting urban regeneration”
22 “The Government will encourage new companies, new work and new venues, and through “New Audiences” widen access to the arts, ensuring better support for amateur and community arts, while encouraging the country’s key arts companies to establish themselves on a sound financial basis.”
24 See the DCMS document Museums for the many: standards for museums and galleries to use when developing access policies, specific guidance for museums, published in 1999.
25 See the DCMS document Centres for Social Change; Museums, Galleries and Archives for all, published in 2000.
In more recent years, museums have been known for “responding to the requirements of their audiences more than even before”\textsuperscript{26}. The Heritage Lottery fund has a dedicated grant for cultural institutions or sites who intend to implement the role of interpretation in their educational activities, new relationships have been developed between the museums and their audiences, a high theoretical and pedagogical debate has been lead at the same time, a new awareness of the broad social responsibility is promoted and sustained: museums and their educational staffs have a big share in cultural politics and in democratization of culture.

### 3.2 Legislative framework

The role of museum educator is however not always clear. Historically, the educator was not always considered the museum's staff: in the past, museum educators were often teachers who were employed as educators, as museums' exhibitions were considered to carry out already the educational function of the institution. Museum education officers have always had an ancillary role, secondary to that of curators. Nowadays, this ambiguous status still often exist, as museum educators are seen not as teachers or education officers nor as museum professionals and this has a lot to do with the perception of the position, on a social level too.

As mentioned above, in recent years, the Heritage Lottery Fund sustains with a grant the implementation of the interpretation role within museums or cultural institutions and sites. Working along with curators, museum mediators or interpretation officer are very often highly skilled professionals, they are teachers but they have also a great number of specific expertise, in various disciplinary domains.

The DCMS sponsors some national institutions in collaboration with the Department of Education, such as Museums, Libraries and Archives Council and two professional major groups, GEM (Group for Education in Museums)\textsuperscript{27} and engage\textsuperscript{28}, by supporting and promoting innovative educational programmes. The above-mentioned professional groups, each of them focusing on a specific field of action, contribute to the professional internal debate, as main providers of learning opportunities, training for professional development and scientific publications as well.

In terms of job descriptions and standards, we can refer to an on-line source: the Museum Association website, careers section, and the UK’s official Graduate Career Website, which

\begin{itemize}
\item\textsuperscript{26} \textit{The responsive museum: working with audiences in the twenty-first Century}, edited by Caroline Lang, John Reeve, Vicky Woollard, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006.
\item\textsuperscript{27} http://www.gem.org.uk/
\item\textsuperscript{28} http://engage.org
\end{itemize}
provide a detailed job description.29

The National Careers Service website30, delivered by the UK government doesn’t include the professional description of the museum educator, describing just the more general Community education co-ordinator profile, which is intended to work in museums too31.

3.3 Analysis of training offer

A specific training offer can be found only on a post-graduate level. The more relevant courses are those in Museum Studies and Heritage Management that are held in more than 10 universities across the UK. The most specific ones are those held at the University of Leicester in “Learning and Visitor studies in Museum and Galleries” and “Interpretation, Representation and Heritage”.32 The Museums Association (MA) offers several continuing professional development (CPD) programmes for its members, for those who already work in the sector. Other training opportunities are provided by GEM (Group for Education in Museums) and engage (The National Association for Gallery Education). A variety of in-service courses are also run by regional federations of museums, specialist groups and private training providers. Many of these courses are available also to voluntary staff.

3.4 Experiences

First opened in 1897, today Tate is structured in four major sites (Britain, Modern, Liverpool and St Ives) and holds the national collection of British art from 1500 to the present day and a collection of international modern and contemporary art, which includes nearly 70,000 artworks. At the centre of Tate’s mission is the visitor and his experience:

“Everything we do, from the programme we present in our galleries and with partners in Britain and around the world, to the books, products and food we sell in our shops and restaurants, supports our mission: to promote public understanding and enjoyment of British, modern and contemporary art.”

29 Source: http://www.prospects.ac.uk/museum_education_officer_job_description.htm
30 https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk
31 https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/jobprofiles/Pages/communityeducationco-ordinator.aspx
32 For more information on post-graduate training offer see http://www.postgrad.com/ or http://www.prospects.ac.uk/
According to its mission, Tate sustains and develops many educational projects that address every kind of audience, from children to adults, alone or in group.

“People have different interests and learn throughout their lives in different ways. We aim to embed learning across all our activities”\(^{33}\).

Special projects were held in order to allow remote groups to encounter the work of art, to promote lifelong learning and learning in informal contexts\(^{34}\). The structure itself is conceived for the scope of reaching a wider audience with specific actions: Tate has four sites and each site has a distinct identity in terms of mission and audience to reach (just think about Tate Liverpool, “dedicated to showing modern art and encouraging a new, younger audience through an active education programme”).

Two special projects are worthy of introduction: “Look groups” and “Verbal Eyes”.

The first one, developed by Tate St Ives and Cornwall Council, aimed to involve hard-to-reach and remote communities across Cornwall thanks to free meetings held in the local areas where members (mainly adults) of those communities could meet and talk in groups - there are currently 20 active groups - about art and share their opinion. More information can be found about the project on Tate’s website\(^{35}\).

The second one was an outreach action and addressed young people in schools of London’s boroughs. The main goal of this programme was to encourage the meeting between young audience with verbal and visual language, using Tate collections and working with artists. Children from primary or secondary schools were allowed to visit Tate Britain and encounter and explore different artistic languages through the collection. They had the opportunity to create a collaborative work of art together with teachers and artists over the course of two weeks. Every artwork was then displayed for a special exhibition in Tate Britain\(^{36}\).

The British Museum, the first national public museum in the world, was founded in 1753. From the beginning it granted free admission to all ‘studious and curious persons’.

“Broadly speaking, museum interpretation is everything we do that helps visitors make sense of our collection”, writes Anna Bright, Interpretation Officer at British Museum in his article “Small

33 http://www.tate.org.uk/about/our-work/learning-at-tate
34 http://www.tate.org.uk/learn/local-communities
35 http://www.tate.org.uk/about/projects/look-groups
objects telling big stories”\textsuperscript{37}. It is interesting to notice that mediation or interpretation practices refer not only to “special projects” or activities for special groups. In this article, Bright tells us one of her challenges of exhibiting more than 4,000 years of history of ancient coins in a small room and and how she had to make this exhibition understandable and enjoyable for audiences: the challenge was not to find the physical space to exhibit them but to “successfully communicate with our visitors”. Bright proceeded to renovate the narrative structure of the exhibition, in order to help visitors to make sense of the gallery space and of the objects, through a “gateway object approach”, which consist in offering people some key-objects that lead them into the collection, according not only to chronological criteria but also to thematic ones. In the article, it is stressed how important it is to know in depth the visitors: “This is a key aspect of interpretation work here at the British Museum (Who are the visitors? How much time do they spend in a gallery? How do they move around in the gallery space?)”.

\textsuperscript{37} This article is published and available online at blog.britishmuseum.org/tag/interpretation
4 Museum mediation in France

On a theoretical level, museum mediation in France is considered more a function than a profession or a job; a function that involves different actors or professionals working in the museum, sometimes even the museum itself and its mission as a whole. But in the last years a renewed interest has been showed about the people who work as mediators and about their professional skills as well, and the problem of the acknowledgement of this job has been widely discussed\textsuperscript{38}. Starting from the assumption that mediation activities are held in order to enable and facilitate the meeting between museums’ collections (scientific and artistic ones) and the audiences, talking about museum mediation in France normally includes a wide variety of activities, that have nevertheless a common background: today, the \textit{médiation muséale} is something different from the classic \textit{pédagogie} or \textit{education} activities and it is provided for all kind of audience. It means that on one hand, this lacks of uniformity amongst all the activities could be seen as a variety of choice and offer. On the other hand it also means that there is no clear and specific professional profile of \textit{médiateur}, nor a specific kind of activity, whilst the skills that should be required are very specific and related not only to disciplinary knowledge but also to relational and communication abilities\textsuperscript{39}.

4.1 History and evolution

The lack of a defined professional profile is probably rooted in the history and evolution of the role of the \textit{médiateur} in French museums. The \textit{médiateur} is a successor of preexisting roles and at the same time a result of the mutation that recently involved museums and their role in contemporary French society.

If we briefly go back in history, we find that the first guided visits date back to the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century: strictly bound to the implementation of the \textit{Ecole du Louvre}\textsuperscript{40} in Paris and to the creation of the first course in Art History in the same institution, the first conference visit in a museum was held in 1920 in the Louvre, according to the mission of the \textit{Ecole}, which was to

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{40} Created in 1882, the Ecole du Louvre is an higher education institute (Grande Ecole) for the study of Archeology, Art History and Museology. Still today, it is a prestigious institution for education in the artistic and cultural field.
\end{thebibliography}
“extract from the collections, for the instruction of public, the knowledge they contain [...]”\textsuperscript{41}. A progressive institutionalization of this profession began and the first “dames guides”\textsuperscript{42} were recruited from the Ecole du Louvre itself between its scholars in 1930, on the basis of an examination. So, the history of this job is quite long, and nowadays, the professional profile still exists under the name of Guide-Conférencier\textsuperscript{43}.

Together with the role of the Conférencier, there is that of the médiateur, born in more recent times, an alternative choice for museums' administration. It is worth to underline that, however, the role of the médiateur is quite different from that of the Guide-Conférencier, but if we consider the real applications of the “mediation function” we discover that such a distinction doesn't exist: the two figures are often superimposed in terms of activities and institutional role.

It is true that the médiateur is an heir of this more ancient profession, but it is also important to keep in mind the evolution of the mission and the statute of French museums in the last years, that lead to this new professional profile, not to mention the emerging exigencies of new professional skills. If we consider the more recent history of mediation in museum, we can observe a progressive sliding from educational issues to mediation ones. Between 1955 and 1990, French museums were bound to an educational service whose model was still that of the éducation or pédagogie and was associated to activities provided for schools and pupils. But in the 60s the first inquiries on museums' audience appeared\textsuperscript{44} and in the 70s and 80s the thought on mediation was stimulated thanks to pioneer undertaking in local museums: the young audience became just one of the audiences that needed to be allowed to visit a museum. During the 80s and the 90s had a strong institutional impulse, connected with the research activity of some French scholars, who undertook a reflection on the médiation culturelle\textsuperscript{45}. The word médiateur was to supposed to be applied in museums too, in order to replace the older ones (conférencier, animateur, guide, etc.) and to introduce new concepts in the field of museums' educational activities\textsuperscript{46}. The new challenge was not only to perform an educational duty, but also to have a share in the process of democratization of culture. So, mediation activities became more and more related to the actions of cultural policy and more and more important.

\textsuperscript{41} As we read in the history of the Ecole, available on its website.
\textsuperscript{43} The profession has been recently reorganised in terms of legal framework with the Décret n° 2011-930 du 1er août 2011 relatif aux personnes qualifiées pour la conduite de visites commentées dans les musées et monuments historiques. A unique professional profile was created, the Guide-conférencier, in order to replace the four previous profiles (guide-interprète régional, guide-interprète national, guide-conférencier des villes et pays d'art et d'histoire, conférencier national) and to simplify the acces to the profession.
\textsuperscript{45} Elisabeth Caillet, Evelyne Lehalle, A l'approche du musée, la mediation culturelle, PUL, Paris, 1998.
\textsuperscript{46} Françoise Pradin et Élisabeth Roch, Médiateurs pour l'art contemporain: répertoire des compétences, La Documentation française, Paris, 2000.
for the statutes of museums. This debate and these experiences led to the enactment of the “loi musée du 4 janvier” in 2002, as an answer to the exigencies of updating the legal frame of reference and as a result of a cultural and political debate which begun in 1992. With this law, the Musée de France was clearly defined as regards to his statute and mission and for the first time the role of mediation was clearly explained. It was stated that audiences must be placed at the hearth of every museum action and that specific professional skills were needed.

The text of the law highlighted clearly how important audience was and encouraged museums to assure educational and mediation activities but the document did not define any useful elements for the real applications.

4.2 Legislative framework

As we pointed out, it is necessary to distinguish between the guide-conférencier (see footnote n°6) and the médiateur.

The guide-conférencier is now a quite defined profession with concrete professional rules and qualification (charte professionnelle), although their working conditions are often still uncertain and often without fixed-term contracts.

But if we look at mediators' working conditions, we see how the heterogeneity that characterizes activities, functions and roles weighs on - or maybe is a consequence of - the heterogeneity of the conditions of employment, in terms of institutional and contractual acknowledgement. Without a unique professional frame of reference, there isn't a unique contractual framework. Most French mediators are highly skilled professionals, working on temporary assignments. Museums still often recourse students proposing them an internship or to artists who can have an income from this “flexible” job without interrupting their artistic activity47. It is clear that such working conditions bear upon museums' activities as well, even though mediators often just carry out the tasks or the projects conceived and developed by education and visitor services. Very seldom, as in the Jeu the Paume (that refuses the term of “médiation”, preferring the more traditional “conférencier”) or in the Cité Nationale de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, mediators are completely involved in the management staff and contribute not only to carry out tasks but also to conceive and prepare specific mediation or educational programmes. There is therefore a strong disproportion between the high level of education required (a master's degree at least) and the general working conditions: this weighs

47 See Aurélie Peyrin, op. cit.
unavoidably upon the acknowledgement of the professional identity, which remains still too vague, for mediators and for institutions as well.

Considering the French Civil Service and the French State Museums, with regard to the Répertoires des Métiers, an index with all civil types of job ranked according to specific criteria, we find two professional profiles for the FPE and only one for the FPT for professionals working for museums in the field of cultural and educational activities:

Responsable du développement des publics et de l’action culturelle dans un établissement patrimonial - FPE

Chargé du développement des publics et de l’action culturelle dans un établissement patrimonial - FPE

Médiateur Culturel - FPT

As regards to professional associations, it is important to mention the MCA - Médiation Culturelle Association, maybe the most important French professional association in the field. Based in Lyon, it contributes to the internal professional debate and to the social and institutional acknowledgement of this job. In 2010, the MCA drew up a Code of Ethics for cultural mediation.

4.3 Analysis of training offer

Even though many University courses in Cultural Mediation are nowadays proposed in French Universities, this kind of training is considered too vague, generic and imprecise by those who are in charge of educational or mediation activities in museums. A specific educational background, linked to the discipline of museum and its collection, is always preferred and a high level of education always required.

Sources:

48 It is worth to underline that French Civil Service (Fonction Publique) is distinguished into four divisions, the civil service of the State (FPE - fonction publique de l’État), the civil service of local governments (FPT - fonction publique territoriale), the judiciary (magistrature); the civil service of public hospitals (fonction publique hospitalière). The FPE and the FPT, with central and local tasks respectively, provide for professionals in State and Local Museums.


50 It is important to notice that only recently a clear distinction was made between the Visitor Care and Security service and the Mediation Service.

51 A free download of the Chart and of other interesting and useful documents can be found on the association's website https://sites.google.com/site/mediationculturelleassociation/la-charte-mca
Internet portal http://www.etudiant.gouv.fr/ Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche

ONISEP (Office national d'information sur les enseignements et les professions) a national, a public establishment depending by the French Education Minister

Cartographie des Enseignements en Histoire de l'Art on INHA's (Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art) website.

Results: 19 University courses, most of them Master's degree, divided between Master Recherche and Master Pro, plus the Ecole du Louvre courses (License and Master's degree) under the name of Médiation, Médiation Culturelle, Muséologie and bound to cultural mediation for cultural heritage and museums.

4.4 Experiences

As we said before, mediation activities in France involve a wide variety of opportunities and declinations of this “function”, related to scientific or artistic museums, and to intercultural projects in ethnographic museums as well. Some experiences in particular are worth to discuss, as a reference or as an impulse for the debate. Each activity that is held in museums is strictly bound to the museum itself, that it is conceived on the basis of the singularity of each museum's collection on the one hand and on the characteristics of the audience on the other.

At the Palais de Tokyo⁵² in Paris, a centre for contemporary art creation, a cultural mediation service is provided for all audience, especially for adults: mediators are always present in the exhibition rooms and they join the visitor or let the visitor join them, through questions and doubts on the works of art. The purpose is to encourage and to favour a non conventional encounter with contemporary art, thanks to non conventional mediation programmes: always bearing on the social meaning of art and always pursuing the aim to promote critical thinking on art, mediation activities are held in order to let the visitor (also a non-traditional one) become independent in judging contemporary works and furthermore, to give the visitor some instruments he could use outside the museum too, in order to become an aware citizen of the world. Mediators who work here have very different trainings, often they are art historians, actors or artists, very seldom they have a degree in cultural mediation studies.

At the Centre Pompidou, a steady and wide programme of mediation is provided for all

audiences, but the most interesting activities are those that are held “outside” the museum: Les atelier de la création\(^{53}\) and the Centre Pompidou Mobile. The first one is a special programme which involves young people who attend a Vocational Educational Training, who live outside Paris, in the banlieue or in province, who are culturally and geographically far from the world of art. The purpose is to put pupils at the heart of contemporary creation, and according to the concept of “active pedagogy”, to involve them in a process of creating and shaping knowledge, through sense and artistic experience. The second one aims to create an itinerant and nomadic museum, in order “to bring art where it normally doesn’t go”, so to bring museum nearer to non-traditional audience and non-visitors as well. The characteristic architectural structure of the Centre Pompidou Mobile and an audience not used to contemporary art, inspire theatrical forms of mediation, so as to propose a captivating and enthralling, but simple and easy at the same time, art experience. As for the Palais de Tokyo, mediators in the Centre Pompidou are mostly art historians or artists.

The Musée du Quai Branly, an innovative cultural institution, is the museum of non-Western arts with a wide and precious collection. It is easy to imagine how important cultural mediation in such a museum is and actually in the Quai Branly we can find a diversified mediation programme, from more “classic” activities, like guided tours, to innovative and surprising ones, such as performances and so on. All the projects and activities are based on the fundamental imperative to avoid and overcome strict cultural distinctions and are conceived to sustain the intercultural dialogue with non-western communities living in the Parisian region. Many programmes are held outside the museums as well, so as to facilitate the approach between museum’s collection and non-visitors in non conventional exhibition spaces. Mediation projects in the Quai Branly are conceived from the “direction des publics” department, whilst the mediators, highly skilled and trained professionals, are temporary employees, recruited by a specialized agency.

---

\(^{53}\) http://www.ateliers-creation.centre-pompidou.fr/-Accueil-
5 Museum mediation in partner countries

5.1 Museum mediation in Portugal

5.1.1 History and evolution

In the last sixty years, Portuguese museums have gone through some transformation that affected their legal legitimacy, the definition of their mission together with their roles and range of activities. The creation of education services was, in this sense, a landmark, resisting multiple constraints and adapting to different demands.

The first steps for Museum education in Portugal were taken in 1953, when a small team of women welcomed students and teachers at the National Museum of Ancient Art. Under the vision of the museum director, João Couto, and his coordinator, Madalena Cabral, this was the only Museum Education Service in Portugal for many years.

The 60’s brought new ideas and changes in the field of arts. New experiences, practices and approaches to different artistic movements were made, triggering later a new insight on the relation between art and pedagogy. This ideological and conceptual wave had repercussions in all artistic fields, linking many times the political opposition with theatre, literature and music. In the scientific files, major advances were made in psychopedagogy and child psychology, as well as artistic education.

The new stance reflected on the legislation of 1965. The new law stated that Museums must organize collective visits and promote their collections, embodying the humanist spirit of João Couto and the philosophy of the National Museum of Ancient Art.

In 1969, with the establishment of the Gulbenkian Foundation, dedicated to Art, Education and Science, there was a big investment in the artistic education, as well as in literacy and in music initiatives. The seeds of an integrated approach, as well as experimentation in educational projects were developed in and outdoors. At a certain point, the impact of these activities was so strong that the Foundation was considered as the “unofficial Ministry of Culture”.

With the democratic revolution of 1974, the concept of free access to education and culture for all became the keystone of many cultural institutions. These ideas also affected the school system. Art became part of the primary school curricula and art history became as an optional branch in history university courses.
The work of Hughes the Varines from 1971 introduced the concept of “ecomuseum”, contextualized in New Museology framework. The challenges of the craft movements as well as community involvement brought new models of relation. This revolution had a great impact on the development of municipal museums and ethnomorphic campaigns.

However, in spite of these changes, most museums maintained a rigid and crystallized structure, focused on permanent exhibitions display and the conservation of their collections. Visited mostly by elites, the presence of schools and children were tolerated at the best, seen as an unwanted burden of the public service. Despite the promotion of regular guided tours and activities, the role of education in museums remained marginal: some of the visits were even guided by other staff of the museum, such as security guards, who had an inadequate profile and no knowledge in this field.

As a response to their almost organizational irrelevance, the educational services, meanwhile established in several public museums, strived to show the importance of establishing a solid and rich relation between their collections and pedagogy.

By the 80’s, there were some leading examples of ecomuseums that worked as a living museum, such as Seixal and Mértola, and some municipal museums started to invest in education, leading to the legal definition of the “career of animator in education services”. However, what seemed to be a victory, culminated in a disaster establishing as the necessary qualification a high school degree, in spite of the university graduate professionals, undermining their expertise and their credibility.

In the 90’s, the new management of the state museums system introduced some significant and positive changes that redefined the relation between museums and their visitors. New structures were drawn, shops and cafeterias were opened, collections and catalogs were published. The reopening of the Museum of Chiado created the idea of temporary exhibitions and its turnover.

A giant step was taken in ’93 when the Education Service of the National Palace of Ajuda promoted an informal meeting to meet colleagues of other education services and to share concerns of ‘what to do’ and ‘how to do’ their pedagogical mediation. The high number of participation was unexpected: from the 61 Portuguese education services, only 9 were absent. These professionals were suddenly more aware of their own importance and recognized the value of networking and experience-sharing. This experience had such an impact that until 2001, members of this 93’ group continued to meet on a monthly basis, in order to understand and deepen the dynamics of their job.
One year later, the Portuguese Institute of Museums commissioned a document on the status of education services which addressed several key issues and established a set of goals still to meet today. In the late 20th century some seminars were organized and the Portuguese Network of Museums was very important in training and organizational structure.

Between 1999 and 2002, educational services were created in two important private-funded contemporary art museums: Serralves in the city of Porto and Centro de Arte Moderna in Lisbon. Deeply framed in the constructivist paradigm and supported by a freelance, multidisciplinary team, these two museums represented the idea of a museum experience, training and a redefinition of the relation between audiences and museums. They benefited from the larger context of their institutions and from a professional management approach, with an investment in audience research, cultural marketing and merchandising.

In 2001, at the still recent Cultural Center of Belém, the Director of Museums Institute promoted a national meeting devoted to Museums and Education, reinforcing a political vision of cultural democracy and the potential of the museums, inviting professionals as keynote-speakers from the United Kingdom, a country with a long tradition in this area.

At the beginning of the new millennium, and as a result of the importance established between media and the necessity of attracting visitors, new professions related to museums appeared, namely, in the field of marketing and advertisement. Due to the awareness that the public became the reason for museums’ existence, with different interests and demands, a new attention was drawn to communication, as well as the need for new mediation strategies.

In the last ten years, conferences and meetings have multiplied and the work of the educational services has become more relevant than ever before. Issues such as accessibility and inclusion have been the object of specific work groups and researches. Through academic achievements, experimentation and professional framing, the education staff - between the rare full-time jobs and many freelance projects - has empowered itself.

Currently in this moment of deep crisis, museums are looking at the educational services and audience engagement as the necessary means to remain socially relevant and sustainable.
5.1.2 Legislative framework:

By the end of the 20th Century, the status of Museum Mediators and their legal protection were still very weak. Its own nomenclature, oscillating over the years between animator and mediator, revealed its fragility.

In the early 50's, the director of the National Museum of Ancient Art, João Couto, was the forebear of providing educational services to its audiences. Years later, the Law n.º 46 758/1965 (General Regulation of Museums of Art, History and Archaeology) illustrated this same concern. It advocated that museums should, by all means in their power, attract visitors and engage them on effective pedagogical action, “predicting that the orientation of collective visits organised to their collections were assigned to «technical staff» or «suitable persons»”.

In 1980, the legislation regarding the internal and professional restructuring of museums (Law n.º 45/80, of 20 March, 1980) acknowledged «cultural action» as one of the areas of the museological skills, side by side with «research» and «museography». According to this law, which established the career of animator, the access to this profession became dependent on a high school complementary course, which ended up contaminating the credibility of senior technicians and obstructing the application of new professionals.

As a general overview, Museum Mediators came across with several symptoms of indefinition and even the partial devaluation of their role. Despite being a profession that appeared 60 years beforehand, as a result of the recognition of their pedagogical importance and necessity, it ended up falling in the banality of the guided tours. Only in the last 20 years, Portugal has experienced a growth in the awareness of mediators’ fundamental importance.

In 1999, the Portuguese Museums’ Network was created, an organization that finally and legally dignified the educational services. But it took two more years to give them justice by the extinction of the animator career (Law n.º 55/2001), while also demanding higher qualifications for professionals working in the educational services. Only in 2004, education in museums became mandatory by law.

The Law n.º 47/2004 (of 19 August, 2004) established the legal framework of the Portuguese museums, through the definition of what should be a museum, of the establishment of the requirements and procedures to be followed in the creation of new museums and their museological functions and responsibilities. It was considered an advanced and innovative law, in terms of the criteria of application, when compared with others, from an international point
of view. This is mostly because it was a recent law, taking advantage of the accumulated experiences and developments that the museological discipline has benefited in recent years:

“The preparation of this law was based on the knowledge of the Portuguese reality, on the recent experience developed by IPM (Portuguese Institute of Museums), on the creation of RPM (Portuguese Museums' Network) and the attention given to international guidelines. The participatory way of the preparation of the law must also be emphasized, since it involved representatives of the APOM (Portuguese Association of Museums), ICOM, the ANMP (National Association of Portuguese Municipalities), museum directors and scholars.”

The first chapter presented the principles of the national museological policy, with emphasis on the primacy of the person, the promotion of responsible citizenship, public service, coordination, transversality, decentralization, information and international cooperation; this was followed by the definition of the concept of museums, their mission and functions, which had two important dimensions: collections and audiences. In the following article, it distinguished Museum from the ‘collection visitable’.

The next three chapters defined the general rules of Portuguese museums and their museological functions - study, research, incorporation, inventory and documentation, conservation, safety, interpretation and exhibition, education -, human and financial resources, facilities, the organizational structure and public access, enumerated, in a clear and detailed way, the characteristics, requirements and functioning of these cultural institutions.

On this matter, it should be emphasized:

- The importance given to research and scientific knowledge of the collections, as well as the concern in attracting new audiences.
- The importance of Museum Education and Educational Services, while facilitating instruments of knowledge and the fruition of cultural heritage, creating affective and intellectual richness to its audience, however without the recognition of the profession and the role of the Museum Mediator.

- The relevance of visitors’ studies and periodic evaluations, that enable “the improvement of the quality of functioning and meet the needs of visitors.”

The educational role of the museum was defined as an essential museological function and, in the article 42.º, it stipulated as mandatory for the museum to develop “systematically cultural mediation programs and educational activities that contribute to the access to cultural heritage and cultural events.” In the same article, it stated that the “museum promotes educational role with respect for cultural diversity, regarding continuing education, community participation, the growth and diversification of audiences.”

Chapters V and VI referred to technical matters in respect of heritage assets embodied in museums. The criteria related to its property, preemptive rights and the regime of expropriation, as well as the conditions of deposit and lending criteria were also defined.

The following chapter, on the creation and merging of museums, emphasized a principle with new opportunities and challenges: the encouragement of the establishment of partnerships between the public and private sectors, in which "the state, the autonomous regions and municipalities promote the constitution of partnerships between public and private entities for the creation and qualification of museums, in order to enrich the cultural heritage." Other aspects of great innovation in this law act as drivers of quality and good practice were discussed in Chapters VIII and IX:

- The Portuguese Museums’ Network, as an organizational system of national museological reality and its support centers. On a meeting held ten years after its creation, its founding purpose, based on decentralization, mediation, training and cooperation between museums, allowed “the exchange of experiences, mutual knowledge of staff of museums, work inter-pair, promotion of dialogue between museums and experiences. Its performance and its territorial coverage enabled the relativize distances and boost, at a regional level, new forms of articulation (…)."

- The accreditation of museums, while indispensable tool for technical qualification and subsequent integration in the Portuguese Museums’ Network. This system ensures, unequivocally, the fulfillment of the provisions of this Law, promoting “access to culture

---

58 Idem, pp.9.
and the enrichment of the cultural heritage by introducing standards of accuracy and
quality in performing the museological functions of Portuguese museums.”

The last two chapters of this document were dedicated to the guardianship misdemeanor and
the final and transitional provisions, highlighting the process of transition from museums
integrated in the Portuguese Museums’ Network, regarding the fulfillment of museological
functions, and the application of this law to the autonomous regions.

5.1.3 Analysis of training offer

There are several post-graduate, as well as master and doctoral programmes in Museology,
Heritage Studies and Cultural Management. Some of the anthropology courses also offer an
option in Museology, and, in other courses, the option of Cultural Sociology and Visitors, for
instance can be found.

Most of these courses have a discipline or option connected to museum education or cultural
animation.

As for Museum Education, the University of Évora created a post-graduate course on Museums
and Education, directed by Professor João Brigola who was the Director of the National
Museums’ Institute. This post-graduate course only had one edition, but involved as the docent
body professionals that are references in the field.

As for the training courses, Setepés, a non-profit organisation in the field of science and cultural
education, developed a course about Museum Educators, and published a book, the “Educational
Services in Portugal”, about museums, music, theatre and libraries educational programmes.

Mapa das Ideias created the first version of its course in 2004 and also developed several
editions and formats.

5.1.4 Experiences

Nowadays, most museums hold programs for different target groups, such as schools and
families. We made a selection of projects that mirrored the diversity of educational projects in
museums, regarding different museum settings.
Open Museum at the Modern Art Center - Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

The programme “Open Museum Workshops” was created at the Modern Art Center by two experienced mediators, Miguel Horta (artist, art and literacy mediator) and Margarida Vieira (dance, performative arts) in 2006. These workshops aim at people with a disability or mental illness, their caretakers and family.

They take place on Mondays, when the museum is closed, assuring the participants all the privacy and means to enjoy the museum experience. All resources are used to overcome barriers and to build a fulfilling and even therapeutical experience, such as drawing, storytelling, body language, etc. The tools are personalised for each session in order to meet each individual’s profile.

The mediators, despite not having a formal training in special needs, give training courses about these topics, with the goal of disseminating and exchanging experiences with these audiences with very specific and individual needs, contributing through their work to transform the museum into a more inclusive institution.

Ecomuseum of Seixal

The overall impact of the “New Museology” and the concept of ecomuseum give museum education a deep meaning and a huge potential. In Portugal, the Ecomuseum of Seixal - created in the early 80’s - is an important landmark for its role in the community and, in many aspects, as a living lab for museum and educational practices. It has several branches across the municipal territory and most of the technical and educational work carried out in the museum sites is done using local craft skills.

The local population is involved in many of the educational activities both as mediators - factory workers explaining the operation of machinery, local rivermen teaching sailing and navigation techniques - and participants. Many exhibitions are the products of the work of local groups. In 2010, the ecomuseum employed a staff of specialized thirty-three members, mostly recruited locally, besides specific project teams.

(157-159 - Ecomuseums 2nd Edition: A Sense of PlacePor Peter Davis)
Projecto Andakatu no Museu do Mação

The Andakatu Project⁵⁹ of the Museum of Prehistoric Art of Mação (Portugal) is aimed at all publics and presents a program, activities and contents arising from multiple archaeological research programs conducted at the museum and its partners, such as universities and research centers. Within this project, a character named Andakatu leads children, youth and adults through the path of human evolution. There is a well defined practical and scientific stance well defined in all the activities. From different raw materials (rock, wood, clay, bone, vegetables, various pigments), all used in Prehistory, Andakatu creates experiments that result in usable artifacts (lithic utensils as sickles, bone implements as arrow points, various vessels and inks) and enable their practical use (in paintings, cooking, using of bows and arrow) within safe and responsible conditions.

There is a permanent contextualization in the archaeological scientific context and its main concern is to make people understand the complexity of the processes involved in the production of scientific, artistic and everyday tools. Through the prehistorical experience, this project challenges our own modern experiences.

5.1.4.1 Selected Case-Studies

The selected case-studies aim to represent different approaches to museum mediation. They address different problems and institutional settings, having each of them a specific angle that can contribute to a reflection and discussion in the mediation field.

- Case Study 1: Programa Descobrir. This innovative and ambitious programme of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is entering its fifth year and it represents the blending of four different educational services: Gulbenkian museum, music service, modern art center and garden sectors. They develop more than 3,000 activities per year, with projects that are carried out in and outside the foundation, promoting experiences and training courses for other museum professionals, educators and teachers, seeking a more inclusive and better understanding of the world.

• **Case Study 2: *Mapa das Ideias***. The company was created in 1999 with the goal of creating better interfaces between museums and their audiences. Being expertised in communication settings and having developed meditation tools that are, today, references in the Portuguese setting, Mapa started to develop partnerships with some museums to perform direct mediation projects. These partnerships between private and public partners, involving national collections, have motivated deep discussions, but Mapa’s value was recognized by the 2011 Best Educational Museum Practice Award given by the Portuguese Museum Association to the National Clothing Museum because of this project.

• **Case Study 3: *Museu da Água***. The Water Museum belongs to the Lisbon Water Company and has developed for the last 15 years an innovative educational service that benefits both from educational and marketing views. Besides the successful visit and historical reconstruction activities programme, the museum promotes a full educational programme for schools that is guided by the principles of environmental education, working the museum collections from that standpoint.

• **Case Study 4: *Rede dos Clubes de Arqueologia do Museu Nacional de Arqueologia***. The network of Archaeological Clubs of the National Museum of Archaeology received the first ICOM-CECA Prize in 2012. This project has several interesting features: it is developed in and by the schools, empowering both students and teachers, giving a unique access to the Museum’s collections; it has a very strong experimental dimension, focusing the challenges of the scientific method; it has an international dimension, only possible due to its methodology; it is sustained through online tools, namely, a dedicated website.

• **Case Study 5: *Museu do Trajo de São Braz***. This museum was selected due to the community involvement and its “living museum” dynamics. It is one of the pillars of the village of São Braz, in the south of Portugal, being the center for the chorus, storytelling group, as well as more expertise projects such as intangible heritage and crafts. Through a hugely informal setting, where the museum positions itself as a facilitator, rather than an authority, it gives interesting clues about how a museum is socially relevant and the challenges of adult non-formal education.
5.1.5 Field research

5.1.5.1 Survey Analysis Portugal, April 2013

In April 2013 a survey was conducted in Portugal about the field of Museum Mediation. The survey was answered by 200 people, although only 141 people actually filled in the entire questionnaire. These professionals were Educators-Diretor (20%), Museum Directors (20%), Curators (11%), Gallery Educators working as a full-time employee or as a freelancer (15%), and Managers (3%). The interviewees were either linked to the professional associations (ICOM Portugal and Portuguese Association of Museology) or they were working in the field of museum education, research and training.

The quantitative analysis was enhanced with the answers of the participants to the open-ended questions.

On the legal status and Museum Mediator’s Profile

Who answered the survey?

There were 200 filled in questionnaires in total to the survey in Portugal. The high level of participation can be explained with the fact, that there had been 5 courses organised already on Museum Mediation within the country.

For analysis purposes, we will consider the total of answers for each question, using as a reading tool the respective percentages. As said before, this research has an exploratory nature and, by being extremely difficult to have basic data concerning museum professionals that work with education and visitors, it has limitations in its extension and depth.

The typical respondent can be described as a highly educated woman (75%) in her thirties, who is in charge of management (20%). The most common academic background is Humanities (77%). 24% of these professionals have been working in a museum for 10-14 years.

As the “type” indicates, while this description is a rough and rather inaccurate portrait of Museum Mediators, it conveys one of the strongest features of the study, as other research shows\(^60\): the field is a female realm.

Characterization of the museums

Most of the respondents work in local/regional museums (47%) and in private-owned museums (28%). As for the collections, the sample is quite diverse: Art (59%), Archaeology (44%), History (42%), Ethnology (34%), Science-Technology (21%) and Industrial (20%).

When analyzing the geographical scope of the museums involved, 47% of the respondents describe their organization as having a local impact, while 7% refer to it as having a regional scope. 16% of the museums are national.

In the open-ended questions, while describing the different organizational settings, there is a curious mapping of concepts and potential in the description of one’s museum as “a territory museum” or “a local museum with an international dimension”.

It almost underlines the potential and the elasticity of the museum within its different communities, real or digital audiences.

Who works as an educator at the Museum?

From the perspective of the museum’s collection, our sample is quite diverse: 59% of the respondents deal with Art, 45% work with Archaeology, 42% with History collections. Other fields, such as Ethnology, Science, Technology as well as Industrial are also represented.

About 90% of the interviewees work in a museum that provides educational activities and about 70% of them have an education manifesto or mission statement. As for the staff that embodies this mission, it can be described as rather small (75% of the respondents say that their education/mediation department is between 1 and 4 members) composed mainly of women. Only 14% of the respondents said that their team was equal in gender, whereas 78% of them work in a team dominated by women.

72% of the respondents said that their museum had a full-time educational staff, in contrast with another 26% which work with freelancer or part-time employees. Non-payed collaborateurs also represent a significant share: 19% of the museums resort to
internships and 15% have volunteers.

Concerning their background, most professionals that answered this survey come from the field of Humanities (77%). Some also have training in Museum Education (23%) and Arts (17%).

The survey shows that Museum Education / Mediation can be seen as a rather new profession:

- 24% of the respondents have worked in the museum for 10-14 years,
- 22% for 5-9 years,
- 22% for 2-4 years.

The skills that are considered relevant for selecting a museum educator/mediator are:

- Training in Museum mediation and education (56% as very relevant),
- Specific to the Museum Collection (49% as very relevant),
- Previous work experience in Education (62% as relevant),
- Marketing and communication studies (59% as relevant),
- Educational and teaching background (58% as relevant),
- Specific to museum education with an emphasis on Museum studies (56% as relevant).

The majority of the Museum Mediators can speak foreign languages (83%), being English the most common (98%), followed by French (62%) and Spanish (35%).

Only 5% of the respondents say that their museums have foreign people in their mediation staff.

Definition of Museum Mediation

Most of the professionals agree that Museum Mediation and Education is a broad concept that includes activities connected with education and communication, aimed at
promoting a new social and more inclusive role of museusm, involving more and different agents in different educational spaces (85%).

Nevertheless, some respondents defined the concept as:

“Creation of experimentation contexts, on a continuing basis, for the participation of different audiences - children, adolescents and adults - in activities of experience and knowledge, that are based on building relationships between individuals and landscapes.”

“As an aggregate function of the museum’s communication project and its mission of disseminating heritage to the different audiences, in a contemporary perspective of transnacionalism and interculturalism.”

Pedro Inácio, vice-president of the Portuguese Museology Association, believes that

“in order to have a successful Museum Mediation, you first have to clearly define the objectives, the mission statement, what and how do you want to work with the museum audiences and with community. (...) In the museum, visitors should have another type of learning, a different motivation: it can be fun, it can have experiences, it can be interactive... all that difference will create a memory for the rest of the life.”

Luís Raposo, president of ICOM-Portugal, explains:

“The issue of dissemination - and by dissemination I mean the communication with audiences, with all the potential users of the information that the Museum can provide - includes the field of education, in its formal sense, with specific activities aimed at education, but also includes everything that constitutes the connection with the Museum and its recipients. I even prefer the term users rather than visitors, because the users of the museum can be so much more than visitors. I consider that the visitor is just one of the types of potential users of the museum. Others may be researchers, or readers, or those who use the
Internet to visit the museum at distance.”

**Museum Mediation Programs**

Regarding the relevance of having Museum Mediation Programs, 76% of the respondents believe that they are important to work with specific stakeholders (local communities, educators and other institutional partners); 74% answered that they are important in order to diversify audiences; 72% to have an in-depth relation with specific targets; and 61% to communicate and disseminate a specific theme.

100% of the respondents answered that their activities are targeted to Schools, 80% to Families, 79% to Adults and 72% to Senior visitors. Nevertheless, Special needs visitors (53%) are a growing concern.

Concerning the type of activities that are being held in the museum, 96% are Guided tours, 74% are Thematic tours, 70% are workshops, 67% are programs for Children and Families and 60% are Outreach activities. Innovative formats like Activities with artists (36%) and Artifact-based learning (35%) are also representative.

As for the tools that are used in the implementation of the activities, the majority of the museums uses Games (80%), Educational kits with objects (66%) and Educational leaflets (64%). More sophisticated instruments such as audio-guides (19%) and multimedia interfaces (PDAs and others) are less represented in the Portuguese museological reality.

The majority of the activities are in the local language (61%) and most museums do not offer any tools in braille (69%) or activities in sign language (91%).

Regarding the schedule of the Museum Mediation / Education activities, it is organised on a yearly (59%) or on a semesterly basis (18%).

**Visitor Studies**

The audiences inquiries carried out by most of the museums are Activity or project evaluation (74%) and Inquiries on the quality of museum’s services (66%). Only 7% of the respondents consideres important to learn more about the Visitor learning styles or to perform Ethnographic researches (8%) on the subject.
As for the methods and tools used to refine or revise the Mediation/Education programs, the majority of the respondents believe that brainstorming (66%) is the most effective, closely followed by the suggestions and demands by the community agents (60%) and front-end and remedial evaluation (58%).

**Definition of the Museum Mediator**

Most professional define Museum Mediator as the person who acts as a bridge (link) between the museum and its visitors (51%) or as the person who acts in transforming museum culture while working with museum audiences (38%).

Nevertheless, some respondents believe that a Museum Mediator is:

— “The person who does the transfer of the meaning and value of Heritage to the cognition of visitors - considering the new advances in molecular biology of cognition, which requires a new awareness of how visitors encode museological objects, and see the recent discovery of the “Structure of Heritage Value”, as a representation that models the significance of heritage objects.”

— “A professional who should be concerned with all areas of the museum: the relation between the staff, the different audiences, the knowledge of museum collection and its research and the evaluation of his work.”

João Neto, President of the Portuguese Museology Association, says:

— “The Museum Mediator is the person responsible for communicating with the audiences. I always saw museums as decoders of knowledge that, in the process of decoding, it generates more knowledge. It is not only a place where a person can be astonished with the treasures that are exhibited there... is the place where one can transform an object, as an element of history or art, and generate more knowledge.”

Regarding this matter, Luís Raposo explains:
“The Portuguese museums are marked by a history quite hectic and traumatic, with respect to the existence of professional figures in education in museums.

Regarding this subject, I do not entirely know the international reality, but Museum Mediation did not exist; then, it was created in the context of a person who worked with curators - who didn’t even have to have a degree in higher education.

Later on, a new movement argued that those educators, so called monitors, also had to have a degree in higher education. Moreover, in some museums it began to exist - and it is still frequent in some museums with big dimension - to have curators with this status, this profile: curators of the educational field (not curators of collections). It was a conjugate movement of qualification of educators to be considered senior technicians.

However, the vicissitudes of the Portuguese public administration caused that the different careers, with different functional profiles, were all amalgamated ... Nowadays, there is not even the career of curator: all the different careers are amalgamated in the designation of senior technician. I think the only one that still exists, or that existed until recently, as a separate career, was computer technician.

Presently, this situation is a little “prehistoric”. This means that we, on a professional level and specifically at ICOM-Portugal, have the responsibility to continue to reflect and - even if it is not defined in the law - create ourselves the functional profiles of the various professions that the Museum should have. Even because the law allows us to define the profiles of the type of candidate to fill in a vacant job and here we can use the functional profiles that we have previously professionally defined. We are not, in any way, exempt from responsibility, as professional associations, of defining the functional profiles.”

Training on Museum Mediation

The majority of the respondents keep themselves updated on current issues of Museum Mediation by going to Seminars and Conferences (82%), Visiting other museums (79%), by Online research (benchmarketing) (72%). Others read Specialized Museum Literature (62%) or use Professional networks (informal groups) (61%). Only 20% rely on Professional associations (formal groups).

Most professionals consider that the best training for Museum Mediators is University and Post-
graduate education (62%), ICOM/UNESCO training (52%), closely followed by Internal museum training (53%). Others attend the trainings of Other professionals’ Associations (48%) and few believe that Networking (31%), e-Learning (27%) and Summer courses are suitable ways of training.

However, some agree that:

“All forms of training are complementary and necessary. The most important thing is to understand that Mediation requires skills and knowledge, that are not closed in Humanities, but that currently includes knowledge of the Social and Natural Sciences field, especially after the process of memory and communication have been deepened on a scientific level.”

Others also believe that workshops and the share of experiences with other cultural institutions may be a way to update themselves on this matter.

References into Theory and Practice

Concerning the practical and theoretical references of the respondents of the survey, 81% answered General literature regarding museum education, 75% use Practical cases presented in conferences or Cases researched online, including other museums’ websites and publications (71%). These are followed by General literature regarding education (57%) and General literature regarding social (action/inclusive) projets (41%).

Others respondents, however, use:

“The frameworks of museology and anthropological theory, teaching in PhD courses and master degree in museology, along with professional experience in museums.”

“Pratical work in schools, universities, museums and gallerys, which envolves educators from all levels and disciplines, artists, curators and cultural managers.”

As for the theoretical issues:
• 44% of the respondents have read or discussed Cultural studies;
• 49% have some references about Feminist Pedagogy;
• 42% have some references about Critical Pedagogy;
• 40% have some references about Poststructuralist theory;
• 35% have some references about Constructivist theory.

Yet, 55% of the respondents never heard of Queer Studies, 42% never heard of Postcolonial theory and 35% of Dialogical practice.

What is needed in a Course on Museum Mediation?

The majority of the Museum Professionals think that one of the issues that should be addressed in a Museum Mediation training is Museum Communication and Education (95%). This is followed by Technical issues on planning and programming (76%) and by Museum theory and educational theories and its epistemologies (69%).

Others believe that it should be:

“The ability of seduction and enchantment of the audiences, through a strong theoretical training and good communication skills. The exercise of explicitness and simplicity (not simplistic). Humility (constant receptivity to learning) and authority (ability to transmit knowledge in a personal way, wise and useful to anyone who listens). The practice of simplicity (which implies sedimented knowledge) in museological discourse should be a constant: when selecting the themes, the pathways, the objects, the writing of texts (whether for catalogs or labels), the visits and workshops.”

Concerning the themes considered important to be addressed in a training:

• Group communication and dynamics (58%),
• Creating a mediation plan (58%),
• Working with special needs in non-formal settings (56%),
• Object-based communication and creation (54%),
• Art pedagogy (41%),
• How to develop partnerships (41%).

Tasks of the Museum Mediator

Given the fact that this was an open-ended question, the answers diverge from one respondent to another:

“The involvement of the Museum Mediator in the training plan - the museum’s educational policy, communication and involvement of the audiences; collaboration in visitor studies; collaboration in programming (annual plans; educational programs of exhibitions, etc.).”

“More than a cultural mediator - that epistemologically is defined as “something between” - I believe that the education professionals should (having, as a starting point, the collections in which they work) stimulate and provoke interpretations/representations in the audiences (individual experiences and meanings), towards a better understanding of the world around them and of themselves.”

“Design, coordinate, implement and evaluate educational and cultural projects, while exploring possible links between the community and the museum; ensure monitoring of visitors and project partners to the collection and temporary exhibitions; contribute to the research and development of cultural mediation in the museum and in the community.”

“The Museum Mediator should play as a liason and as a coordinator between the various sectors of the museum, putting his experience and knowledge to the service of the audiences, conveying the institutional message clearly and supporting the creation of cultural financial plans and strategies of interdisciplinary work.”
“The Museum Mediator should play a role that would comprise characteristics related to public relations, marketing, education, communication and art and historical knowledge and a good level of general culture. And even if he may not have any specific knowledge of these, he should have the ability to learn and adapt to the circumstances and needs of the museum where he works.”

“Actively participate in the planning of museum activities, coordinate activities and the team of which he is responsible; providing evaluation moments to the participants and the team that is involved; establish partnerships with the surrounding community; promoting trainings for the community and for the staff of the museum; rehabilitate the image of the museum abroad, as indispensable partner of personal enrichment.”

“Responsible for the planning and coordination of the Communication of Heritage (based on the museum's collection) to visitors. Note: it is important to consider that in the management of heritage in museums, the function "communication" is one of five following responsibilities: to preserve, document, communicate, reconstruct and transmit.”

“There are many functions, because it should be part of all museographic processes, from how to assemble the pieces in the halls of the museum, till what type of communication is established with the public through social networks, through the media, etc... It is to say that it covers the dissemination, mounting and the approach program of the expositive proposals. The real problem is that the mediator itself is never recognized, there is the lack of job stability in which we develop our works, with temporary contracts, without recognized positions. Spain is a bad example, where many centers do not have stable staff, or suitable conditions.”

“Who works in a museum is a permanent mediator between the different audiences and the museum which he represents. The tasks are diverse, but energize the space and take the image of the museum abroad are some of the most important for a better communication with the museum community. It is a starting point for all educational practices, both formal and non-formal.”
João Neto explains that “mediators are those who help the museum to communicate better, those who can help the museum to find partners and sponsorships, those who can bring and seduce audiences to the museums.”

5.2 Museum mediation in Estonia

5.2.1 History and evolution

The first museums in Estonia date back to the very beginning of the 19th century. The field has evolved considerably since then and now there are more than 230 museums in Estonia altogether.

“Museum mediation” is understood as a general term language-wise, a term that applies to most fields of work in a museum, not being a field of work on its own. It is usually thought of as most connected to museum education.

Museum education has been in specific focus since 1994 when for the first time a position of a museum educator was created in the Estonian Open Air Museum. Now, there are museum educators in most museums, bigger museums employ a small team of educators. Even though they are called “educators”, their work is mostly mediation in a wider sense and they are involved in all kinds of mediation activities, not just educational programs. Exhibition-related mediation falls mostly on curators and nowadays many museums have a PR-person as well.

Although there are many museums in Estonia considering the small population (1.3 million), most of them are not big, consisting only of a staff of 1 or 2 people, often working part-time or on a voluntary basis.

The curator of the museum field is the Ministry of Culture. There are 35 museums that belong to different ministries - these are bigger central or regional museums which often base their collections on a special theme. A considerable amount of museums belong to local authorities and these are mostly different-sized city, town and village museums. The rest are private museums or museums belonging to NGOs, usually smallest in staff size.

5.2.2 Legislative framework

The role of the museum educator/mediator is not clear and has not been specified in any legal documents.
All museums are subject to the Museum Law\(^{61}\), which is currently under redaction. In addition to that, there is an official development plan for museums curated by the Ministry of Culture (\(\text{"21st Century Estonian Museums. Main Development Directions 2006-2015."}\)^{62}) which is taken into account when planning changes in the field. This development plan focuses on the mission and vision of Estonian Museums and states main ways to achieve this vision. The plan doesn’t revise museum mediation, but it has a chapter on museum education. It sees museums mainly as partners to formal education (mostly schools). However, since 2006 when this plan was made focus in this field has shifted more towards life-long learning. A new Policy of Culture^{63} is being drafted by the Ministry of Culture in collaboration with cultural institutions which will reflect this shift.

Another document that is connected to the mediation field is the development plan “Digital Cultural Heritage”\(^{64}\) for 2011-2016, also by the Ministry of Culture. Questions on how to preserve (and mediate) digital cultural heritage are currently much debated in Estonia and many museums participate in projects and work groups related to this. One of the focus points at activities listed in this document is raising user awareness (this means mapping the current situation, developing information channels including social media and connecting different databases for easier use) - this is therefore also a focus point for the museum mediation field in Estonia right now.

The occupation of the Museum Professional\(^{65}\) has been officially described for the Estonian Qualifications Authority some years ago, with the aim of granting formal qualification levels. The opportunity to receive this level, however, has never been offered to museum professionals. This is because firstly there hasn’t been any success in formally connecting the levels with salary increase and secondly because the description is too general to apply to any specific job in the museum. This description is therefore not considered active.

Most museum specialists are full- or part-time museum employees and usual labor laws apply to them. They act on a work description which they sign along with the work contract.

---

\(^{61}\) Muuseumiseadus (RT I, 21.03.2011, 20) [https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/121032011020](https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/121032011020)


5.2.3 Analysis of training offer

There are currently no undergraduate, graduate of postgraduate programs in Estonia that focus on museum studies of any kind.

However, some courses are offered to students in different universities. For example, University of Tartu offers a course on museum education and communication to history students and the Estonian Academy of Art offers a course on museum education to art pedagogy students. These courses are not active semester and are not very substantial (only 4-6 ETCS). There have occasionally been other similar courses in universities as well.

Because of the lack of courses on museology and museography on university level, necessary courses are often organized by the Ministry of Culture, museums themselves, museum societies, museum professionals associations and museum NGOs. There are also some in-house trainings (usually informal) in every museum. Most of these courses and seminars focus on practical museum work.

5.2.4 Case Studies

This report is accompanied with 5 video case-studies from Estonia. Cases were selected on the principle of illustrating different methods of mediation and museum education in Estonia.

The case-studies are as follows:

5.2.4.1 Maarja Kõuts

Branch Manager

Museum Miia-Milla-Manda (Branch of Tallinn City Museum)

Tallinn, Estonia

Permanent exhibition based on values education

Educational program “Different is Extraordinary”

---

66 Available on the project website: www.museummediators.eu
Museum Miia-Milla-Manda is a children’s museum which bases its principles on values education. These principles are explained in the video and illustrated with an example of a recent educational program which focuses on social issues.

Museum Miia-Milla-Manda has won the prize of “Values Development Museum 2012” awarded by the University of Tartu Centre for Ethics.

5.2.4.2  Marge Luude

Museum Educator

Põlva Peasant Museum (Põlva Talurahvamuuseum)

Põlvamaa, Estonia

Educational museum space “Exiting Attic”

Põlva Peasant Museum is an open-air museum which poses a range of weather-related problems on their activities. They have found a solution by creating a special educational museum space that acts as an addition to the open-air experience and offers an opportunity for families to participate in a totally new way.

Põlva Peasant Museum has won the 2nd prize in the competition of “Values Development Museum 2012” awarded by the University of Tartu Centre for Ethics.

5.2.4.3  Reeli Kõiv

Head of Educational Centre

Tartu Art Museum (Tartu Kunstimuuseum)

Tartu, Estonia

Exhibition “Estonian Art in Exile” (Estonian Art Museum)

Educational program “Portable Exile Art” (Tartu Art Museum)

Reeli Kõiv from Tartu Art Museum shares their experience on how to mediate a temporary exhibition to students through a special educational program. The program connects art
pedagogy to history studies, therefore connecting several topics from the school curriculum at the same time.

5.2.4.4 Virve Tuubel

Guide-Methodologist

Estonian National Museum

Tartu, Estonia

Educational program “What THING is the museum?”

This educational program poses the goal of creating truly personal experiences and through them creating a deep understanding of why museums exist and what they mean to society. This is done by examining participant’s personal objects that they’ve been asked to bring along and creating an exhibition together.

5.2.4.5 Janet Laidla

Curator

The Old Observatory (The University of Tartu History Museum)

Tartu, Estonia

What revolves around what? Creating illustrative aids for teaching science in the Old Observatory.

The educational staff at the Old Observatory aims to give real-life meaning to dry math calculations and physics drawings that students tackle with in class. For this purpose, several special methods have been created - from interactive models to funny calculations.
5.2.5 Field research

This is an analysis of the results from the questionnaire and the interviews on museum mediation. 119 people answered this survey, out of which 70% completed the whole questionnaire. This is a considerable amount of museum professionals in Estonia, which is considered to be very roughly around 300-400 people, when supportive posts (like maintenance, cleaning, book-keeping etc) are excluded. However, there are no relevant statistics about how many people are actually involved with professional careers in museums.

Most people who answered this questionnaire were professional position educators (39%), directors (21%) and curators (21%). 10% were communication specialists and 6% were education directors.

There were two additional interviews conducted with specialists who lead the training for museum professionals through their organizations in order to compare survey results to their experiences:

- **Merike Lang** (Museum Council - Head of the Museum Education Committee; Director of the Estonian Open Air Museum)

- **Piret Õunapuu** (Director of Executive Board of the Estonian Museum Association; Researcher-Curator in the Estonian National Museum)

### On the Legal Status and Museum Mediator’s Profile

Almost all of the professionals who answered this survey (92%) work for a cultural institution legally recognized as a museum, out of which most work for a state owned museum (65%), a local museum (17%) or other public authorities (13%). Most of these museum focus on a specific subject on a national basis (40%), but there is also a considerable amount of answers from museums focused on local or regional cultures (16% and 25%). These museums hold various collections, most of all history (27%) and ethnological (26%) collections.

Low participation from private institutions can be explained by the nature of private museums in Estonia - they are mostly small places based on specific collection and operated on the principle of open collections. They are usually monumentally understaffed, run on a voluntary basis and are rarely involved with museological work.
Almost all of the museums organize educational activities (93%), but only over half have an educational mission (62%). This shows that often educational activities are not thoroughly thought through and the main focus in museum education is practical as opposed to strategical.

Usually there are special staff members for mediation and education activities (83%). This means 1-4 persons (70%), in bigger museums more, often 5-9 people (18%), but it’s rarely more than that. Most mediators and educators are women, but in almost a quarter of museums there are equal amount of men and women involved with mediation. Most of them work full-time (87%) or part-time (18%) on a regular contract. There are some who work on a temporary contract, but hardly any freelancers or volunteers. There are not a lot of interns in mediation either.

When searching for a new employee most museums consulted usually look for skills specific to the museum’s collections (average rating 2.41), but skills in mediation, museum education and a knowledge of pedagogy are also considered important (average ratings 2.29, 2.18 and 2.07). Compared to that they find previous experiences in museums and schools the least important. This means that museums are open to people with different kind of work backgrounds and not much emphasis is put on museum experience.

Opinions of the interviewees are compatible with the results of the survey here. Interviewee Piret Õunapuu feels that it’s best to have training in the field your museum specializes in first and then add to that education by getting training in things like museum communication, museology or museum education later. Interviewee Merike Lang puts more emphasis on the skills related to communication: basic communication skills, open-mindedness and marketing knowledge; and adds that knowledge of basic educational methods (this includes different drama methods) and some psychology knowledge are also often necessary. However, she also says that its good for a mediator to have studied something else connected to the museum’s collections first (different humanities, arts, sciences) and communication as an addition to that.

Both interviewees find that although the profession of the museum mediator is well-respected in society the biggest problem when finding suitable staff is the wages. Interviewee Merike Lang says that a lot of young museum specialists have a big dilemma, because these wages are not sufficient to get a mortgage for an apartment. It’s hard for museums to compete with other employers on the labor market. It is especially difficult to find employees with education or
experience in marketing and communication because the wages in private companies are significantly higher than what museums can offer. She points out that the marketing and communication specialists, who have learned their skills through work at a museum, usually move to the private sector after reaching a good level of expertise.

Interviewee Piret Õunapuu puts more emphasis on the person - she feels that the position of a museum mediator in society mostly depends on every mediator personally - whether they show discontent or enthusiasm. However, she adds that future work outlooks for museum mediators still only include other cultural institutions, because museum skills are very specific and have little use anywhere else.

**Definition of mediation**

72,9% of mediators see museum mediation as broad concept, embracing activities connected with museum education and communication, aimed at promoting a new social and more inclusive role of museums, involving more partners than educational settings. Museums consulted found four reasons most relevant when it comes to the importance of mediation and education in museum:

- To diversify audiences (79,8%)
- To have an in-depth relation with specific targets (77,7%)
- To communicate and disseminate a specific theme (73,4%)
- To work with specific stakeholders (local communities, teachers, institutional partners, etc. (68,1%)

Interviews also show that mediation is understood as a broad concept. Interviewee Merike Lang says that mediation is any kind of activity in the museum that is directed outwards - from mediating history through exhibitions to direct active mediation through educational programs and it also includes marketing, communication and PR. This kind of thinking can also be seen in the survey where mediators have described the tasks of a mediator.

Merike Lang also stresses that museum education is a part of museum mediation, they cannot be disassociated and that museum mediation is certainly a part of life-long learning. She feels that
museum mediation should rather be seen as a way to develop the new, more inclusive role of the museums as opposed to being only an addition to formal education.

Interviewee Piret Õunapuu adds that when talking about training museum mediators, we can’t forget the people who work in customer service - museum cafes, museum shops, cloakrooms etc. They are the first people visitors meet and very often they also need to mediate the museum. Bad experiences at the café can ruin the whole visit - most people never meet a curator or an educator when they visit a museum.

Management of Museum Mediation and Education service

Mediators consider their audiences to be mostly schools (100%), adults (76,0%), families (68,8%) and tourists (59,4%). This can also be seen from what activities are usually held at museums: workshops (88,7%), guided tours (87,6%), thematic tours (71,1%) and programs for children and families (62,9).

Museums use different tools to maximize results, most often games (87,5%), websites (77,1%) and educational kits (69,8%). The majority of museums also offer activities in foreign languages (79,2%), but they rarely have special tools for disabled audiences - like braille (only 7,3%) or sign language (only 2,2%).

Audience inquiry usually consist of inquiries on quality of service in the museum (75,0%), sometimes also on visitor learning (37,5%). Inquiries on demographic info or project evaluation are seldom carried out, and ethnological methods are scarcely ever used. These results may be connected to low skills in evaluation methods.

Activities are usually planned on a yearly basis (68,2%). Activities connected to refining and revising programs are not much carried out and when they are, very different methods are used with no specific method standing out.

Training on Museum Mediation

Most mediators find that their role is to act as a bridge or a link between the museum and its visitor (71,4%).

Estonian museum professionals keep themselves updated mainly by visiting other museums (93,3%) and going to seminars and conferences (83,3%). Benchmarking on the internet is also common (73,3%) along with reading specialized literature (62,2%). Groups, either formal or non-
formal are not really considered as an important way to keep oneself up to date professionally. It seems that individual experiences are predominant.

The best training for museum mediators is thought to be participation in special courses/summer courses (78,3%) and in other professionals’ associations training (62,0%). Other ways (university education, ICOM/UNESCO training, in-house training and networking) are also considered relevant - the only thing Estonian museum professionals don’t have much faith in is e-Learning.

Interviewee Merike Lang says that the current additional training system for museum specialists (most courses are arranged by professionals’ associations and committees and the field is not very regulated) has a very strong advantage: the additional training field is flexible and can adapt to the changing needs of museum professionals very quickly. She feels that when training is planned over a very long period, relevant results might not be achieved.

Interviewee Piret Õunapuu also finds that the current additional training system is quite good for the same reason and she stresses that while organizing courses it is very important not to forget the needs of small museums where there are not many employees and one person often has to fill the shoes of many different specialists.

Although other issues are also considered important (53,8-63,7%), skills and knowledge in museum communication and education is by far the most relevant in the eyes of Estonian museum mediators (86,8%).

Almost half of the professionals feel that they need extra skills in group communication and dynamics (51,6%), visitor studies (49,5%), how to develop partnerships (44,0%), object-based communication and creation (42,9%) and working with special needs in non-formal settings (40,7%). Extra skills in other offered themes were not so often needed.

Interviewee Merike Lang remarks that she feels that communication studies should be added to the Humanities Bachelor’s curriculums in universities. Lack of communication, PR and marketing skills is also apparent in the results of the survey.

Profile of a Mediator

When it comes to the question of the tasks of a museum mediator, different views arose. Most often it was said that a mediator has to give meaning to what the visitor sees. The mediator has to open the museum to the visitor. Also, that a mediator has to communicate the most important aspects - act as a kind of filter. Providing the visitor with new knowledge and giving answers to
their curiosities are also considered to be very relevant.

In everyday reality this means receiving visitors from all target-groups. They are continuously involved in the exhibition creation process and create and prepare educational programs. A mediator also reflects on current projects and prepares for next ones, and is densely involved in marketing (including product design) and PR.

Many people said that the image and reputation of a museum are in the hands of the mediators. Through him visitors understand the contents of the museum and the kind of values it carries.

These tasks are also apparent in the answers in the additional interviews and interviewee Piret Õunapuu stresses that collecting and preserving have no real value unless there is mediation - otherwise it’s kept hidden from society. She says that the big goal of successful mediation is to make a person want to come back to the museum.

80,7% of professionals who answered this questionnaire were women. Most of them were either 30-39 (32,5%) or 50-59 (27,7%) years old. There are also quite a lot of very young workers in the mediation field - 21,7% were 20-29 years old. Different age groups all seem to be a part of museum staffs and there is no apparent inclination to any of them.

Most mediators have an educational background in Humanities (55,1%). This adds up to the fact that skills connected to specific collections are considered most relevant and most museums specialize in history and ethnology. Pedagogy is the second most popular field of study for museum mediators (23,1%) - this can be explained by the importance of the educational role of a mediator according to the answerers.

Most mediators have worked in the museum for less than 10 years, most often either less than 2 (24,1%) or 5-9 years (24,1%), but generally museums usually seem to employ specialists with different experience levels almost equally.

97,2% of all mediators can speak foreign languages - mostly English (96,2%), Russian (88,6%), German (39,0%) and Finnish (33,3%). Very few mediators speak French or Spanish, but Swedish was also named on 4 occasions.

Most mediation staff also include non-Estonian nationalities (63,9%), consisting of 1-10 persons which sometimes is most of the mediation staff. This is probably due to the fact that Estonians make up about 68% of the population and workers of other ethnic backgrounds are therefore considered an asset to a museum.
References into Theory and Practice

As far as practice-theory references, professionals seem to be more interested in practice than theory. Most consider their references to be mainly on case-studies, from conferences (72.7%) and cases researched online (55.8%). Theoretical interests focus more on museology (66.2%) and educational theory (59.7%) and less on social projects (only 31.2%).

Theoretical issues didn’t score very high. Estonian museum mediators are more familiar with Cultural Studies (average rating 2.86) and Constructivist theory (average rating 2.24). This derives from the fact that these theories are widely discussed in Humanities and Pedagogy degree courses in Estonian universities. People have less knowledge in Structural constructivism, Poststructural theory, Critical Pedagogy, Postcolonial theory, Dialogical practice, Feminist pedagogy and Queer studies (average rating between 1.72-1.97). Mediators seldom said that some theory has influenced their issues and methods, but it was most said about the above-named Cultural theory and Constructivist theory.
5.3 Museum mediation in Finland

5.3.1 History and evolution:

Most Finnish museums were founded as part of the nation-building process in the early 20th century. Already from the beginning they had the goal of educating the public and reinforcing the national identity. First educational officers were appointed to national museums in the 1970’s (Pedafooni 2B).

The Finnish Association for Museum Education was funded 2005. Their statements defines that museum education is part of the museums’ vital tasks of audience development and art education and it is intended to promote cultural democracy and accessibility.

They write “Museum education as a profession is new, and the field has until now remained unorganised. The association seeks to reinforce the identity of museum education as a profession and increase its appreciation, by assisting its members to network and by improving the expertise and training opportunities in the field.”

5.3.2 Legislative framework

The title museum in Finland is not protected: anything can be called a museum. The distinction lies in defining between professionally run museums that are eligible for state funding and museums that are not professionally run (still there is, of course, a difference between nonprofessional museums that are systematically run and assisted by regional museum advisors and private collectors or companies who decide to call their collection a museum). The legislative definition of a museum is that it has two members of staff.…

Museums Act of 1992 was amended in 2006 and the statute is being refined this year.

Among other definitions the Statute defines a museum eligible for state subsidies, when it is professionally run by minimum of two employees with either museological studies (30 ECTS) or two years of work experience. The statute does not mention museum education specifically, but the presentation of collections is mentioned. The Ministry of Education and Culture is in many cultural policies and special subsidies encouraged mediation and accessibility in the cultural field in general and in museums especially.
5.3.3 Analysis of training offer

Universities of Jyväskylä (campus and online), Helsinki, Tampere, Turku and Oulu as well as the Finnish Museums Association (online) offer 25-80 ECTS of Museology, but only 2-8 ECTS on Museum Education as part of audience management. Aalto University has an international multidisciplinary MA programme on Curating, Managing, and Mediating Art (CuMMA) which consists of theoretical and practical studies and projects, and a Master's Thesis (2 years, 120 ECTS). In the theoretical studies, the framework is the work and practices of the field of visual arts. Practical studies and projects focus on the analytical and reflective examination of the field. The programme focuses particularly on questions associated with the public presentation and mediation of contemporary art, and its contents are developed in active interaction with the changing demands of the art field.

Mediation in the programme

The Finnish Museums Association provides annually a varying range of in-service trainings ranging from one-day seminars to distance-learning courses. In their selection there is often some modules of interest for museum mediators, but no specific curricula. The Helsinki University Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education has started in 2013 a pilot training for MLA -pedagogy as 30 ECTS blended learning module for museums, archives, science centres and libraries professionals realised with Universities of Helsinki, Oulu, Turku and Eastern Finland.

The Finnish Association for Museum Education, Pedaali, was established on 1 March 2005. The purpose of the association is to promote museum education. The goal is also to provide information on the overall importance of museum and art education. The goal of the association is to function as a forum for active and future museum educators, provide training, and work actively in the field to promote museum education. Pedaali arranges meetings, seminars and training sessions and publishes online.

5.3.4 Experiences

5.3.4.1 Selected Case-Studies

The five case-studies from Finland focus on different ways of making an impact in the field of museum mediation.
Finnish Museum of Photography/ Pedaali - Finnish Association for Museum Education - Building audiences. Erja Salo has created a pedagogical approach and practice for the museum. She is also the chair of museum educators’ association Pedaali. The case discusses the changing role of the museum mediation - Erja Salo, educational curator

The Open Museum - developing a learning environment for adults. Seven museums collaborated in engaging adult audiences and creating tools and practices for museums in a project 2010-2012. Leena Törnberg discusses the ideas of engaging and informal learning - Leena Törnberg, Education Management Professional.

Jyväskylä Art Museum - Culture Companions. Engaging the community as well as municipal services. - Sirpa Turpeinen, educational curator.

Helinä Rautavaara Museum - Arooska: the somali wedding. Co-curating an exhibition and educational program with the Finnish diasporic somali community. -Ilona Niinikangas, educational curator and Suaado Jama, project coordinator.

Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova : wellbeing from the museum

OR Sagalund?? community, open air museum

OR Werstas

5.3.5 Articles other materials


Conference report

Project papers:

Avara museo: The Open Museum - developing a learning environment for adults

Fantasy Design in Community

5.3.5.1 Survey Analysis: - Finland, March 2013

This is an analysis of the results form the questionnaire and the interviews on Museum Mediation. 56 people answered the questionnaire of which 26 (55 %) were Museum Educators (either Gallery Educator or Educators/Program Coordinators, Director of Education or freelancers), Curator 7 (17.5%), Museum Directors 3 (5%). Most museum educators share the same title, which can be depending of the type and size of museum be described either as gallery educator, educator or director of education. 8 respondents chose the Other - option and 13 did not answer to this question. The job titles that are used in Finnish museums vary greatly, and many did not exist in the multiple choices. The job title curator is not used as a direct translation. The other titles mentioned include two different translations for curator (intendentti, amanuensis), producer, visitor specialist, front desk museum assistant, team leader. Job titles are not protected.

The titles and share of work vary a great deal from museum to museum. Most museums are rather small (average number of staff is 7) and until very recently they made do with two titles for staff with higer eduction: director and 2-3 amanuensis (=does everything else), in addition to which they employed guards, technicians, perhaps office staff. Since the 90s a third title - museum educator- has become usual. Her or his work can be anything from giving guided tours, taking care of marketing and communication to managing entire educational programs, curating educational or participatory exhibitions, writing exhibition texts and publishing educational materials. An even newer trend in middle sized and big museums is changing the titles of their museum educators to better describe their different responsibilities. However, right now most of the museum mediators have the same title but have very different job descriptions.

The starting point in the interviews was that the typical profile of the museum mediator is the profession of “museolehtori” (literally “museum lecturer” but translated as museum educator, curator of education, gallery educator) which is a typical job title in most museums with staff of more than 2 -3, even what activities the “museolehtori” carries out in their institutions vary. The profession of museum mediator exists, and the museum educators have a very active and developed professional association Pedaali which has a prominent role in the field - they are...
consulted both within the field and even in policy-making. The current discourses in the museum field are very much about it is not only the museum educators that should be taking the audiences into consideration etc.

Tree people answered the interviews: 2 answered the interview designed for Museum Mediators and 1 for Museum Mediation Trainers. The respondents were in the core of developing museum mediation in Finland: the chairperson and vice chairperson of the museum educators association Pedaali (both also professional full time museum educators in their own museums, an art museum and a photography museum) and the coordinator of education services at the Finnish Museums Association, the main training provider for museum professional. She also had a background in museum mediation in both cultural historical museums and science centres. She is among the very few in Finland with a degree in museum pedagogy (from University of Stockholm, Sweden).

On the Legal Status and Museum Mediator’s Profile

All of the respondents that answered the question work in an organization that is recognized as a museum at the national level. More than half of the respondents’ museums were owned by the municipality, second biggest group worked in museums owned by foundations, less in state owned and other publicly owned museums. None of the respondents worked in voluntary-run museums. This may be because the survey was distributed through channels used by museum professionals and directed for them, and voluntary workers do not identify themselves as museum professionals.

Most of the museums were considered local or regional.

Of the respondents majority, about 2/3 worked in a historical museum and almost 1/3 in an Art Museum, even though all the other museum types listed were also represented even though they are very few of them in Finland.

Most of them organize educational activities (95%) and have an educational mission (more than 2/3). Of the museums consulted, 95% has personnel to organize Museum mediation/education activities.

The personnel are mostly women (90%) and aged 30-39 years (45%).
As far as their background, most professionals come for the humanities (75%). Many had done museum studies and pedagogical studies, but also many other varieties of educational background were mentioned: social sciences, economics, PhD, degree in tourist services etc.

Museum mediation/education has not been a separate professional profile in Finland for very long, but museums have provided educational services for their audiences, perhaps with a different job title. Even though the majority of the respondents have worked in museums 9 years or less, 40% have worked more than 10 years of which 9 respondents even more than 20 years.

The Museum Education/ Mediation departments are rather small: half of the respondents work in museums that have 1-4 people working with mediation and only 10% in museums with more than 10 staff in their department. Within the departments there are full time professionals (54.5%) and freelancers (according to activity) (40.0%). This means that the departments of Education are small and that half of the professionals are freelancers.

The skills that were considered very important when selecting a museum educator/mediator were expertise specific to collection’s (47%) and museum education/museum studies (48%). The abilities considered important were previous work experience both in education (63%) and museums (55%). Experience was considered more important than particular educational content: this reflects to the fact that there is no specific education for museum mediators, thus experience and an understanding of collections and museum studies is most that can be expected. Curiously enough marketing and communication were not considered important - was that maybe because the question was about marketing and communication STUDIES, maybe the answer would have been different on experience? In the interviews the importance of understanding and being able to focus also marketing and communication was much discussed. Being able to think outside the narrowest definition of museum pedagogy was considered very important, and something that will be emerging as a new need/skill in the field.

Most museum mediators speak other languages (98%). These are: English (100%), Swedish (45%) German (29%) Spanish (24%) and French (17%).

In the category "other" mostly Swedish was mentioned (that being the other official language of the country: in bilingual municipalities all public services, even cultural services, are provided in Finnish and Swedish both), but in addition to Swedish several museums mentioned Russian, some Italian - Estonian, Arabic and Somali all got one mentioning.

Surprisingly (considering that all the museum staff that I have encountered outside my own museum are 100% Finns) 25% of the respondents’ museums have people with foreign background working in museum mediation. The high number may be explained by Russian-born freelance
guides that many museums use to provide services for Russian tourists, since not many Finns have studied Russian at school.

**Definition of Museum Mediation**

Most of the professionals in the survey choose the definition that Museum Mediation is a broad concept that includes activities connected with education and communication, that promote a new inclusive role and involves different agents in different educational spaces (72%).

In the interviews new demands for museum mediation were recognized emerging from the need to create different kinds of contacts with audiences and stakeholders. We also discussed the role of museums as medium: not only of mediation as face-to-face interaction between humans but also exhibitions and collections as statements that mediate meanings and values.

Today in most museums, museum mediators are also part of the exhibition team, but the practices can be rigid and most museum educators still feel the need to promote the importance of taking their expertise into consideration already when starting the planning: the exhibition narrative, not only the length and legibility of texts and programming. On the other hand, many curators but especially exhibition teams in cultural historical museums/special museums consider mediation an essential part of their work in planning and in realising exhibitions. At the moment there are two different initiatives that affect most of the museum field regarding collections: the other is about unifying digital catalogues strategies and combining the contents of museums, libraries and archives to one interface and search logic (FINNA) which means that the digital catalogues actually are directly available to the public, and curators of collections are also becoming mediators. The interface will also allow a two-way communication: the users can add their comments. There are lots of expectations towards the feedback possibilities and contextualisations. The other initiative within the field of collections in Finland (TAKO) is about collaboration, specialization and lending within the Finnish museum field: museums are encouraged to reaccession objects that other museums already have, focus on strengths in their own collections and share the work of contemporaneous documentation. Especially in the latter the projects involve the audiences in many ways, and have a strong mediation focus.

In the interviews the respondents rather focused on discussing the fringes and development possibilities of the field, perhaps because they all had a role of developer.

The average situation is best represented by what the survey tells about museum mediation programs.
**Museum Mediation Programs**

78% of the interviewees answered that Museum Mediation Programs are important in order to communicate and disseminate a specific topic, 78% to have an in-depth relationship with specific audiences, 78% to diversify audiences.

100% answered that the programs their department organizes are targeted to schools, 90% to Adults, 85% to Families, 75% to seniors and 68% Special Needs Visits but activities for tourists (58,5%), minorities (32%) and refugees (22%) are also represented. The numbers are rather high, probably higher than average. A national survey related to the state funding of museums will be out this spring with data also about accessibility and diversity of audiences and it will be interesting to compare with this data: most likely the respondents of the survey represent active museums.

Most activities that are being held have traditional formats such as Guided tours (100%), Workshops (90%) and Children and Family Programs (78%).

Most museums use educational brochures (88%) and have educational kits (64%). 100% of museums have a web page, but only 51% consider they have a mediation focus in it (most likely the respondents considered that they need to have special educational content on their site, not only basic information). Most museums (87%) provide activities in different languages, but this most likely means that the other national language Swedish/Finnish is used. There is little offer of services in Braille (82%) or in sign language (92%).

Museum Mediation/Education activities are mainly organized in relation to either as part of yearly planning (39%) or temporary exhibits (34%).

Activities are mostly developed and evaluated from the perspective of the professionals (team brainstorming 87%, stakeholders 54%) even though also audience feedback is considered (visitor studies 44%, remedial/front-end feedback 41%).

**Visitor Studies**

87% evaluate the activity or project and the quality of service. Almost half of the museums collect demographic information of their visitors, but none of their learning styles and very few (2) carry out ethnographic researches. This indicates that the possibilities of visitor studies are
used rather reactively than proactively: not for learning about them in order to design mediation for them, but rating the product/service already designed.

**Definition of the Museum Mediator**

Most professionals think that the Museum Mediator is the person who acts as a bridge (link) between the museum and its visitors (75,0%).

Museum mediation was described in addition to choosing from the ready options:

"I believe it is a two way communication, where the mediator has to be able to get to the same level as the audience. If it is necessary to clarify concepts or themes, the mediator needs to be able to understand this in order to reach the audience."

"Bridge in the way that the museum has certain specialist functions and transmitting them in an animated, experiential and influencing way is the role of the museum mediator from my perspective."

"The visitor is not always aware of the possibilities the museum could offer. When you take the initiative to talk about them, demand is created which leads to developing also the offer."

"A person who translates the museum objects and themes and offers alternative ways to seeing the same thing from different perspectives. Not only offers one truth, encourages in critical thinking and own deductioning."

The tasks of the museum mediator are described as (translated from open field questions: the respondents meaning was not always clear to the translator).

"To take into consideration the visitor perspective and remember the needs of different visitors. The activity goes two ways, it acts as mediator between the museum and the audience. Generally, about museum education: museum education sees the museum and the museum visit as an entity, not only from the perspective of the content that the museum displays but also regarding everything that the visitor encounters in the museum - and even outside the museum. Museum education has three starting points: 1) to enable and encourage the visitors personal experience and activate own translations and creativity 2) to transmit information, deepen understanding and further knowledge 3) discuss the museum as an institution, an open space and location. The mission of museum pedagogy is also to involve the whole organisation in taking the
Guidelines for Museum Mediators professionals in Europe - 74
2012-2014

audience into consideration and furthering the pedagogical mission. (Source: Museum pedagogical association Pedaali, www.pedaali.fi)

"Depends on whether the mediator is more the planner or the facilitator, but (depending on the museum) to create a setting where one is not afraid to perceive, think and act."

"Act as mediator between the museum and the audience. Create and carry out contents and activities."

"To transmit the content of the exhibition to the audience."

"In addition to audience activities, to be in charge of the "educational" properties of the exhibitions, events, planning of guided tours and other activities, interaction with stakeholders related to mediation activities (teachers, NGOs, other museums)."

"In our museum the museum educator is in charge of the planning of the museum education as part of the museum’s exhibition plan as well as the realisation of pedagogical concepts. The guided tours are carried out - in addition to the museum educator - by other members of permanent staff as well as temporary customer service employees and volunteers."

"To sense the changes in the environment and react to them, find new partnerships, develop the work continuously with the museum and the visitors."

"To work with different audiences in ways and locations that are best suited for them making the tradition and the future understandable and interesting."

"The museum mediator communicates, develops the museum education critically, justifies museum education theoretically and pedagogically also in events production, and she/he can with her/his intensive presence also encourage and activate different target groups to interact with culture and nature. The museum mediator is an important person also in how the visitors experience their visit and whether they get inspired to find more about things or to find locations of cultural and natural heritage in their environment. The museum mediator is both educator and communicator. She/he also teaches hands on skills in workshops so she/he also transmits values by action. The museum educator is not invisible, because her/his influence is present in for example the pedagogical planning of exhibitions and learning materials."
“In the end the visitor gets a positive feeling, which can then turn into action, if the content has been presented in a way that makes them personal and meaningful.”

”To enable all visitors to find something new in the museum. Act as a link between the museum and the rest of the world.”

”As I already mentioned: to transmit sense of culture and history, making the significance of the past understandable by realizations.”

”To build a shared understanding.”

”To create enthusiasm to things and themes from the museum visit.”

”Most important is to act as a link between the museum and the audience. To educate, inspire, transmit and entertain.”

”To transmit knowledge, new experiences and ways of thought, opening up history/art to the audience with means and methods most suitable for them.”

”To create contact surfaces between the audience and the museum, not just by exhibitions.”

”To give information about culture/art/science and light a spark for own learning, developing and loving culture.”
Training on Museum Mediation

Most professionals follow current issues in museum mediation collegially by visiting other museums (97%) or go to seminars and conferences (78%). Informal professional networks (77.5%) and as well as professional associations (53%) are also important sources of input.

Most professionals think that Museum Mediation training should happen in networks (65%) or as university/postgraduate courses (63%). This perhaps reflects the strong role that Finnish Museums Association has as professional museum training provider: their trainings focus very much on sharing good practices inside the field and networking.

References into Theory and Practice

Finnish museum professionals see their work as very practical and appreciate case studies, either in conferences and seminars (87%), in the web (67%). Literature on museum education is also appreciated (53%).

Identifying the theoretical background of their practice is not very important for museum professionals in Finland. Of the choices given cultural studies is most influenced (47%) as well as constructivist theory (32%).

What is needed in a Course on Museum Mediation?

Most of the professionals think that communication and museum education is needed in a course on museum mediation (83%), secondly technical questions on planning and programming (73%) teaching problems derived from practical case studies (53%). One third of the respondents see the theoretical background as important (museum theories of education and theories and epistemologies of teaching and learning).

Most of the themes suggested in the survey for museum mediation training interested the respondents, but the most important were:

1. Creating a mediation plan (71%)
2. Object-Based Learning (51%)
3. How to develop Communities Work (47%)
4. working with special needs groups (44%)
The popularity of the mediation plan is probably because at the moment many museums are developing their pedagogical strategies.

To sum up the current practice and programming, it is worrying to see how specific to their own field the museum educators see their field practices:

1. ideas and current issues come from other museums/museum professionals
2. in recruitment museum experience is highly valued
3. theory is not important

From reading this I worry where could the museum field get new and fresh ideas from, if they only look within their own community? Benchmarking is good, but do we keep recreating the juxtaposition of “the museum and the outside world” by staying too close to home? The only way out seems to be that opinions of and interaction with audiences are emerging to be seen as valuable. But should we not look a bit further in our communities/environments - at least in Finland there are building expectations from the state and from the municipalities that cultural institutions should be more open to collaboration between the sectors - not only education, but social and health sectors, both municipal and third sector for instance. Policy-makers talk about culture being part of well-being services, but are the connections there in the field yet? How are museum professionals able to best realise and evaluate good possible new practices if they only look at their own sector?
5.4 Museum mediation in Spain

5.4.1 History and evolution

During the 19th century most Spanish Museums were seen as contemplative spaces and were visited by an elitist audience following the European tradition of understanding museums as monuments or mausoleums. Little by little labels and guided tours were designed to help the visitor understand what was being exhibited. During the 70’s and due to The New Education or Active Education Movement in Schools, museums were seen as educational arenas and the demand of educational tours for students grow in a fast and urgent fashion (Lavado, 2006). Most museums at that time did not have educational departments and had to improvise Services for Schools. This leads to a gradual need to have museum education departments that crystallised during the 90’s. In the 80’s around 30 museums had education departments (López, 2011) and in the 90’s it was a must, due to the paradigm shift form object to visitors that was seen across Europe and the US. During the last decades museum education departments have expanded their services to new audiences such as families, local communities, senior citizens and have diversified their projects and programs. Education Departments are charge of communication and education and believe their task is bridging their collections and exhibits to visitors.

In 1985 the nomenclature for education was unified within the Spanish context and most education departments were known as DEAC Department of Education and Cultural Action following ICOM’s guidelines.

During the 90’s some universities started Museum Education programs which contributed to professionalism in the field. However there is still a division between in-house museum educators and external personnel. Most of the museum programs are being held by external personnel which means a precarious profession. Moreover, there is a difference between big and small local museums in terms of resources. Local museums are small and most professionals have to do all museum tasks form conservation to education. There is a need to have better training in museum mediation for local museums as a study on the cultural sector shows 67.

5.4.2 Legislative framework

The role of the museum educator /mediator is not clear. Most museum mediators come from the Humanities field or from the teaching field and have training either in the job or through National Conferences organized by ICOM the Departments of Education and Cultural Action (Sánchez de Serdio; López, 2011). Museum educators have always had a secondary role tighten to curators, although in the late 90’s museum communication became more visible and central than before.

The new role of the museum educator/ mediator is to communicate and divulgate knowledge derived from exhibits or collections. Nowadays their ambiguous status leads to a division between museum institutionalized educators and freelancers or subcontracted small enterprises. Most museums in Spain do not have solid museum mediators’ teams; they rather rely on external mediators who are not considered to have the same status within the museum context. Although their visibility is crucial to the museum’s educational programs, their administrative or legal status is still precarious. (Artium, Vitoria, El Patio Herreriano, Valladolid, Guggenheim, Bilbao, La Laboral, Gijón; Musac, León; Montehermoso, Basque Country; Reina Sofia, Madrid Muhba, Barcelona; CCCB; Barcelona, Fundació). Some other museums rely on interns to do education (Fundació Miró, Palma de Mallorca). There are instances of freelancer museum mediators who have won court cases and have got compensations for their services (Musac, León, 2011, www.educacionenprecario.com). On the other hand, and since the late 90’s, the field of museum education/ mediation has been acknowledged through university postgraduate courses, bibliography and national congresses. There are also informal groups on Museum Education such as a Facebook network called REDPEMEA.

5.4.3 Analysis of training offer

There are several postgraduate courses on Museum Education that focus on the role of museum education: M.A. in Museums: Education and Communication, University of Zaragoza, since 1989; M.A. in Museum Education, Heritage, Identity and Mediation, University of Murcia, online; M.A. in Didactics and Heritage, University of Barcelona; Postgraduate in Artistic Education and Museum Management, University of Valencia; M.A. of Museum Studies, Unviersity of Granada is also committed to Museum Education as well as the M.A, in Heritage Management, University of Barcelona.
There are not that many associations that offer Museum Mediation training needs or in-service courses. However, the Ministry of Culture has the platform on Permanent Laboratory of Museum Visitors (http://www.mcu.es/museos/MC/Laboratorio/DocumInteres.html) which researches and publishes on Museum Visitor Studies, as well as some Museum Publications such as Her & Mus, Revista de Museso; Musea, Revista de Museología; Arte, Individuo y Sociedad that include some articles on Museum Mediation.

5.4.4 Experiences:

Most Education Departments in Spanish Museums hold programs for Schools, Families or Communities. The following are some examples of specific projects or programs organized by specific Art Museums:

- “Coffee Conversations with Temporary Exhibits”: Since the 90's The Arts Lab of Caixaforum, Barcelona has a project for Senior Visitors where they visit a temporary exhibit and debate it sharing a cup of coffee.

- AT-M Program “A tu medida” (At your measure): Since the late 90s Artium Museum in Vitoria offers a School program targeted to schools and teachers consists of a planning session with teachers, a pre-visit, a visit and a school visit in order to work in depth on aspect of the museum’s collection and exhibitions.

- Visual Thinking Curriculum: Malaga Picasso Museum, Barcelona’s Picasso Museum, Centro Atlántico de Arte Moderno, Las Palmas. A CV that comes from New York’s MOMA and has been implemented in most Modern Art Museums since the late 90’s.

- “Cartografiem-nos”: Since 2005, Es Baluard in Mallorca started a long-term collaborative project with the local schools of Majorca. Museum Mediators, Teachers and Students negotiate a process research on schooling, territory and the arts. They develop several artistic projects based on the interests and worries of the students. Each artistic project is exhibited in the museum, in the school venues and in their local communities.

- “Social Inclusion Program”: La Panera Contemporary Art Center in Lleida, offers an Educational Program on Social Inclusion which offers a language program to immigrants in relation with the contemporary exhibits of the Center.
There are several good Programs for Teachers at Centro Dos de Mayo, Madrid, at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Barcelona or Collaborative Projects for Communities at Matadero, Madrid, or for Artistic Communities at Reina Sofía Madrid.

5.4.4.1 Selected Case-Studies

I have selected five case studies, which pose problems to the practice of museum mediation, rather than looking for general answers and thus unifying what can-cannot be seen from a contingent, and contextual approach. All the case studies identify problems and are based on experiences of museum mediators. In this sense, I am interested in rendering educational practices that somewhat do not seem universal, homogeneous or institutionalised by educational or mediation departments. All of the case selected studies are drawn from actual teaching practices in different institutions across Spain (Majorca, Bilbao, San Sebastian, Barcelona and Plascencia, Extremadura). They show a different story of museum mediation and aim to reveal how theory and practice are connected, yet how in our field, critical or post critical theory is also needed in order to challenge a reproductive approach when we define museum mediation practice solely from constructivist theory.

I have selected five museum mediators who believe that Museum Mediation is a reflexive critical practice. Secondly, they think there is interplay and a constant negotiation between objects, visitors, the process, the institution, mediators and what is left over or silenced in each action. Thirdly they are committed to researching museum practice and finally they bring different angles of specific problems that can arise we Museum Mediation is seen a highly complex field.

Most of the mediators selected in this study are women, since Museum Mediation is a highly feminised job. In this case, all of them have a post feminist approach in order to resist the stereotypical role of educators as a vocational or non-intellectualised community. Moreover, most of the mediators selected have been positioned as educators in the periphery: as gallery educators, outsourcing services, interns or museum guides. Being a precarious staff yet, showing an autonomous position within the museum field. Sometimes their work is not visible enough within the museum community, due to the lack of long-term museum mediation teams and due to the homogenisation of people, practitioners and programs in most Spanish museums.
Most of the museum mediators selected have recently changed jobs. Some work for the University, have a PhD, work in a Local Community Museum or are looking for better opportunities abroad. Consequently, I would like to recognise their contributions to the Spanish Museum Mediation Community. I hope that this project is a healing experience for all of them.

Each case poses a different problem to Museum Mediation Practice. Each of them examine the effects of the mediator’s actions and review their practice according to different viewpoints that stem from Critical Pedagogy to Post feminist Pedagogy. Some of these Mediators use process to rewrite their practice, such as in Case Study 3 where Mediators reflect on the need to take into account Pedagogical documentation while designing and implementing any Museum Mediation Project. Some of them talk about the Role of the Museum Mediator as a Multifaceted and Problematic Subject, as in Case Study 1 where the Museum Mediator is viewed as continuous unfolding of Masquerades. Or they simply show how to use Performance as a way to liberate both the mediator and the public as in Case 5.

- Case Study 1: Residual Pedagogy or how to talk about what is normally not being said when after a museum education intervention, Irene Amengual, Majorca.
- Case Study 2: Reconstructing one’s experience after the Spanish Museum Boom. Going back home. Amparo Moroño, Centro de Interpretación Monfragüe Park, Cáceres.
- Case Study 3: Should we sign our Museum Mediation Projects or Interventions? Amaia Urzain, El Cubo, San Sebastián.
- Case Study 4, Why is it so difficult to document while doing Museum Mediation? A story in three voices. Artaziak is a cooperative of three women dedicated to museum mediation.
- Case Study 5: A Bit on Performance, Feminism and Education in Conversation with Museum Mediation, Salonniers is a collective of five artistic educators that use performance as a way to develop creativity, critical thinking and communication from a performative point of view.
5.4.5 Field research

5.4.5.1 Survey Analysis

This is an analysis of the results of the Questionnaire and of the Interviews on Museum Mediation. 63 people answered the questionnaire. It was answered by Educators or Program Coordinators (28,9%), Museum Directors (20%), Curators (17,8%), Directors of Education (13,3%), Gallery Educators (6,7%), Managers (6,7%).

11 people were interviewed; 4 participated in the interview designed for Museum Mediation Departments, 4 for Museum Mediators and 3 for Museum Mediation Trainers.

On the Legal Status and Museum Mediator’s Profile

48, 4% of the professionals consulted work for a local or regional authority.

Most of the people in the survey work for either a Local or Municipal organization (35,1%) or for a Regional organization (31%). Most professionals consulted work for an Art Collection (75,9%). Most of them organize Educational Activities (96,9%) and have an educational mission (69,4%). Of the Museums consulted, 87,7% has personnel to organize Museum mediation/education activities.

The personnel are mostly Women (78,7%) and are 30-39 years old(44,7%).

Concerning their background, most professionals come from the Humanities field (75,6%), secondly, they come from Art Education (28,9%) and thirdly from Pedagogy (20%). Their background is Arts (31,1%). This means that there is no specific university training on Museum mediation. They were trained through their job experience. It’s therefore a practical profession. It seems that the disciplinary knowledge is more relevant content than education or communication.

The survey shows that Museum Education / Mediation is seen as a rather new profession:

- 29,8% have worked in the museum for 5 to 9 years,
- 19,1% for 2 to 4 years,
- 17% for 10 to 14 years.
The Museum Education / Mediation departments are rather small: 75% of the professionals consulted claim that in the Department of Education 1 to 4 people work. The majority of the workers in this field are women, 80% of the answers confirmed this. Within the departments there are full time professionals (54.5%) and freelancers (according to activity) (40,0%). This means that the departments of Education are small and that half of the professionals are freelancers.

The abilities that are considered for selecting a museum educator/mediator are:

- In Education and Teaching (63,8%)
- Specific to Education and Museum Studies (52,0%)
- Museum Mediation and Education (52,0%)
- Specific to the Museum's Collections (50,9 %)

Most Museum Mediators speak languages (83, 3%), such as: English (100%), Spanish (73,3%) - taken into account that in some areas of Spain Spanish is considered as a foreign language - and French (57,8%).

There are no foreigners in Museum Mediation departments (100%). This means that it is a very local oriented practice and English is needed for tourist visitors.

**Definition of Museum Mediation**

Most of the professionals agree that Museum Mediation is a broad concept that includes activities connected with education and communication, that promotes a new inclusive role and involves different agents in different educational spaces (70, 2%).

In our interviews we found different conceptions of Museum Mediation. However, most of the people agree that there is not a clear concept. Moreover, it is a concept that they define in terms of practice, rather than relying on theoretical references. This means they do not use any theoretical reference to define Museum Mediation. On the other hand, some say that Mediation is seen from a very traditional point of view:
“So, my experiences, within the field of artistic mediation, one very specific (just to mention one), would be to mediate between the local community (a neighbourhood) and a museum. And to mediate between this neighbourhood and museum with which, because we also have to see with whom we mediate, in families, with families.”

Mar, Museum Mediator.

“Within museum mediation, I would say it is: general visits and workshop-visits. [...] The traditional forms are the ones that guide the practice. Another thing is that every educator can adjust this form to do the general visit and the workshop-visit differently.”

Sofía, Museum Trainer

“Yesterday, during a conversation with another group, we were thinking about it, because we were talking about cultural mediators and this is what we are, but in reality, we did not really know what we were talking about. We don’t really know what a cultural mediator is. We define ourselves as such.”

Elsa, Museum Mediator

Some of our interviewees think Museum Mediation is not only an institutional term, but also a question of how to create connections with different institutions and / or agents. It is also seen as an Encounter between Cultural Producers and People:

“So I was a mediator... because we understood that there were some cultural productions on one hand and we there were also the people, and there was a connection... But, sometimes there is a need to provide bridges or to connect...to make possible to have the encounter, the mediation, and to take interesting things out from it.”

Margot, Museum Mediator

---

68 Except for Mar, the rest of names are invented to preserve the mediators’ identities.
Another conception of Mediation is that of the Creation of Networks and Communications. In this sense, Mediation is seen as a two-way responsibility, either of instances institutions or agents or always in flux:

If the focus is placed on the Visitor or on the Context, the definition of Museum Mediation varies dramatically: Andrea thinks that Mediation always changes according to with whom you work. Amaia considers that visitors are always experts in something:

“I would say that the essential thing for me is that in this mediation both parties give in something, I don’t know how to say it. That it should be interesting for everybody, not like one side is the one who decides and the other doesn’t even know why he/she is there.”

Margot, Museum Mediator

“It seems to me, I don’t know if this is a good practice or what, that when you have a proposal, what is visible from what you do is not always the same. Or to make visible what you are...do you understand? If I do this with an intention, in this moment, with these people, and I do the same thing in other moments, it changes. It is not possible that the format repites and has the same result, because the process is linear and closed, isn’t it? But within premises, make visible the participants, the intentions, but in a different way.”

Elsa, Museum Mediator

“I don’t know if it is about a perspective, but I think that nowadays if someone is working in Museum Mediation, especially in a Contemporary Art Museum, should remain attentive to the difficulties of the society where they live, and be up-to-date of the circumstances that affect the artists, the public and the institutions themselves. This is important for me that it doesn’t remain outside of the discourse (if you have the power to do so, of course). It is also important to know how to work with the image in the broadest sense of the word, to be able to create visual stories, cartographies in which they join news, artistic works, advertisements and everyday artefacts in order to generate experiences and to provoke. In my opinion, it is essential to maintain a critical, active and lively attitude towards the context.”

Iris, Museum Trainer
“Because you mentioned before about experts, and I am realizing that in each group, the people are experts in something: in baking bread, in sewing, in literature...So, this is a way that this expertise...”

Sofía, Museum Trainer

**Museum Mediation Programs**

85,4% answered that Museum Mediation Programs are important to work with Specific agents such as local communities, docents, institutional groups 79,2 % answered that Museum Mediation Programs are important in order to communicate and disseminate a specific topic, 75,0% to have an in-depth relationship with specific audiences, 62, 5% to diversify audiences. However 100 % answered that the programs their department organizes are targeted to Schools, 93,9% to Families, 85,7% to Adults and 73,5% Special Needs Visits, which means that they do not target that many programs to Local communities and non-traditional Museum Mediation audiences. Most activities that are being held have traditional formats such as Guided tours (98,0%), Workshops (91,8%) and Children and Family Programs (87,8%).

Most museums use videos (64,4%) to implement their mediation activities, have a web page (55,6%) and use games (62,2%). Just 46,7% teaches with objects and 42,3% develop educational brochures. The activities are mostly in the local language (66%). There are neither activities in Braille (80%) nor in sign language (76%), which means that diversifying their audiences is not a priority.

Museum Mediation/Education activities are mainly organized in relation to either temporary exhibits (34,9%) or each year planning (30,2%). Consequently, the education/mediation department rely more on the exhibitions being organized by other professionals in the museum rather than in having their on particular vision, themes, problems and lie in museum mediation.

If we contrast this information with some of the interviews, we will see that mostly Museum Mediators participate at the end of the exhibition design process, acting as transmissions of exhibition knowledge as Margot says:
“What matters is the protocol and a discourse of the exhibition as the basis for the educational work, and not the educational frame: “we do not identify ourselves with any concrete educational model, because the truth is that we operate in a way, that in case of each exposition, we ask these external agents that I spoke to you about to do the educational project, and all of them is different, they do not always come from the field of education, museums, didactics or pedagogy.”

Margot, Museum Mediator

“The traditional forms are the ones that guide the practice. Another thing is that every educator can adjust this form of doing the general visit and the workshop-visit differently. This is what would be significant in another line. But I think that the strange thing is, that the current Museum Mediation of the institutions in the Basque Country out of habit reproduces the traditional forms in the Department of Education and Cultural Action.”

Sofía, Trainer

Most activities are evaluated at the end of the process (85,1%). Some at the beginning and during the process 53,2% that means that the evaluation has to do with the reception of the activity rather than with the learning involved.

While defining projects the metaphor of the bridge is also being used:

“An artistic mediation project is a transitional bridge between who we are, how we think and the way we relate to the environment, to the context and to others. This is a means to make our existence more tangible based on real, invented or unknown relations that we create to know ourselves, to create a knowledge, think about it and put it aside till we pick it up again, provoking like this relations between what we know of and what we want to incorporate.”

Karen, Museum Mediator
Irene, defining her department, considers Museum Education to be a self-reflexive and caring process with specific audiences and according to specific temporalities and quality experiences:

“The educational mission that we have, like the educational department, - even though it is not official, since it is not in the museological plan, it has not been extended - is different. We try to generate educational programmes, which, somehow, prioritize quality experience over the number of visitors. What does it mean? It means that we indulge the programmes that we do, we think a lot about why we do them, we give priority to the quality and to the meaning of the project, over the people that will enjoy these programmes or the time that will take to carry them out. It also means to create personalised programmes according to the type of collective. And we also try to open up doors to work closely with certain communities in a less programmatic and more open way and in function of their agenda. But we do this in very specific programmes that have external funding and it is not always easy to accomplish them.”

Iris, Museum Mediator

Visitor Studies

76,1% evaluate the activity or project (this means they evaluate the museum educator).

47, 8 % do Quality studies of the Visit and 45,7% do demographic studies, which means they do not do any educational 4,3% nor ethnographic research 2,2%.

“I distinguish between what it should be and what it is. The museum expects the visitors to come and see all the displayed art pieces, to enjoy them and therefore to increase their cultural level. This is a passive role in a sense that the visitor doesn’t have any decision making power about what he/she will see nor about the discussions that the exposition will generate. He/she is the consumer of what is available. I believe that, ideally, a museum should look at a visitor in a very different way, because the interesting thing is to create a strategy that allows the visitor to have a more active role where he/she can take decisions in certain aspects or, even to be able to generate his/her own response about what he/she sees. So, a visitor that is more active, and in certain ways, more present.”

Iris, Museum Mediator
Definition of the Museum Mediator

Most professionals think that the Museum Mediator is the person who acts as a bridge (link) between the museum and its visitors (60,0%) or that is the person who acts as a critical friend connecting the museum and its visitors (42,2%).

If we take into account mediation from outside the Museum field (for instance dancing or social education) the definitions have to do with the role of the Mediator rather than with the role of the Institution. In this sense, museum mediators are seen as provocateurs:

“...a museum mediator is a person that facilitates to its public that it works with the generation of necessary experiences in order to bind their practices with the artistic creation. A museum mediator provokes, gets you confused and makes you think, making self-knowledge possible.”

Karen, Museum Department

Another interviewee thinks Museum Mediators need to know about Management, because it is part of museum jobs.

“For a museum mediator or for any professional where they don’t teach the economic, bureaucratic steps, that, at the end, you need for your work.”

Sari, Museum Mediator

There is much debate on the professional role of the museum educator. Most interviewees agree that there is not such profession in legal terms and think museum mediators should ask for it.

“I think that in a group of educators, we should worry about how we become a professional body, how we could become a professional body. Because, the truth is, it really angers me when I go to a doctor and at they ask for my “profession” and I don’t know what to say. And then I say “museum educator” and they don’t understand what it is.”

Margot, Museum Mediator

“The current professional profile of the museum educator would say, to start with, that it is not a professionalized profile. It is not defined, no one has ever defined it. In the social security,
there is no epigraph. When I had to join the social security as a self-employed in order to work with different institutions, I went to the social security and I said: my professional activity is Museum educator (I tried to simplify at the beginning). And when they looked at me saying: “how would you say that in other words”, I said: museum guide. And I was told that there was no such heading. So, for me, the fact that administratively your profession or your professional activity is not recognized is already a sign.”

Sofía, Trainer

Ana exemplifies how at her institution all professional categories are so abstract that there is not a clear role for the museum mediator:

“I mentioned already that in this institution we don’t use professional categories, but we have some very abstract ones, such as manager, technician. Think about it, we are 400 employees working for the La Fundació La Caixa and the categories are the same for those who work in the the cultural center and for those who work in the Caixa Forum. So, they don’t really go into the details. Maybe in smaller organizations, it is clearer.”

Emma, Museum Department

Museum Mediators have to be versatile:

“In the articles that I give you I always highlight the versatility and the multiplicity of functions, starting from the communication with the public to the economic management of the projects.”

Iris, trainer

Institutions have to clearly define the tasks of a museum education:

“I think that when I am thinking about this topic, I think about the need of inclusion of the educator in the institutions, because once its tasks are defined, the topic would emerge (which is very important for me) that the educators could be involved, mainly in the phases of conceptualization. Because we are not yet involved in these phases. We are neither involved in the choice of the exposition, nor in the negotiation or development of the content, nor at the
“plasmación” of these exhibition spaces. So, for me, museum practice would start with the inclusion of the educator, because it is essential.”

Emma, Museum Department

“For me, mediation and education are not the same. For example, if you asked me if I was a museum mediator, I would feel very comfortable with this term because I understand museum education in a way that it makes me feel comfortable with the definition. At the same time, if you asked me if I did museum mediation, I would say, practically, most of the time, no. For me museum education has to do with providing educational programmes for different sectors of the population so that they are brought closer in a certain way to the collection of the museum. This can be done in many ways and in many degrees: we can do it in a more traditional way, we can do it in a falsely open way, or we can try to do it in a real open way, establishing a critical dialogue with students and open small spaces dedicated to their interests and to their issues. But we always talk about degrees, because it is a structure that does not allow the permeability of the institution towards the agenda of the visitors. For me, when we talk about mediation, we are mainly referring to a working strategy with different groups that affect or have the potential to really affect what is happening in an institution. And, unfortunately, no matter how much we care about this line of work within the educational department and how much we relate to it and believe that politically we should work in this direction, the work structure that has been created in this museum, makes this task very difficult, because the structure that we have of thinking of long term projects are always depending on the sponsorship that are determined by the creation of the project, beforehand. And, normally, it is difficult to generate spaces for real dialogue and open work-flows, when you are depending on external financial support and they are only supported by the sponsorship and that you have to justify your costs. And this is our main problem. It is true that we organise open programmes, programmes that always tend to adjust to the agenda of the groups that we work with, but we are talking about opening cracks within huge limitations.”

Siri, Museum Mediator
Training on Museum Mediation

Most professionals go to Seminars and Conferences (73,9%) in order to have information on current issues on Museum Mediation or Visit other Museums (71,7%). Some do it through informal groups /65, 2%) or they read specialized bibliography on Museum Studies (58,7%). This means that the profession is mostly based on doers rather than on reflexive writing (narrative) or on bibliographical theory making. Most professionals think that Museum Mediation training should be done as part of Museum Internal Training (75,6%). Some think that should held as University courses and Postgraduate courses (66,7%). Others think it is the competence of ICOM and UNESCO training (31,1%), and finally lesser professionals think in Networking as a way to get trained (31,15%).

“For decades, Department of Education and Cultural Action conferences have been used to train the people responsible for the education/communication/dissemination within the museum. Afterwards some post-graduate courses appeared, but they still need to be improved.”

Iris, Trainer

This answer seems to be very narrow, in terms of thinking that museums as the only machines to give the specific training for specific museum work that seems to work only within museum instances (a thought), rather than relying on the connections between museums and universities.

“This field is not very intellectualised. It is very practical. We have to overcome this and more, being a field represented by women.”

Alma, Museum Education Director

Most interviewees have agreed there is not a specific University training on Museum Mediation. Most of them claim that it is either a fragmented area of studies or a ‘do it yourself’ issue.

“As such, it does not exist. There is no specific training for museum mediation. I think there is none. There is no degree in museum mediation, there is no post-graduate degree in museum education. It doesn’t matter how we name it, there isn’t any. So, this course, since it doesn’t exist, I call it a bit like “do-it-yourself”- fragmented”

Sofía, Trainer
“I think that nowadays people who work in the educational field have a Humanistic background, with the paradox, that during our 5 years of studies, we never ever had a subject (neither optional, nor obligatory) about educational theories. After, we immerse in the world of education, so, later the training continues, PhDs, Masters, post-graduate courses, etc.”

Margot, Museum Mediator

Eneritz claims that to start working as a Museum Mediator in Spain you do not need any degree on Museum Mediation:

“To start with, to work as a museum mediator/educator no qualification is needed, since it is not required at any place. Therefore, basically, anyone could work as a museum mediator/educator. I say it with knowledge of the fact, because none of the people working around me as a museum educator has any kind of qualification within the field, and I dare to say that they haven’t even read anything related to the topic either. They are simply trained through the experience.”

Iris, Trainer

There is a lack of Museum Mediation training, which corresponds to a lack of administrative recognition or a legal basis. Besides, most institutions do not claim this in legal terms:

“It is the same, if there was a formal training - because for example, if you do a professional training as a hairdresser, you have your heading- if there was a specific training for museum mediators, maybe the social security would also include this heading. This is the part with the most administration, that at the end determines your status within the institution. When you are not defined administratively, the employment relation that the museum will maintain with you will not be professional, it will be like if someone would come here for a couple of hours. So this is the professional level. So, the professional profile of the museum educator on a professional level is not recognized, neither at the social security, nor within the institution itself.”

Sofía, Trainer
Or that the profile of the Museum Mediator is semi-professional:

“This is the profile of a semi-professional, since it doesn’t have the sufficient legitimacy to be a profession itself”. Quote from one of his articles, to take into account.”

Iris, Trainer

And, therefore, some professionals consulted think that it seems that this is not a serious profession:

“I think the word is lack of seriousness in the profession that we have to use. I took it very seriously, and in order to do so, I trained myself through ways that I had access to. When I am directly with the public, I do my job very seriously, but on the other hand this seriousness is not among the objectives neither of the museum, nor of the society. So it annoys me deeply, because sometimes, when I finish a visit, people tell me: ”congratulation, you did a very good job, you really transmitted well what you like” But, clearly, you cannot feed yourselves with the glory of the public “how well you have done it - that sometimes they give you a tip - I really liked it, you can really tell that you love it”, and that fills you. But, of course, when you say that it seems that I am doing something good, you also start thinking: “but for whom? For me?, because it doesn’t have a serious continuity. In our surrounding, non-formal education (museum/free time) seems to be linked to youngsters, recent graduates who are waiting for their first job opportunity. Many museum educators end up in formal educational surroundings.”

Sofía, Trainer

“What I would say that they have in common is the job-uncertainty and the lack of recognition of their job.”

Iris, Trainer

The profile of people interested in training on Museum Mediation are young graduated women in art history, teaching or fine arts:
“I would say, the people, that I think would be interested in doing a course to become a “museum educator”, are mainly women and with a background in humanities (mainly art history, fine art, and even pedagogy). Lots of them would have liked to become highschool teachers and since they could not achieve it, they would like to try to find a profession with “easier access” within the field of non-formal education. Many of them would have the typical experience as a camp instructor, or any other activity related to the leasure and free time, and they would be interested in being trained in something similar, in a museum surrounding.”

Iris, Trainer

There are two interviewees who say that there is a big contradiction between the image of the museum gives on museum mediation as a central task and the precarity and invisibility of museum mediators:

“Many contradictory situations during all these years of work. Among them, the uncertainty, the invisibility, but paradoxically in this contradictoy vision, that the the institutions don’t really care about mseum education.”

Eva, Museum

“But, I think that we should work a lot to have an administrative framework, a legal framework, a cathegory. Because in our case, for example, there is no cathegory. The people do not have a contract as a museum educator. And this is an important institution. So, here we have completely abstract cathegories…”

Ana, Museum Mediator

We need to have a critical and reflective practice-based approach

“[...] one thing that we always underline and that we think is missing in other training areas, at least in the Art History field, is the critical approach. Questioning all the time what you are doing, what it implies. So it will always give you a certain distance, I don’t know how to say it, to be ready to say “ok, I am going to try it another way”. In other words, not to maintain the same model all the time, continuing some forms and that this doesn’t raise the question later,
and...or to see “if I do this, like this, what does it mean?, what is the other person going to learn?”.”

Margot y Elsa, Museum Mediators

As a person who appeases, who can work with conflicts:

“Like an appeaser. Like the one who clears, solves conflicts. And speaking like this, we used to say: “hey, it is like the same here...., the same is to create them, isn’t it? So we spoke a bit about it [...] About if I had to creat these conflicts because it seemed that everything was fine, eventhough it shouldn’t have been according to our ways, so we had to shake things up. I don’t know. But, on the other hand side, we are trying to create networks and to communicate.”

Sofía, Museum Mediator

References into Theory and Practice

As far as practice-theory references:

- Read general bibliography on Museum Education (81,8%)
- Use Case Studies presented in Conferences (65,9%)
- Use general bibliography on Education (54,5%)

As far as theoretical issues, Critical Pedagogy is most influenced (48,8%) as well as Constructivist Theory (42,9%). Some people have read and discussed Cultural Studies (42,1%), Feminist Theory (40%) and Post structural Theory (27,5%).

What is needed in a Course on Museum Mediation?

Most of the professionals think that Communication and Museum Education is needed in a Course on Museum Mediation (89,4%). Secondly, Museum Theories of Education, Theories and Epistemologies of Teaching and Learning (72,3%), Technical Questions on
Planning and Programming (66%) and last but not least, Teaching Problems derived form Practical Case Studies (61,7%).

As far as themes for Museum Mediation Training:

- Working with Special needs and non-formal learning (71,1%)
- How to develop Communities Work (60%)
- Group dynamics (53,3%)
- Creation of Mediation Plans (46,7%)
- Object-Based Learning (40%)

Ana says that since most Museum Mediators come from the Humanities field and thus, they need more information on Educational theory:

“I assume that if we had to plan the museum educator course, we would obviously have to talk about educational theories.”

Margot, Museum Mediator

A course on Museum Mediation needs to connect theory and practice, a connexion with the reality of museums and on the other hand, with current issues on Museum Studies and Museum Education:

“The main con, I think is the disconnection with reality (the maximum that is offered is an internship in a museum), that they do not learn anything during the classes. The pro, I guess would be, that during their course they would get to know some references, texts, examples in relation with the current museum education and for those interested, they would be, very interesting sources of knowledge.”

Iris, Trainer
However, Ana thinks that in Spain there is a good theoretical framework for museum mediation with publication, National Conferences and research. But we still need recognition as a profession:

“For the record, in recent years much progress has been made, especially in the theoretical sense: there have been many publications, research works and conferences... Me, who has been working for some years in the field realizes that during the past 10 years, might as well a bit more, we have advanced. We have made some progress. This is encouraging. We have advanced, but there is still much to do. At least, I would like to see already a figure... right? Beside of the engineers or hairdressers, but that we are also someone.”

Margot, Museum Mediator

It is crucial to have references or models for each project that will be organised:

“So, it is kind of obvious, but for us it is useful to have some references, or models, good or bad practices (I don’t know how to call them), but something that would in some ways make visible the things we creat... ranging from a book, the pure theory and ideas that make you think, till practical examples not necessarily from the field, right? But they show ways of doing things. And very often it helps us to...to bring ideas into practice.”

Margot y Elsa, Museum Mediation

**Knowledge and Abilities in Research**

Be able to do action-research:

“I think that in an inverstigation, it would be very useful to carry out an acion-research. [...] because they generate knowledge, many data, many data that are dissolved and not collected.”

Sofia, Trainer
Know how to document educational programs; have knowledge on research methodology:

“Sometimes you have to prepare a report about the visits, but the purpose is not a research, it is more a monitoring on how many works you have seen, how the group was...it is descriptive. Very often they collect the information, but very descriptively, not with the objective to do a research. So, I think that the educators of the museum, teachers have some time for the research. I, at lease, would have liked to know how to research, what were the appropriate methods to do a research, while I am with a group. I wouldn’t even know what methodological or epistemological tools I could have.”

Sofía, Trainer

Be able to research your educational practice either by the mediators themselves or by an external researcher and not for the mediators themselves or for an external researcher. To research on your practice in order to write on your practice and to generate new knowledge:

“I think that it is important that the museum educators are prepared that their practices are likely to be researched, by them and also by external staff of the university, for example. It is essential to start from their experiences, their contributions, their practices, their decisions can be researched, in the sense that they can be put in writing, after being reflected on. This way it can contribute to the generation of knowledge in the field and in the training of others. It also generates legitimacy to the field, since historically they only conducted researches in the field of conservation, restauration, etc., and it is important to bring visibility that the education can also be researched.”

Iris, Trainer
From the mediator’s point of view and not only from the institutional role/ needs: Be able to register, systematize, reflect and articulate the mediator’s practice in order to share knowledge that they have constructed and that has to do with practice. Read literature on research practice in museum mediation:

“Museum educators should be able to register, systematize, reflect on and articulate their practices in a way that they could be part of a broader research, that encourages to share the generated knowledge, that normally doesn’t go further than its limited scope of action.

Paralelly, those, working in the field of museum mediation should read and research, as part of their routine about theories/practices within their field of work, not only in their context but also from other countries, in addition to their interest in travelling and getting to know through the internet activities that are proposed in other places, as a learning mode.”

Iris, Trainer

Knowledge and Abilities in Evaluation

Know about different ways and methodologies of evaluation. Be able to evaluate your programs from different angles:

“An activity without evaluation does not generate knowledge, or leaves any record, so it is essential to be able to evaluate - if possible from different angles, and through different perspectives - all realized activities. The educators should have the tools to evaluate, such as having surveys filled out by the users and interpreting them, or carrying out discussion groups in a team, for example.”

Iris, Trainer
5.5 Museum mediation in Italy

5.5.1 History and evolution

Museums have today a significant role to play in tackling social exclusion through culture, by sustaining and promoting the development of active citizenship.

Museums have a social responsibility towards local communities in the specific territorial contexts, and this responsibility is linked with the characteristic nature and mission of each cultural institution. In order to exercise its social function, each museum should necessarily be “open” and “receptive” with regards to communities, examine its role and reflect upon its function, so as to successfully interact with contemporary societies, characterized by dynamism and complexity. Cultural heritage could play a significant role in facing social issues and in tackling social exclusion as well, by promoting itself as a testing ground for new forms of cultural citizenship, by promoting and sustaining social cohesion and territorial belonging.

Cultural heritage can be understood as a part of the commons, as cultural resources accessible to all, and it is a distinctive sign of social groups who share meanings. Today, the role of museums is changing in Italy too, where these cultural institutions are becoming more and more involved in society and are reflecting upon their mission, with a focus on the process of auto-representation they can activate within local communities. There are several activities that have been promoted during the last years in Italian museums, in order to establish a connection with the local contexts. Thanks to these activities, museums registered a better access to and a wider participation in culture.

The main goal of these programmes is to promote processes of active participation and to give each citizen the role of a potential stakeholder. Cultural institutions need urgently to turn themselves towards new audiences, that can fully participate in the process of cultural production.

The debate on this theme is rich and articulated as well, across Europe and in Italy too. ICOM Italia, in October 2007, founded the thematic commission “Education and Mediation”, which aims at promoting the encounter, comparison, research and planning of opportunities; activating the debate on a national level; going in-depth into those issues that are fundamental in the life of education and mediation professionals; becoming the national reference for the ICOM.
International Committee for Education and Cultural Action; taking up research and producing documents and instruments that should be useful for the professional community.\textsuperscript{69}

The document drawn up by the Italian “Education and mediation” Commission addresses all the institutional stakeholders: Ministries, Administrations, Local Authorities, Universities and Museum Management as well, in order to undertake effective actions to promote and sustain the educational role of museums.

The focus on some fundamental issues is maintained in order to strengthen professional awareness of all those who work in museums and cultural institutions, to consolidate the learning possibilities within the educational activities domain in museums; to favour a tight connection between the educational role of museums and their other institutional tasks; to promote the acknowledgement of the professional skills in education and mediation and of the training needs on a high degree level, consistent with the skills pointed out in the national curricula guidelines for museum professionals (Carta nazionale delle professioni museali ICOM Italia); to promote the relationship with local communities so that they could become engaged in the definition and in the carrying out of cultural museums' programs; to underline the importance of lifelong learning process, of the education for social inclusion and cultural integration; to focus the attention on the problems raised with the outsourcing of museum educational activities.

The document points out that today the educational role of museum addresses different kinds of audience, and hence it has to take into account the plurality of their needs and cultural characteristics and to rethink activities, workshops and communication instruments.

Moreover, a contemporary museum cannot disregard the encounter and the comparison between different cultures: museums are real contact zones, considering the role they have in favouring the meeting between different people, mentalities, knowledge, willing, expressions, values,
languages; they enable all kind of audience to fully participate in building culture, by recognizing to visitors the role of “interpretive communities”.

In order to create a bridge between museums and different kind of visitors it is necessary to put into action knowledge, skills, experimentation, communication instruments, legal frames that could favor and consolidate this connection.

5.5.2 Legislative framework

The current legislative framework does not regulate the professional profile of museum mediators, although the attention on these issues has been intensified during the last years: the article 2.1 in the ICOM Statutes defines the museum as “non-profit making permanent institution in the service of society and of its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits, for purposes of study, education and enjoyment, the tangible and intangible evidence of people and their environment”. Moreover, the ICOM Code of Ethics states that “museums have an important duty to develop their educational role and attract wider audiences from the community, locality, or group they serve. Interaction with the constituent community and promotion of their heritage is an integral part of the educational role of the museum”.

Concerning Italy, the ministerial guideline for the relations between museums and audiences - known as Atto di indirizzo sui criteri tecnico-scientifici e sugli standard di funzionamento e sviluppo dei musei (Art. 150, comma 6, D.L. n. 112/1998) per l’Ambito VII “Rapporti del museo con il pubblico e relativi servizi” - states that: “It is necessary to start up an educational service (that - in agreement with the management - plans educational activities, details projects, cares institutional relations with schools and other local authorities, produces and collects specific didactic material) within the museum or, when not possible, to share this duty with other local museums or cultural institutions. This educational service addresses targeted audiences, school-age youth or adults as well, and specific programmes will be prepared”.

These documents highlight very clearly how fundamental the educational role of the museum is, so museums should provide for an educational service which should be able to perform this duty, through a high skilled staff and programs turned to diversified audiences.
This is not a new issue within the cultural sector. In February 1995, the Italian Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali founded the thematic commission “Commissione di studio per la didattica del museo e del territorio” (D.M. 16.3.1996) in order to reconsider the educational role of Monuments and Fine Arts Departments and Museums.

A further important step in this process is the signature of the framework agreement, the 20 March 1998, between the Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali and the Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione which states: “considering the right of each citizen to be educated to knowledge and aware use of cultural heritage, [the two Ministries] engage themselves in arranging structures, resources and activities to achieve the above-mentioned ends”.

The framework agreement makes the management of cultural institutions and schools able to elaborate in conjunction annual or plurennial educational projects. The same year, the Ministero per i beni culturali e ambientali founded the “Centro per i servizi educativi del museo e del territorio”, that aimed at coordinating the educational services operating on a national level.

Concerning the description of the professional profiles operating in museum education, the ICOM Italia, in agreement with museum professional associations, drawn up the Carta nazionale delle professioni museali, a document that provides for the first job description of the professionals working in the Visitor Service, describing in particular the Manager of educational service and the museum educator profiles. This document is a result of a joint work realised by museums, universities, research centres and public service administrations.

The research group made up by ICOM France, Italia, Suisse, ICTOP (International Committee for Training of Personnel) prepared the document Museum Professions - A European frame of reference, presented during the International Conference which took place in Vienna, in 2007. This European frame of reference takes into account two distinct professional profiles: The Manager and the Officer in the Education and Visitor Service.

The national and the European frames of reference are the results of a long-term engagement, which requires well-constructed strategies on a national and international level as well,
involving a wide range of professionals concerning responsibilities, the drawing up of professional profiles and the training, on a higher education level.

A further research which contributes to this process of definition of museum professional profiles is the one realized by ECCOM and IZI in 200971, an interregional project, known as “Professioni e Mestieri per il patrimonio culturale”, with the Regione Lombardia as leading institution. The main goal of this project was to set qualitative standards for professional skills, curricula, and practical abilities for the safeguard, conservation and exploitation of the cultural heritage. Amongst the profiles here described, we find the skilled professional Esperto dei servizi educativi delle istituzioni culturali e del territorio. In the job description, the context, the EQF level, the skills and abilities, the function and the role and the training standards are set and highlighted. This professional is in charge of defining all educational programmes, studies and researches, by focusing on the characteristics of the cultural institution he works for. He collaborates in defining the identity and the mission of his institution and is in charge of the planning of the activities. He sets up a network of exterior contacts, with public or private institution, with a special attention on the teaching and education sector (schools, universities, adult training or education). He sets up relationships with Universities and research institutions specialized in training, lifelong learning for museum professionals, audience studies and discipline-specific researches.

5.5.3 Training offer analysis

In Italy, the manager of the education service and museum educator’s profiles, as they are described in the ICOM documents, don’t have relevant training opportunities that can provide for the required skills and professional abilities. This profile needs nowadays also mediation skills, in order successfully communicate and interact with audiences and non-audiences as well.

In the latest years, several training courses were born, each of them is characterised by different ways of didactic organization in terms of content, length and activity.

Museum education and pedagogy courses are held on a degree level or in Master’s courses and postgraduate schools. In most cases, these courses are held by qualified lecturers in the Faculties of History of Art, Cultural Heritage Conservation or Pedagogy and Education (facoltà di conservazione dei beni culturali, storia dell’arte e scienze della formazione). Very often, some internship opportunities in museums are offered to the participants.

Courses in museum mediation are difficult to find, with the exception of two Master’s courses that will be presented later on.

In Italy, the training offer for cultural heritage mediation is not homogeneous at all. The research has been carried out through OFF.F, the Italian Ministry Ministry for Education, University and Research (Miur) website (updated to 2011. The scores have been verified on the 2012-2013 web-pages of Universities), the interregional catalog of postgraduate training opportunities Alta Formazione in Rete and the detailed review of museum education courses held in the Academies of fine arts.

Specific courses in 2012-2013 are held in two Universities, the Cattolica in Milan and RomaTre in Rome, and in three Academies, Bologna, Macerata and Frosinone.

The Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore in Milan offers the first level Master’s course in “Servizi educativi per il patrimonio artistico, dei musei storici e di arti visive”, which aims at training skilled professionals, consistent with the ICOM Carta nazionale delle professioni museali. A degree in Humanities is required for the entry. The CREA research centre (for education through art and cultural heritage mediation for environment and museums) coordinates this course and organizes conferences, lectures, meetings and courses, elaborates projects on a national and international level, with public or private institutions.

The RomaTre University offers two second level Master’s courses, which were two postgraduate courses before. They both concern, in different ways, the cultural mediation in museums:

73 http://centridiricerca.unicatt.it/crea_index.html
“Mediazione Culturale nei musei: aspetti didattici, sperimentali, valutativi”\textsuperscript{74}, the first one, refers more to the museum mediator profile as described in the ICOM/ICTOP\textsuperscript{75} European frame of reference for Museum Professions. This course aims at providing for the theoretical references and the technical instruments to analyse the needs and expectations of visitors, the appraisal of programs and activities and to plan specific educational activities for targeted audiences. The second one, "Standards for Museum Education", can be found also on the on-line catalog Alta Formazione in Rete and aims at training museum mediators that are aware of the educational role of museums and then able to plan educational and training activities with a special focus on social issues\textsuperscript{76}. The entry requirement for these courses is a generic master’s degree. In some cases, also a regional grant is available for this course\textsuperscript{77}.

The Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna offers a bachelor’s course and a Master’s one as well. The bachelor’s course, Didattica e Comunicazione dell’Arte\textsuperscript{78} is preparatory for the Master’s course in "Didattica dell’Arte e di Mediazione culturale per il patrimonio artistico"\textsuperscript{79}. This one is divided into a technical-scientific unit - which is focused on disciplines such as Art History, Museology, Art Criticism, along with courses in pedagogy or education, cultural mediation techniques - and a practical unit, with workshops on artistic disciplines and practices and on multimedia languages.

The Academy of Fine Arts in Macerata offers a bachelor’s degree in "Mediazione artistico-culturale", followed by a Master’s degree in Museology-Museography\textsuperscript{80}. In these courses too, multimedia languages and IT teaching, along with classical disciplines such as psychology and pedagogy, are taught.

The Academy of Fine Arts in Frosinone offers a Master’s degree in "Comunicazione e Valorizzazione del Patrimonio Artistico"\textsuperscript{81}, where the graduates should “be able to use each kind of communication approach - technique, creative, multimedia - with the aim to promote

\textsuperscript{74} http://www.lectiones.it/
\textsuperscript{75} The education and visitor service officer implements all the activities directed at current and prospective visitors. She/he assists in planning and implementing activities and events during permanent and temporary exhibitions. She/he helps with the appraisal of programmes and activities. She/he informs the head of the department of the needs and expectations of visitors to develop new programmes and activities.
\textsuperscript{76} http://www.lectiones.it/
\textsuperscript{77} altaformazioneinrete.it
\textsuperscript{78} http://www.ababo.it/ABA/comunicazione-e-didattica-dellarte/
\textsuperscript{79} http://www.ababo.it/ABA/didattica-dellarte-biennio/
\textsuperscript{80} http://www2.abamc.it/pdf_offerta_home/1_med_artistico_culturale.pdf
\textsuperscript{81} http://www2.abamc.it/pdf_offerta_home/1_med_artistico_culturale.pdf
and disseminate cultural heritage awareness, working out an important role in the shaping of a specific consciousness with regard to cultural heritage”.

Furthermore, there are some training courses that are more generic, such as those held in the Academies of Fine Arts in Palermo, Perugia e Genova in “Art” or “Museum” pedagogy, whilst the University Tor Vergata in Rome offers a second level Master’s course in "Comunicazione Estetica e Museale".

At last, the University AlmaMater in Bologna offers a single course in ““Modelli di mediazione didattica e didattica museale” (M-PED/03), in the bachelor’s degree for Educatore sociale e culturale82.

From this analysis emerges that high education courses in the Universities and master’s courses are becoming to integrate museum mediation issues amongst the fundamental disciplines that shape the skills and profile of museum professionals.

5.5.4 Experiences

In Italy, cultural politics aiming at a wider access to culture and cultural heritage are spreading out across the country. Different activities and practices focus on specific issues and it is worthy to introduce each of them separately. The activities are differentiated with regard to targeted audiences, according to age criteria (children, teenagers, adults, elderly people, families, schools); to special-needs criteria, serving people with disabilities; to social, economic and cultural disadvantages, in order to promote social inclusion and to open museums to non-audiences too.

In some cases, museum mediation is intended more as an inter-cultural activity, as a vehicle to promote the awareness of the cultural heritage through exchange, dialogue and comparison83. This happens more in the big cities of the country than elsewhere, where new citizens are present in great numbers and where processes of social and cultural inclusion are fundamental.

82 www.scform.unibo.it
83 www.ismu.org/patrimonioeintercultura
Milan is one of the Italian cities where these activities are concentrated, and a good example of these practices is the project “A Brera anch’io. Il museo come terreno di dialogo interculturale”84, which finds its place in the more general debate on the role the museum can play in promoting social cohesion and positive dialogue between people and communities from different cultures. This project addressed children in primary and secondary schools and their families.

The main goal of this project was to bring children and families up to be respectful and aware of the cultural heritage through dialogue; to discover a Museum – the Pinacoteca di Brera - and some of its artworks; to understand them and to use them as an instrument of growth; to convey knowledge and skills and behaviors as well, that can be replicated in different contexts; to offer teachers the opportunity to rethink their didactic praxis.

The elements that helped make this project a success were the skills of professionals with different certified abilities (teachers, art historians, museum educators and mediators); the training of teachers with the help of external experts; the support of didactic materials; the interdisciplinary approach of museums; the shaping of workshops and paths that involved autochthonous or migrant young people as well, so as to promote a shared and active citizenship.

Another important reference for the museum education sector in Milan is the Fondazione ISMU. Thanks to the “TAM TAM” project, in 2005 Fondazione ISMU activated a training, research and practical course together with the Municipality of Milan, drawing the attention on the right to culture as a strategic element for citizenship and social inclusion and promoting the value of partnerships between cultural institutions, schools and region in intercultural heritage education. The Fondazione ISMU offers a training course with the goal of exploring new methods and instrument for the planning and evaluation of inter-institutional activities for intercultural heritage education and to provide cultural mediators and museum educators for the interdisciplinary skills and the planning and operational paradigms85. Participants in this course were museum educators and managers as well, who in turn promoted intercultural education activities within their institutions.

As an example, the Museo Civico di Storia Naturale e Archeologia di Montebelluna (Treviso), realized the experimental path “Le scienze al museo” - aiming at pursuing this experience over

85 Bodo S., Cantù S., Mascheroni S. (a cura di), Progettare insieme per un patrimonio interculturale, Quaderno ISMU 1/2007, Fondazione ISMU, Milano 2007.
the time - which addresses young audience and adults as well, foreigners or Italian.

Another important activity has been realized in the archaeological section of the Sistema Museale della Città di Cremona, which undertook the project “Scene di festa. Dall’antichità ad oggi, l’archeologia come ponte tra culture”, that addressed mainly children and young people from schools.

The contemporary art sector presents several explicitly so-called mediation activities: from the MAXXI in Rome to the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Turin, from the Castello di Rivoli to the GaMec in Bergamo, the professional profile of the mediator is defined as the one who acts as a bridge between the audiences and the works of contemporary art, whose message needs a mediation to be understood.

5.5.4.1 Case studies

Within the MuseumMediators project, 5 case studies have been selected in order to analyze some of the most interesting experiences and to give a national panorama of the mediation activities.

Museo di Storia Naturale e Archeologia in Montebelluna

History and mission

The Museo di Storia Naturale e Archeologia in Montebelluna was born in 1984, and became an Institution in 199786. Its activities are characterized by a special focus on specific issues such as equality, impartiality, reception, integration, right to choose. This bears on the mission and the purposes of all its activities, which “collects, preserves, studies and disseminates the naturalistic and archeological history of the region, with a special focus on the Treviso area”.

Educational service and mediation activities

The activities held in this museum address mostly schools, teachers, educators, museum officers

---

86 Delibera di Consiglio Comunale n. 130 del 30/09/1997 ai sensi dell’art. 72 del vigente Statuto comunale e del Decreto Legislativo 18 agosto 2000, n. 267 “Testo Unico delle leggi sull’ordinamento degli Enti Locali”.

Guidelines for Museum Mediators professionals in Europe - 111
2012-2014
and adults more in general.

*Educational service for schools*

The activities address mainly target groups of children and young people between 3 and 19 years old and are always differentiated according to specific age groups, with a special attention for children between 3 and 6 years old. Every year, a detailed and renewed programme is provided for all schools in the Veneto region, with animations, special lessons, laboratories, workshops. The activities are carried out by museum educators, selected by the museum itself on the basis of the CVs and a job interview. They attend a training course in 60 hours, provided by the museum itself and an examination must be passed during a real educational activity: the result depends also on the observations of teachers and pupils involved in the activity.

In recent years the museum focused its attention on lifelong learning issues, aware of the role museums could play in informal learning activities for adults. It organizes lectures, seminars, workshops addressed to adults, alone or in groups. A particular attention is focused on the Universities of the Third Age and on the CTP (Centri Territoriali Permanenti) for the education of adults, with special and specific projects.

One of the projects the museum developed to spread museum mediation is known as “*Dentro al Museo: scienze e storie*” and addresses migrant citizens, in order to promote a wider access to cultural heritage, a greater consciousness of the naturalistic collections and to develop interlaces between personal stories and the history of collections.

*GAMeC - Galleria d’Arte Moderna e Contemporanea in Bergamo*

*History and mission*

The GAMeC was inaugurated in 1991 and was created together with the Municipality of Bergamo and the bank Credito Bergamasco, in order to promote modern and contemporary art. The purpose underlying the creation of GAMeC, which is partnered by the Accademia Carrara and the Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti, was to form a pole in the city dedicated to art. The GAMeC aims at exploiting, implementing, promoting the heritage of the Accademia Carrara, concerning the 20th century, and organizes activities to sustain a high quality cultural policy and to become a reference in the sector of contemporary art.
**Educational service and mediation activities**

“Art for all” is the watchword that inspires here all the activities of the educational service, together with the article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights⁸⁷: “Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.”

The GAMeC is a lifelong learning institution, open to all, young people and adults, teenagers and children, migrants and tourists, scholars or curious people. All the activities are targeted and diversified, on the basis of the principle of reception. With practical laboratories for children, training opportunities for libraries and associations, workshops for adults, tour guides “in all world’s languages”, the GAMeC wants to sustain the idea of the museum as a place for dialogue, research and integration. Thanks to museum officers and educators, the activities have been implemented and special partnerships have been made between the museum and schools, hospitals, prisons, universities and so on. Thanks to the high quality of the programme, the museums has been awarded in 2006 with the prize of Alta Qualità per l’Infanzia “Il Grillo”, promoted by the Consorzio Turistico Alta Badia and sponsored by the Antoniano di Bologna, Unicef, the Facoltà di Scienze della Comunicazione of the La Sapienza University in Rome and the Scienze dell’Educazione Department of the University of Bologna.

In 2012, the GAMeC held the project **Artedisarte** in collaboration with the homonymous volunteers’ group that has been operating in the city district of Campagnola since 2009. The project aimed at testing new aggregation processes and mechanisms, through a deep reflection on the loss of identity known by the region since the 70s. Together with creative activities, the **Artedisarte** group carries out training paths to analyse the above-mentioned district’s identity and the exploitation of contemporary art as a means to express one’s own thoughts.

At the end of the exhibition in the museum, the panels will be placed along the perimeter that marks the limits of the district of Campagnola, so as to give a new meaning to the region by expressing contents to be shared over the time.

---

⁸⁷ **UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, adopted by the General Assembly of the UN in 1948.
Moreover, the GAMEC is the first institution that has internal mediators. Thanks to the project “Ospiti DONOre”, in which a group of immigrant women worked on the meaning of the “gift” inscribed in the collections, the educational service planned and carried out the training course for museum mediators, which addressed all immigrant citizens in the region of Bergamo, who desired to have a share in the dialogical process between the museum and the international communities they represented. This training courses made the participants able to “open the doors” of art to all those who normally don’t visit a museum at all, because of several cultural and economic barriers.88

Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo

History and mission

The Italian contemporary art foundation Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo was officially set up in Turin in 1995 by contemporary art collector Patrizia Sandretto Re Rebaudengo. The Fondazione’s main aim is to promote and encourage a greater understanding of contemporary art and of today’s leading trends at an international level. At the Fondazione, the vast field of visual arts - painting, sculpture, photography, video, installation and performance - is analyzed and presented to the public not only through the exhibition programme but also through an array of in depth educational activities and flanking events. These include conferences, lectures by artists, curators and critics from acclaimed Italian and foreign institutions as well as courses on contemporary art conducted by the country’s leading university professors.89

Educational service and mediation activities

The Educational Department of the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo offers educational tours to draw students of all ages to contemporary art. Children and teenagers are involved in lively tours where attention is focused on creating a dialogue with the work of art based on the signals given by the work itself: form, color and space are just some of the concepts enabling students to appropriately discover each work of art. Tours take place within the Fondazione exhibition rooms and foresee a special involvement and sharing of the acquired information. This initial phase of the tour is followed by a workshop activity which varies according to the type of exhibition and work of art displayed, developing each time topics such as identity, corporal

88 www.gamec.it
89 www.fsrr.org
expression, gesture, movement, matter, visual communication, space and writing. Workshops are a fertile ground where students are encouraged to share their artistic experience through tours specifically conceived for different ages. There are permanent workshops which deal with issues and languages employed in the contemporary art field as, among others, identity, the body, relation between painting and the new media, sign and design, space and the concept of installation, color and multisensorial aspects in art. In the past years the Educational Department has increased the number of intercultural and accessibility projects in order to promote the idea of an open museum able to host and create true moments of sharing and dialogue. Along with the daily activities of tours and workshops, the Educational Department develops all year round special projects reserved for students of all ages and tours specifically designed for kindergartens, daycare centers, summer camps and families.

Exhibitions can be discovered with the help of art cultural mediators. One on one or in small groups, these visits facilitate the full comprehension of the artworks and satisfy further questions regarding the artists. The role of an art mediator is to establish and facilitate the direct contact between the visitor, the work of art and the exhibition itself, by supplying information, stimulate the dialogue and emphasize individual interpretations. Cultural mediation prepares the visitor to personally discover the work of art along with a further in depth examination of the artistic research based on an approach, which combines information together with dialogue, sharing and comparison.

“My Modernikon” was one of the many workshops realized by the foundation. It was linked to the exhibition “Modenirkon” and it was organized in collaboration with the high school Liceo Classico Cavour in Turin. The seven meetings scheduled in the project had the aim to draw students to contemporary art creation by making them mediators as well. Students were asked to present the public the works of art, in a personal, interactive and enthralling way.

**Museo civico di Zoologia in Rome**

**History and mission**

The Museo Civico di Zoologia in Rome is a centre for scientific culture that preserves, studies and disseminate animal biodiversity. The museum can rightly be described therefore as a true repository for all biodiversity as well as a valuable legacy for the community. The common
thread that binds the new exhibition trail is biodiversity in the animal world. It leads visitors through rooms on animal passions, living on the edge, the coral reef, the swamps of the Roman countryside, mammals, amphibians and reptiles and into the scenographic skeleton room. Thanks to the use of various techniques including multi-media and multi-sensory tools, visitors are able to find out about all sorts of animal species, understand their origins and how they have adapted to survive in a multitude of different habitats.

**Educational service and mediation activities**

The Museums aims to improve public scientific knowledge and sensitiveness for nature conservation and sustainability, by means of its permanent and temporary exhibitions and specific educational projects that target all visitors and all school levels. The Museum Educational Department is constituted by expert operators who realize lab-activities, practical experiences, guided interactive tours in the Museum and observations in the field for schools and normal public. Congresses, workshops and other cultural meetings are realized for specialists, museum operators and teachers\(^90\). Researches are carried out on educational issues, visitor studies, public engagement in science, scientific communication and social-cultural inclusion.

The educational role of the Museo Civico is incontrovertible and the dissemination of scientific culture is a fundamental mission\(^91\).

The educational projects of the museum are essential to schools’ didactic curricula as well, as the involvement in the project “Città come Scuola” highlights.

In the last years, new didactic methods based on an active process of learning arose also for the teaching of Science. These new theoretical references activated a renewal of didactic strategies in museums too, in exhibitions and in educational projects as well: the new main aim is to offer audiences the possibility to build and elaborate knowledge in a personal way.

Educational methods and communication are therefore interactive and constructivist aiming to stimulate excitement, personal inquiry, enjoyment and engagement. Conferences, happy hours, museum cultural nights and other cultural events are organized for all publics.

\(^90\) [www.museodizoologia.it](http://www.museodizoologia.it)
One of the museum’s main projects is “Il Museo come spazio per l’inclusione culturale”. The main goal of this project, that begun in 2011, was to draw citizens in disadvantaged situations to museums and addressed elderly people, immigrants and all the inhabitants of Rome’s boroughs.

The survey was a tool to study this non-audience and to evaluate the project: the results highlighted different kinds of barriers: logistic, economic, cultural ones, but also a sort of uneasiness towards the museum experience, first of all towards scientific museums. This research led the museum to implement activities, to promote and sustain cultural access and inclusion for all, also through outreach activities (the outreach project “Il Museo esce dalle mura e va nei quartieri cittadini”). These projects addressed also young migrants (mostly Africans or Romani people) who live in Roman boroughs and aimed at including young people or adults in disadvantaged situation in cultural life; activating new social relationships; promoting self-esteem; sharing cultural knowledge and experiences; developing a new vision and management of museum as a place for intercultural dialogue.

**Museo d’Arte Moderna di Bologna**

**History and mission**

MAMbo is the Bologna Modern Art Museum. With its permanent collection the museum traces the history of Italian art from World War II to the present day, as seen through the experience of the former Galleria d’Arte Moderna di Bologna. MAMbo supports the most innovative artistic practices and helps outline the routes of contemporary art, through an exhibition program focused on research and experimentation. The museum cooperates with cultural and academic institutions to promote opportunities for reflection involving scholars as well as the general public, stimulating the debate on contemporary culture. The museum is the focus of various research- and innovation-based activities, such as the Cineteca di Bologna, the DMS workshop spaces, the Communication Sciences Faculty and many associations and art galleries.

**Educational service and mediation activities**

The Education Department was created in 1997 inside the Institution Galleria d’Arte Moderna di Bologna as an internal and stable structure aiming at approaching the public to contemporary art. The paths proposed are based on a methodology, which conceives the art education like a stimulation for the development of the sensitivity, for the understanding of one’s own identity, the history and the reality around us. The art becomes a necessary tool for the
educational processes and the works are thought not only as a text to know but also as a pretext to develop the critical sense and an open mind towards culture.

In these terms the museum is an active space, a space of education, confrontation, reflection, and enrichment; beside having the role of a cultural institution it allows the user to cultivate his/her own memory and identity in relation with his/her time. The activity of the Education Department of MAMbo is supported by the Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio in Bologna.

“City Telling” is a mediation project realized by the MAMbo and was conceived as a practical application of the theoretical suggestions received during the EU partnership “European Museum Education and Young People: a Critical Enquiry” (2007-2009)\(^2\). The main issues of this project were intercultural dialogue and social inclusion and addressed young Italians and migrants between 14 and 25 years old, who were active in the Katun youth group in San Donato district in Bologna. Main goals of the project were to promote the access to cultural activities, the encounter with the works of art and their languages and to boost museum’s capacity as a place for intercultural dialogue, involving all citizens and exploiting cultural heritage.

5.5.5 Field research

Within the MuseumMediators project, a fieldwork has been realized through 24 interviews with museum mediators, professionals working in museums and trainers (the transcriptions can be found in the Appendix II). Furthermore, a survey has been given to museum managers or curators and in some cases to managers of educational services (the text of the survey can be found in the Appendix I).

5.5.5.1 Interviews analysis

In order to gain some fundamental information about the theoretical definition of museum mediation and about the role mediation activities play in museums, we took some targeted interviews with key persons within the museum education/mediation field. In particular, we heard managers of educational services, trainers and museum officers who work as educators or mediators, in artistic or scientific museums across the country.

We present the results here below, divided according to professional categories and to the topics under discussion.

**Museums and Key persons**

**A definition of mediation**

One of the questions concerned a possible theoretical definition of mediation, in order to understand how mediation is conceived and practiced and how it can be implemented and improved. It’s not just a matter of giving a theoretical definition, it is also important to highlight all cultural implications of museum practices in the field of mediation and education.

Generally speaking, mediation is defined as the link or the bridge that can be created between the museum and its visitors and it often involves most of the educational activities. The distinction between education and mediation, actually, is not always clear or not always pointed out. For clarity’s sake, it could be possible to divide the answers we received into two major conceptual domains: on the one hand, mediation is conceived as an active process of learning, interpretation and comprehension, not only with regards to museum objects but also to contemporary society. In this case, the aim is to provide visitors all the critic and cultural instruments that are necessary to be independent and autonomous in the process of knowledge. Visitors can bring these instruments with them also outside the museum and can extend the museum experience beyond its boundaries.

On the other hand, mediation is defined as a process that sets up a dialogue, which is intercultural above all. In this case, the attention is focused on the promotion of cultural exchanges and on the sharing of different cultures and different approaches to culture, through collections and their meaningful and manifold values. The GAMeC in Bergamo, for instance, carries out mediation activities through intercultural mediators rather than art historians, and they are in charge of creating an intercultural dialogue between the works of art and their various audiences. The mediation staff in the GAMeC is actually composed by migrants that can speak fluently Italian, trained by the GAMeC itself, that have to facilitate the access to the museums and exhibitions for the members of their own cultural communities.
This above-mentioned distinction is however too simplistic: in some cases the two approaches are fully integrated, as it happens in the Museo Civico di Zoologia in Rome and in the Museo civico di Montebelluna.

The audience

To understand and differentiate audience is the first necessary step to promote mediation activities in museums. To examine in detail the generic adult audience helped many museums in giving a targeted and specific educational/learning offer and in shifting towards the mediation field. This differentiation is realized through visitor studies, that in most cases are only sporadic ones. When the research on audiences is continuous and well-structured, some focus groups are organized with specific target groups and surveys for each activity or special event are given.

Activities

According to the answers and as already said, in most cases mediation activities are not clearly distinct from educational ones. Therefore, when we talk about education in museums we normally refer to activities that address schools and children. When we talk about mediation, indeed, we refer to the dialogic and communicative process that can be established between museums and visitors. It’s a matter of making collections able to “talk” to the audience, of establishing a dialogue among cultures, or between the museum and its region and local communities, to find the “access codes” to other cultures, and so on.

The most meaningful experience in mediation refers to interculture and contemporary art field and to the activities for groups with special needs. These are actually fields in which the activities are well distinct from education or from traditional guided tours, and normally are: workshops, thematic paths, also for special needs - people with disabilities or migrants - but also for the local communities that need to be more involved in cultural life (as in Museo Civico di Montebelluna) and to be more aware of the respect for the environment and the biodiversity (as in the Museo civico di Montebelluna). The activities linked to intercultural issues are the most difficult to carry out but at the same time they represent the most interesting challenge.
Training needs

The mediator’s profile is always described as a complex figure that needs a wide range of skills. A solid disciplinary education, linked to museums’ collections, is always required and it has to be integrated with educational and pedagogical expertise and relational and communicational abilities as well. Mediators get their job training in museums (some of them, as the Museo Civico di Montebelluna has a very well structured training offer for its mediators) and to get field experience is a fundamental training moment, as mediation activities are often very differentiated and specific to each museum.

Mediators

As interviews highlighted that mediators have complex professional profiles with a wide range of skills and expertises. The educational background has to be linked with the discipline of the museum the mediator works for (Art History, Science, Archeology and so on). This background is always integrated with a specific professional training in order to gain pedagogical, educational, communicational abilities. This specific phase of the training is accomplished “in the field”, thanks to a direct experience with projects and activities. All the professionals working today as mediators began their career as a museum guide or educator.

The role of the mediator

If asked about the very characteristic of their role, mediators have no doubts: their main task is to convey museum’s content to all kinds of audience and to transfer the message of collections and objects. The characteristic of this communication process is the “position” mediators have in the triangular relationship that has to be established between the mediator, the work of art and the audience: mediators find their place between, they mediate, they act as a bridge and their most difficult task is to communicate the non-explicit or the most difficult to understand messages to visitors.

Skills and abilities

Beyond a good scientific background, mediators have to perfectly know the “object” (collections, museum, artists, and so on) to mediate. This kind of skill is often gained each time
a new exhibition, artist, object has to be presented. Communication abilities are indeed gained “in the field”, according to most of the mediators we heard.

Moreover, it is very important to know and understand the kind of audience you will work with, in order to modulate the approach and the language. This ability to adapt oneself to all types of public is considered by all mediators as fundamental as a solid background and according to all, it can be learned only through the job.

Activities

The activities that mediators carry out are extremely varied, as they depend on the specific characteristics of each museum, of collections, objects and works. The planning of the activities and the elaboration of specific projects are always a result of a joint work with the staff of the educational service. The planning of projects is always developed on the basis of previous experiences and after having targeted audiences. The three mediators we heard work in three different contexts (Museo Nazionale del Cinema in Turin, Museo Civico di Montebelluna, Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo per l’arte contemporanea): the mediators working in museums carry out quite the same kind of activities: outreach activities, also for special needs groups, workshops, labs, animations and so on. The educational offer for schools remains always fundamental in museums.

In the foundation Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo per l’arte contemporanea things work in a different way. The mediation service is distinct from the educational one and mediators are always present in the exhibition rooms, wearing a t-shirt that makes them recognizable at once. Mediators here have an “art kit”, useful to establish a dialogue with art in 10 questions, and address to all audiences: this mediation service is available and free for all. The aim of this kind of mediation approach is to draw more and more audience to contemporary art.

Audience

The question on the audience led to very different answers, depending on the characteristic of each museum and collection. In the Museo Nazionale del Cinema in Turin, which has an interactive and enthralling permanent exhibition, there is quite no difficulty in communicating with audience. In the Museo Civico di Montebelluna, the teen-agers are the most difficult audience to get involved, while in the Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo, elderly people are those who have the greatest difficulty in the encounter with the works of contemporary art.
Schools visit more often the two museums, while in the Foundation young people between 20-30 old and elderly after 50 years old. Generally speaking, the audiences that need mediation activities to be implemented are the adults between 30-40 years old, because they are inclined to choose other ways of entertainment.

What do you hope your audience remembers most from its visit to the exhibition?

This question had the aim to understand mediators’ approach towards visitors and activities. The answers underline not only the process of learning, but they also highlight a process of “changing” that mediators want to activate in the mind of their visitors: a changing with regards to the museum’s experience; a changing in the approach to reality; a changing in the process of learning.

Professional profile

Because of the complexity of this professional figure, a wide range of skills and a variety of approaches are required, the professional profile of mediators cannot be described in an unequivocal way. Mediators themselves don’t feel part of a specific professional group and find that there is a big variety of practices in the field. If we then add the scanty acknowledgement on a social and institutional level, we understand why this professional profile is often fragmentary and in quest of identity.

Trainers

Museum Mediation in Italy

As already said earleir, the most important experiences concern intercultural activities or activities linked to contemporary art.

In terms of activities identified as “mediation” activities, the trainers who were interviewed underlined the fact that these are traditionally considered as activities addressed to adult visitors, while those addressed to schools are normally called “education” activities.
Training offer and mediators’ professional profile

A specific training offer is lacking and this lack is mostly evident within the University courses. A solid background in museum mediation - with pedagogical and communication skills - cannot be disjointed from a good scientific background, which is the fundamental prerequisite a mediator must have to well interact with different audiences and to provide for a multidisciplinary interpretation of the works and the objects in museums.

5.5.5.2 Survey data

The team-group prepared a survey that was sent to 150 museums across the country. Only 42 surveys were completed (less than 30%)

Who answered

The professionals who answered are managers (31%), curators (27%) and museum educators (27%).

Most of them declared to keep themselves updated on current issues in museology and in museum mediation themes through visits to other museums and online research on case studies, museums’ websites and scientific publications (77%).

Typology of museums

Most of the answers (86%) were given by institutions recognized as museums. Concerning the legal status, 17% were state owned; 58% were owned by local/regional authorities; 24% were other type of museum. The 40% of them were archaeological museum, followed by artistic ones.
Fig. 1 Type of collections

What kind of collection does your museum hold?

Che tipo di collezione ospita il suo museo? (seleziona più di un'opzione se necessario)

The 97% of museums provide educational activities: the 62% declared that the museum has a mission specific to the educational service. The 76% declared that mediation activities are normally held: the 59% of them has a staff for mediation activities, composed by maximum 4 persons, and mediators are mostly women (80%). The 54% of mediators has a full-time job. The 90% of them is Italian and can speak a foreign language (mostly English). Concerning people with disabilities, only the 30% of museums provide for Braille tools, and only the 11% of museums provide for LIS guided tours.

Mediators

Concerning the fundamental skills and abilities, “Training in museum mediation and education” obtained the majority of answers (70%), followed by “Specific to the museum collection (art history, archaeology, history, science and so on)” (69%), then “marketing and communication studies” and “Previous work experience in museums” (both at 68%).
Fig. 2 Fundamental skills

Most of the people who answered (92%) agreed with the following mediation definition: “museum mediation [is] a broad concept, embracing activities connected with museum education and communication, aimed at promoting a new social and more inclusive role of museums, involving more partners than educational settings”. The mediator is seen as “the person who acts as a bridge (link) between the museum and its visitors” (65%) and his educational background is both University and post-graduate education and internal to the museum.

Concerning the themes mediators need to be more trained, all the respondents judged fundamental to be more trained in “Museum communication and education”.
Museum mediation

Mediation in museums is considered important because it “facilitates the encounter between different cultures and the creative and educational exploitation of museums, also for visitors with non-structured cultural backgrounds” (80%); then in order “to have an in-depth relation with specific targets” (77%), “to work with specific stakeholders (local communities, teachers, institutional partners, etc)” (67%) and to “diversify audiences” (63%).

Most of the activities address schools (90%), followed by adults and families (67%).

80% of the museums take into account evaluation programmes for mediation and educational activities and 50% of them makes inquiries on the quality of museum's services. Only 40% of museums hold demographic inquiries and 20% holds Visitor learning styles inquiries. Mediation activities normally held in museums are: guided tours (100%), thematic tours (81%) and exhibitions (65%).
More in general, the evaluation of programmes and activities is made by team brainstorming (82%), summative evaluation and suggestions and demands by community stakeholders (both at 59%).
5.5.5.3 Conclusions

The main issues which emerged from the field research carried out in Italy are:

1. Museum mediation is considered as a broad concept, including education and communication activities, with the aim to promote an innovative socially oriented role of museums. In some cases, this broad meaning has been associated to the word “education”, as a concept which encompasses that of “mediation”. This reflects the fact that there is no clear distinction between the two words;

2. The mediator is a person who operates as a bridge, as a contact point between museums and their visitors;
3. The word “mediation” instead of “education” is mainly used in contemporary art museums or to indicate activities aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue, and mainly for activities addressed to adults, while “education” activities are addressed to schools;

4. In most museums, mediation is used as a synonym of education (see point 1) and the related activities are addressed mainly to schools and are carried out using the traditional tool of the guided tour;

5. Professionals consider important a good training but also the working experience in order to build on their profile;

6. Continuous learning is considered very important and in order to achieve it professionals would like to be informed about other experiences of colleagues in different countries.
6 VET (Vocational Education and Training) proposal

6.1 Description of the professional figure

From the results of interviews and questionnaires carried out in the partner countries, notwithstanding the differences due to cultural, historical and political issues, the working group could achieve a shared profile of the mediators as well as of the profession as a whole.

Definition

The mediator is commonly recognized as the person who acts as a bridge (link) between the museum and its visitors.

Museum mediation is commonly recognized as a broad concept that includes activities connected with education and communication, that promote a new inclusive role and involves different agents in different educational spaces.

Museum educators/mediators

Education is a central issue for all museums: almost all of them have an educational department, an educational mission and a dedicated staff composed by in-house staff and freelancers. The dimension of the staff is quite small (1 to 4 people) in every country (Italy 54%, Spain 75%, Portugal 74%, Finland 52% and Estonia 70%), meaning that generally speaking education departments are quite small. Half of the professional are freelancers, except from Portugal where they represent only the 19%.

Most of educators/mediators come from the humanities background: this is coherent with the fact that most of museums indicated as the first requirement for the educators/mediators selection the disciplinary knowledge, followed by museum mediation training and work experience.

Most educators/mediators are women; all of them can speak at least a foreign language (English is quite common in Southern countries and Russian in Nordic countries). In Finland 25% of mediators are foreigners (while in the other countries the percentage lower to 10-5%).

Skills and abilities of the educators/mediators

The most relevant field of expertise identified within the partner countries are:

- “Training in museum mediation and education and training specific to museums”;
- “Education and teaching”;
• “Specific training to the museum collection (art history, archaeology, history, science and so on)”;
• “Marketing and communication studies”;
• “Previous work experience in museums”;
• “Previous work experience in education”.

Mediation activities

Most countries develop activities addressed to schools (IT 90%, ES 94%, PT 100%, Fi 100%, EE 100%), families (IT 67%, ES 86%, PT 79%, Fi 85%, EE 69%) and adults (IT 66% ES 73.5% PT 78% Fi 90% EE 67%).

The tools used are quite traditional: the most popular is the guided tour, followed by the thematic visits and by workshops.

Evaluation of the activities

In the partner countries in most cases mediation activities are evaluated as if they were training courses, analysing the performance of the mediator.

There is a very scarce use of visitors’ studies, although most of the respondents to interviews and questionnaires said that they take into consideration their stakeholders.

Training in Museum Mediation

The profession is mostly practice-based rather than based on theoretical issues: in most cases museums want the mediators to undertake an internal training, notwithstanding the sort of theoretical background they have. Seminars and conferences are considered important tools for self-training, as well as visits to other museums and knowledge of other case studies (learning from experience).

Training needs

The overall impression is that the museum lies always at the centre of the professional development of mediators: that’s why practical experience is considered to be more important.
than theoretical issues. Notwithstanding that, the respondents have indicated some topics they would like to get a specific training in the following fields:

- Visitors studies
- Object-based learning
- Special needs / non formal learning
- Communication and group dynamics
- How to develop communities work
- Creation of a mediation plan (as part of the development of pedagogical strategies)
- Action research and case studies methodology (with a specific focus on documentation)

### 6.2 Description of the training

On the last partners meeting we all agreed that the references to Erasmus Mundus and the VET course should not be used. It wasn't possible / feasible and partners are still a far away from this. We’re too ambitious; it was not possible in the early stage, besides the work process partners have developed during the project implementation and profound research.

### 6.3 Training Standards

#### 6.3.1 The European Qualifications Framework (EQF)

The EQF\(^3\) acts as a translation device to make national qualifications more readable across Europe, promoting workers’ and learners’ mobility between countries and facilitating their lifelong learning\(^4\).

The EQF aims to relate different countries’ national qualifications systems to a common European reference framework. Individuals and employers will be able to use the EQF to better understand and compare the qualifications levels of different countries and different education and training systems.

Agreed upon by the European institutions in 2008, the EQF is being put in practice across Europe. It encourages countries to relate their national qualifications systems to the EQF so that all new

---


\(^4\) See EQF levels at page 67 of this document.
The EQF applies to all types of education, training and qualifications, from school education to academic, professional and vocational: it also encourages lifelong learning by promoting the validation of non-formal and informal learning. European countries are increasingly emphasizing the need to recognize the full range of an individual’s knowledge, skills and competences - those acquired not only at school, university or other education and training institutions, but also outside the formal system.

This reflects a wider shift within which the EQF is acting as a catalyst for reforms: most Member States are now developing their own National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) based on learning outcomes. Several countries (IE, IT, MT, UK, FR and BE-Flanders) already have one in force.

The core of the EQF concerns eight reference levels describing what a learner knows, understands and is able to do - ‘learning outcomes’\(^{95}\). Levels of national qualifications will be placed at one of the central reference levels, ranging from basic (Level 1) to advanced (Level 8). The EQF recommendation defines learning outcomes as ‘...the statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process...’. Acting as a common and neutral reference point for education and training authorities at national and sector level, the eight levels cover the entire span of qualifications from those achieved at the end of compulsory education and training to the highest academic and professional qualifications. It is assumed that the introduction of this common reference point will make it easier for individual citizens, employers and education and training authorities/providers to navigate within and between complex qualifications systems. This will facilitate transfer of qualifications and eventually provide a better informed basis for legal decisions on the recognition of qualifications.

In the EQF, learning outcomes are defined as a combination of knowledge, skills and competence. This is important as it draws attention to the fact that the content and profile of qualifications will vary according to the ultimate purpose, the distinction between academic and vocational qualifications illustrates this. The balance between knowledge, skills and competence will vary from qualification to qualification; the EQF reference levels provide an instrument to capture these variations. The EQF is a framework for cooperation and an instrument for

\(^{95}\) Ibid.

**Guidelines for Museum Mediators professionals in Europe – 134**

2012-2014
strengthening mutual trust between stakeholders involved in education and training. If used on a systematic basis, the common reference levels can potentially, through the increased transparency achieved, facilitate comparison between and translation of qualifications. The future impact of the EQF requires, however, that national education and training authorities and stakeholders at sector level decide to commit to it on a voluntary basis. The EQF will thus only become a success if it is recognised to be relevant to the needs of sectors and Member States. While the long term aim of the EQF is to improve mutual trust between the different stakeholders involved in education and training, the cooperation must already from the start be based on procedures and criteria supporting this trust. Decisions to refer national or sector qualifications to the EQF must therefore be closely linked to transparent principles and procedures for quality assurance at all relevant levels.

6.3.2 Our training courses

Our courses are part of non formal learning: non-formal learning is a distinction in learning between formal and informal learning. It is learning that occurs in a formal learning environment, but that is not formally recognized. It typically involves workshops, community courses, interest based courses, short courses, or conference style seminars. The learning takes place in a formal setting such as an educational organization, but is not formally recognised within a curriculum or syllabus framework.

A recent OECD report has been published on the subject of non formal learning within 22 countries, based on recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes\textsuperscript{96}.

The labour market is by far the most frequently considered topic in the reports submitted by countries for the study (see the study background reports, www.oecd.org/edu/recognition). The aim should be to match skills and labour market needs and thus angle the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes towards skills in short supply on the market, while offering employment opportunities to disadvantaged groups, thereby achieving two aims at once.

Another point linking the labour market to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes is the need to deal with the skills shortages that occur when the demand for knowledge, skills and competences exceeds the supply. In general, this results in a situation in which large numbers of job vacancies go unfilled, even though the general unemployment rate

\textsuperscript{96} P. Werquin, see bibliography, http://www1.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/44600408.pdf
may often be high. The link between the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and skills shortages is self-evident in virtually all countries and the disarmingly simple reason is that knowledge, skills and competences are often present but are not visible because they are not recognised (for example, they are not certified).

The existence of standards to take account of non-formal and informal learning outcomes may also constitute an incentive to recognise them: in Italy, for example, the idea is that the existence of a national learning standard - even a minimum one - and/or an employment standard would make it possible to use a system of units (credits) that could be awarded for skills or competences on a cumulative basis. In Italy, this is considered to guarantee quality.

However, while the existence of a national qualifications framework may facilitate recognition, it is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for it to occur: many countries nonetheless stress that a national qualifications framework is important in fostering the recognition of non-formal and informal learning outcomes.

Another potential spur is a credit transfer and accumulation system.
Annex I - Survey

ABOUT YOUR MUSEUM

Dear Sir/ Madam,

The following survey was developed for the Leonardo da Vinci Transfer of Innovation Partnership "Guidelines for Museum Mediators professionals in Europe", financed by the Education and Culture DG Lifelong Learning Programme.

The main goal is to create a training course for Museum Mediators/ Educators, that represents the institutional and professional needs of Museums' mediation professionals in the European countries that participate in the project: Portugal, Spain, Estonia, Finland and Italy. Mapa das Ideias will export the training course that was tested in Portuguese (2009, 2010, 2011) and European (Loures, Oporto, Brussels, Barcelona sessions) settings, with an international team of lecturers. This course is in the ComeniusGrundtvig database as "PT2011058006" and can be consulted in the website: www.museummediators.eu.

The project consortium is: Portugal - Mapa das Ideias (for profit company) that created this training methodology; Spain - University of Barcelona (higher education public organization); Italy - European Center for Cultural Organization and Management (non profit association); Finland Helinä Rautavaara Museum (public national museum), that has a very strong intercultural dialogue expertise and that participates in collaboration with Finnish Museums Association; Estonia - the National Museum of Estonia (public national museum), with a clear mission towards citizenship and dialogue with diversified audiences. The project will be followed by the Portuguese Committee of the International Council of Museum Professionals (http://www.icomportugal.org/ and http://icom.museum/). A researcher and Museum professional will also be an external evaluator of the whole process. The Polytechnic of Tomar will be an observor, with the goal of creating an Erasmus Mundus Master and proposals for the creation of VET courses related with Museum Mediation for people without higher education or unemployed.

By developing this common training ground among Museum professionals in the five participating countries, the project will stimulate the creation of training and professional guidelines that will sustain the work of Museum Mediation and Education officers. As results we aim to create:

- Assessment of training needs.
- Training framework with European lecturers, interactive contents that deal with horizontal and specific issues in different national settings.
- Technical publications and website.
- European Network of Museum Mediations and Education professionals.
- European Thinktank.
- Erasmus Mundus Master, based in the Polytechnic of Tomar.
- Specific proposals for VET courses for unemployed and without formal education people, adapted to the different national settings.

Please note that the survey will take 15 minutes to be answered and that if you interrupt you will lose the information.
If for any reason this happens, please clean your computer's cookies, so that the online survey allows you to start over.

Your collaboration is very important and we will be delighted to share with you the results.

If you are an education and mediation professional in Portugal, Estonia, Finland, Spain or Italy, and would like to know more about our training course, please visit our website: museummediators.eu.

What is your country?

Estonia
Finland
Italy
Portugal
Spain
Other. Specify

On a national level, is the cultural institution you work for recognized as a museum?
Yes
No

What is the legal status of your museum? (please choose one option)
State owned
Owned by local, regional authorities
Owned by other public authorities
Private (Foundations, NGO'S, Companies and enterprises)
Volunteer

Is your Museum... (please choose one option)
Local (Municipality or a local based organization)
Regional (Region)
National (Regional, as in Catalunha History Museum)
National (Country, as the Portuguese National Ancient Art Museum)
Private owned / Foundation
Other. Specify

What type of collection does your museum hold? (You can choose several options)
Art
Archaeology
History
Science and Technology
Ethnology
Natural History
Industrial
Other. Specify

Does your museum provide educational activities? (please choose one option)
Yes
No

Does your museum have an education manifesto or mission statement? (please choose one option)
Yes
No

EDUCATION AND MEDIATION SERVICE STAFF

How big is your education and mediation staff? That can be the starting point of this section of the survey. This information is very important because we do not know who are the professionals that work daily at the educational and mediation services of the European Museums. Through this survey, we will be able to identify the common potential and, also, difficulties, as well as the potential. We will be happy to share with you all the research reports in due time.

Please note that if you interrupt answering the survey at this point, you will lose the data and will have to start over.

If you need to stop and lose the data, please clean your computer's cookies before answering. Thank you so much for your collaboration!
Does your museum have a staff for the educational and mediation activities?

Yes
No

How many people work in the education/mediation department?

One to four
Five to nine
Ten to fourteen
Fifteen to twenty four
More than twenty five

If you have a mediation staff, are the mediators mostly men or women?

Mostly men
Mostly women
Equal number

What is the employment status of mediators in your staff?

Freelance workers (by activity)
Part-time workers (with a schedule and regular salary)
Fulltime workers
Academic Internships
Professional Internships
Volunteers
Temporary workers (assigned to specific tasks, projects or timeframe)
Other.
Specify

Which skills are relevant for selecting your Museum Mediation and Education Staff?

| Specific to the museum collection (art history, archeology, history, science, etc.). | Not relevant | Relevant | Very relevant |
| Training in Museum mediation and education. | | | |
| Marketing and communication studies. | | | |
| Specific to museum education with an emphasis on Museum Studies. | | | |
| Educational and teaching background. | | | |
| Previous work experience in museums. | | | |
| Previous work experience in education. | | | |

Can mediators in your staff speak any foreign languages?

Yes
No

If it is the case, which ones?

English
French
Spanish
German
Other. Specify

Are there any foreign people in the mediation staff?

MUSEUM MEDIATION AND EDUCATION SERVICE MANAGEMENT

In this section, we want to learn more about how your museum manages the educational and mediation services. It will be rather quick and it will give us important information regarding the training assessment needs. After this you will have two more short sections focusing on the training needs directly and, also, a personal survey. Thank you!

In your opinion, which description suits best your organizational approach to museum education?
mediation and education? (please choose one option)

Conceiving museum mediation as a broad concept, embracing activities connected with museum education and communication, aimed at promoting a new social and more inclusive role of museums, involving more partners than educational settings.

Conceiving museum education as a complement to formal learning institutions such as schools and lifelong learning institutions.

Other. Specify

Why is it important for you to have mediation and education programs? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)

To communicate and disseminate a specific theme
To have an indepth relation with specific targets
To diversify audiences
To work with specific stakeholders (local communities, teachers, institutional partners, etc.
To discuss important issues such as intercultural relations, gender issues, etc.
To attract tourists and touring companies.
For fundraising.
For eventplanning.
To complement exhibit planning.
Other. Specify

What kind of audience do you address your activities to? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)

Schools
Adults
Families
Senior visitors
Special needs visitors
Minorities
Refugees
Tourists
Other. Specify

What kind of activities are normally held in your museum? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)

Guided tours
Workshops
Performances
Thematic tours
Outreach activities
Artifact-based learning
Children and Families programs
Teacher training sessions
Activities with artists
Other. Specify

What are the tools that you employ in carrying out mediation activities?

Audioguides
Videos
Educational kits with objects
Educational leaflets
Games
Multimedia interface (PDAs and others)
Website
Newsletter
Other. Specify

Do you have any activities in foreign languages?

Yes
No
Do you have any tools in braille?

Yes
No

Do you have any activities in sign language?

Yes
No

What kind of audience inquiries does your museum hold? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)

Activity or project evaluation
Demographic inquiries
Visitor learning styles inquiries
Inquiries on the quality of museum’s services
Ethnographic research
Other. Specify

How do you schedule your activities?

Monthly
On a semester basis
Yearly
In case of exhibitions
Other. Specify

How do you refine/revise your programs? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)

Summative evaluation.
Frontend and remedial evaluation.
Demographic report or visitor studies
Educational ethnographic research.
Team brainstorming.
Suggestions and demands by community stakeholders.
Fundraising opportunities.
Benchmarking.

MUSEUM MEDIATION TRAINING
After the description of the museum’s educational and mediation activities, we want to learn more information regarding the Museum Mediators training assessment.
The project goal is to create a common training ground for museum educators and mediators across Europe. As you have realised, we are trying to test the concept of mediation vs. education, to see if it is a better way of convening the true experience of museum learning and communication.
After this section, we will close the survey with some personal questions regarding a characterization of the museum staff involved in the study. Thank you, once again, for your collaboration!

How would you define the Museum Mediator? (please choose one option)

The person who acts as a bridge (link) between the museum and its visitors
The person who acts as a critical friend connecting the museum and its visitors
The person who acts in transforming museum culture while working with museum audiences
The person who acts as a teacher
Other. Specify

How do you keep yourself updated on current issues in Museum Mediation? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)

Seminars and Conferences
University courses
In house research
Specialized Museum Literature
Online research (benchmarking)
Visiting other museums
Professional networks (informal groups)
Professional associations (formal groups)
Other. Specify

**What do you think is the best training for Museum Mediators? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)**

- Internal museum training
- University and Postgraduate education
- Summer Courses
- ICOM/UNESCO training
- Other Professionals’ Associations training
- e-Learning
- Networking
- Other. Specify

**Which issues do you think should be addressed in a Museum Mediation training? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)**

- Theories of teaching and learning and its epistemologies.
- Museum theory and educational theories and its epistemologies
- Museum communication and education
- Technical issues on planning and programming
- Teaching problems derived from actual context-based case studies
- Other. Specify

**Which are the themes you would like to have more training of? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)**

- Communicating with small children
- Communicating with older people
- Group communication and dynamics
- Art pedagogy
- History pedagogy
- Science pedagogy
- Artistic and manual skills and activities
- How to develop partnerships
- Working with special needs in non-formal settings
- Object-based communication and creation
- Visitor studies
- Creating a mediation plan

**Which are the tasks a Museum Mediator carries out/should carry out?**
(Open answer)

**ABOUT YOU**

In this section, we want to learn more about you and your background. This way we can have a collective portrait of museum managers and professionals linked to the education and mediation fields. Thank you for your collaboration!

**Museum Position**

- Director
- Curator
- Educator Director
- Educator Project
- Manage
- Educator Freelance
- Gallery educator
- Communications manager
- Other. Specify

**Gender:**

- Female
- Male

**Age at Dec. 31, 2012**

- 20-29 years
What is your educational background? (please fill in more than one option, if necessary)

- Humanities
- Art Education
- Museum Education
- Pedagogy
- Communications and Marketing
- Science
- Arts
- Other

For how long have you been working in the Museum?

- Less than 2 years
- Between 2 and 4 years
- Between 5 and 9 years
- Between 10 and 14 years
- Between 15 and 19 years
- Twenty or more years

What are your practical and theoretical references? (please fill in more than one option if necessary)

- Practical cases presented in conferences
- Cases that I research online, including other museums’ websites and publications
- General literature regarding education
- General literature regarding social (action/ inclusive) projects
- General literature regarding museum education
- Other.
- Specify

Do you identify yourself with the following theoretical discussions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Never heard of</th>
<th>Have some references about</th>
<th>I have read or discussed these concepts</th>
<th>It has influenced issues and methods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constructivist theory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Structuralism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructivism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poststructuralist theory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Pedagogy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postcolonial theory</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogical practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist Pedagogy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queer Studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other. Specify</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you want to learn more about our project? If so, please leave your contacts. This way we can send you our newsletters and send you information regarding the Museum Mediators European training course in due time. This information is optional and will be processed through a separate database.

Name
Position
Museum
Email
Mobile number
Country

Thank you for your collaboration. It will be very important for the research results. If you gave us your personal information, we will be delighted to share the reports and information regarding the training course. For more information, please visit our website: www.museummediators.eu.
Annex II - Interviews
Museum Mediators - Interview for Museums/Key Persons

Introduction
1. Name and Surname
2. Age
3. Museum Position
4. What is the museum you're currently working for?
5. How long have you been working in the museum?
6. What are the museums you have worked for?
7. Are you a member of any professional organization/social network?

The Museum
5. Could you briefly present and describe your museum and its mission statement?
6. What kind of audience does your museum and its activities address?
7. Do you normally hold inquiries on your audience? And on your potential audience?
8. If this is the case, how and by what means do you collect the information that you need? (surveys, interviews, observations, monitoring, etc.)
9. According to you, which is the role of the audience for a museum and in particular for your museum?
10. Does your museum employ professional profiles specifically working with audiences? If yes, how many?

Educational Activities
4. What is the educational mission of your museum?
5. What are the educational activities that are normally held in your museum? What kind of human resources do you employ?

Mediation
1. If you were asked to give a definition of “museum mediation”, what would it be?
2. What distinguishes the museum mediation from other museum activities?
3. Within the educational activities, does your museum provide museum mediation projects?
4. If this is the case, please describe it (kind of activity; objectives; target groups; methodology; process; research/evaluation; dissemination)
5. Which sort of research do you carry out in order to conceive your museum mediation projects? Do you keep on doing research activities during the project’s life? What use do you make of the results?
6. How do you identify good practice in museum mediation?
7. Do you think there is any authorial issue in museum mediation projects?
8. Which - if any - controversial/contradictory situations have you faced in your museum mediation activities?

On the job title “Museum Mediator”
1. What kind of training is required to become a museum mediator in your museum and where do mediators get their training?
2. Does your museum provide for continuing professional development as well as training courses for mediators and those who want to become museum mediators?
3. What are in your opinion the fundamental knowledge, skills and abilities that a museum mediator must have?
4. How important is for your museum the role of the museum mediator and his/her activity?
5. How long has your museum been providing for this job title, if so?
6. On an legal level, is there an acknowledgment of this profession? Since when?
7. When you choose your museum mediators, what do you privilege?

Museum Mediators - Interview for museum mediators
Name and Surname
Age
How long have you been working as a museum mediator?
What are the museums you have worked for as a mediator?
What is or what are the museums you're currently working for as a mediator?

Education and job training
1. What is your educational background?
2. What are your job experiences, also considering those outside the field of museum mediation?
3. In your opinion, what are the fundamental knowledge, skills and abilities that a museum mediator should have?

Activities
1. What do you think the role of the museum mediator should be?
2. Could you describe in details the activities that you carry out as mediator?
3. How and by what means do you carry out these activities?
4. How is your job structured? Do you carry out projects conceived by the educational service or do you contribute in conceiving museum mediation projects?
5. What is a museum mediation project for you?
6. If it is the case, how do you frame your museum mediation project?
7. What is your favourite mediation activity, according to your experience and to your audiences?
8. Which controversial/contradictory situations have you faced in your museum mediation professional life?
9. How do you disseminate your museum mediation projects?
10. How do you identify good practice in museum mediation?

Audiences
1. What type of audiences do you usually meet and which is the one you work mostly with?
2. What kind of audience has more controversial issues in approaching mediation activities or the works of art?
3. How in depth do you work with audiences?
4. How do you manage to face up possible controversial issues arising with audiences?
5. What is in your opinion the audience that needs mediation activities to be increased? Why?
6. What do you hope your audiences bring back with them after the museum experience?
7. How do you think you could contribute to museum mediation research?

Professional Acknowledgement
1. Do you feel part of a specific community of practice?
2. Do you think that your profession is well acknowledged, on a social and on an institutional level?
3. Are you aware of the legal acknowledgement of your profession?
4. How are relationships and professional collaborations structured with the colleagues of other departments in your institution?
5. Do you see museum mediation as a staircase to other positions?
6. Do you think there is a glass ceiling issue in your profession?
7. Are you a member of any professional organization/social network?
8. Do you think there is any authorial issue within your profession?

Working condition
1. What were and what are your contractual conditions? What would you change?
2. On an average, how long have you been employed or are you employed on a mediation project, considering each museum you have worked for?

Museum Mediators - Interview for museum mediator trainers
Name / Surname
Position
Organization/University
Educational history
How long have you been working in the museum mediation field?

A. Museum mediation in your country
1. According to your experience, could you please indicate 3 significant examples of museum mediation activities?
2. Which are the most significant examples of museum mediation in your country?

B. The training context
1. What is currently the state of the art of university and post-university training referring to museum
2. What is the profile of the trainees? And their training needs?
3. What sort of educational background is required in order to attend the courses? (Post-diploma, post-graduate, special needs)
4. Could you please provide details of the main features of the trainees (gender, educational background, professional background, etc.)?
5. In your opinion, is the training market offer appropriate in order to train the professional figures needed in
6. Could you please indicate pros and cons of the current training offer?

C. Description of the professional profile

1. How would you describe the museum mediator professional profile?
2. Which are the main features of the context in which museum mediators operate?
3. Could you please indicate the level of complexity of this professional profile (see ann. 1)?
4. In your opinion, what level of EQF (European Qualification Framework) is suitable for museum mediators (see ann. 2)?
5. Which do you think are the main activities of a museum mediator?
6. According to your opinion, among the different perspectives which can be used to look at museum mediation, which one is more suitable to answer the needs of contemporary society?
7. Do you think the current labour market offer is adequate for the qualification achieved by museum mediators? If no, how do you think it could be improved?

D. Competences, knowledge and skills

1. Research: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
2. Planning: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
3. Project implementation: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
4. Management: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
5. Security: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
6. Monitoring: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
7. Evaluation: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
8. Communication: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
9. Education: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
10. Documentation of informative systems: competences, knowledge and skills a museum mediator should have
### ANNEX III. Levels of complexity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Autonomy and self-management of his/her own tasks</td>
<td>No competence</td>
<td>He/she can adapt his/her behaviour to operational conditions in order to achieve a result</td>
<td>He/she decides the most suitable behaviour in order to achieve a result and reach an achievement and take charge of it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>No competence</td>
<td>He/she can recognize the problem and offer a solution</td>
<td>He/she develops ideas to manage the problem, indicating working methodologies in order to cope with unexpected outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility for other human resources</td>
<td>No competence</td>
<td>He/she has the responsibility for other human resources and optimize their work/commitment</td>
<td>He/she manages the process of professional development of other people, whom he/she is responsible for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management of relational processes</td>
<td>No competence</td>
<td>He/she can manage relationships in a cooperative way</td>
<td>He/she manages relationships also in potentially conflicting situations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EQF LEVELS**

- **1 - 2 - 3**
  - Operator
  - Basic level (compulsory schooling)

- **4 - 5 - 6**
  - Technician
  - Intermediate and upper-intermediate level (non University training)

- **7 - 8**
  - Expert
  - Upper level (University; Ma)
Bibliographical references

AA.VV. *Managing European Diversity in Lifelong Learning*, September 2007


C. Da Milano “Museums as agents of social inclusion”, http://museummediators.eu/?page_id=179.


Regione Lombardia, Professioni e Mestieri per il Patrimonio Culturale, Milano 2010.


N. Simon, The participatory museum, Santa Cruz, Museum 2.0 2010.


Portuguese chapter


Italy chapter


Sánchez de Serdio, A. y López, E. (2011) Políticas educativas en los museos de arte españoles. Los departamentos de educación y acción cultural, en: Desacuerdos 6, edita: Arteleku, Centro José Guerrero, MACBA y UNIA.