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Museus
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El rol dels
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en l'educació
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ciutadania



Seminari híbrid

Museums, audiences, citizens

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The relationship between heritage and community

The relationship between heritage and communities implies the need for a clear binary vision of community members as active subjects and not just passive recipients of cultural policies actions and strategies.

On 27 June 2005, Faro, in Portugal, hosted the opening meeting of the Council of Europe on the *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*, called the Faro Convention, which came into force on 1 June 2011¹.

That document is still a milestone for the understanding of the role of cultural heritage in contemporary society: starting from the concept that the use of cultural heritage falls between the rights of the individual to come into the cultural life of the community and enjoy the arts, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948², the Faro Convention represents a step forward since it grants to the populations to play an active role in recognizing the values of cultural heritage and invites States to promote participatory processes, based on the synergy between public institutions, private citizens, associations.

The main element of novelty of the Faro Convention is constituted precisely by the shift of attention from the object - cultural heritage - to the subject, citizens and community: art. 12 of the Convention in fact affirms that the parties undertake to "take into consideration the value attributed by each patrimonial community to the cultural heritage in which it identifies" and "to promote actions to improve access to cultural heritage, in particular for young people and disadvantaged people, in order to raise awareness of its value, the need to conserve and preserve it and the benefits that can derive from it"³. The Convention therefore sees in the participation of citizens and communities the key to increase awareness in Europe about the value of cultural heritage and its contribution to well-being and quality of life. The key points are therefore the notion of cultural heritage as a common good; the definition of "community of inheritance" and the concept of value as something socially constructed.

Regarding the first point, the term "common good" describes a specific good that is shared and beneficial for everyone - or for the most part - of the members of a given community. This also applies to cultural heritage, that ultimately belongs to humanity and is preserved for future generations. Water, air, environment are common goods in a global sense, but the historic centre of a city, a monument, a local museum, a public garden, a landscape, are goods that benefit specific communities and can be key elements of local development, helping to improve the quality of life of that community and producing integration, social cohesion and sense of belonging.

The second point concerns "heritage communities", which the Convention defines as "a group of people who attribute value to specific aspects of cultural heritage, and who wish, in the framework of public action, to support them and pass them on to future generations"⁴. The concept of community can be understood in a

¹ Council of Europe, *Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society*, 2005: <<https://www.coe.int/it/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/199>>

² See in particular Art. 27 of the Declaration: https://www.ohchr.org/EN/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

broader sense, but it is anyway closely linked to the notions of access, participation and representation (which we will discuss later).

As for the third point, communities play a fundamental role in the valorisation of heritage, since - through participatory processes - they consciously appropriated the values connected to it, redefining them: in fact, the concept of value is a socially constructed concept that changes over time, and which depends on historical, social and cultural factors. A further strengthening of this concept passes through the UNESCO Recommendation of 2015, in which cultural heritage is defined as a set of material and immaterial values recognized by the populations, key actors of the processes of identifying what heritage is⁵.

The role of museums in contemporary society

How does the role of museums fit within the framework of the Faro Convention and the principles it bears on the one hand and the creation of values –as previously discussed– on the other?

The idea that the cultural and social dimension are closely linked and, more particularly, that cultural policies and institutions can have a positive impact on the lives of individuals and communities is not new and has been greatly nurtured by the discussions – generated by the changes to which Western society has been subjected in recent decades – on the role of culture and museums in contemporary society and on their capacity to produce integration, dialogue and social cohesion.

Back in 1970 Alma Wittlin wrote that "Museums do not represent an end in themselves, but rather a means to the service of man and his development"⁶; in 1972 the ICOM (International Council of Museums) - UNESCO conference in Santiago de Chile put the social role of museums at the centre of the discussion among the professionals of the sector, starting a series of reflections, debates and publications on the theme⁷; in the same years, debates took place on the concepts of "democratization of culture" and "cultural democracy", officially launched with the Intergovernmental Conference of European Cultural Ministers promoted by UNESCO in Helsinki in 1972 (which will be discussed later); in those years, phenomena such as social theatre, the movement of community arts in Great Britain (which correspond to the *animation socioculturelle* in France and *Soziokultur* in Germany), and the widespread heritage represented by public art interventions, were born and consolidated and have made the link between cultural heritage and local development more and more explicit.

But it is only a few years ago that a thesis is taking hold, apparently far more radical, namely that cultural institutions can act as real vehicles to fight social exclusion, meaning by exclusion "a dynamic process that it

⁵ UNESCO, *Recommendation concerning the protection and promotion of museums and collections, their diversity and their role in society*, Paris, 2015, http://musei.beniculturali.it/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/FINAL_RECOMMENDATION_ENG.pdf

⁶ A. Wittlin, *Museums: in search of a usable future*, Mass. e London, MIT Press Cambridge, 1970, p. 157.

⁷ The important role of ICOM in the reflection on the role of museums at international and national level is evidenced by the rich bibliography available on <https://icom.museum/en/activities/research-development/publications/>. In particular, for the purposes of this article the following publication is mentioned: *The Role of Museums in a Changing Society*, "Museum International", Vol. 68, No. 271-272 (2016).

totally or partially precludes the individual from participating in those social, economic, political and cultural systems that determine his or her integration into society"⁸.

The new ICOM definition of museum goes exactly in this direction: "A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing"⁹.

If on the one hand it is the very concept of social integration that has acquired a new value, not related and referable only and exclusively to those categories of non-public that fall within the classical definition of social exclusion –i.e. people with physical, psychological or social disadvantages– but to the community as a whole, on the other hand it seems to be accepted the idea that cultural institutions in general and museums in particular can become instruments of social integration through a wise use of strategies for access, participation and representation. In reference to museums, Richard Sandell back in 1998 identified in these mechanisms the main barriers that inhibit their use by the community and individuals¹⁰.

Access is the first step towards more complex and complex social and cultural inclusion strategies and demonstrates that cultural institutions are anything but neutral: museums or cultural institutions not involved in breaking down access barriers, actively keep them. Traditionally, access problems have mostly been associated with architectural and financial barriers (which still today still represent one of the main obstacles to participation, especially in the case of "disadvantaged" users), while only recently the focus has been placed on sensorial and cognitive barriers, cultural barriers as well as technological ones (digital divide).

But access, however fundamental, if interpreted as a one-way process, during which cultural institutions open to audiences other than traditional ones, is not enough. In fact, it is necessary to actively involve these audiences (and more generally the communities) in an effective process of consultation and participatory planning. In order to eliminate barriers to participation (decision-making processes, creative processes, the construction of meanings), cultural institutions have at their disposal a wide range of strategies and practices that are very different from one another, all of them sharing the objective of becoming less self-referential, more rooted in the life of the communities and more open to the needs of their public and different stakeholders. A further area of exclusion is related to the lack of or distorted representation of certain groups and cultures or "sub-cultures" –for example in museum collections and installations– with the affirmation and promotion of dominant social and cultural values, subordinating or rejecting alternative values. Other barriers can be more directly attributed to the sphere of political decision makers, such as:

1. The lack of resources made available for the development of cultural services accessible to all, and not only to traditionally "disadvantaged" groups.

⁸ A. Walker and C. Walker (eds.), *Britain Divided: the Growth of Social Exclusion in the 1980s and 1990s*, Child Poverty Action Group, London 1997.

⁹ <https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/>

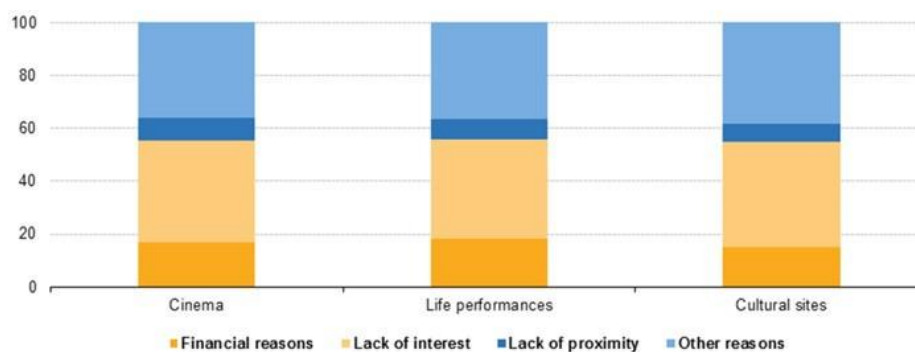
¹⁰ R. Sandell, *Museums as Agents of Social Inclusion*, «Museum, Management and Curatorship», Volume 17, 1998, Issue 4, pp. 401-418.

2. Failure to exercise the equalization function against social and territorial imbalances.
3. The deliberate choice to keep some cultural services exclusive.
4. The emphasis placed on data as unique indicators of success and not, for example, on methodological indicators such as participatory planning and the active involvement of communities or specific community groups.

Cultural participation in Europe

Cultural policies in Europe take inspiration from international documents such as the already mentioned Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Faro Convention; nevertheless, data on cultural participation –referring to local citizens and not to tourists– show that a quite low percentage of European citizens participate in cultural activities and, far more important, this percentage is made by homogeneous groups of people in terms of social, cultural and economic background.

Which are the main barriers to cultural participation (Fig. 1) and how could they be overcome? As we have seen in the previous pages, barriers can be geographical, physical, economic and cultural.



Note: Estimated data for EU-28.

Fig. 1. Main reasons for not participating in cultural activities (source: EUROSTAT 2017¹¹)

If we look at data on the main reasons for not participating in cultural life, lack of interest is strictly connected with lack of perceived relevance, which can be considered as a cultural barrier due to lack of knowledge and lack of self-confidence related to the feeling of inadequacy. Education still has a significant impact on cultural participation: in half of the member States, more than 90% of people with high (tertiary) educational attainment attended cultural activities. Cultural participation of people analysed in relation to their income shows a similar

¹¹ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture_statistics_-_frequency_and_obstacles_in_participation.

pattern to that observed when looking on educational attainment: the higher the income level, the higher the participation.

These data refer back to 2019: we know very well that the pandemic years have been dreadful for the cultural sector, both regarding cultural organizations/professionals and cultural participation. Regarding the latter, there are no data available at European level but, if we look for example at Italy, we see that in 2020 and 2021 the percentage of those who participated in cultural activities went down from 29,8% to 8,3%: something similar is likely to have happened in other countries. Women and youngsters, who normally show higher participation levels, are those that during the pandemic suffered the most (and not only regarding their cultural life: that is the reason for them to be right at the centre of the European Next Generation EU plan to recover from the pandemic). It is likely that data from 2022 onwards will show figures similar to those of 2019 and that we will have to start again from the point we were before March 2020, but having identified sectors –such as the cultural one– and groups of society –women and youngsters– that need an extra care, being particularly fragile.

Audience development

The response to these figures, clearly stating that many different kinds of barriers still exist, which prevent people from actively participating in culture and cultural activities, has come from the European Commission in 2015. In that year, the DG EAC of the European Commission launched a tender to conduct a «Study on Audience Development. How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organizations», in order to better understand the concept from a theoretical point of view and to analyse some case studies from all over Europe¹².

Starting from the European Commission definition of Audience Development (AD) as a strategic and dynamic process enabling cultural organisations to place audiences –understood not only as visitors, but also as individuals and communities – at the centre of their action, the Study identified a model with two main aims addressed to current audiences: widening already active audiences and deepening their experiences; and diversifying the present audience to new target audiences.

First of all, it is important to underline that the term “audience” (from the Latin verb *audire*, to hear) should be intended in a broad sense, not only embedding in itself all the words related to participation in any sort of cultural activity (such as reader or spectator, connected to the verbs to read and to watch), but –more in general and more specifically at the same time– it identifies the people who live in a determined place and participate in its cultural life: in a word, citizens.

¹² EUROPEAN COMMISSION Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, *Study on Audience Development. How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations*, 2017: <http://engageaudiences.eu/files/2017/04/Final-report-NC-01-16-644-EN-N.pdf>.

This conceptual framework is based on the categories of access (physical, geographical, cultural and economic access to culture); participation in the activities but also in the decision-making processes; representations of all differences. These three categories, which are those that generate exclusion and provide barriers to cultural engagement, active participation and legitimation of audiences, have merged into the wider concept of AD.

Responding to this conceptual distinction, the Study renamed the three main audience categories using non-academic, intuitive, easy-to-understand and hopefully inspiring categories: Audience by Habit, Audience by Choice and Audience by Surprise. This categorisation aims to:

- Shift the perspective from the kind of use that people make of cultural contents, to the complex of factors that determine their decision to participate.
- Underline that every citizen can become "audience" in different ways.
- Stress that, for cultural organisations, developing different audiences means developing different kinds of relationships.

In more detail, this is how the three audience categories have been defined:

- Audience by Habit. People who usually attend and/or participate in cultural activities, whose barriers to access are relatively easy to overcome, and towards whom different strategies are possible, such as audience education to attract similar audiences not currently participating; and taste cultivation to increase and diversify content and attendance. "Habit" in this framework means that those audiences are familiar with the same idea of being an audience, therefore cultural experiences are not just something they are used to do, but much more a part of their identity and self-perception.
- Audience by Choice. People who are not used to participate for reasons of life style, lack of opportunities or financial resources; those for whom participating is not a habit, or who rarely choose to attend a show or a concert, but don't have any particular social or cultural disadvantage. To engage them, different strategies are possible, such as extended marketing but also education and participatory approaches.
- Audience by Surprise. People that are hard to reach/indifferent/hostile, who do not participate in any cultural activity for a complex range of reasons, related to social exclusion factors, education and accessibility. Their participation could hardly be possible without an intentional, long-term and targeted approach.

Considering the above-mentioned issues, these categories might in some cases overlap, since the boundaries among them are not neat. These are in fact flexible categories, which should help organizations in better understanding their audiences not as self-explaining segmentations, but as tools to be used in relationship with the strategies of widening, deepening and diversifying audiences and with the key action fields.

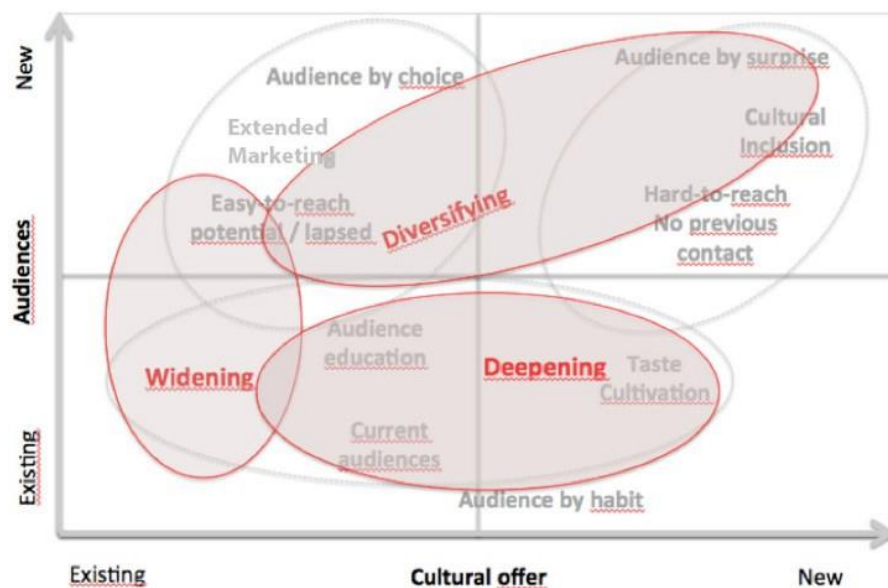


Fig. 2. Re-framing Audience Development objectives within a strategy (source: Study on Audience development)

Widening, deepening and diversifying are reinterpreted and slightly overlapped:

- Widening refers both to current audience, Audience by Habit (increasing the audience of the same kind as the one who is attending today), and that part of Audience by Choice who has different or lapsed cultural consumption (attracting audience).
- Deepening refers to strategies addressed to current audiences, those who by habit already value cultural practice but who can be more engaged in the perspective of taste cultivation (deepening and diversifying their cultural consumptions).
- Diversifying refers both to strategies addressed to Audience by Surprise and to those Audiences by choice that have no or little chance to participate in the arts.

In all three cases, AD implies a first step, called REACH, based on the contact established between cultural institutions/organizations or CH itself and the audiences; and a second one, the ENGAGE phase, which consists in the active engagement of audiences through different tools and activities.

There are many strategies and tools to pursue different audience goals, and they can be classified in many ways. Four key action areas have been identified, that represent the main assets for Audience Development strategies.

Far from being rigid categories, these instruments are the prevailing action assets (in practice as in rhetoric terms) for developing audience, although with huge crossover characteristics. All these categories seem particularly interesting when it comes to focus on the impacts on organisations:

- **Place** refers to those projects and cultural organisations' strategies strongly relying on the "place factor", creating links and building relationships based on a physical site, (e.g. interventions on space design, brand identity, etc.) and aimed to foster ownership towards acultural and physical space.
- **Digital** refers to those projects and cultural organisations' strategies strongly relying on the "digital factor", as a key aspect to reach audiences and foster engagement.
- **Capacity building** refers to those projects and cultural organisations' strategies strongly related to the "people factor": the empowerment of the staff and the development of their skills,competences and leadership are a key factor of different experiences, recognising the needfor change inside the organisation in order to alter audience behaviour.
- **Active participation/co-creation** refers to those projects and cultural organisations' strategies strongly relying on the "participatory factor". These are also particularly interesting interms of their impacts on the organisation¹³.

These categories have been integrated with some key action field such as **Programming** (Offer innovation in terms of format, programming, language, theme, place) **Organisational change** and implications, **Use of Data, Collaboration and Partnership** (fig. 3).

PLACE
PROGRAMMING
CO-CREATION
CAPACITY BUILDING
ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE
USE OF DATA
DIGITAL
PARTNERSHIP AND NETWORKING

Fig.3. Strategic domains for AD (source: Study on Audience Development)

Although in the Study no hierarchy had been defined among these domains, Organisational change is the main result we should aim for when discussing AD: no strategic and deep change can happenwithout a profound

¹³ Co-creation refers to a process which should include communities in the programming of activities since the very beginning of the process, allowing them to fully and freely express themselves and legitimizing their voices (see C. Da Milano, *Nothing about us without us: how the DE-BIAS project will explore participation, partnership and community engagement*, 2023, <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/nothing-about-us-without-us-how-the-de-bias-project-will-explore-participation-partnership-and-community-engagement>).

change in the organisation, its structure, and its mission (which in most cases it is perfectly in line with AD principles but in practice it is not followed up).

The main challenges cultural organisations are facing to achieve this goal are the changing demographics; a high level of competition for people's leisure time; new models of consumption, production and co-production (partially influenced by technological advances); change in political attitude (funding conditions); economic and sanitary crisis. AD addresses all these challenges, not providing universal recipes but calling upon cultural organisations/institutions to examine –in a perspective of accountability– their programming, their communication, their advertising, their networking, their public activities, their artistic leadership, and ambitions, recognising that innovation is possible and necessary everywhere.

European policy models

How does AD fit into a broader framework of cultural policies at European level?

Political decision makers from the post-war period to today have given different answers to the question of what the role of culture in society is or could be: these are responses strongly linked to the issue of legitimizing public spending on culture and which have merged into three broad orientations of policies, effectively summarized in the taxonomy developed by François Matarasso¹⁴.

If we consider as the first model the one based on the concept of “excellence”, in which people were perceived as passive listeners of undisputed truths, very popular in Europe until the 60ies and 70ies and still existing, then the second case can be as a model of "development of access". Widely adopted in Europe between the fifties and sixties of the last century, it is based on the idea of democratization of culture; its objective is to guarantee equal opportunities for access to a single culture that is universally valid through the identification of specific underrepresented groups, the development of activities / programs aimed at promoting their participation, and the removal of specific barriers, whether physical, intellectual, cultural / attitudinal or financial. In many European countries, access development is nowadays an integral part of the activities of almost all cultural institutions, and the principle that public funding entails some duty to widen the relevant public is generally recognized.

The third policy model consists of the instrumental use of cultural initiatives for the achievement of socio-economic objectives. In this model, cultural and social actors identify specific situations of social unease (such as urban degradation, crime, school dropout, unemployment, racism or other forms of discrimination) and develop ad hoc projects to counter them. The most striking form of the "socio-economic development" model is that which combines culture and the arts with urban regeneration processes: alongside this strand, the model in question also includes a wide range of initiatives with social objectives (such as for example the development of self-esteem and specific skills in the individual, or the capacity for self-determination in the communities), aimed at involving the recipients. Even the socio-economic development model presents some risks: among

¹⁴ F. Matarasso, *L'état, c'est nous: arte, sussidi e stato nei regimi democratici*, «Economia della Cultura», 4/2004, pp. 491-499; F. Matarasso, *A restless art. How participation won, and why it matters*, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Lisbon and London 2019, pp. 64-86.

these we mention, for urban redevelopment interventions, the excessive emphasis on short-term environmental and economic impacts to the detriment of social and cultural ones (meaning, by impact on the culture of a place or a community, the impact on lifestyles, identity, heritage and so-called cultural governance, or citizenship, participation, representation, diversity), or failure to achieve financial and social goals however unrealistic; in the case of community development projects, the mediocrity of the final product under the artistic profile, episodic interventions (which hardly leave a permanent trace on the territory and in the life of the communities), and a top-down approach, which often disregards a careful analysis of the needs and expectations of the participants.

The model of "cultural democracy" –officially born during the Intergovernmental Conference of European Cultural Ministers promoted by UNESCO in Helsinki in 1972– is based on the assumption that the task of cultural policies is to guarantee equal dignity and opportunities for expression to all citizens and consists in expanding access not only, as the two previously illustrated models are proposed, to cultural consumption, but also to production and distribution. The emphasis is therefore placed on the active involvement of individuals, which translates into their opportunity to access culture not only as an audience, but as actors capable of producing culture, intended as a tool that stimulates creativity and fosters a positive sense of one's own identity. At the heart of the cultural democracy model is the concept that, to truly contribute to the fight against social inequality, cultural institutions must themselves become more inclusive, through human resource development policies, funding allocation criteria, experimentation new partnership modes, the inclusion of new voices, skills and narratives (legitimation of people's views and perceptions and of co-creative processes and practices): it is a model which is deeply connected with the principles of AD.

One of the most decisive test benches in this regard is the growing diversity, in social and cultural terms, of Western societies, which requires many institutions to radically revise the prejudices and beliefs that have traditionally informed them not only about culture and planning, but also the organizational structure.

The policy models presented here, far from excluding each other, outline a field of activity and can be creatively combined, provided they meet two basic conditions: that individuals and groups – even those that are clearly disadvantaged – are not stigmatized as a problem, but considered as real resources; that these policies lose their current status of exceptionality and become an integral part of the way of thinking and working of policy makers and cultural operators.

From policies to practice

Promoting not only access but also participation in activities related to heritage and decision-making processes and the representation of communities means, in a word, to seriously invest in processes of audience development, understood as a strategic process and dynamic that allows cultural organizations to put the public, conceived not only as visitors but as individuals and communities of reference, at the centre of their action. On the one hand, in fact, audience development means engaging on the fronts of increasing numbers of participation and diversification of the population groups that use cultural goods and activities. On the other hand, considering that participatory practices are only one of the two sides of the coin, it means investing in

the second aspect linked to participation, i.e. participation in decision-making processes, and representation, through which it is possible to complete the vision of the Faro Convention. Here too, audience development is the strategy on which to focus, since the third key element on which it is based is precisely that of strengthening the link between cultural institutions and citizens. The strategies on which to focus in order to achieve results in this sense are those related to processes of co-creation; internal and external capacity building (intended to strengthen the capacity of internal staff and communities); collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data (on the motivations that push individuals/communities); partnerships with different stakeholders; use of new technologies¹⁵.

A practical example in this sense is given by the activities carried out in the last twenty years by ECCOM-European Centre for Cultural Organization and Management¹⁶, namely many projects related to the social role of museums and their link with the diverse components of society, through capacity building, partnerships, qualitative analysis, use of new technologies, engagement of contemporary artists.

*A focus on “CO-CREATING INTERCULTURAL SOCIETIES: A FOCUS ON RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION-DRIS ”*¹⁷

The project *Co-creating Intercultural Societies: A Focus on Racism and Discrimination – DRIS* (2020-2022) has been funded by the European Union’s 2014-2020 Creative Europe Programme and implemented by Interarts, ECCOM and ITZ. The project aimed to enhance respect and mutual understanding for cultural diversity through intercultural dialogue and to facilitate cultural participation of migrant communities, by developing effective counter-narratives through art and culture, especially among multi-ethnic and multicultural communities in three European cities: Barcelona, Berlin and Rome.

Discrimination continues to affect large numbers of new citizens, ethnic minorities, immigrants and their children, the fight against racism and xenophobia is still an on-going priority that deserves all our attention. The international community has indeed worked for the integration of migrants and refugees; however, these processes are often hindered by discrimination and violence that undermine positive attitudes and hamper meaningful participation in society. The project was underpinned by the Agenda 2030¹⁸, since it will directly address different Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely: Goal 4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all; Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls; Goal 11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

¹⁵ See footnote 12

¹⁶ www.eecom.it

¹⁷ <https://drisproject.eu/it>

¹⁸ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf?ref=truth11.com>

The project pursued the following objectives:

- To **increase the participation** of cultural institutions, public authorities, CSOs working in the cultural, education and social fields, and train them in audience development and management of pilot cultural projects.
- To **enhance the opportunities** of different minorities of migrant origin to collaborate and participate in the social and cultural life of their cities with the aim of co-creating intercultural projects and artistic products with new narratives, avoiding negative stereotypes.
- To **co-create transnational projects and artistic co-productions** to be showcased across Europe, with the active participation of communities of migrant origins and representatives, using cultural institutions and organizations as contact zones, spaces for intercultural dialogue and mutual learning.
- To **disseminate counter-narratives and storytelling** to raise the awareness of both public institutions and people in the 3 target countries on the value of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and peaceful social relations.

DRIS aimed at promoting intercultural dialogue and creating new anti-racist narratives through artistic participatory processes, involving cultural and social agents. It expressly acknowledged the need to go beyond a “traditional” educational approach, focusing on enhancing this with input from shared practices.

The DRIS participants learned through formal and informal training sessions, active engagement, co-designing artistic experiences, and a final exchange of results among the project partners and participants. Although the cognitive dimension was key throughout the process, the emotional and human components were also factored in, given their intrinsic value to personal development.

Conclusions

To conclude with, taking into account some of the lessons learned through specific projects such as DRIS, it is important to advocate and promote, at European national and local level, the following concepts:

- More operational programmes of the European Union, in addition to the Creative Europe Programme, should provide opportunities for projects such as this, based on the importance of a “cultural approach” supplemented with “experienced-based” activities.
- Promoting access and inclusion in the cultural sector means knowing how to listen and recognise different points of view regarding the heritage that surrounds us. To some extent, it is a process that invites us to get involved and to pleasantly note that many different paths can lead to the same destination on another route that is more humanly beautiful.
- Based on the assumption that participation in cultural life is a human right, active participation should not only be enabled but also fostered to ensure education and personal growth.
- Formal and informal education are not sufficient to foster inclusive processes. All projects in this area involve constructivist thinking, two-way exchanges and training activities with practical, experience-based processes. Furthermore, evaluation must be a fundamental part of both the training and practical

components of projects on the ground.

- Cultural policies and projects should support exchanges that go beyond specific communities to involve the population at large.
- Public policies and operational programmes should support training activities developed through innovative means and tools (such as actively engaging artists and participants from the outset, involving a transdisciplinary approach) that go far beyond traditional approaches to cultural and social mediation.