Learning in Museums and Young People

a **NEMO - LEM** Working Group **study**

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the NEMO - LEM Working Group

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INTRODUCTION

Overall structure

The report focuses on museums informal and non-formal learning opportunities for teens (young people or young adults aged 14-25) to highlight benefits and impacts of young people's cultural engagement in terms of personal well-being, active citizenship, social skills development and employment opportunities.

The study begins with the definition of a "Basic Framework", aimed at introducing from a general point of view some important issues referring to the actual context, the more-than-ever important role of museums, with a particular attention to young people.

Then, the study is divided in 4 main sections, aimed at:

- introducing the entangled relation between museums and young people, with a particular attention to **motivations** and **methodologies**, which could improve youth's **access** and **engagement** in culture

- exploring museums' role in the **digital era**, with references to the challenges and the new possibilities introduced by the **new technologies**

- investigating the museums' role to face **social exclusion**, focusing on young people in a **NEET** (Not in Education, Employment or Training) **status**

- looking into the multifaceted concept of **accessibility** and **disadvantage** referred to young people with some kind of **disability**

In order to give specific references to the EU context, all themes are introduced in relation to some of the *Europe 2020* priorities, targets and flagship initiatives.

Although it is well known that all *Europe 2020* actions are interrelated, it could be useful to highlight the most specific elements connected to the topics of this study.

Starting from these premises, the analysis of each one topic is carried out by a brief description of the present situation, the ways in which museums are dealing with these issues and by the presentation of some case studies, considered as examples of good practices and sources of inspiration.

The topics chosen for this report have been suggested by the NEMO - LEM Working Group, because of their relevance to the ever-changing relationship between museums and young people and their direct connections with Europe 2020 and other important EU strategies, initiatives or recommendations.

Nonetheless, it is important to consider that the nature and the provision of European and International museums education programmes for young people changes enormously and depends mostly on specific political, economic and social situations. The situation is similar is for youth cultures.

In this context, is very difficult to define an exhaustive survey, but it is definitively possible to begin. The main aim of this study is therefore to trigger an analysis in this field that could hopefully be carried forward in the future.

An entangled context

As emerged from the public consultation on the Europe 2020 integrated long-term strategy (March 2015)[1], the legacy of the crisis is still particularly severe; among the difficulties it's important to notice that youth unemployment rates are still elevated in many Member States.

Furthermore, from a social point of view, the crisis has led to an increase in social exclusion and exposure to poverty with a consequent rising of inequalities in terms of lifestyle, well-being, cultural and access to professional opportunities[2]. Fortunately, one of the positive trends of the latest years is about the educational field, with a sensible reduction of the early leavers from education and training and an increase of the population aged 30 - 34 having completed tertiary education[3].

Currently, the general trend is to try to build a solid basis for jobs and growth through structural reforms that are concerned with political, economic and social issues but which vary from one Member State to another (in some cases from a region to another). From this complicated context it emerges the importance of a cross-involvement of institutions on different levels: from national governments, to regional and local policies, to social partners, other stakeholders and the civil society. The success of Europe 2020, based on the three priorities "smart, sustainable and inclusive growth", crucially depends on these factors.[4]

To support the improvements proposed by the EU strategy and to improve the present situation in general, young people's cultural engagement is a crucial theme as they are the citizens of today and tomorrow and if we consider the present situation it becomes much more important.

"Playmaker" Museums

In latest years youth's engagement and access to culture have gradually become an important priority, often developed through specific policies aimed at supporting of co-operation and partnership actions at social, cultural and educational levels. The main goal is the definition of new strategies in order to face and overcome the barriers that prevent young people's access to culture.

It is well-known that access and participation to culture facilitate the creation of the own sense of identity and belonging to the territory, promoting social inclusion processes, supporting a multi-level development - both individual and collective - and lifelong learning[5].

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1 COM (2015) 100 final

2 The latest data (2013) from European Commission report 121.6 million people at risk of poverty of social exclusion VS the 96.6 million target of *Europe 2020*.

3 The latest data (2013) from European Commission report 12% of early leavers from education and training vs 10% target of *Europe 2020* and 36.9% of population aged 30-34 having completed tertiary education vs at least 40% target of *Europe 2020*.

4 For further information on the actual evaluation of the *Europe 2020* strategy see also COM (2014) 130 final

5 For a detailed analysis on these themes see K. Gibbs, M. Sani, J. Thompson, *Lifelong Learning in Museums. A European Handbook*, 2007 available on online.ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/I/libri/pdf/LifelongLearninginMuseums.pdf

This issue is witnessed by the EU recommendation on key competences for lifelong learning[6].

As cultural institutions, Museums can help to make the difference, taking on the role of agents of social changes and becoming benchmarks for effective actions in this direction.

In her essay *Not For Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities*[7], philosopher Martha C. Nussbaum (2010) highlights the crucial role of education and culture in creating competent democratic citizens. In her publication Nussbaum notices that the focus on national economic growth is allowing to a concept of education (at all levels but schools education in particular) as a mean to train mainly the students' useful skills in order to make them economically productive individuals rather than empathetic citizens who think critically. The consequence is a worrying decrease of youth's ability to criticize authority, to feel sympathy with the marginalized and different, and to deal with complex global problems. The loss of these important competences damages the health and the performance of democracies and the hope for a better future. It is essential to give back the right importance to the role of education as a mean able to transfer knowledge, attitudes and skills for participating in democracy and facing the diffuse "lack of trust and/or responsibility for the future" (Benasayag, Schmit, 2004)[8]. In response to this situation, Nussbaum suggests to education professionals that it is crucial to reduce the concept of "education as a tool of the gross national product". Rather, education must be reconnected to the humanities and considered a tool which gives students' knowledges, attitudes and skills able to make them true democratic citizens of their countries and of the world. Although Nussbaum's diagnosis of education and learning is very related to the US context, similar signs are visible in European countries, especially after the economic crisis in 2008.

That is why, as democratic and educational institutions, museums still have the chance (and the duty) to become an active resource in society and to create constructive engagement strategies to support social and cultural change.

As suggested by Cristina Da Milano[9] there are 3 main elements which have to be taken into account as representing the ways in which cultural heritage acts as agent of social inclusion (or exclusion):

- access - both physical and cultural
- representation - to reflect or investigate the present values of contemporary society
- participation - active engagement in the creation process of cultural production

Considering the present situation, learning in museums can be conceived as a further tool next to/after formal education, a further instrument, useful to increase knowledge and understanding, to develop personal skills and to acquire new competences, able to strengthen the links between individuals and the reality in which they live.

6   (2006/962/EC) Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning
eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN

7 M. C. Nussbaum, *Non per profitto. Perché le democrazie hanno bisogno della cultura umanistica*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2011 (italian edition)

8 M. Benasayag, G. Schmit, *L'epoca delle passioni tristi*, Feltrinelli, Milano 2004 (italian edition)

9 C. Da MIlano, *Museums as agent of social inclusion,* Eccom – European Centre for Cultural Organisation and Management, 2013
museummediators.eu/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Museums-as-agents-of-social-inclusion_DaMilano.pdf

These positive outcomes must be considered not only important achievements per se but also precious opportunities in relation to the social context and daily life, including civic awareness, personal well-being, social engagement and job opportunities. It is well known that the contact with cultural heritage allows a person to become familiar with one or more different points of view. This is an important step to formulate an own critical thinking, which leads to elaborate a personal interpretation of the world and to consider society as "something built by people" rather than an abstract concept. With regards to youth, this process is really important for the formation of the own identity, the transition to adulthood and an informed choice of the role we all have in society.

The topics written above are particularly relevant, especially if related to young people, traditionally considered as a difficult public for museums in general.

An entangled relation

Which could be the strategies that enable young people to participate to cultural life?

How is it possible to improve youth's access to culture?

The final report (2010) *Access of young people to Culture*[10], accomplished by Interarts and commissioned by the Education Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) in collaboration with EU commission, tries to investigate causes and trends, in order to find answers to these questions.

Starting with reflections about youth culture visibility, its main aim was to analyse the different national situations and to provide a series of recommendations, useful for future policies and strategies in the improvement of youth's access to culture.

The report identified these main barriers:

- lack of time and money
- the concept of culture, which is often considered not a priority
- geographical diversity: rural or suburban areas vs urban and central areas
- lack of an appropriate cultural offer, often perceived as not-appealing

The research indicated various facilitating elements such as:

- specific economic strategies and policies
- broadmindedness of cultural institutions towards young people culture and creativity
- the building of connections between the cultural "official" heritage and the territory (such as the involvement of local communities)
- using networks as positive tools in terms of mobility, communication and dissemination
- the support of young people's artistic and cultural expression, with a particular emphasis on an inter-disciplinary approach
- involving young people from different backgrounds (social economic and cultural)
- a greater use of non-formal approach in learning
- the use of new technologies as educational tools
- acknowledgement of young people as cultural users and creators; the figure of *prosumer* emerged as a person who produces and consumes his own culture at the same time. Actually

10 Laaksonen (dir); C. Feixa; R. Huq, L. Suurpää, L. Varbanova, *Access of Young People to Culture*, European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) Brussels, 2010
EACEA/2008/01 (OJ 2008/S 91-122802)
http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/documents/study-on-youth-access-to-culture-full-report_en.pdf

this characteristic has been enhanced by the great presence and use of the digital/social media.

Considering these premises, it could be useful to consider *why* and *how* young people would be involved in learning processes and cultural activities.

Why - From a general point of view, teenager's perception of learning - especially learning in museums outside the compulsory education - changes: it's a matter of personal choice, especially if we consider young people over 16. Finding the <u>motivations</u> that lead young people to be engaged in education and/or training is really important to promote a greater participation in the cultural life. At a general level, motivations could be identified as social, skills-related and career-related.

To be more specific, the *NEET National Research* (UK), lead by Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and carried out by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), could be very useful for this scope.

Here below a list of 14 motivations, extracted from *BIS Research Paper n. 87 Motivation and Barriers to Learning for Young People not in Education, Employment or Training* (2013)[11].

<u>Motivations</u>:

- to achieve future career aspirations
- to gain employment or increase employability
- to gain qualifications, which are perceived as a gateway to employment and a measure of personal development
- to develop skills, experience and knowledge
- for personal development, according to the desire to improve personal situation, progress in life or boost self-confidence
- by receiving professional support and information
- by receiving support from partners, family members and peers
- for enjoyment and interest of a particular argument or of learning in general
- by the style of learning or a relaxed learning environment, where they feel treated as adults
- as a productive use of time
- by financial support and incentives
- by previous or current learning experiences, able to develop a positive attitude towards learning
- in order to widen options and increase opportunities in life
- as an employer requirement

How - It is equally important to provide "youth friendly" <u>methodologies</u>, environments and then projects, which could be adapted to young people's needs in order to facilitate their access to culture and their active involvement in projects or programmes.

Some publications could help to trace reference points related to these topic such as *Engage 22 - The international journal of visual art and gallery education Young People Agency*[12], and the Italian

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11 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/motivation-and-barriers-to-learning-for-young-people-not-in-education-employment-or-training

12 engage 22 Young People and Agency, published by engage, London, July 2008
http://www.engage.org journal.aspx?id=23

research *Io non vado al museo!* (I don't go to the museum!)[13].

Metodologies:
- *good communication:* "youth- friendly" museum vs the idea of the museum as a place which is "not for me"
- *creating connections* in line with young people's need of identification to overcome the distance between the individual and the objects exposed
- *non-formal learning* which allows a more personalised approach to learning vs a learning conceived only on accumulation of knowledge
- *relations and sociality* in line with youth's relational needs. Environment and activities which allow interaction, sharing, debates and discussion lead young people to discover, negotiate and construct their own sense
- *an appropriate mix of structure and freedom:* structure is fundamental in establishing individual
- and collective goals. Freedom is an essential condition for taking charge of the own learning
- *time and experience* with varied opportunities for participation in order to develop and increase a sense of ownership of the project
- *active participation* to give young people the appropriate role in the meaning-building process; for instance, involving young people in initiatives, such as the design of small exhibitions or the design of activities for their peers, leads to an increase of the sense of responsibility and to the development of personal skills

In the last two decades a great number of project, researches and activities have been realized in order to analyse and reduce the gap between museums and young people. It is also meaningful that recently much more museums have provided their educational departments with specific sections dedicated to young people and participation. However, the idea of an inclusive museum "with people at the centre" is an ongoing challenge.

In this scope it is useful to briefly present the positive case of Danish Museums. Main results of the "User Survey 2013"(in which more that 200 museums and cultural institutions took part) have shown that young public increased by 33% since 2009. Developing museums for young citizens is now a matter of fact for the whole sector. "The clear increase in the proportion of young users is the result of a strategic effort to involve young people at the museums, where the Danish Agency for Culture's education pools have given priority to project that are based on learning partnership between youth education and museums and between museum and teachers' learning programmes".[14] Despite these very good results, youth percentage is still underrepresented in proportion to the whole Danish population (24% in 2013). This brief description shows how the involvement of young people in learning in museums still requires further efforts.

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13 A. Bollo, A. Gariboldi, *Io non vado al museo, Esplorazione del non pubblico degli adolescenti*, in Bollo A., *I pubblici dei musei. Conoscenza e Politiche*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2008

14 J. T. Jensen, *Museum as mediators of cultural democracies*, published in I. Brændholt and J.T. Jensen, *Museums - Knowledge, democracy and transformation*, Danish Agency for Culture, 2014 p. 30

Examples of good pratices: positive legacy from the latest years

Among the accomplished programmes, it is useful to point out the research projects *envision*[15] and *enquire*[16]. Co-ordinated by *engage*[17] (UK 2002 - present), these initiatives have been focused on the relation between art galleries/museum and young people, investigating the reasons of this difficult relation and creating meaningful opportunities for teens in art museums, often outside of the formal education. *Envision* was the engage pioneering programme, aimed at stressing the concept of learning as a social process and supporting art museums and galleries to develop inclusive ways of involve vulnerable young people aged 14-21; its key feature has been to support young people to actively influence and shape cultural provision. *Enquire* (2004-2011) has been a national programme aimed at supporting projects that engaged children and young people with galleries, museums, contemporary visual arts and artists and associated research. The goal was to investigate the learning in art museums and galleries, both by analysing the process in which museums can support learning and the acquisition of skills and by fostering and highlighting the learning benefits of working with contemporary art languages and spaces.

Both the projects acted on a national level. The strong co-operation between different cultural agents (such as National Councils, museums, galleries, libraries, universities schools and local associations) and social organisation on the territory (such as pupil referral units, youth clubs, youth offending teams, social services and alternative education providers) and the Continuous Professional Development - guaranteed for the engaged professionals - have been crucial for the success of *envision* and *enquire*.

The programmes - *enquire* in particular - were based on "Clusters - Partnerships" on the national territory. In line with the Action Learning methodology, each Cluster found its "research questions", strictly related to local situation and needs. Projects and initiatives were developed to explore the "research questions" and to find possible and efficient answers.

Envision and *enquire* allowed the great number of young participants to improve essential skills, such as:
* working and taking decision on their own
* developing social skills and the ability to create relationships
* communicating, discussing and sharing ideas
* team-working
* risk-taking

Some of the most meaningful features of *envision* and *enquire* regard legacies, in terms of:
* greater consideration of the learning benefits of museum/gallery education and better understanding of the factors that enable this learning, with a particular attention to young people
* better visibility and opinion of youth's culture and expression
* creation of strong local and regional partnerships, also by making long-terms partnerships
* create a heritage of good practices and resources around youth-friendly practices, to be widely disseminated to other organisations, also through publications and handbooks

15 http://www.engage.org/envision.aspx

16 http://www.engage.org/enquire.aspx

17 www.engage.org

Europe 2020 references

Targets:

- The EU currently has a target of investing 3% of GDP in R&D. The target has succeeded in focusing attention on the need for both the public and private sectors to invest in R&D but it focuses on input rather than impact. There is a clear need to improve the conditions for private R&D in the EU and many of the measures proposed in this strategy will do this. It is also clear that by looking at R&D and innovation together we would get a broader range of expenditure which would be more relevant for business operations and for productivity drivers. The Commission proposes to keep the 3% target while developing an indicator which would reflect R&D and innovation intensity

- A target on educational attainment which tackles the problem of early school leavers by reducing the drop out rate to 10% from the current 15%, whilst increasing the share of the population aged 30-34 having completed tertiary education from 31% to at least 40% in 2020

Flagship Initiatives

Innovation Union (related to the "smart growth" priority)

An initiative designed in order "to re-focus R&D and innovation policy on the challenges facing our society, such as climate change, energy and resource efficiency, health and demographic change. Every link should be strengthened in the innovation chain, from 'blue sky' research to commercialisation."

A Digital Agenda for Europe (related to the "smart growth" priority)

An initiative designed in order "to deliver sustainable economic and social benefits from a Digital Single Market based on fast and ultra fast internet and interoperable applications, with broadband access for all by 2013, access for all to much higher internet speeds (30 Mbps or above) by 2020, and 50% or more of European households subscribing to internet connections above 100 Mbps."

Background

The *Europe 2020* "smart growth" priority underlines the relevance of knowledge and information for the future european development. In this scope researches, ICT literacy rate and a more aware use of the new technologies have a very important role, concerning with different levels: communication, information, education and also the creation of new job opportunities.

This fact is in line with the gradual shift from a production-based economy to an information-based economy (which needs people with more holistic skills). "Action under this priority will unleash Europe's innovative capabilities, improving educational outcomes and the quality and outputs of education institutions, and exploiting the economic and societal benefits of a digital society, in terms of school leaving and research and development."[18]

As regards the *Europe 2020* targets, the latest evaluations of Europe 2020 impact[19] show that recently

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18 COM(2010) 2020 final

19 COM(2014) 130 final ANNEXES 1-3 and COM(2015) 100 final

the EU Research and Development (R&D) investment is slightly increasing up to 2,02% vs the 3% goal and there is a perceivable difference with the US situation.

From a general point of view the school and training early-leaving rate (especially by young people aged 18-24) has decreased in a stable way since 2000, but it still remains above the 10% identified by the *Europe 2020* strategy. Furthermore, on the national level the situation is much more fragmentary, from the really positive outcomes in Denmark (less than 10 %) and Lithuania (less than 9%) to the difficulties in Spain, Italy and Romania[20].

Latest evaluations[21] report that the "Innovation Union" flagship is well advanced. All actions planned are underway and at various stages of implementation. In particular five European partnerships for innovation have been created, aimed at fostering cooperation between EU, national and subnational, actors around the following topics:

• active ageing and healthy ageing
• productivity and sustainability
• smart cities and communities
• water
• raw materials

It is important to notice that all these actions are fully implemented and that at present the EU has managed to fill about half of the innovative shortcomings more than the US and Japan.

According to latest evaluations, the "Digital Agenda" flagship initiative has been able to reach the adequate politic attention as regards digital economy. Progresses have been made in the implementation of the actions. In January 2014 more than 90% of the actions foreseen were underway or completed. Internet is now widespread across the EU, e-commerce and e-government services are gaining ground, such as by the accomplishment of the coverage of basic broadband across the EU. Nonetheless, there are still hampering factors such as the fragmentation of the EU markets, the lack of infrastructure and lack of confidence or skills by consumers. High-speed broadband infrastructures are still insufficient and could create new digital gaps or foster social exclusion in some areas, especially the rural ones.

In order to stress the importance of new media, the *Europe 2020* strategy introduced the concept of "Digital Society", with a specific reference to the global demand for information and communication technologies in economical but also social and cultural terms. For instance, spreading high-speed internet is useful to enhance EU abilities to innovate (in the field of job and entrepreneurship), include, disseminate knowledge and distribute goods and services[22].

Both in a positive and in a negative direction, these 4 actions regard many features such as marketing policies, entrepreneurship, research, education strategies, social and civic arrangement: it is possible to say that the relation with new technologies is the matter of a society as a whole. From this point of view a successful - or not successful - ICT literacy could become a real wall between social inclusion

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20 See table in COM(2014) 130 final ANNEXE 2, p. 20

21 COM(2014) 130 final ANNEXES 1 to 3

22 About these themes see the UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills research *Smart cities international case studies: global innovators,* Research paper n. 135
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/smart-cities-international-case-studies-global-innovators

and social marginalisation.

For the purposes of this report, it will be highlighted the relation with educational features, considering new technologies as an important factor able to facilitate the access to culture for all ages, with a particular attention to young people.

FOCUS: "BIT" generation[23]

It is clear that the role and the impact of new media is much more stronger than before.

Data from the EACEA final report *Access of young people to Culture* - Spanish national report in particular - could give an idea about this changes, especially with regard the incidence of the new technologies and their impact on young people experience of culture: in Spain "whereas practicing sport and reading had been among the most recurrent activities for young people in 2001, neither of them featured at the top of the list in 2004 or 2008. On the other hand, 'listening to music' and 'watching TV' emerged as the second and third main activities which young people liked (96% and 91% respectively) and which they most often did (92% and 88%), whereas 'using the computer' was fourth among the activities which young people most often did (74%). Overall this seems to indicate the relevance of media and the new technologies in the ways in which culture is accessed, and its impact on more traditional forms of cultural consumption."[24]

As it is well known, youth cultures have a dynamic and ever-changing nature. In the "Digital Society" it is possible to notice different typologies of cultural production and use.

In this scope the EACEA final report[25] could be useful to trace some benchmarks referred to origins, directions, flows and contexts in which youth cultures are created, changed, produced and consumed. Starting from the EU national reports, the research identified 3 main contexts:

- *institutional culture(s)* - supported by the public state institutions (at local, regional, national and European level), in a non-profit and educative way
- *commercial culture(s)* - the result of the cultural industries (media, music, fashion, market), in a business and consumption way
- *alternative culture(s)* - generally created by some civil society actors (most of them youngsters or young adults) in order to encourage social participation in a non-profit way

The new ICT technologies and social media permeate these 3 categories and cause a continued production of new languages and new ways to approach, think to and act in the world. This is particularly true if related to young people, who are among the greatest users of the internet and connoiseurs of its potentials: in fact, the massive extension of digital spaces and practices influences almost all the social features of youth's everyday life.

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23 The name of this paragraph has been inspired by L. Savonardo, *Bit generation. Culture giovanili, creatività e social media* (Bit generation. Youth cultures, creativity and social media), Franco Angeli Edizioni, 2013 (italian edition)

24 Laaksonen (dir); C. Feixa; R. Huq, L. Suurpää, L. Varbanova, *Access of Young People to Culture*, European Commission's Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) Brussels, 2010, p.119
EACEA/2008/01 (OJ 2008/S 91-122802)
http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/documents/study-on-youth-access-to-culture-full-report_en.pdf
All the EACEA references present in this chapter come from this publication.

25 *ibidem* p.116

This leads to important changes in terms of formation of the own identity, development of the personal and collective unconscious, communication skills and the ability to create relations. Furthermore, the technological development is deeply changing the relation between young people and the formal cultural institutions and also their approach to culture, knowledge and learning.

Actually social networks, video/photo sharing sites, on line games, devices like smartphones and Apps are now mainstays of youth culture. In this scope, it could be useful consider why young people find these activities so interesting and important.

Getting data from researches such as the *Living and Learning with New Media: Summary of Findings from the Digital Youth Project*[26], and the paper *Digital media and youth: social uses of new technologies*[27], it is possible to find some benchmarks.

- to increase friendships, interests and independence (friendship-driven and or interest-driven participation on line)
- to extend or strengthen social relationships, using digital media as multidimensional connectors, able to make them acquire social and communication competences
- as mean to affirm the own identity, by communicating ("post", "like" and "share") or, for instance, customizing their own social page
- to be engaged in peer-based and self-directed learning: this allows to acquire various digital skills, make and share own creations (such as videos) and receive feedbacks from other young people on line

Considering these elements, in 2013 researcher and professor Lello Savonardo made an interesting comparison between the 50's Beat Generation and the actual Bit Generation: if "Beat" meant rebellion, pulse, rhythm, "Bit" is connection, sharing, participation.

Nonetheless, it is important to underline that young people (and people in general) do not approach or use digital tools in the same way. The use of new media potentials change in line with specific social, economic and political contexts. Furthermore inter-generational and above all intra-generational differences (Savonardo 2013) lead to different ways of participation in the Internet.

Museums' answers

In 2005 Dirk vom Lehn and Christian Heath wrote: "There is a growing interest in exploring the ways in which new technologies can enhance participation in museums and galleries. The long-standing commitment to interactivity in science museums and science centers has begun to bear upon developments in the arts and decorative arts."[28]

26 M. Ito et al., *Living and Learning with New Media: Summary of Findings from the Digital Youth Project,* The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Reports on Digital Media and Learning, 2008
http://digitalyouth.ischool.berkeley.edu/files/report/digitalyouth-WhitePaper.pdf

27 A. Carenzio, *Digital media and youth: social uses of new technologies. Two researches from Italy,* Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milano 2008
www.euromeduc.eu/IMG/doc/Digital_media_and_youth_alessandra_carenzio.doc.

28 D. vom Lehn and C. Heath *Accounting for New Technology in Museum Exhibitions,* Research paper to appear in 2005 *International Journal of Arts Management* Vol. 7(3): pp.11-21
kclpure.kcl.ac.uk/portal/files/9114195/vom_lehn_Accounting_.pdf

After ten years, it is possible to say that the situation is very much changed and that the "interest" is nowadays a matter of discussion and a claimed need.

In line with the "Digital Agenda" flagship initiative, much more museums are facing this item and trying to find solutions able to make them find their "place" in the cyberspace, with the aim to make their heritage more accessible (digitalisation and e-learning) and to attract wider audiences, especially those more difficult to reach, such as young people. Of course, these issues are important factors that could promote the acquisition of the key competences recommended by the EU Commission, in particular the digital competence which "involves the confident and critical use of information society technology (IST) and thus basic skills in information and communication technology (ICT)"[29].

The adopted strategies and initiatives vary, depending on each specific context. Despite this diversity it is possible to find some points in common such as the building of dedicated web site, the presence on the social networks, the digitalisation of cultural heritage and collections, the design of more interactive exhibits, the newest researches on audience development.

Nonetheless, in the latest years it is becoming much more important to go beyond the basic solutions and reflect on a more conceptual level. Having a web site is important (and also updating it), but it is no more sufficient. The "digital revolution" is leading to the redefinition of the concept of culture itself and of engagement in culture. The same is for learning. The same is for museums.

This item makes rise a series of doubts, which could be resumed in the words "curiosity" and "caution". Sometimes, although the acknowledgement of the new media relevant role, a certain fear that museums' learning potentials could be eroded by the so called "software society" (Savonardo 2013) is perceivable. This ambiguous attitude is well represented in recent debates aimed at reflecting on the ambiguous nature of the Internet, seen as a great tool for our brain-skills[30] or a dangerous instrument which affects our individual autonomy, in terms of lack of attention and loss of long-term memory[31]. In every case, museums' role and responsibility do not decrease, on the contrary.

As cultural institutions, learning, education and awareness-raising still remain key goals for any museum, but it is necessary rethink established practices and adapt them to the contemporary concept of "platform", in order to improve the interaction with museum visitors, especially with young people and young adults. "Knowledge has become common property, but the way in which knowledge is converted into meaningful experiences, education, professional and social memories is an open marketplace, in which the museums can have a field day if they will break with their norms and tradition bound-self image (…) Within the schools and education area, it is important to have a variety of learning forms and to challenge the analogue and the digital opportunities for expression."[32]

29 (2006/962/EC) Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning
eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32006H0962&from=EN

30 About these themes see H. Rheingold, *Perchè la Rete ci rende intelligenti*, Raffaello Cortina editore, 2013 (italian edition)

31 K. Bjerg, *Digitalisation is killing the autonomous individual*, Weekendavisen, 28 March 2014, quoted in I. Brændholt and J.T. Jensen, *Museums - Knowledge, democracy and transformation*, Danish Agency for Culture, 2014, p. 53

32 B. Skaarup, *The natural history museum as knowledge centre and learning environment*, in I. Brændholt and J.T. Jensen, *Museums - Knowledge, democracy and transformation*, Danish Agency for Culture, 2014, p. 106

Except for the benefits related to accessibility (especially for people living in remote areas or with physical disabilities) it is not a simple challenge, as a virtual participation can only result in a visual or auditive experience that cannot replace a real one. That is why, in the age of globalisation and digitalisation, it is important to reflect on finding new ways of making culture and learning not only accessible but also understood and remembered, probably by using new technologies as a multifaceted mean, rather than the goal.

An important contribution about these topics is the Jasper Visser and Jim Richardson's publication (2013) *Digital Engagement in Culture, Heritage and the Arts*. In particular the *Digital Engagement Framework*[33] could be a useful instrument to structure efficient strategies by using digital media as a tool of involvement and audience development. It is divided in 4 steps, from the "Organisational Basis" to the "Strategies, Technologies and Processes". Step 3, entitled "Reach and Engage your Customers", is particularly relevant. Its sequence "reach - interest - involve - activate" could summarize the main processes and benefits by using digital media in museums.

The actual interest in improving the relation between museums and digital technologies is witnessed also by the *MuseumNext* conference[34] held in Geneva from 19 to 21 April 2015 and attended by more than 600 delegates from 31 countries. Trying to answer the question "What's next for museums?", many innovative practices in this field were presented and discussed. Among all: the visitors' engagement strategies adopted by **The Cooper Hewitt National Design Museum** - part of the Smithsonian Institution - (US) related to digital engagement via three interactive devices: a specifically designed Pen, interactive tablets and the Immersion Room[35]. Another innovative strategy presented during the conference is the **Cleveland Museum of Art**'s new *Gallery One*[36] (US). According to the idea that "technology has to enhance, not distract", and after 5 years of research, since 2013 the museum created an innovative and interactive space in which art, learning and technology coexist; visitors can look at real artworks and masterpieces and then deepen their knowledge through hands-on and technology-based activities, such as fun games. As written by David Franklin, director of the Cleveland Museum of Art, "the signature element of Gallery One is a 40-foot long Collection Wall. The wall, the largest multi-touch microtile screen in the United States, displays nearly 4,000 objects from the Museum's collection - that is, every object on view in the museum. Museum visitors can walk up to the wall and tap a high-resolution photo of any piece that captures their attention. This brings up information about the artist, examples of similar works, works from other artists and other eras on similar subjects, and much more. In this way, the Collection Wall isn't a miniaturization, encapsulation, or substitution for our collection. It's a portal into it. Because another tap on the Collection Wall allows museumgoers to add the piece to a customized iPad "playlist" of works they'd like to find and view in the galleries. This allows our guests to create their own guided tours based

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33 J. Visser, J. Richardson, *Digital Engagement in Culture, Heritage and the Arts,* Jemma Bowman editor, 2013 digitalengagementframework.com

34 See www.museumnext.com

35 www.cooperhewitt.org/new-experience/designing-pen/ and www.cooperhewitt.org/events/opening-exhibitions/immersion-room/

36 www.clevelandart.org/gallery-one/about

on their own interests. Or they can choose one assembled by a friend, a member of our staff, a stranger, or even me."[37] All this is possible by using the Cleveland Art Museum's app *ArtLens*[38], which is downloadable for free on the iTunes store.

Finally, an important witness of the need to explore and accomplish the relation between museums and digital media is **Tate**'s (UK) *Digital Strategy 2013–15: Digital as a Dimension of Everything*[39] which is aimed at using digital media, to increase and spread on a wider level the understanding of modern and contemporary art and culture. This general goal will be reached through a great number of actions such as the use of platforms and websites, the digitalisation of the Collection, the establishment of digital communities[40].

Museums strategies in this field are very different. However, still considering the target of young people, among the good practices it is possible to identify 4 trends:

- the building of a "virtual society", which promotes and supports interaction, participation and engagement both in the virtual space and then in the reality - such as the creation of interactive digital platforms beside and beyond museums
- digital media as connective exhibits, able to involve the visitors and let them create "customized" links between the cultural heritage and their own experience
- digital technologies as an educational tool, useful in terms of accessibility of culture and cultural heritage - such as the e-learning practices
- new media as a further instrument for self-expression and personal reinterpretation - such as video productions in terms of practical results of projects, contests, etc.

Of course these categories are not mutually exclusive and do overlap.

Possible recommendations

Based on the EACEA final report, it is advisable to consider and find the most appropriate balance between:

- "the cultural construction of youth (the ways through which cultural institutions model young peoples lives)
- the juvenile construction of culture (the ways through which young people participate into cultural life)[41]."

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37 David Franklin, *Of Pixels and Paintings: Gallery One, ArtLens and the Role of Technology in Museums,* posted the 13/03/2013 *on http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-franklin/cleveland-museum-of-art_b_2870285.html*

38 http://www.clevelandart.org/gallery-one/artlens

39 www.tate.org.uk/research/publications/tate-papers/tate-digital-strategy-2013-15-digital-dimension-everything

40 https://circuit.tate.org.uk/

41 EACEA/2008/01 (OJ 2008/S 91-122802)
http://ec.europa.eu/youth/policy/youth_strategy/documents/study-on-youth-access-to-culture-full-report_en.pdf

According to all these data, it is possible to define 5 main goals on which Museums should focus:

- thinking themselves also as "multimedia - enhanced knowledge centres and alternative learning spaces" (B. Skaarup, 2014)
- innovating in the visitors' connection to the collection - from contents generator to connector between the cultural heritage, the knowledge and the users (especially young people)
- using all the virtual spaces - such as websites or social networks - in a more dynamic way, as places for debate, reflect and spread ideas
- reaching wider audiences, especially young people who are more difficult to reach or who can not reach museums
- enabling young people to actively participate in museums' "life" both on a virtual and on a real level
- supporting a more aware use of the new technologies.

These goals can be reached through:

- the consideration of the Internet as a useful "pool" of instruments to establish a continuous dialogue with young people
- an efficient policy and a greater investment in the digital and new media field, choosing the best solutions related to the specific situation and resources
- the development of socially accessible information strategies by following the ever-changing digital evolutions
- the provision of on-line services for people living in rural or isolated areas or for people with physical disabilities
- the professional development of museum staff competences relating to youth learning and engagement through new media and ICT technologies.

Inspiring examples of good practice

Since 2008 the **Stedelijk Museum** (NL) gives the possibility to young people aged 15-19 to become "Blikopeners" (Eye Openers)[42], which means to become peer educators in the museum to engage young people in dialogues around art and museums, and give them more confidence to interpret art. Blikopeners are involved in a great variety of activities such as organizing events, workshops or programmes for people their own age, inside and outside the museum. Moreover, Together with museum educators, they give lessons to students in both academic and professional areas about the video art collection. Blikopeners have diverse backgrounds, also in terms of study, and come from the Greater Amsterdam region. Every year a new group takes over with new candidates.

One of the most interesting projects carried on by Blikopeners is What The Art?!, a TV series completely edited, directed and presented by young people. During the series Blikopeners visit a well-known artist/designer in his/her studio. *What The Art?!* aired from 24 August to 14 September 2013 in Avro's Kunstuur. Suitable visual arts teaching materials are developed for each edition, in which the featured artist gives students an assignment. The series and teaching materials are also available online for free.

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42 http://www.stedelijk.nl/en/education/youth/blikopeners

The art foundation **Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo** (IT)[43] is carrying on the interdisciplinary project *I speak contemporary,* addressed to schools and commissioned by Fondazione CRT for Diderot project. The project consists of 2 main steps. During the first one (2 years of experimentation in schools) the Education Department designed and produced 4 video lessons, each dedicated to one artwork of the Foundation's permanent collection. In the videos a native English speaking operator presents the artwork using simple and appropriate terms for the age of children (aged 8-10) or teenagers (aged 11-19), to help students to focus and memorize key words and concepts. In the second part of the video, the operator introduces to the students a simple workshop dedicated to the artwork. Each video-lesson is accompanied by a bilingual paper, which is a useful help for the teachers as it contains some technical information about the workshop.

During 2015/2016 the project will continue with the creation of a dedicated website, which will contain contents, ideas, a blog to promote a virtual dialogue and between the participating schools, and of course an area dedicated to the video-lessons. In this way the video-contributions can be viewed, downloaded and used by a potentially infinite number of schools and individual users.

43 www.fsrr.org/dipartimento-educativo

CASE STUDY #1
PALAZZO GRASSI TEENS
François Pinault Foundation - Palazzo Grassi and Punta della Dogana, Venice (IT)

Foreword

This case study is a good example of audience development strategies especially because it is aimed at involving young people through the use of new media considered as an engagement and educational tool whose position is beside the "real" visit to the museum. It is also important to highlight the Professional Development of the staff involved, who have as sources of inspiration some of the most innovative good practices in this scope, such as programmes of Tate Modern and Derby Museum (UK), Stedelijk Museum (NL), Portland Art Museum, Indianapolis Museum of Art and Milwaukee Art Museum (US). Thanks to its innovative approach the project has been presented in the Museum Next conference 2015.

Background and general context

The François Pinault Collection is one of the largest private collections of contemporary art in the world and includes the most important figures of the international art scene since World War II to nowadays. Since 2005 Palazzo Grassi, Punta della Dogana and the Teatrino are the seats dedicated to François Pinault Foundation's exhibitions in Venice. The general mission is to be platforms which support exchange and dialogue between the public and the world of art, becoming privileged places of contact and interaction with contemporary culture with a creative and innovative approach.

The François Pinault Collection's Education Department started its actions in 2010 with the name "St_art" and the essential idea that museums have to be accessible for all kind of audiences: at present there are activities and programmes dedicated to children, teenagers, students, teachers, museum professionals, adult visitors, hearing-impaired visitors. However, the Department aims to reach other audience segments in the future.

Interest in young people engagement arose in 2011, after the participation to Tate Modern's Turbine Generation project, which was addressed to secondary schools. This experience led to:
- a further awareness of the importance and strategic value of working with youth
- a perceived need to train the team on this issue by attending conferences, seminars and establishing contacts with other museums

The Palazzo Grassi Teens Programme has been created in this context, to improve and enrich the educational offer for young people. It starts from the awareness that teens often perceive museums as "boring" and distant. A place "not for them". Generally they visit museums only in "compulsory" occasions such as school visits and study-tours but traditional learning supports often struggle to involve them in a meaningful way. Young people seem apparently not to care much about what adults - parents, teachers, museum guides etc. - tell them. Furthermore it seems that peers'opinions and the interaction with them are more taken into account.

The Education Team decided to develop an engagement strategy that combines teens' needs of

sharing among peers with the idea that art exercises its ability to transform things and people through the physical encounter with artworks. In the design of the activities the Education Team wants to test and prove the efficacy of the peer-to-peer education within the museum: the programme contents are selected, discussed and mediated by teenagers who address to their peers, almost without adults' mediation.

Target:
young students from local secondary schools

Goals:
- increasing the number of visitors between 11 and 19 years
- improving the "reputation" of museums as open minded and inclusive environments towards their visitors, especially young people
- support teenagers' approach to contemporary art, by combining the analogue features of the visit to the museum with the peer-to-peer methodology and an educational use of digital technologies
- allow the establishment of a closer relation between young people and contemporary art, through identification processes, discussions and personal interpretations
- create a Pinault Collection's content library, conceived from teens' points of view

Description of the project
In 2014 the Education team proposed the creation of an app dedicated to the temporary exhibition "Prima Materia" - held in Punta della Dogana. The contents needed to be selected, discussed and mediated by the teens themselves with a peer-to-peer approach. The team identified the tablet as the right tool to be used because it is very popular among young people and it can support different contents such as short text, videos, images etc.

Seven classes from local secondary schools were engaged in the making of "Detto fra noi" (Between us), a special video-guide made by teens and for teens.

The work-plan was articulated throughout the school year. After a visit to the exhibition, each class explored the museum halls on their own. All participants chose the artist to work on and discussed about their choice with the Education team. There was no vertical transmission of information, but an inductive system of observation, which starts from the formal reading of the artworks and that does not require any previous knowledge from the puplis. In the following months the participants worked in class and at home, guided by teachers.

The Education Team and the participants met about once a month to discuss the ideas, considering the proposals, organize the future steps. The video-recording was made at the museum, in the classroom and outdoors. During this phase the participants worked outside school hours and without teachers.

Participants decided what to say about the artists and the artworks on display by identifying the reasons behind the artworks and connecting them to their personal experiences and lives. Participants also chose "how" to convey the message by using different means of communication

such as video, pictures, poems, short texts, animations, interviews. The videoguide was made by 40 video contributors and explored 20 different artists' languages and 2 different art movements. In early June 2014, the app was finished: the video guide, on tablet, was given for free to the visitors of the exhibition "Prima Materia".

The project had great success, that is why, in September 2014, the Education Team decided to further develop the project. The idea was to create a web site – teens.palazzograssi.it – dedicated to the Pinault Collection, to make the contents created by teens more accessible through a true digital platform. Therefore, during the temporary exhibition "The Illusion of light" held in Palazzo Grassi, ten other classes (220 teens) worked on new media to help create http://teens.palazzograssi.it, a sort of Content Library of the Pinault Collection in Venice. At present the website contains all contents related to the "Prima Materia" exhibition; contents dedicated to "L'illusione della Luce" will be uploaded in June 2015.

Also for this project, the Education Team decided to use a peer-to-peer approach. Again, critical approaches and interactions were encouraged by adopting a device currently used by teenagers and by reducing adults' presence in the learning processes and project steps.

The creation of the website allows the museum to:

- be truly "digital" and accessible from anywhere at any time
- maintain the accessibility of all contents created for previous exhibitions
- upload and update the contents gradually, whenever they are ready or needed
- digitalise not only temporary exhibitions but also the entire Pinault collection in Venice
- build a content library of our collection based on the views of teenagers

The construction of the website is supported by the activity of 3 social media: Facebook, Instagram and Twitter, which at this stage are used primarily to communicate with the authors of the contents and of course to promote the project.

It is interesting to notice that the Education Team used the Jasper Visser and Jim Richardson's Digital Engagement Framework, which helped the team to focus on all aspects, problems and dynamics of the project process.

Finally, it is important to notice that the programme design and management was held by the museum staff in close collaboration with videomakers, freelance graphic designers and ICT developers. The strong co-operation and enthusiasm of the whole team work were key elements for the good results of the project.

Outcomes and legacy:

- improvement of museum "reputation" as a place of knowledge, discovery but also a space for cultural accessibility and inclusion
- engagement of a wider audience of young people who could become art contemporary ideal supporters and potential advocates: youth who learn to love contemporary art today could become its biggest fans tomorrow
- creation of a Pinault Collection's content library – teens.palazzograssi.it – created and updated by teenagers and dedicated to their peers and to the general public

- adoption of a more inclusive approach because the contact with contemporary art can blur differences between students since every reaction and opinion has equal dignity and value: you can be yourself, accepted for who you are, even gratified.
- development of youth's skills such as the acquirement of an own critical point of view, a better understanding of the society in which we live, the ability to go beyond the surface and the prejudices
- improvement of youth's self confidence by bringing out their personal ideas or taking personal decisions.

Feedback

As regard the videoguide "Detto tra noi", the feedback is really positive.

From the authors:

154 teenagers participated to the project and 20 teachers.

80% of teachers believe the project changed the students' approach to museums and contemporary art 95% of students believe the project was interesting, funny and instructive and say they are willing to visit others museums in the future.

From the users:

1217 teenagers borrowed the tablet

98% of teenagers say they will suggest their friends to go see our exhibition and ask for the videoguide 92% of teenagers say they would have been engaged in a project like this

As regard the *Palazzo Grassi Teens project*, the evaluation of the impact is still in progress as the latest contents will be uploaded in June 2015. However, the feedback from the participants is really positive in terms of participation, self confidence and entrepreneurship.

On line references

http://www.palazzograssi.it/it/start
http://www.palazzograssi.it/it/palazzo-grassi-teens
http://teens.palazzograssi.it/usr.php

Europe 2020 references

Targets:

- "The employment rate of the population aged 20-64 should increase from the current 69% to at least 75%, including through the greater involvement of women, older workers and the better integration of migrants in the work force"

- "A target on educational attainment which tackles the problem of early school leavers by reducing the drop out rate to 10% from the current 15%, whilst increasing the share of the population aged 30-34 having completed tertiary education from 31% to at least 40% in 2020"

- "The number of Europeans living below the national poverty lines should be reduced by 25%, lifting over 20 million people out of poverty."

Flagship Initiatives

Youth on the move (related to the "smart growth" priority)

An initiative designed in order "to enhance the performance and international attractiveness of Europe's higher education institutions and raise the overall quality of all levels of education and training in the EU, combining both excellence and equity, by promoting student mobility and trainees' mobility, and improve the employment situation of young people."

An Agenda for new skills and jobs (related to the "inclusive growth" priority)

An initiative designed in order "to create conditions for modernising labour markets with a view to raising employment levels and ensuring the sustainability of our social models. This means empowering people through the acquisition of new skills to enable our current and future workforce to adapt to new conditions and potential career shifts, reduce unemployment and raise labour productivity."

European Platform against Poverty (related to the "inclusive growth" priority)

An initiative designed in order "to ensure economic, social and territorial cohesion, building on the current European year for combating poverty and social exclusion so as to raise awareness and recognise the fundamental rights of people experiencing poverty and social exclusion, enabling them to live in dignity and take an active part in society."

Plus

Youth Guarrantee

A new initiative aimed at finding further solutions to the youth employment problem.

It has been endorsed by the EU Countries with the Council Recommendation on April 2013.[44]

According to the Member States' national situations, the aim is to provide young people under 25 with an appropriate offer of employment, further education, apprenticeship or training within fourmonths after becoming unemployed or since the end of the education path.

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44 2013/C 120/01 available on http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX:32013H0426%2801%29

Background

According to the latest evaluation of *Europe 2020* impact[45], the crisis in Europe has caused a worrying increase of unemployment, which rose from 7.1% in 2008 to a peak of 10.9% in 2013. In the short terms the unemployment rate will probably decline slowly (10.4% in 2015). The evaluation reports also that in the last years the situation is even more deep-seated. Between 2008 and 2012 the long-term unemployment – active population unemployed for over a year – increased from 2.6% to 4.7% with a probable increase of "structural unemployment". This could have severe implications for the economic growth and over all for the political and social construction of the EU, in terms of increasing levels of poverty and social exclusion.

Although unemployment affects all age groups, the situation is particularly difficult for people over 55 and for young people aged 15 to 24. The evaluation document indicates that in 2013 the average percentage of unemployed young people in the EU was 23.3%, with peaks at 59.2% in Greece and 55.7% in Spain.

Finally, it's important to notice the growing percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), which was equal to 13.2% in 2012.

Since the recession of 2008, the NEET[46] category has been widely used by the European Commission as a useful indicator[47] for monitoring the labour market and the social context of young people in reference to the *Europe 2020* strategy and its corresponding Employment Guidelines.

FOCUS: "NEET" Generation

NEET are generally defined as "young people not in education, employment or training" aged 15 – 24. Recently this label has included also young adults not in education, employment or training aged 25 -29[48]. At the European level, NEETs are defined as all the unemployed and inactive persons (according to ILO definition) who are currently not in any education, employment and training.

From a general point of view the NEET category is made of youth who are disengaged from both work and education with a probable risk of labour market and social exclusion.

However, the NEET category shows a great heterogeneity. That is why it has been analysed in very different ways, depending on different points of view.

Considering risks-factors (such as education, family background, immigration status and health) Eurofound (2012)[49] divided the category in two subgroups:

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45 COM(2014) 130 final and Annexes 1-2-3

46 "The Employment Committee (EMCO) agreed in April 2010 on a definition for youth neither in employment nor in education and training (NEET) for use in the context of the Europe 2020 Employment Guidelines." Quotation from the European Commission DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion document Youth neither in employment nor education and training (NEET). Presentation of data for the Member States

47 To be updated on this theme, visit ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/youth/statistics-illustrated

48 To be updated on young people migration and socio-economic situation see http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Young_people_-_migration_and_socioeconomic_situation (data are referred to December 2014)

49 Eurofound (2012), *NEETs – Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg
http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf
All the Eurofound references present in this chapter come from this publication.

- "the vulnerable NEETs, who are not in employment, education or training and are at risk of marginalisation while often lacking social, cultural and human capital.
- the non-vulnerable NEETs, who are not in employment, education and training but are rich in cultural, social and human capital and despite being NEET are at little risk of marginalisation."

In other terms: "those who are not enhancing their prospects through engagement with education or who are denied the means of making a living through employment."

Considering individual factors such as different experiences, characteristics and needs, Eurofound (2012) divided vulnerable and not vulnerable NEETs in 5 subgroups:
- *conventionally unemployed* - this is the greater group and could be divided into short-term unemployed and long-term unemployed (12-24 months). They could be the most vulnerable group because of their unwanted difficulties due to lack of employment;
- *unavailable* - vulnerable and not vulnerable young people. Among them: caregivers, young people with family responsibilities - such as young mothers -, ill or disabled young people;
- *disengaged* - young people not looking for job or learning opportunities because not bound by other commitments or inability; in this group are both discouraged workers and young people at risk - such as for a dangerous lifestyle or asocial behaviour - are represented;
- *opportunity-seekers* - young people who are actively searching for job or training opportunities, but are waiting for an occasion in line with their own skills and status;
- *voluntary NEETs* - young people who are travelling or young people involved in constructive activities as art, music, self-directed learning activities.

Looking at the problem from a different point of view, the *NEET National Research* (UK), lead by Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) and carried out by the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE), is useful. *Paper n.87*[50]: is particularly interesting: it approaches this phenomenon starting from the learning status and divides the NEET category in five segments, from the closest to the furthest in participating to learning:
- recent experience in being 'NEET'
- applied for a course
- looking for learning opportunities
- want to learn in the future
- no plans regard learning

This division takes into account factors such as the practical and attitudinal barriers to be engaged in education and learning, personal aspirations for the future and the role of learning in supporting these, individual financial circumstances. Among all there is an important key finding:
"Many young people who are not in education, employment or training have had poor previous experiences of education. They will need to be convinced of the relevance and benefit of learning to their lives, if they are to be encouraged to engage in learning in the future."

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50 research available on https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/motivation-and-barriers-to-learning-for-young-people-not-in-education-employment-or-training

All these data show the great intricacy and heterogeneity of the "NEET generation" and how many different aspects are included under this label, with issues regarding both the personal sphere and the social one. Related to its complexity, the <u>causes</u> and <u>consequences</u> of the NEET have economic, political and social features.

<u>Causes</u>: on the individual level, the NEET status is generally a gradual and very complex process. According to Eurofound (2012) research data, it is possible to indicate 6 main risk-factors/characteristics that increase the probability to become NEET:
- low educational level
- suffering some kind of disability
- low household income
- living in remote areas
- difficult family environment
- immigration background

On the social level the process of becoming NEET has its roots in the evolution of the european situation in the last 30 years, further worsened after the crisis in 2008.

<u>Consequences</u>: on the individual level the main consequences (both short and long-terms) in being NEET can be of different natures:
- bad financial consequences, such as scarring effects or wage penalties,
- negative social conditions, such as low self-esteem, isolation, risk-related behaviour, unstable mental and physical health.

On the social level Eurofound indicates the main consequences of being NEET as:
- institutional and interpersonal mistrust
- less political engagement
- lower civic participation

Young people are the citizens of today and tomorrow. Turning these 3 elements in a positive trend is very important because of their strong effects on personal growth and identity-formation process and as they could foster social cohesion and finally health of democracy.

Eurofound pays also attention to the importance of the education (both individual and referred to family), as it is one of the most important variables with the strongest effect on influencing the probability of being NEET. This is particularly true for the "vulnerable NEETs".
This is certainly a complicated scenario, which shows many different features of disadvantage. Of course, the "NEET generation" is not only an individual difficulty for those affected, but is a real challenge to society as a whole.
Eurofound's advice is to take into account NEET's heterogeneity, especially when designing intervention policies for their re-integration into education systems or labour markets. A tailored approach would be effective, as it could be based on the need of the various sub-groups.

Museums' answers

Eurofound (2012) indicates two main risk factors relating to education and learning disengagement:

- *educational disadvantage* - "associated with social factors such as family, school and the personal characteristics of the young person"
- *educational disaffection* - "concerned with the attitudes young people have towards education and schooling specifically, as expressed by truancy or behaviour that leads to school exclusion."[51]

As social and cultural agencies, Museums can take on the role of social agents through a specific and tailored programmes provision for young people, aimed at facing the disadvantage and prevent disaffection.

Museums strategies in this field have many points in common, but contents, ways and activities vary enormously, depending on specific conditions on national, regional and local situation. At EU level it is possible to notice a great quantity of proposal in the UK, which is the State which faces the problem since the longest amount of time. The acronym NEET itself has been formulated in the UK and later used by EU Commission. However, among the great amount of proposals it is possible to distinguish 2 main kind of projects:

- *preventing* - programmes and projects dedicated to young people also involved in education and learning (such as secondary education). The main aim is to facilitate and support youth's approach to cultural heritage, lead them to consider it as a tool for fostering personal skills and well-being and for acquiring new competences useful in the future and in the society;
- *facing* - programmes and projects dedicated to young people who are already in a NEET status. The main aim is give them the best possible support and guidance to improve their present conditions in terms of self-confidence and well-being in order to contribute in supporting their re-engagement in the society (active citizenship and job opportunities).

Of course these categories are not mutually exclusive and do overlap.

Possible recommendations

Considering all these data, it is possible to define 3 main goals on which Museums preventing or facing the NEET phenomenon should focus on:

- stressing the social value of learning in terms of personal well-being, self-esteem, self-expression, active role in decision-making, sense of belonging, civic and social engagement
- enabling young people to realise their potential (acquired and/or acquirable skills)
- providing experiences and opportunities which contribute to help young people improve their personal lives and their career aspirations (such as apprenticeships)

These goals can be reached through:

- the support of european, national and local policies, able to create learning, training and job opportunities
- an efficient "partnership policy", capable of involving different organisations and institutions on

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51 Eurofound (2012), *NEETs – Young people not in employment, education or training: Characteristics, costs and policy responses in Europe*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, p. 53
http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/sites/default/files/ef_files/pubdocs/2012/54/en/1/EF1254EN.pdf

the territory

- the offer of information, advice and guidance on available opportunities and resources held at the museum
- the development of an accessible learning environment, able to support the learning itself
- the provision of projects, based on an informal and active approach, such as project in co-operation with artist educators
- the professional development of museum staff's competences relating to youth learning and involvement.

Inspiring examples of good practice

Ikon Gallery's *Youth Programme*[52] (UK) is a good example both in terms of disaffection and in terms of disengagement. The programme is dedicated to young people aged 16-21 and who meet regularly - since 2009 - at the Gallery to be engaged in series of meaningful cultural activities, such as long-term projects, working with professional artists, manage events, build relations with communities in the territory or other youth groups and participating to creative activities related to visual arts. The programme has a great number of initiatives and proposals, such as pioneer youth-led programming supported by professionals.

Among all, the *Finding Slow Boat* (2011-2013) and the on going *Black Country Voyages* (2014-2017) involve members of the Ikon Youth Programme in a project placed on board a canal boat named Aaron Manby, lent by Sandwell Council. The boat was transformed in a "floating laboratory" and hosts workshops along the canal network of the territory. Both the projects involve professional artists and young people also from the *Youth Programme* who are considered as project co-creators and co-leaders of creative initiatives on the territory.

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52 See www.ikon-gallery.org and www.blackcountryvoyages.org

CASE STUDY #2
Domino Effect Project for NEET Young People
National Portrait Gallery, London (UK)

Foreword

This case study is considered as an example of good practices in working with young people in a NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) status. In line with the UK national strategy for NEET young people[53], this project shows all the needed steps in facing social exclusion through the contact with cultural heritage and cultural life: partnership building, "tailored" learning processes and ways to make knowledge a meaningful and useful experience for the participants in terms of active participation, skills development and future career opportunities.

Background and general context

The National Portrait Gallery, London witnesses the importance of portraiture in history and culture. It houses portraits of the most famous personalities of British history and culture in the most diverse art forms, such as paintings, sculptures, photographs and caricatures. Formally established in 1856, the National Portrait Gallery houses the largest collection in the world dedicated to the portraiture genre. The Collection is displayed in London and in a number of locations around the United Kingdom, including several houses managed by the National Trust. In its actual main seat in London, the exhibition is divided over three floors and has more than 1,300 works displayed in chronological order, from the Tudor to the contemporary period. As stated in its website the National Portrait Gallery's mission is "to promote through the medium of portraits the appreciation and understanding of the men and women who have made and are making British history and culture, and (...) to promote the appreciation and understanding of portraiture in all media". The aim is to connect history to life, by promoting reflections and debates on identity, diversity and society items.

In line with this concept, Learning Department activities and researches are crucial to the work of the National Portrait Gallery. One of the key priority for Learning is to provide an attractive and integrated programme of projects for young people in the targeted London boroughs.

The *Young People's Programme* is specifically dedicated to working with teens aged 14 – 21 outside the school context, with a particular attention for the hard-to-reach young people. It offers a range of drop-in creative sessions, special events and projects dedicated to hard-to-reach young people. All programmes and activities have an inter-disciplinary approach and are led by the Gallery's specialist team of freelancers, with guest artists and other creative practitioners. Furthermore, programmes and projects are developed with input from the Gallery's peer-led Youth Forum, to give a youth perspective to the Gallery's activities and to increase its profile as a youth-friendly institution.

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53 See www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-strategy-for-helping-young-people-access-education-training-and-work--2

Target

Young people aged 14 - 21 in a NEET status

Goals:

- responding to issues of social exclusion
- engaging new audiences
- promoting a positive approach with cultural heritage, considered also as a source of inspiration in order to discover, experiment, reflect, express and produce
- breaking down barriers in participation in arts organisations for NEET youth audiences
- supporting participants in discovering their talent and gaining practical and transferrable skills
- raising confidence and creating pathways for progression into the Gallery and arts careers

Description of the project

Domino Effect was a three year photography project funded by the Dorset Foundation that provided the National Portrait Gallery with the opportunity to work with NEET young people on a more long term basis than in the previous experiences.

Each year the National Portrait Gallery worked with different partner youth organisations across Camden, Southwark, Lambeth and Westminster; these included Kids Company, The Fairbridge Programme, New Horizons Youth Centre, Westminster Council, Salmon Youth Centre, South Camden Youth Access Point (SCYAP) and Southwark Youth Contract at Southwark Council.

This strategy is in line with the changing NEET landscape, that is why each year the National Portrait Gallery worked with organisations that differed in their ways of working with NEET young people. From charitable to government organisations.

Through these community partnerships, the *Domino Effect project* delivered photography courses to NEET young people in the targeted London boroughs of Westminster, Camden and Southwark.

Each year the Gallery worked with two partners, and through each partnership offered a series of three photography courses led by a professional photographer. The National Portrait Gallery worked with freelance photographers who had a proven track record with the Gallery of working with young people.

For instance, during the third year (2013/2014) the partners involved were:

- The Salmon Youth Centre, Bermondsey (southwark)
- South Camden Youth Access Point, Camden (SCYAP)
- Southwark Youth Contract, Peckham

Each of the three courses offered by each partner, usually included four sessions.

The timing and structure of these varied in accordance with the needs of the partner and participants. For instance in some cases they were held on four consecutive days, while in others evening sessions took place once a week for four weeks. This "tailored approach" helped to create a sustainable progression path for young people. Every session was facilitated by a

professional photographer and the project coordinator, supported by a National Portrait Gallery workshop assistant and a youth worker from the partner organisation. Sessions were based at the partner venue with at least one visit to the National Portrait Gallery, usually during the third session. This appropriate mix of indoor and outdoor activities was a good way to keep young people interested, together with the use itself of photographic language.

The learning approach of the workshops took into consideration different learning styles in order to foster personal engagement and active participation, with particular attention to practical elements and experiences, the collaboration between peers, the time for individual reflective exercises, short-term and tangible results such as photographic prints or other materials that could be taken away after the workshops sessions.

The National Portrait Gallery ran also two CPD (Contined Professional Development) sessions, and one post-programme evaluation session with staff from SCYAP and Southwark. In addition, staff from Southwark participated in one session of the Project Seminar in October 2014, giving a partner organisation's view on the project and its impact on their young people.

Furthermore, in the third and final year, the Gallery organised a project seminar for 50 museum and gallery professionals, held in October 2014 and an external evaluator report.

As a dissemination strategy, the Gallery published also a toolkit, aimed at informing other cultural sector practitionners and community arts organisations about the processes, challenges and opportunities of implementing this project, and sharing practice and expertise about working with NEET audiences. It is possible to download the toolkit through the following link:

http://www.npg.org.uk/learning/young-people/domino-effect-neet-photography-project.php

All the steps of the project have been evaluated by using different ways such as:

- *Observation Forms* - completed mainly by the National Portrait Gallery Learning Staff
- *Informal interviews* - audiovisual recording (or audio recording) of the participants to know their opinion during and after the sessions
- *Sketchbooks* - a useful tool allowing the participants to reflect on the project outside of the sessions by writing
- *Responses in writing* - blank cards given to the participants on the last session, aimed at making them reflect on and evaluate the project as a whole

Outcomes and Legacy

Outcomes and legacy for Year 3, and for the project overall, included:

- an efficient promotion of art and culture for young people and their families, and in general for a segment of the public who would have hardly considered to visit a museum or a cultural institution
- increasing of participants' awareness of the education offer and opportunities addressed to them in museums and galleries
- creation of meaningful partnerships within the territory
- during the project each participant created a personal portfolio; among them five participants have signed up to creative courses held in Colleges and used the portfolio created during

the project as a part of personal references

- one participant started a paid internship at Tate and have taken part to events at the National Portrait Gallery which were part of the Young People's Programme
- two participants gave tours - with support of the Gallery staff - during the project seminar, held in October 2014
- two participants have started a personal career as freelance photographers
- three of the participants have become part of the Gallery Youth's Forum, supporting some important young people's events held in the National Portrait Gallery
- some of the participants will start apprenticeships
- the Year 3 group organised an exhibition of their works at Southwark Council's head office

Feedback

I enjoyed doing this course, due to the fact that I had been given an opportunity to experience something new, and to see what I am capable of. And the guys here gave their 100% focus on to me and the group, giving us the chance to enjoy ourselves. Every Tuesday we came to the photography course. It has been a pleasure working with everyone. Tuesday won't be the same anymore. It was a great experience getting to know new people and visiting places.
(Domino Effect Participant)

Taking part in the Domino Effect once a week has been a great experience, it has helped me with my confidence in being around with new people, it made me feel capable of doing many things, and gaining a certificate and portfolio has helped me see a difference in myself - from someone who has nothing to someone who now has self-value. This can make a big difference to my CV, employers can now see that I am someone who has a variety of skills. The support I received has not just helped me to build a future, but has helped me to turn my life around.
(Domino Effect Participant)

On line references
www.npg.org.uk/
npg.org.uk/learning/youngpeople
www.npg.org.uk/learning/young-people/domino-effect-neet-photography-project.php

CASE STUDY #3
Communicating the museum: innovation, accessibility, creativity
MUSEO TATTILE STATALE OMERO, Ancona (IT)
Foreword

This case study was chosen because of its strict bonds with EU policies (Youth Guarantee in particular) and because of the italian situation related to this theme. As it is well known, this phenomenon in Italy is particularly acute, with the diffused consequence of NEETs still living with their parents. The Eurofound research[54] highlights that on a general level, in Italy being NEET tends to be a persistent phenomenon, especially for young people aged 20-24 and young adults aged 25-29. Finally, this project can be considered as a good example of a museum engaged in providing career opportunities for young people who are in the NEET status.

Background and general context

The Museo Tattile Statale Omero was created to fill this gap in the range of cultural services for the nonsighted, and also to offer an innovative space where artistic perception passes through multisensory, rather than just visual, stimuli. Starting from the Italian Union of Blind's idea, it was created as a museum for visually handicapped people and it was founded in 1993 by the Ancona City Council with the aid of a grant from The Marches Regional Council, It become a State Museum in 1999 when it was recognized by the Italian Parliament in law no. 452 from 25th November 1999, which confirmed its unique status as national tactile museum, due to its specificity in the country. The aims of the Museum, as set out in Article 2 of that law, are to "promote the cultural growth and integration of the visually handicapped and to widen their knowledge of reality". However, from a general point, of view the Museo Omero whises to be a productive cultural space for every kind of public and offers a structure equipped with variable exhibition paths, which can be adapted to the needs of any visitor. In the summer of 2012, the museum began to move into its new premises in the Mole Vanvitelliana, Ancona.

The creation of the new Museo Omero at the Mole is a long job and is still in progress. The aim is to create an innovative, multi-sensory, technologically-advanced exhibition area, spread over 3000 sq m for a total of about 300 works. The collection is fully accessible and can be enjoyed through touch. It provides an overview of the plastic and sculptural arts of all periods and includes descriptions in Braille and in large black print. It features true copies, in plaster or resin, of famous sculptures from Classical Greece up to the early twentieth century.

The museum's educational services are fully accessible to blind or partially-sighted visitors as well as to the disabled in general. Access to these services is free of charge and addressed also to adults, in order to promote lifelong learning and to ensure equal opportunities for cultural growth and social integration. The Institution is hosting volunteers of the regional, national and European civil service, as well as trainees from the university and adult volunteers, training them in the field of accessibility to cultural heritage. The Museo Tattile Statale Omero has worked with Volunteers from the Civilian Service in Italy since 2004, attracting young people from all

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over the country. As a matter of fact, the cultural accessibility sector is highly specific and so the catchment area is very large, with volunteers arriving from all over Italy and from abroad to take part in projects based on activities designed to promote a barrier-free enjoyment of culture that will necessarily encourage the integration of the visually impaired.

The *Communicating the museum: innovation, accessibility, creativity project* starts from these premises and is strictly related to the still-in-progress move of the Museo Tattile Statale Omero in a totally renewed context.

Target

Young people aged 18 to 28 years living in Italy in a NEET status, with a special attention to people with sensory disabilities, in particular visual ones. Participants had to join the Youth Guarantee.

Goals

- increasing personal civic awareness through an active experience within a communication and cultural education project
- acquiring specific competences related to the Museum's mission such as: accessible promotion and communication, art education skills, welcoming disabled people and the general public, events organisation and management
- acquiring key competences such as listening, analysing, communicating, proposing and managing new activities, adapting to different context - even unexpected situations -, being independent, brainstorming and team working skills
- improvement and further development of the services for the public through natural communication processes
- proving and improvement of the textual communication processes in loco (captions, didactics and display panels and publications) and outdoor (advertising and communication actions through traditional media)
- updating and upgrading the ICT processes on site (computer media and multimedia aids to the museum tour) and off site (internet and digital environment).

Description of the project

The *Communicating the museum: innovation, accessibility* project is a result of museums' joining in the Civilian Service Public Competition issued by the Marche Region. The initiative is still ongoing: four young participants were selected at the end of March 2015 and will start their experience at the Museum on May 2015 until April 2016 (total: 12 months). As expected by the notice, the volunteers involved in the Civilian Service are entitled to a monthly allowance.

The main activity of the project is to look after the communication strategies and actions of the Museo Omero activities, referring to on-site and off-site information and including the relation with the territory and the engagement of the public in order to highlight the Museum's external activities. Museums are evolving from places of conservation to communications environments of cultural heritage, also because of the new technologies.

The interaction between real and virtual features, direct and remote, and the role of digital environments have extended the concept of public also as potential users of the Internet. Therefore the Museo Omero also wants to take the role of a communicating Institution, addressing visitors as important mediator of social and cultural values with particular attention to people with special needs, especially with visual disabilities.

Young people participating to the project will help to reach this goal, giving their active contribution for the accomplishment of a complex strategy of communication, which has to be accessible to everyone and bearer of fundamental values such as social inclusion and culture of diversity. At the end of the project, the Museo Omero and I.Ri.Fo.R. - Institution for Research, Training and Rehabilitation for the Blind People - ONLUS Marche will issue a certificate that sums up the professional and key competences acquired by the participants.

During the 12 months of engagement the participants will be provided with an intensive training (110 hours). Lead mostly by Museum staff and experts, lessons are characterized by an interactive approach to ensure the greatest possible involvement: non formal learning, problem based learning, role playing, group discussions, individual exercises allowing the step-by-step acquisition of important skills useful to the accomplishment of their tasks within the Museum. Training activities lead also to a better awareness of the context in which young participants are asked to work. Starting from the knowledge of the Museum's mission and cultural heritage, some of the main topics are:

- Senses specific functions and features, with a particular focus on the sense of touch. From the tactile exploration process to the tactile imagination development. Approach to art through drawings in relief, bas-relief and sculpture designed for visual handicapped people: problems and possibilities; Exercise on the mobility of the blind through the vicarious senses.

- Aesthetic education for the visually impaired. Cultural rights and access to the museum heritage for people with visual impairment. The main national and international experiences in the field of accessibility to the museum heritage and artistic - aesthetic education for the visually impaired. The tactile image as an instrument of knowledge and emotion. Aids for the drawing in relief. Art education as a tool for cultural and social integration.

- Institutions and main services for the visually impaired. The Italian Blind and Visually Impaired non-profit organisation: structure, activities and membership press. Braille printers and their use. eVALUES and library telematics; ICT aids and web sites accessibility for the visually impaired.

- Accessiblity and communication. Essential notions of the e-accessibility. Accessible museum website and vocal website. Newsletters and mailing lists. Social network. Relations with editorial web of organizations, institutions, online newspapers. Managing photos and videos. Braille and audio information; Information in large type; Technologies and tools for the blind and visually impaired; Textual and digital information on site at the Museum

- The Braille system: Historic and social value of the Braille system invention. Structure of Braille alphabet and tactile approach. Practical exercises of reading and writing.

Expected Outcomes

As previously written, the project is still in progress and the four participants will start their experience at the Museo Omero on May 2015.

It is therefore at the present only possible to define the expected results, that will be evaluated through specific indicators - each for every result.

The project hopefully lead to:

- acquirement of specific and key competences. Indicators: specific training involvement, qualifying work activities carried out during the project
- increase of the public and enhancement of visitors satisfaction. Indicators: numerical data of entrances to the museum, surveys/questionnaires of public satisfaction, self-evaluation of the operator
- improvement of the textual communications accessibility and the presence of new publics at the Museum. Indicators: numerical data of public participation, visitors' satisfaction questionnaires
- improvement of the accessibility to the museum, full accessibility of network communication by computer. Indicators: number of visitors to the museum and on the network, visitor satisfaction surveys.

On line references

www.museoomero.it/

http://www.museoomero.it/main?p=attivita_garanzia_giovani&idLang=3

Europe 2020 references

As regard this topic, it is necessary to mention the EU strategy *Disability Action Plan* (2003-2010)[55], which had as priorities employment (2003-2005), active inclusion (2006-2007) and accessibility (2008-2009) with the aim to face problems such as low educational levels and discrimination in employment. To deepen the actions planned in the *Disability Action Plan*, in 2010 the EU Commission proposed the *European Disability Strategy 2010-2020*[56], which is focused on removing the most possible barriers to promote the full economic and social participation of people with disabilities. The strategy is parallel to *Europe 2020*, also because the economic crisis in 2008 had a more severe impact on people with disabilities than non-disabled people in various scopes.

The main aim is to gradually improve regulatory frameworks in order to better reflect the need of disabled people, also in terms of service development and social inclusion. To reach its goals, the *European Disability Strategy* is using all the tools and the initiatives established by *Europe 2020*.

The Commission identified 8 main transversal areas to be developed through key actions. Although all the 8 areas are interrelated, the most relevant for the purposes of this study are:

- **Accessibility** - ensuring accessibility to goods, services including public services and assistive devices for people with disabilities. Among the key actions: to optimize the accessibility of the built environment, transport and ICT in line with the Digital Agenda and Innovation Union flagships. It will also foster an EU-wide market for assistive technology

- **Participation** - which means enabling disabled persons to enjoy all the benefits of EU citizenship, removing administrative and attitudinal barriers to full and equal participation, providing quality community-based services and including access to personal assistance. Among the key actions: improve the accessibility of sports, leisure, cultural and recreational organisations, activities, events, venues, goods and services including audiovisual ones; promote participation to sports events and the organisation of disability-specific ones; explore ways of facilitating the use of sign language and Braille in dealing with the EU institutions; address accessibility to voting in order to facilitate the exercise of EU citizens' electoral rights; foster the cross-border transfer of copyright works in accessible format; promote use of the scope for exceptions provided by the Directive on copyright

- **Equality** - promoting the equal treatment of people with disabilities both by providing protection from discrimination, and by implementing an active policy to combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities in EU policies

- **Employment** - to enable many more disabled people to earn their living on the open labour market. The Strategy pays particular attention to young people with disabilities in their transition from education to employment. It will address intra-job mobility on the open labour market and in sheltered workshops, through information exchange and mutual learning

- **Education and training** - promoting inclusive education and lifelong learning in order to improve

55 COM/2003/0650 final

56 COM(2010) 636 final

knowledge on educational levels and opportunities for pupils and young people with disabilities, also with the support of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020). These goals will be reached by facilitating information advice and guidance on EU and national level and enhancing participation in the Lifelong Learning Programme and the Youth in Action Programme. Further foreseen actions are an early identification of special educational needs and the provision of an appropriate training and support for professional working at all levels of education

- **Social protection** - enable disabled people to be able to benefit from social protection systems, poverty reduction programmes, disability-related assistance, public housing programmes and other enabling services, as well as retirement and benefit programmes. The Commission pays attention to these issues through the European Platform against Poverty.

Background

As stated in the *European Disability Strategy*, "in 2010 in the 16-19 age group the rate of non-participation in education is 37% for considerably restricted people, and 25% for those restricted to some extent, against 17% for those not restricted." Since the Strategy's establishment, many studies and analysis of data were made in order to evaluate progresses or difficulties.

In order to analise data and establish indicators, Eurostat gives these two "main" definitions of disability:

"Definition 1: People having a basic activity difficulty (such as sight, hearing, walking, communicating);

"Definition 2: People limited in work activity because of a longstanding health problem and/or a basic activity difficulty (LHPAD)."[57]

The latest data from Eurostat shows that disabled people leave education and training earlier that non-disabled ones[58], in particular, about one person with basic difficulties out of four in the EU compared with 12% of people without difficulties. At national level the situation varies from the lowest percentage in Sweden (11%) to the highest in Turkey and Bulgaria (more than 60%).

The high rates of early education and school leavers among young disabled could be related to accessibility and problem with the provision of suitable programmes, in terms of methods and instruments which do not meet the abilities of young disabled.

The European need of raising awareness regard accessibility in education is witnessed by the international dissemination Conference for the ICT for *Information Accessibility in Learning* (ICT4IAL) project, which will take place in Riga on 27–28 May 2015. The conference will present the ICT4IAL Guidelines, as the result of two years of research and activities. The Guidelines will be very useful as tools which will help to create accessible materials related to learning processes.

Considering the Definition 2, the rate of early leavers from education is again much higher for disabled people than for non-disabled ones, 31,5% compared with 12%. Also in this case the gap between these two groups is different from one country to another, from the lowest ones in Finland,

57 ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Disability_statistics_-_access_to_education_and_training

58 ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Disability_statistics_-_access_to_education_and_training

Sweden and Switzerland to the highest one in Romania.

On 2nd December 2014, one day before the *International Day of Persons with Disabilities* - which falls each year on 3rd December - Eurostat, the statistical office of theEuropean Union has issued a press release about the actual life conditions of disabled people in the EU[59].

From a general point of view, in the EU about 44 million people aged 15 to 64 have some kind of disability, which prevents them from participating in equal conditions to than others in the economic, cultural and social life of their communities. In 2011 less than one person with disabilities on two between 15 and 64 are in employment (47.3%) and in 2013 almost a third of people with disabilities aged 16 and over were at risk of poverty and social exclusion (29, 9%). But above all, in all EU countries the condition of people with disabilities is less favourable than that of the rest of the population. This issue is referred to all three analyzed indicators: employment, lifelong learning, risk of poverty and social exclusion. Fortunately, some positive changes happened in 2011, such as almost similar rates in participation to lifelong learning for disabled and non-disabled people in Sweden, France, Italy, Ireland and Greece[60].

According to the latest data from Eurostat "in 2011, 30.7 % of people aged 15-34 having a basic activity difficulty were neither in employment nor in any education or training in the EU-28. This is 15 percentage points higher than those in this age group without basic activity difficulty. The gap was much more marked (25 percentage points) for people with limitations in work caused by a longstanding health problems (40.4 % and 15.4 % respectively)."[61]

This situation - especially referring to young people with disabilities - leads to some worrying consequences such as having a lower level of education, exclusion - partial or total - from society's cultural life - especially after the end of school studies - and greater risks to become NEETs or to stay in a NEET status for a long time.

FOCUS: "Special Needs"

Under the "umbrella" word "access" are placed many different meanings.

The same is for "disadvantage".

As it is well known, these are multifaceted concepts with multifaceted consequences related to them. It is possible to consider "access" and "disadvantage" as two useful benchmarks to investigate the engagement rate - due to access - and the exclusion rate - due to disadvantage - in and/or from a society. Obviously, this "picture" is not so simple. Many different nuances are positioned between these two words and many other factors - at cultural, social, economic levels, for instance - play a role. The situation becomes much more complicated if related to disability, which is a multifaceted concept too. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN Convention) uses an open definition which says (Article 1): "Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may

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59 ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/2995521/6181592/3-02122014-BP-EN.pdf/aefdf716-f420-448f-8cba 893e90e6b460

60 For more information see other Eurostat Statistics explained articles such as *Disability statistics - Labour market access, Disability statistics - Access to education and training and Disability statistics - Poverty and income inequalities*. Available on the Eurostat website ec.europa.eu/eurostat

61 Data from July 2014

hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."[62]

According to the UN Convention it is possible to say that disability is an "evolving concept" and a result "from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others".

So, the same concept of "disability" has multiple faces, diverse nuances and very wide scopes , which could been summarized with the words "special needs".

This means two simultaneous actions: identifying the needs and finding ways to fill them.

Approaches to this issue have been divided in 2 main trends:

- the *medical* model of disability
- the *social* model of disability

The focus of the medical model of disability are the person's functional limitations (impairments) which are considered as the cause of any disadvantages experienced. It is possible to limit these disadvantages only by treatment or cure. Nowadays this model is considered outdated.

On the opposite, the social model focuses on disability, considered as disabling barriers. According to this approach, the focus become external factors, related to environmental, social and behavioural barriers rather than the individual's lack of abilities. Disability is caused by the loss - or limitation - of opportunities as a result of some kind of discrimination. It is possible to solve or to limit these disadvantages through the removal of the disabling barriers at all levels.

"Suddenly what I had always known, deep down, was confirmed. It wasn't my body that was responsible for all my difficulties, it was external factors, the barriers constructed by the society in which I live. I was being disabled - my capabilities and opportunities were being restricted - by prejudice, discrimination, inaccessible environments and inadequate support. Even more important, if all the problems had been created by society, then surely society could un-create them. Revolutionary!"[63]

The common adoption of social model of disability encourages society to be more inclusive, and changed the meaning itself of *needs*, shifting the attention to possible social changes and to accessibility as a precondition for participation in society and in the economy.

It is important to notice that looking into these issues is a very complicated process for many reasons such as the diverse kind of disabilities – physical, cognitive, psychical or mental, etc. -, the differences among an acquired or congenital disability - especially at an individual level - the "dynamic" way in which disability is represented and approached, which concerns political, social and cultural issues that influence attitudes and prejudices of non-disabled people.

Thanks to the social model, most recent researches are trying to take into account all these factors, by shifting from considering the role of the external world to the internal emotional life of individuals and vice versa. The general trend seems to be going towards the definition of wide frameworks which could be suitable to specific needs in terms of educational and learning styles, self-determination opportunities, technology development - especially in terms of aids and devices.

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62 *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* available on www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150

63 L. Crow, *Including All of Our Lives: Renewing the social model of disability*, 1992 in 'Exploring the Divide', edited by Colin Barnes and Geof Mercer, Leeds: The Disability Press, 1996, pp. 55 – 72
disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/files/library/Crow-exploring-the-divide-ch4.pdf

Of course the life-conditions for disabled people are much better today than in the past, but maybe it is not enough to talk about them or to advance with technological research. What is needed deals also with equality issues (Schianchi 2009).

An important contribution in this scope is the anthropological concept of "liminality" applied to physical disability and introduced by the anthropologist Robert F. Murphy.

In his publication "The body silent" (1987)[64], the author makes a self-study on his own experience of acquired disability and argues that people with impairments are in a middle zone, in a transitional area between isolation and emergency, which he defines as "Social Liminality". Disabled people do not have (or have lost) the "normal" status, but they are not strangers to the world; they are not perfectly healthy, but not sick either; not dead but not an active part of the society either; neither socially alive/active, nor socially removed, not completely rejected and not fully accepted either.

This issue has direct effects in everyday life in terms of discrimination, lack (or loss) of independence, social and sentimental relations - the feeling of being a burden to others, the idea of being punished, the development of a sense of guilt - which is often felt by the family - the shame in front of "the others". Everyone and the society as a whole is involved in the processes he describes.

If liminality means being "in between", also youth in general could be considered as a "liminal condition": no longer a child but not yet an adult. The scenario becomes much more complicated if we consider a young disabled person.

One of the most delicate periods in young people's lives is the transition to adulthood - at identity level - and the transition from compulsory school education to early adult life – on a social level. This is true both for non-disabled teenagers and for disabled young people. One of the differences is that young people with disabilities are not always supported to think of themselves as persons who could play an effective role in society or even be a resource for the society in which they live; this might be a direct consequence of the "Social Liminality" described by Robert F. Murphy.

This attitude could lead to an higher risk of early school leaving and education and training disengagement by disabled young people. As written earlier, the under-achievement of educational qualification is an important risk-factor in terms of cultural engagement, job aspirations and future career opportunities.

In her study *The education and employment of disabled young people. Frustrated ambition* (2005), reasearcher Tania Burchardt shows similarities and differences between aspirations and future outcomes of non-disabled and disabled people - excluding those with learning difficulties -, by looking also in the past decades. Among the findings, she wrote that "as far as we can tell, the aspirations of disabled and non-disabled teenagers have converged since the1970s. We can speculate that this convergence has come about through a higher proportion of disabled children being educated in mainstream schools, through comprehensive education in general, or indeed through more positive role models of disabled people in society at large."[65]

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64   R. F. Murphy, *The body silent* (first published in 1987) Norton 2001

65   T. Burchardt, *The education and employment of disabled young people Frustrated ambition*, London School of Economics and Political Science, published for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation by The Policy Press Bristol, London, 2005 available on www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/1861348363.pdf

Nonetheless, although these positive changes, Burchardt's study shows that the educational and employment outcomes - for disabled and non-disabled young adults - are different.

In general disabled young adults have:

- "lower educational qualifications
- higher rates and durations of unemployment
- lower pay (even after controlling for educational qualifications)
- lower-status"

So, if "their aspirations as teenagers were similar [for disabled and non-disabled young people], their outcomes in early adulthood diverge" and "the discouraging aspect of these results is that high aspirations with relatively low chances of fulfilment are arguably the worst possible combination."[66] Probably this disadvantaged situation is the consequence of a direct or indirect discrimination.

Burchardt's study could be considered as a starting point for further reflections which go beyond the purposes of this report, but are not less important. It leads us to consider the importance to provide aspiring role models for young disabled people. Furthermore if it is essential to foster further strategies aimed at gain recognition of disabled young people's potential and value - from a collective and individual point of view - it is also urgent to strengthen the present strategies which are trying to make these aspirations real possibilities.

Museums' answers

Responding to their sole as social agencies, in the last years many museums enhanced their accessibility characteristics in terms of environmental changes/adjustments and learning strategies, taking into account the need to provide special educational needs.

From a general point of view, an interesting contribution is the list "Accessibility for under 100 dollars" drawn up in 2006 by the participants of the conference *Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability* (LEAD) and organized by the Kennedy Centre (US)[67] addressed to (and attended by) administrators and leaders in the arts and cultural institutions. The list contains 60 "low cost" suggestions to improve cultural institutions' accessibility. It faces a wide range of barriers, such as environmental, attitudinal or communicative.

From an ethical point of view, a common effort is the dissemination of the social model of disability as, if it has been adopted on an institutional level, many people still think at disability issues from the "medical" point of view.

For instance, in line with the UK *Equality Act* (2010), the British Museum further strengthened its strategies dedicated to "diversity" at all levels, as it demonstrated with the *Disability Equality Scheme*[68]. "The British Museum adopts the social model of disability in preference to the medical model which focuses primarily on the impairment. The social model, however, argues that less emphasis should

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66 *Ibidem*

67 See www.oregonartscommission.org/publications-and-resources/accessibility-under-100-dollars#sthash. GvW451Di.dpuf See also: www.kennedy-center.org/education/vsa/programs/

68 available on www.britishmuseum.org/about_us/management/equality_act_2010.aspx

be placed on the disability itself and more on addressing the physical, intellectual, sensory, cultural and attitudinal barriers to access and equality which are presented by the physical environment and culture in which disabled people live. With the lessening of these inequalities, it is argued, the challenges faced by disabled people will be significantly reduced."

The *Disability Equality Scheme* main goals could be useful to indentify the bechmarks in terms of museums' inclusive strategies:

- "To promote equality of opportunity between disabled persons and other persons
- To eliminate discrimination that is unlawful under the Act
- To eliminate harassment of disabled persons that is related to their disabilities
- To promote positive attitudes towards disabled persons
- To encourage participation by disabled persons in public life
- To take steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, even where that involves treating disabled persons more favourably than other persons"

The ways in which museums try to reach these goals vary depending on specific situations. However in the last years, many positive steps were made also because the benefits of the contact with cultural heritage are nowadays a matter of fact and regard all people, not only the disabled ones.
One of the strongest effort to these issues comes from "*Meet me. The MoMA Alzherimer's project*"[69]. From 2007 to 2014 MoMA (US) provided a specific project for Alzheimer's patients, dedicated to the involvement of people affected by dementia and their families and care partners. The project allowed deep studies in this field. In particular it proved that the close contact with artworks and the experience in the museum:

- provide intellectual stimuli
- create meaningful connections between personal stories, memories and reality
- live meaningful experiences that encourage personal growth
- strengthen the relationship with the caregiver
- share a positive experience with other people who share the same disease

It is important to notice that many of the benefits written above could work also for people with other kinds of disabilities. In fact accessibility is not only a physical matter, such as environmental barriers that prevent the full enjoyment, but is also concerned with perception and cultural sensibility.

Apart from architectural adjustments - removal of architectural barriers -, the most diffused museums' strategies on accessibility and learning are referred to these scopes*:*

- *tailored proposals* - provision of special paths, which are designed in accordance with groups' specific needs, considering different learning styles; generally, the Education Team is available to meet group's representatives, before the activity, in order to design the tour in a more specific way. This service is particularly useful when addressed to visitors with developmental and learning disabilities, mental illness or with autism spectrum
- *specific programmes* - provision of programmed guided tours or workshops for groups composed of people with similar disabilities - such as for visitors who are deaf, or blind or partially sighted etc.

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69 http://www.moma.org/meetme

- *special tours* - provision of non-conventional tours - such as blinded tours -, dedicated not only to visitors with disabilities but also to non-disabled users; the specific aim of these services is also to promote cultural accessibility trough an empathetic approach which could be called "put yourself in the shoes of..."
- *accessible materials* - provision of materials, both on line and directly in the museum, aimed at encouraging people to visit the museum - in an autonomous way and with their own families/ care partners -, and supporting learning processes; these materials vary in accordance with the kind of disability

Of course these categories are not mutually exclusive and do overlap.

Possible recommendations

Considering all these data and according to this topic it is possible to define 5 main goals on which Museums should focus:
- stressing the social value of a learning in terms of personal well-being, self-esteem, self-expression, active role in decision-making, sense of belonging, civic and social engagement
- developing an accessible environment at all levels, which is able to promote and support learning processes and different styles also by the use of tailored programmes and activities
- enabling young people to be aware of and realize their potential (acquired and/or acquirable skills)
- reaching and engaging wider audiences, especially young people who have a greater risk of social / educational exclusion
- promoting an education for diversity also among non-disabled visitors
- provide the appropriate training and support for professionals working in education for people with special needs

These goals can be reached through:
- a real and efficient "partnership policy", able to involve different organisations and institutions on the territory
- the provision of on line services and socially inclusive information strategies for people with some kind of disability or for people living in rural or isolated areas
- a particular attention to designing programmes and activities with an inclusive approach, also in terms of learning styles and contents adaptability
- the provision of community-based activities for people who can not reach the museum
- the professional development of museum staff's competences relating to disadvantaged youth's learning and involvement

Inspiring examples of good practice

The **Balkan Network Museums**[70] (managed by the Cultural Heritage without Borders Foundation) and its Access Group – are carrying an interesting project about this topic. Funded by the US Embassy in Bosnia and Herzegovina and by the Stavros Niarchos Foundation, the "Disabled People in Museums" project is aimed at increasing accessibility in museums at local and regional levels,

70 www.bmuseums.net See also *Disabled people and museums in the Western Balkans,* pdf available on http://bmuseums.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/Niarchos.pdf

also in terms of museum educators' continued professional development in this scope. The project wants to take on the role of an efficient strategy, aimed at encouraging long-term cooperations with the institutions involved, such as museums, non - governmental organisations, artists and disabled people. The intended consequence is an increase in disabled people's participation in the cultural life and in museums' activities.

In 2014 and 2015 five workshops and several conferences were held in various cities across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Among the main themes of the workshops: learning and sharing the social model of disability, learning different ways of increasing museums' accessibility (at all levels), learning about the production of disability-aid tools, also by using the new "Disability Toolkit".

This network-strategy is also strengthened by other parallel initiatives such as the annual conferences "Meet, See, Do", aimed at promoting a shared dialogue between museums in Bosnia and Herzegovina, also in terms of engagement participation and social inclusion.

An interesting project regarding these issues is *Rethinking Disability Representation*[71], a large scale, and experimental action-research project which took place in 2007 - 2008 in the UK with the aim to promote new approaches to disability-related themes and to the representation of disabled people's lives within museums and galleries. Lead by the **Research Centre for Museums and Galleries** (RCMG) **Department of Museum Studies of the University of Leicester** (UK), the project involved 9 partner museums across the UK, departments and a wide Think Tank made of disabled activists, artists, and cultural practitioners. It had the financial support of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.

By adopting the social model of disability as conceptual framework, this complex group worked in partnership with the 9 museums involved. A great number of different activities - such as exhibitions, workshops and educational and evaluation sessions - were designed by the whole team and held mainly in museums in order to explore the wide field of disability representations, to change visitors' - both disabled and non-disabled - perceptions and attitudes towards disability, to turn them in a more positive direction and to promote a broader understanding of disability-related issues. Among the more interesting features of this project: the facing of the strongest stereotypes and prejudices linked to this field, including those more "politically correct" and the partnership with organisations run by (not for) disabled people. This project is too articulated to be described in a few lines, but its whole process is published in a pdf available on www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/research/rcmg.html

A great example on disabled people's inclusion in the cultural, social and economic field comes from the **Cooperativa Sociale Accaparlante Onlus**[72] which have as main goal an effective integration of the disabled persons, who are considered not only as users but also active promoters and producers of culture. In particular, within these two organisations it could be useful to highlight the *Progetto Calamaio* (Inkwell Project) activities.

Since 1996 it has the unique feature - in the Italian context - to have a teamwork composed of disabled

71 J. Dodd, R. Sandell, D. Jolly, C. Jones, *Rethinking Disability Representation in Museums and Galleries,* Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, 2008
www.le.ac.uk/museumstudies/research/rcmg.html

72 http://www.accaparlante.it/

and non-disabled people, who design and manage together a great variety of educational activities (such as workshops, seminars and training courses), often in partnership with museums and various cultural institutions. The activities are addressed mainly to schools and professionals in the social/cultural sector. The interesting feature is that disabled educators - also with severe physical impairments - are co-creators and co-leaders of the activities. They give tours together with their non-disabled colleagues - who are also their care partners during the working time. The main goals are promoting an "education for diversity", the development of a "relational intelligence" and the overcoming of prejudices and stereotypes related to disabled persons.

CASE STUDY #4
Elorrieta Errekamari & friends.
Designing visual art experiences for teenagers with learning difficulties.
PLASTER CAST MUSEUM OF BILBAO (ES)

Foreword
This case study has been chosen because of the long-lasting co-operation between several cultural institutions on the territory and the provinces: it is a good example of an inclusive and mutual relation built by the museum and its users. Finally and despite the numbers of the personnel, there is a positive continuous effort related to the educational provision of activities dedicated to disabled young people. This intention is in line with the actual need to improve disabled young people's access to culture and to make them more engaged in and aware of the society in which they live.

Background and general context
The Plaster Cast Museum of Bilbao opened its doors in 1930 with a clear educational purpose. It owns a Collection of high quality sculpture copies purchased from the workshops of different European museums, mainly during the 1930s. The Collection provides a great educational resource for the study of the History of Art since the Antiquity to the Renaissance. Since its foundation, to fulfill its educational mission, the institution has housed a drawing school for amateurs and art and architecture students, as was customary in similar European institutions.
After a relocation in the 50's and and a closure period in 2006 the Museum reopened at the former refurbished church of the Holy Heart of Mary, very close to the previous location. On the following year, both the Provincial Government of Biscay and the Bilbao City Council - public owners of the Museum - provided the institution with a new Educational Service that has been working since that moment on. In 2007 the Educational Service started a wide programme of activities focused on three lines of action:
• the educational aspect
• the production of cultural events at the church (in connection with the neighbourhood the Museum is located in and its community).
• the production of temporary exhibitions in order to gradually exhibit all the works in the Collection.

The educational programmes began in 2007 with guided visits for schools, backed by workshops, and with a special programme of guided visits through the city of Bilbao for all kinds of public. In 2008, The *Artwork in Context* (a monthly lectures programme), and new programmes for schools were added to the initial offer. During the following years, new educational programmes were added and, nowadays the Museum offers 10 different programmes for school audience, two programmes for school teachers, five regular activities for the general public, workshops and materials for families-customized special visits and workshops for groups with specific needs such as professional groups and people with disabilities.

Among this last collective, the programme "Elorrieta Errekamari and Friends" started in 2007 and has been designed and developed ever since twice every year. The programme is targeted at young students with intellectual disabilities.

Targets and goals: regular learning programmes for secondary education.
The Educational Service is a department with only two workers, which is a severe restriction in terms of the number of programmes that can be effectively developed and conducted. This limitation, together with the characteristics of the museum collection (pieces that represent Classical and Renaissance), determined that the service decided to target the first educational programmes to the students from the higher courses of the regular education system and to spread the coverage to lower courses little by little. For the school year 2007-2008 the Service offered four different programmes for students from 12 to 16 and two for students 16 to 18. As a complement to those sessions, two urban circuits for schools were offered, one for each age group. From 2008 onwards, new programmes were designed to reach younger age groups. Once the first programmes were tested with groups, accounting for evaluations based on visitor's opinions and requests, several adjustments were made to the programmes. At the same time, there were regular calls to the schools and other educational centres to present their own proposals to work the contents of the Museum's Collection and to fit better into their learning projects.

Description of the project: Elorrieta Errekamari and friends
In 2007, just when the school groups started to participate, the Service received an email from a teacher from a centre for students with special needs (Ms Begoña García Bernal). The request was to design a guided visit of the collection for a group of teenagers with special needs that studied at 3 different schools in the region (Bilbao and Getxo in the province of Biscay, and Amurrio in the province of Alava). The programme was organized around two different activities: a guided visit and a workshop to learn how the plaster casts are made and to make oneself a small plaster sculpture.

12 students and a support team of 6 teachers came in 2007. Ever since, the programme is run with a new design twice every academic year. This implies that every year the Education Service designs, taking the specific requirements of the teachers, two new activities: one visit to the temporary exhibition displayed at that moment (based on some aspect of the collection of the museum) and, since 2010, a walking tour through the city. In the last edition, 39 students and 15 teachers participated, coming from 5 education centres in the provinces of Biscay and Alava. The involved schools are:

- IES Eskurtze BHI (Bilbao, Biscay)
- IES Laudio BHI (Llodio, Alava)
- IEFPS FaduraGetxo (Getxo, Biscay)
- IES Zaraobe BHI (Amurrio, Alava)
- IEFPS Elorrieta Errekamari GBLHI (Bilbao, Biscay)

Between 2007 and 2015 a great number of programmes and activities were created and accomplished. Among them:

- 2007. *Guided visit to the Collection and workshop* - This first programme was based on the Plaster Casts Collection. Sculptures were used to explain what the copies were (to understand why, where and when they were made), and to learn some basics about the original works and about life in ancient Greece. The visit was complemented with a workshop that took place after the visit and where the students could follow an ancient Greek recipe to make some olive dressing. They brought their olives back with them to taste them at home.

- 2010. *Programme "Noren Esku? The Human Rights through History" and workshop* - Guided visit to the temporary Exhibition and workshop. The 2010 temporary exhibition was devoted to Human Rights; this was presented as a travel from ancient Mesopotamia to the Counter reformation Europe, fighting for individual and collective rights. The workshop was developed during the visit and consisted of a role game where participants were invited to think and act as someone from the opposite gender. Different historical moments and cultures were described and explained. The museum educators offered the students stickers with the most usual professions at the time. The participants had to choose which ones they could have practiced, according to their gender, in order to become more aware of gender discrimination towards women along the human history.

- 2010. *Guided visit through the city* - This activity came as a request from the group of teachers and, in 2010, the educators of the museum created a guided tour across the city for a group of teenagers with intellectual disabilities. Some material was designed, such as a simplified city map and some stickers with historical images and drawings of the city, to be used during the walking tour. The main monuments of the city's history, from 1300 to the present time were visited.

- 2013. *Programme "Via Renaissance. Florence. Sculpture"* - The teachers proposed to extend the activities at the school. Around a temporary exhibition on the idea of the Renaissance art patronage in the 15th century Florence, the teachers started working with the students, so they could work at school around several of the sculptures in the exhibition. When in the museum, the students had to explain the sculptures to their friends. After the visit to the pieces that was conducted by the own students, the educators completed the presentations and introduced a workshop. The guilds of Florence were some of the most prominent clients and patrons of artworks in the 15th century. Students made some badges with the coats of arms of the main guilds in Florence and identified which of them had commissioned or had an influence in each of the pieces in the exhibition.

- 2014. *Programme "Iron and Industry"* - This was a city tour, designed as a special circuit to walk the streets of the neighbourhood the museum is located in. This part of Bilbao is significant for its mining past and even nowadays one can access to one of the mine tunnels. This was used to explain the main facts of the iron mining and commerce in the 15th to 18th centuries in Bilbao and to understand the effects of the Industrial Revolution in the shaping of our modern city.

At present, the latest created programme is *"The Bilbao Consulate"*, a walking tour dedicated to discovering the commercial heritage of Bilbao. This is still in progress and will be implemented in May 2015.

Outcomes
- The programmes have succeeded in supporting participants' approach to museum and territory cultural heritage, with the positive consequence to break down barriers and opening the door to a richer cultural life
- young people involved considered the experience of the project as positive in terms of achievement, self-esteem and confidence
- the partnership started in 2007 is increasing year by year, with the consequent acknowledgement of the museum's role in the territory as a social and educational institution
- the museum succeeded in engaging a wider audiences

Conclusions and evaluation
One of the key elements for the success of this initiative was the attitude of the teachers that requested a programme properly identifying the skills to be acquired and that gave the museum team the freedom to propose and design well adapted experiences. At the same time, the support teachers made good use of this resource in their teaching and learning practices in the classroom. This has allowed a long-term collaboration and the Educational Department of the museum faces every year new challenges to provide these five schools (and the new ones that may join) with new programmes. Learning materials and other resources are adapted to the skills and circumstances of the groups.

Feedback
As they have told us more than once, they are eager to come back again every school year. Sometimes they have enough time to come twice, some years only once. The fact that they keep on coming and bringing new people with them is proof enough that the museum is doing something well, we think. But, when we read their mails and comments, we feel greatly gratified.
Itziar Martija Recalde. Educational Service of the Museum and designer of the programmes.

...I hope you can because the Plaster Cast Museum and your explanations have become an essential part of our curriculum.
Begoña Pérez Bernal. Teacher at the work learning classes from IEFPS Elorrieta Errekamari GBLHI

In education, things work when there is a teacher WHISHING to communicate that which fascinates her, and that teacher, in this case, is Itziar Martija who clearly feels real passion for that she transmits and she wants the others to feel this very same passion. This wish drives her to adapt the contents, as she fills them with life and with a spark that captivates our students, us and, I think, the rest of the public. This is the simple mystery of our loving for her visits.
Mª Isable Gómez. Teacher at the work learning classes from IEFPS Elorrieta Errekamari GBLHI

...Itziar took us to see some images of the statues at the exhibition about the Renaissance in Florence. Each group explained a different statue, for example Eskurtze Giambologna's Mercury, Llodio Lucca de la Robbia's Cantoria, Getxo Verrocchio's David... Giambologna's Mercury has one leg in equilibrium and the other foot behind, the hand points to the sky and in the other one he has a caduceus (a cane with two coiled snakes and two wings)...
Partcipant student from IES Eskurtze BHI.

On April 18th we went to the Plaster Cast Museum of Bilbao. We were with two educators named Itziar and Markel who told us about the lives of some characters of Bilbao...
...After that, we went to Saint Mary Street, number 10, where Rafael Moreno, better known as Pitxitxi, was born. This famous Athletic football player has a street in his honour, a bust and a prize because he was the top goal-scorer of the league. When a football team comes for the first time to play to San Mames its tradition to offer a bunch of flowers to Pitxitxi's bust...
Participant student from IES Eskurtze BHI.

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