

Transnational Report

Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain



EcoHeritage

EcoHeritage: ecomuseums as a collaborative approach to recognition, management and protection of cultural and natural heritage

Project N°: 2020-1-ES01-KA204- 082769



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

UJa.
Universidad de Jaén



**UNIVERSIDADE
LUSÓFONA**

SocioMuseologia
M
Universidade Lusófona
Lisboa - Portugal

**Universidad
de Alcalá**

on
projects

**ecomuseo
al paesaggio**
Piemonte

! Ecomuseo
Regione Lombardia

MiLA
Fondazione Milano - Lodi - Mantova

MINOM-ICOM

**UNIVERSITÀ
DEGLI STUDI
DI MILANO
BICOCCA**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Transnational Report

Summary

Presentation	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction: Conceptual framework and institutionalization process	7
Survey Results / Data collection and interpretation process	14
Training needs	18
Final considerations and next steps	20

Presentation

This document contains the Transnational Report (TR) presenting the main conclusions of the research activities carried out during the first phases of the EcoHeritage Project. This is a collective analysis presenting the gathering of contributions from Poland, Italy, Spain and Portugal in their National Reports (NR), when each team of experts have scrutinized the different approaches to the concept of ecomuseum and the implications observed in a group of surveyed institutions. Additionally, a set of interviews with scholars was organized by each team, bringing together perspectives concerning the conceptual framework, as well as political, legal, historical and social issues related to ecomuseums, cultural heritage, and local development. By consolidating the linkages between the theoretical context of ecomuseums and the practical prospect for a capacity building program, this TR aims to contribute in achieving the goals proposed by EcoHeritage Project.

The methodological approach was shared between the four country teams and each one was responsible for researching their national contexts. After the round of kickoff meetings, where some general ideas and prospects were discussed, a survey was prepared to scrutinize the main issues related to ecomuseums, to address the training needs identified, and to foster the ecomuseums network and web-based training app, expecting to assemble a set of materials and references to the future design of capacity building events intended to congregate ecomuseums' professionals and related stakeholders. This TR contributes to the results expected for the Project, as it presents a general mapping and diagnostic report in the four countries, discussing differences and similarities, and focusing on shared needs for the future development of ecomuseums.

Executive Summary

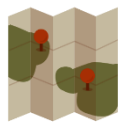
Aim of the project

The EcoHeritage Project aims to research the models of management developed in ecomuseums, addressing successful cases related to the sustainability of these community-based experiences. EcoHeritage aims to contribute to the valorization of these processes, focusing on their relevance to the communities in a sense of fostering local development and social cohesion. Finally, after identifying the main training needs for ecomuseums, a specific capacity-building program will be designed, as well as a network of institutions and their professionals.

Methodological approach

The methodology for this report was based on a conceptual research considering the different understandings concerning ecomuseums in Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain. In this sense, after meetings and interviews with scholars and other related stakeholders, a survey was distributed to a series of ecomuseums in the four countries. The data collected and studied has brought together the current situation of ecomuseums and the training needs identified by their professionals.

Expected results



mapping of ecomuseums



similarities and differences in the concept



shared needs and possibilities for capacity building

Conceptual framework

Nowadays, it is indispensable to understand the social role of the ecomuseums for the integral development in the local, regional, national, European and international levels, gathering perspectives related to social cohesion, cultural diversity, environment and global citizenship. Different conceptual and practical approaches to ecomuseums were identified during this research, and it is imperative to understand that these institutions are part of an intermittent and shifting phenomenon. They are in continuous change,

and maybe they will become something else according to each different social and historic context. However, perhaps the main issue that maintains the linkages between the original aspects of ecomuseums to their contemporary perspectives relates to the necessity of responding to local populations' needs. This report brings these different perspectives and tries to address common needs and goals related to identifying training needs and fostering capacity building initiatives and the development of strong networks.

Main results of surveys

The diagnostic report involved (based on a survey, interviews, meetings and bibliography) 110 institutions, namely: 1 partner and 22 ecomuseums in Poland, 2 partners and 40 ecomuseums in Italy, 3 partners and 22 ecomuseums in Spain and 2 partners and 18 ecomuseums in Portugal.



Figure 1. Geolocation identification map of the Partners of the consortium and 102 participating ecomuseums in Poland, Italy, Spain and Portugal (including mainland and islands territories). Scale 1-500km. Produced from Google My Maps.

Training needs

- Facilitating of co-learning processes;
- Considering innovation as a transversal subject;
- Improving monitoring and evaluation processes;
- Enhancing community-based management;
- Capacity building for managerial skills;
- Using the SDGs strategically;
- Supporting climate action;
- Strengthening of national, regional and international networks;
- Enabling both online and in person activities;

Suggestion of modules for training tools, considering horizontal methodologies for knowledge sharing and co-learning:

Module I: presentation of each territory; Module II: presentation of each community; Module III: Management models for ecomuseums; Module IV: presentation of identified cultural heritage; Module V: mapping difficulties, problems and needs; Module VI: mapping solutions; Module VII: SDGs, climate action and the interconnections between global issues and local territories.

Final considerations and next steps

After this diagnostic stage, the following steps of the project will involve the development of a best practices manual, a participatory heritage management toolkit and OERs and a Web-based training app. All these stages will facilitate the strengthening of ecomuseums networks in the European context and abroad, as it could be replicated to other contexts and approximate to ecomuseums from other regions and countries.

Introduction: Conceptual framework and institutionalization process

The definition of ecomuseum sometimes seems clear to scholars and practitioners in the museum sector. But when you notice the history of this concept and the diverse approaches perceived all over the world, a complexity that is far from a comfortable and calm epistemological environment is revealed. The gathering of the four National Reports proposed by the EcoHeritage Project has demonstrated how differently the recent conceptualizing process of ecomuseums was channeled into historical, social and political contexts. Each background has brought different approaches to the usages of cultural heritage as well as to the linkages to specific conceptual and legal frameworks. On one hand, Spain and Portugal converge on the sociopolitical issues and the close connections to the International Movement for a New Museology (MINOM) in the conformation of ecomuseums and their contemporary conceptual framework. On the other hand, the Italian context has presented a concept closely connected to the frameworks of cultural landscapes. The Polish context has presented a diverse understanding, considering their historical developments in the post-Cold War period and the centralized management of the country's cultural heritage during the 20th Century – the approach to new museology and to experiences related to ecomuseums was only disseminated after 2000 in Poland.

The ecomuseum concept was created in France at a specific time and in a specific social, cultural and economic situation – the turmoil related to counterculture movements in the 1960's, the struggles for human rights and the institutions' responses in designing cultural policies. In 1971, when the ICOM General Conference took place in Paris and Grenoble, the concept was coined by Hugues de Varine. This process was based on experiences launched years earlier with the creation of the French regional natural parks in the mid-1960s, when Georges Rivière and De Varine implemented some experiences of territorial museums. After 1971, the ecomuseum evolved towards community processes endorsing endogenous local development – converging to the ongoing UNESCO agendas linking culture and development. In 1973, then, in the urban town of Creusot-Montceau-Les-Mines, the most referred community ecomuseum was born, and from the mid-1970s to the present day a crescent number of correlated experiences has been identified both in France and in the rest of the world, each of them bringing different perspectives from their local contexts.

The idea of ecomuseums first arrived in French-speaking countries, such as Canada, but gradually spread to other countries with interest in the New Museology, such as Portugal, Brazil, Norway, Italy, etc., until its current expansion to other countries (Turkey, China, Japan, Mongolia, Korea, etc.). Today the ecomuseums are also gathered in associations and federations such as EMI (Italy), FEMS (France), JECOMS (Japan), ABREMC (Brazil), or DROPS worldwide. The EcoHeritage Project has gathered the diversity of four

national perspectives, bringing forward a general understanding of ecomuseums and their local specificities. The project is considering the conceptual frameworks and the experiences identified nationally, emphasizing the diversity of ecomuseums in the European context, but also their common historical challenges regarding the sustainable use of living heritage for the integral development of local communities and the emerging issues regarding the UN 2030 development goals and climate justice.

The understanding of the ecomuseums in Portugal brings an intense debate considering the context of the first Portuguese ecomuseums, the development of concepts in the academic context, and the main actors engaged in these processes. The Portuguese definitions keep very close associations to the French ecomuseums, mainly because of the projects developed by Hugues de Varine in France and Portugal, and the emergence of MINOM, which has integrated Ibero-American and Francophone perspectives to experiences present in different countries. This diversity characterizes process developed by museums, associations, collectives, rural and peripheral organizations, and several communities gathering perspectives related to the local development and the promotion of cultural rights, frequently observed in the triad proposed by Hugues de Varine: from the traditional approach related to building/collection/public to the ideas of heritage/community/territory. Italy, Poland, Portugal and Spain have presented different experiences and understandings on ecomuseums (i.e. Strategic Manifesto of Italian Ecomuseums), but their ideas converge when referring to human development, cultural diversity, territorial linkages, as well as contemporary issues related to local and global sustainability.

The history of the Portuguese democracy is connected very closely to the strong rise of ecomuseums in the country since the 1970s (Primo, 2008). From May 28, 1926 to April 25, 1974, Portugal went through a long dictatorial period called Estado Novo¹, chaired by António de Oliveira Salazar. These almost 48 years are still present in the social memory of the population, and the yearning for freedom is patent in the active cultural mobilization that can be noticed all around the country in the following years. In 1975, the Carnation Revolution (*Revolução dos Cravos*) ended this period of repression, and the so-called Revolutionary Process in Progress (PREC) took place and established a democratic regime. It was a time to rebuild Portugal as a nation and to realize the basic rights of the population, including the access to culture and citizenship. Since this period, it is possible to identify a considerable growth in the activities of museological institutions in the country, as shown by the Survey of Museums in Portugal, a research organized by IPM – Portuguese Institute of Museums, carried out by OAC – Observatory of Cultural Activities, and published by the Portuguese

¹ During this dictatorial government the PIDE - International State Defense Police and DGS and the Directorate-General for Security were responsible for controlling and censoring public opinion in Portuguese territory, including its colonies. The implications noticed in the culture and arts sectors are clear as the government used to control and suppress any gatherings, liberties, opinions and behaviors criticizing the status quo.

Ministry of Culture in 1999. (Inquérito aos museus em Portugal, 2000). In several regions of the country, a group of community-based museums has been gradually taken shape, showing the efforts to have new understandings concerning the museology practices (Brito, 1989)².

Two experiences could be emphasized as they indicate this movement of museological renovation: Ecomuseu do Seixal (1982) and Museu do Casal de Monte Redondo (1981). These two experiences revealed the necessity of establishing community-based museums, avoiding the institution “whose main objective was only the collection, preservation and presentation”. (Moutinho, 1991, p. 79). The Portuguese historian and museologist António Nabais, who was responsible for organizing and developing the Ecomuseu do Seixal, has followed the same spirit when he discussed his experience and mentioned that “it is a museum in growth and development, which follows the interests of the local community and at the same time continues to study and recover the cultural heritage of the municipality”. (Nabais, 1989, p. 89). These museums are good examples related to this line of thought and practice that would be called the New Museology. Contrasting to the normative and traditional museology, these new processes have supported projects that used to make use of the museums as instruments to support local development since the 1970s.

In 1984 the team at the *Museu do Casal de Monte Redondo* had the opportunity to actively participate in the I International Atelier - Ecomuseums / New Museology, which took place in Quebec (GTP - MINOM, 1985, p. 01), in which the Québec Declaration was adopted by 15 different countries represented by their museologists. This document is still recognized today as a reference containing some basic principles of a New Museology. Following this event, the II International Atelier - Ecomuseums / New Museology took place in Lisbon, Portugal, in 1985, and gave rise to the creation of MINOM - International Movement for a New Museology. MINOM is an international organization affiliated with ICOM - International Council of Museums, attentive to social and cultural changes, with the objective of promoting intercultural dialogue between professionals, collectivities and cooperative relations. (*Textos de Museologia*. MINOM, 1991). Nowadays, Portugal has more than 40 identified ecomuseums³, and the Department of Museology at Lusófona University brings together theoretical and practical experiences, deepening discussions around the social role of museums.

The Spanish case has also some similarities regarding the sociopolitical and historical developments from the 1970s. By ending the Francisco Franco dictatorship, the State of Autonomies has emerged with the

² More information at: Brito, C. A. de. (1989). A Nova Museologia da Teoria às Práticas: Uma leitura portuguesa. In: *Textos de Museologia. Jornadas sobre a Função Social do Museu*. (p. 40-42). MINOM - Movimento Internacional para uma Nova Museologia.

³ The Portuguese National Report has identified 72 community museums and ecomuseums, while the EULAC Report has identified 43 ecomuseums.

regional government bodies – *comunidades autónomas* – facilitating the emergence of regional political actors. Following the promotion of those regional policies, the first eco-museological experiences arrived in the early 1980s, specifically in four places: Allariz (Galicia), Esterrri d'Àneu (Catalonia), Molinos (Aragon), Tiriez (Castilla-La Mancha). The first three have become examples of community-based eco-museological projects both in the national and international specialized literature and were promoted by people who were involved in the creation of MINOM. The fourth has had more limited visibility, mainly due to a disconnection with international networks. At present, only two of the above-mentioned institutions continue with the initial project: *Parque Cultural del Maestrazgo* (Aragón) and *Ecomuseú de les Valls d'Àneu* (Catalonia).

The administrative decentralization of Spain made it possible for each region to legislate according to its cultural and natural diversity. The development of ecomuseums in Catalonia, Andalusia and the Basque Country, to mention a few, are examples of this process. After being integrated into the European Union, Spain could also be benefited with some rural development funds that have facilitated the creation of ecomuseums. The FEDER and LEADER funds had among their pillars the cultural and heritage recovery, the participation of the communities, and the development of economic activities such as tourism, some common issues related to the understanding of ecomuseums. The professional and academic field has also undergone a plausible evolution since the 1980s, mainly related to fields such as local and community development, cultural management and tourism, and a specific reference has brought a deepening aspect to the field of social and community museology, with Aurora León's book *El Museo: teoría, praxis y utopía* (The museum: theory, praxis and utopia), first published in 1978. This boom in research and specialized training led to the emergence of ecomuseums, connecting the academic knowledge to practical experiences. Currently there are nearly 100 active ecomuseums in Spain, as it was presented by the country's National Report. The specificities identified in the country contrast how different the Spanish experiences are from the French original practices from the 1970s, highlighting the clear objectives of the ecomuseums, as experiences adapted to local necessities expressed by communities and the people in their territories.

Ecomuseology arrived in Italy in 1990, when the *Ecomuseo della Montagna Pistoiese* was created. Since then, a number of projects have tried to preserve and take care of the landscapes in the country. At the beginning of the new millennium, the number of ecomuseums increased remarkably: the first attempt to survey Ecomuseums in the country took place in 2002, when Maurizio Maggi and his team identified more than 57 ecomuseums; in 2008, a second attempt was coordinated by Raffaella Riva, who identified 193 of them (Riva, 2008); today, Italy is endowed with about 240 ecomuseums. However, the identification of ecomuseums in Italy represented a core question for many years, since some of them are self-identified as ecomuseums, even if they do not uphold any general principles of ecomuseology. Nonetheless, it is important

to notice how the institutions have acquired common instruments and methodologies to apply locally, such as the participatory inventory of cultural heritage and landscape (Maggi, 2002). Additionally, the legal frameworks related to the institutional recognition of ecomuseums ensures funds and visibility for the institutions.

Some of the key aspects identified in the Italian context are related to the proximity of ecomuseums to cultural landscapes, as well as the legislations established regionally and highlighted by Huges de Varine: “Italy is the only country in the world where there are special laws for ecomuseums” (Varine, 2021). Italian ecomuseums had a fruitful period from 1998 to 2007, with the discussion and development of regional laws and the interactions between universities and local institutions organized at a national and European level⁴. The ecomuseums are now recognized by law in fifteen of the twenty-one Regions or Provinces in Italy, and a national network is being created to facilitate the cooperation between institutions, scholars and communities, as well as proposals for a national law⁵. In 2016, the experience gained within this network was gathered in a common text, called *Manifesto*, which summarizes the discussions developed in the last years, in a deep approach to the relations between ecomuseums and cultural landscapes. Additionally, the role of museums related to climate action was discussed in the last years, and since 2019 Italian ecomuseums have joined awareness projects committed to achieving the UN 2030 development goals (SDGs). All these processes could be summarized in the celebration of 50 years of ecomuseology in 2021, in a program called “ecomuseums are landscape”⁶ – bringing together discussions on topics such as wellness, resilience, participation, diversity, short production chain, circular economy, and transmission. After considering these specificities, the Italian National Report stressed the importance of recognizing ecomuseums as 'mediating institutions' within the Regional Landscape Observatories, as envisaged in the Italian 'Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code', and also in compliance with the recent ratification of the 'Faro Convention'.

In Poland, the ecomuseums emerged only in the last two decades, as in the 20th century the political situation led by totalitarian authorities did not enable a democratic approach to cultural heritage management. The local communities were perceived only as heritage recipients, in a centralized management that addressed heritage interpretation based on obligatory views related to official ideology. Theoretically, cultural heritage used to belong to the people and their nation, but practically there was no sense of heritage co-ownership. The concept of ecomuseum was not disseminated and museologists were hardly educated in principles of new museology. The first projects aimed at disseminating the concept were

⁴ Highlights include the 1998 Argenta meeting; the national ecomuseum meeting held in Piemonte in 2003 and the 2007 Carta di Catania. For a historical overview of museology and ecomuseums in Italy, see Maggi 2009

⁵ <https://sites.google.com/view/ecomuseiitaliani/strumenti-e-documenti/legislazione>

⁶ <https://sites.google.com/view/ecomuseiitaliani/agenda/gruppi-di-lavoro/paesaggio/ecomusei-sono-paesaggio>

implemented in the last decade, after cooperation agreements with foundations from Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. These processes enabled the recognition of interest among localities in the four countries and spreading networks concerning ecomuseum methodologies with Swedish ecomuseums (*Bergslagen Ekomuseum, Ekomuseum Nodre Atradalen, Ekomuseum Falbygden-Ätradalen, Gransland Ekomuseum and Emans Ekomuseum*). Ecomuseum concept has been promoted in Poland thanks to two NGOs: first by Polish Environmental Partnership Foundation (until 2010) and Foundation of Active People and Places (since 2010). These efforts resulted in launching first ecomuseum initiatives based on local NGOs, local institutions, and private organizations.

The specificities identified in the Polish ecomuseums are mostly in their understanding as a network of sites. The diffusion of the cultural heritage in ecomuseums' areas stresses the 'living' collection as illustrations of natural and cultural values of the region and their legacy to local inhabitants. In this sense, it comes close to the cultural landscape approach, adding the network of interpretation centers to its core. Each center functions as a spot with a group of people being responsible for coordinating, promoting and implementing the ecomuseums' projects, mainly related to research, publishing, information and marketing activities. Other core activities include workshops with local producers, craftsmen and artists in interchanging events related to their creation process (e.g., potter at potter's wheel, blacksmith in the forge or wicker, painter on glass in the atelier, sheep cheese producer in the shepherd's hut). The relations established between the museums and their landscapes are also emphasized, as marked trails and paths facilitate the journey between particular ecomuseum sites. Polish Ecomuseums also often make a calendar of events, so that visitors can plan in advance their participation in events.

The map of ecomuseums in Poland has changed significantly through the last years. From 2000 to 2006, fifteen ecomuseums were originated in the country. The European regional funds, such as the LEADER Program, have also enabled the funding of ecomuseums, as these institutions became good partners for cooperation projects, mainly related to tourism and community-based education – in general terms, a shared condition with the other three researched countries. In 2012 a survey of ecomuseums was done, identifying fifty-six ecomuseums, and nowadays it is very difficult to define the exact number of operating institutions as they are grassroots initiatives, usually initiated and run by local NGOs – the Polish National Report identified and tried to reach fortyfour institutions based on Internet survey followed by telephone verification. After the research, twenty-two ecomuseums were considered in this national analysis.

The surveys and interviews developed by EcoHeritage project have brought perspectives that reaffirm these connections between the political processes, the cultural landscapes, the articulations developed by social movements, the engagement to local development, the institutionalization and the



perspectives explored by ecomuseums concerning past, present and future. By using a theoretical approach, it is expected that the ecomuseums are understood as a resource to support community's needs, as well as integral and social development. However, as it will be presented in this Transnational Report, even if taking creative perspectives in developing their activities, the culture of innovation and the monitoring of impacts within ecomuseums can be improved. In this sense, it is necessary to foster the new generations' needs, taking a position to "activate the memory that is stored, make it energetically dynamic and envision it in the future for young people", (Luís Mota Figueira, *Museu Agrícola de Riachos*), to "empower communities to be the actors of their sustainable development (Hugues De Varine). There is also an urgent need of understanding these processes deeply in each of their contexts, trying to find their problems and limitations, and envisioning their specific needs in terms of institutional aspects, training needs, communities' issues etc. Nowadays, for the ecomuseums it is indispensable to understand the social relations in the local, regional, national, European and international levels, gathering perspectives related to social cohesion, cultural diversity and global citizenship. Finally, it is imperative to understand the volatility that characterizes Ecomuseums, considering their continuous changing dynamics, and the fact that they could become something else according to each different context. In fact, the main issue that maintains the linkages between the original aspects of ecomuseums to their contemporary perspectives relates to the necessity of responding to local population needs for change and development through the sustainable use of their living heritage. This report brings these different perspectives and tries to address common needs and goals related to identifying training needs and fostering capacity building initiatives and the development of strong networks.

Survey Results / Data collection and interpretation process

The first stages of the EcoHeritage Project were carried out after a series of meetings for awareness concerning the ecomuseums' approaches, the presentation of the Project and the definition of contents for the semi-structured interviews. The interviews were very important to have a broad understanding on specificities of each country and to design the main issues to be addressed by the questionnaire. The surveys were applied in the four official languages of the participant countries, being conducted between January and April 2021. Then, it was possible to identify and research 102 ecomuseums – 22 in Poland, 42 in Italy, 22 in Spain and 18 in Portugal (lists available in annexes I and II). The survey was designed in five sections, related to the identification of the institutions, their structure and management, the human relations and partnerships, the museum approach to innovation, and finally, the performance of the museums.

The sample was quite diverse and it was possible to perceive the representativeness of different regions in the four researched countries - not as a statistical sense, but facilitating a qualitative understanding. In Poland for example, 9 out of 16 regions (called voivodships) were represented. Spanish partners made contact with the 119 registered ecomuseums all around the country, concluding that 92 of them are open, 6 are closed, and 21 are still being planned. Italians researchers involved the country's ecomuseums network in different meetings, and collected a high number of questionnaires – 42 institutions, corresponding to more than 17% of the Italian ecomuseums. The Portuguese team was in contact with 72 institutions, including ecomuseums, community museums and heritage associations, and representatives from all regions of the country, including the islands, were surveyed.

After the analysis of data from the first section, it was possible to observe how the naming process of ecomuseums have different approaches in each of the countries researched: in Poland most of them use word “ecomuseum” to distinguish their characteristics, while in Portugal it is easily noticed that only 6 of them maintain the “ecomuseum” terminology in their names. The evidence of some ethnographic museums is also highlighted, as some of these institutions conserve this classification, although there is a verifiable change in their approaches, from their initial classificatory methodologies of local groups to their commitment to participative processes and local development. In general, the surveyed institutions are used to maintain a deep connection to ecomuseums' concerns, such as rural environment, community-based experiences, socio-political process and local territory.

The organizational structure of ecomuseums, question approached in the second section of the survey, is quite different from that of traditional museums. Their conception, structure and organization (spatial and administrative) have singularities related to the professional relations established in these community-based

experiences, and the intent of finding a close definition could bring misunderstandings related to specificities of each territory. Ecomuseums are social and cultural spaces that differ from traditional cultural organizations in their commitment to knowledge of the natural environment and the cultural landscape in which they are located, helping citizens to discover the history, development and dynamics of a unique territory and the community that inhabits it. In this sense, they seek to promote the involvement and awareness of both its public and the institutions and society surrounding the institution – connecting local professionals to day-to-day life of the territory.

Most of the surveyed institutions have extremely limited human resources – some of them include only one to three professionals involved in the activities of the museums, for example. By addressing the personal identification of respondents, the research could propose the identified training needs focusing on profiles and target audiences for capacity building – also trying to identify gaps that could attract the people based in the territory to the activities carried out by the museum. In this sense, it was possible to conclude that most of ecomuseums' professionals are trained in areas of knowledge related to History, Archaeology, Tourism, Heritage, Architecture, Sciences and Administration, with an average of 40-70 years old. In terms of gender equality, the sample has presented different aspects, such as a fair distribution in Spain (45,5% men - 54,4% women) and Poland (40,1% men - 59,1% women), and an unbalanced distribution in Portugal and Italy, where most of the directors are men. It was also possible to notice that in all the surveyed countries the volunteering activities are a core component of the ecomuseums, as approximately 20-25% of respondents act as volunteers at the museum and claim that the institutions develop this kind of actions.

The survey raised a discussion also concerning the management structure of ecomuseums. It focused on the nature and the purposes of the Institutions considering the relationship established with the cultural heritage and the relevance of each space within the institutions. It was remarkable to understand the processes of management, decision-making and financing related to the surveyed ecomuseums, tackling the governance models adapted by each institution. In this sense, it was possible to identify the professionalization of human resources and their main needs in terms of qualification and capacity building - which will be a guiding point for one of the project's next products, which is a training platform. The institutionalization process of ecomuseums and the importance of their role in our societies is perceived after verifying the percentage of publicly owned institutions - around 40-45% in Portugal, Spain and Italy. Some of these ecomuseums, mainly in Portugal and Spain, were incorporated to State institutions, while other groups are operated by associations - case of 30% of the ecomuseums in Spain, Italy and Portugal. On the other hand, in Poland 54,5% of the surveyed institutions are managed by informal collectives of various entities (NGOs, entrepreneurs, public institutions and individuals), a key factor related to the decentralization process of cultural heritage management after the 2000s. Finally, the respondents were very clear when asked about

the purpose of the institutions: to respond to local demands such as taking care of local heritage, safeguarding and interpreting the cultural heritage, to support local economic activities, to enhance local identity and other diverse issues related to local development.

The third section of the survey addressed the relationship between the ecomuseums, their professionals and their communities, focusing also on partnerships developed by different stakeholders related to ecomuseums. It was possible to identify that the ecomuseums maintain a network of partnerships in their territories often based on informality, as presented by the results shown in question 15: in the four countries almost all participating ecomuseums have relationships with a network of local institutions / associations and Ecomuseums network at the regional level. Other specific cases have also exposed how some ecomuseums were institutionalized into local structures, such as municipalities, a common case in the Italian and Portuguese contexts. Additionally, some management models – such as those found in Poland – also reveal a diverse understanding on how ecomuseums tend to function as network-based structures, established as grassroots initiatives with different kinds of associations and local institutions related to tourism, education and local development, convening also diverse people – artists, artisans and producers. Finally, it is important to notice how did the European Funds for regional development have been facilitating the development of ecomuseums, emphasizing also the needs for capacity building directed to projects designing – an evidence of the local, regional and global interconnections for funding community-based projects.

The innovation processes developed by ecomuseums were examined in the fourth section. At a first glance, there is a representative percentage of positive answers related to the use of innovation by ecomuseums – considering both new activities and improvements, more than 50% of the Portuguese ecomuseums and more than 80% of the Italian institutions responded positively, and in the Polish case, 55% of respondents use innovation for new activities and 71% for improvements. On the other hand, only 45% of Spanish museums have developed new innovation processes and 36% have innovated in improving their existing activities. The comprehension of innovation needs to be addressed to interpret data from this section, as some institutions have included the direct use of technologies, for example, as innovation. The culture of innovation needs to be addressed transversally in the ecomuseums, using the capacity building and contemporary tools to develop specific innovation processes related to several activities of the ecomuseums – communication, research, use of local technologies, sustainability for community-based processes, new ideas for local development, climate action, community engagement, alternatives to territorial social development, etc. All these processes could be addressed using the benefits from ecomuseums' networks – locally, regionally, and internationally. The ecomuseums are used to maintain

strong ties with other institutions, a tendency revealed, for example, by the proportion of partnerships developed by the surveyed institutions in research activities: 87% of Portuguese ecomuseums, 76% in Italy, 74% in Spain, and 10% in the Polish case - remembering that in the case of Poland, 54.5% of the nature of ecomuseums are already the result of informal collectives of various entities (NGOs, entrepreneurs, public institutions and individuals).

The interpretation of the collected data brought an understanding that the issues of innovation are recognized as relevant. However, it seems that museums do not provide activities for awareness or training in the field of innovation. It is not yet clear whether this fact is due to the lack of information about the vast field of training for innovation, whether in relation to the possible models or the contents to be dealt with. It is also important to emphasize that this lack of training for the staff of each museum (technicians, coordinators, volunteers) may also extend to members of the community involved in this type of institutions, as the paradigms of the ecomuseums are based on participation and community engagement. Finally, there was no data suggesting the concern to involve different audiences (occasional and permanent) in the processes of thinking and acting as agents of innovation in the life of ecomuseums. This study revealed that museums are mostly purchasers of existing technologies on the market, but they cannot identify needs for developing specific technological tools addressed to their own contexts for solving their specific problems. The idea of innovation is well received and finds its place in the development of services provided in each museum. But at the same time, this same idea is not articulated with the improvement of processes or with the need to promote in museums (people and communities involved) training for innovation, aiming to add value to the services that each museum can or intend to offer, as well as to the improvement of processes that may lead to new or better services. There is a need of enhancing a culture of innovation in the cultural institutions and ecomuseums, avoiding a perspective of understanding innovating only as the creativity of individuals, and developing policies for training, capacity building and sustained organization in this field of knowledge.

Section 5 addressed questions related to museums' performance, such as the role of ecomuseums in their territories, the education processes developed locally, the strategic function of SDGs, and the identification of how the Covid-19 Pandemic has impacted the ecomuseums' activities. The surveyed ecomuseums are used to develop diverse initiatives, including projects devoted to enhancing local identity, promoting community cohesion, strengthening gender equity, protecting the environment, and fostering economic development. All the quoted actions have an expressive influence in enhancing social cohesion and sustainable development. It is significant that 20% indicate an integral vision of heritage, converging terms such as cultural landscape and beautification of the municipality, the relationship of humankind with



agriculture, natural landscape, etc. This approach presents confluences towards the idea of cultural landscape, in line with the Round Table of Santiago de Chile of 1972 and with the Landscape Convention of the Council of Europe (2000). The natural and cultural landscapes were contemplated after the ecomuseums' answers in diverse terms: in Poland, the mentions to natural heritage are related to terms such as environment (45,45%), biodiversity (31,81%), and ecosystems (18,18%); the cultural landscape is especially considered in Italy (82,1%) and Portugal (66,7 %). There is a wide range of activities developed by the institutions related to natural and cultural landscapes, and it includes guided visits, thematic workshops, and events coordinated with schools and other institutions involving all age groups, from children to seniors.

Training needs

The diversity of experiences was highlighted by the different approaches to ecomuseums observed in each of the four analyzed countries. Subsequently, it was possible to identify some aspects converging to a common ground related to ecomuseums' human resources and contemporary training needs. A high proportion of managers and workers do not have a specific training in museology: Spain – 71.4% for managers/85% for other personnel; Poland – 88%/90%; Italy – 79%/74%; Portugal – 40%/80%. However, they do have other types of training from other areas of knowledge and disciplines such as history, archaeology, biology, environmental sciences, social sciences, tourism, etc. As most of surveyed institutions are open to develop and receive capacity building initiatives, considering their territorial articulation and the general aspects of managing ecomuseums, the effort to find confluences was summarized in the main issues for organizing the next steps of the EcoHeritage Project. The importance of specific training tools, approaches and methodologies for ecomuseums was emphasized after surveying the institutions in the four countries, and the general guidelines of this report will assure the proper arrangement of the training tools and the precise development of strong networks – considering a broad approach to reach active ecomuseums, dormant institutions and projected ecomuseums.

The main needs identified by the research process provided some guidelines to the capacity building core issues, which could be resumed in some topics: the development of competences for project management – articulating local needs to planning skills; the development of competences for creation of projects related to local cultural heritage; the development of competences for project implementation, management, monitoring and evaluation; among other specificities. To this end, three approaches can be considered: the technical training in museology, such as museum planning, conservation and documentation processes that could be related to ecomuseology, such as cultural heritage participatory inventories, management, planning and exchange of knowledge; and the managerial skills necessary to develop holistic projects considering their economics, social, environmental local and global impacts, as well as possibilities for financing and for their sustainability. In this sense, innovation was considered a transversal subject targeting all capacity building processes, as it is an indispensable path to fostering ecomuseums initiatives by highlighting their social role in all societies and their importance for local and integral development. The ecomuseums are used to be strictly connected to their territories, and the challenge of finding similar problems and solutions after enhancing the interchanging process – online or in person – could strengthen their role as cultural and social institutions.

The idea of knowledge sharing could bring together this diversity of experiences by enhancing bottom-up procedures with horizontal discussions for a co-learning process where each institution and their professionals could find similarities and common problems, needs and goals. The university, in this sense, could be a space for sharing academic and traditional knowledge, connecting this diversity of backgrounds and considering the local perspectives as valid as the scholars' knowledge. The main challenge is to find which are the best ways for developing the training program, considering an approach attractive to professionals, public and partners of the ecomuseums. The training modules should serve for improving the museums' services and their relations with the communities, and, in terms of effectivity and applicability, some specific topics should be addressed in a clear connection between local and global agendas: the strategic uses of SDGs; the climate action; innovation; monitoring and evaluation; etc. All these issues are interconnected in a perspective of providing tools for the developing of projects and research. Ultimately, even considering the use of online tools as essential, mainly because of the Pandemic context, it is indispensable to consider the importance of face-to-face events, as the museum as a meeting spaces is one of the main characteristics of the ecomuseums. In the next months it will be possible to find ways of balancing the online tools with face-to-face events, always considering the importance of managing sanitary regulations.

One of the possibilities suggested during the interviews consists of interchange events between ecomuseums: "the ideal would be to make a residence for a group of 10/15 people who are going to live the reality of the museum for a week: to be there, to sleep, to feel the thrill of the museum with its groups." (Emanuel Sancho, *Museu do Traje de São Brás do Alportel*). In this sense, a draft could be prepared structuring modules to each section, considering a co-learning atmosphere where each of the ecomuseums and professionals would participate in an equal dynamic, mediating the presentations and always trying to use the tridimensional perspective of ecomuseums: territory/heritage/community. The main approach is based on the sharing experience, for example, organized in this 8 modules model: Module I: presentation of each territory; Module II: presentation of each community; Module III: Management models for ecomuseums and techniques and methodologies for community participation; Module IV: presentation of identified cultural heritage; Module V: mapping difficulties, problems and needs; Module VI: mapping solutions; Module VII: SDGs, climate action and the interconnections between global issues and local territories; Module VIII: tools for monitoring and evaluating results and impacts of ecomuseums in their territories.

Final considerations and next steps

This report brought various challenges related to the ecomuseums in Italy, Poland, Portugal, and Spain. Is it possible to reach a common understanding concerning ecomuseums in four countries with so many differences? How to find out and focus on the establishment of a common ground for capacity building and for the strengthening of networks, considering the evidence of these differences and distances? These questions, as well as lots of other issues, followed the gathering of information for elaborating this report. Each one of the studied contexts has different perspectives for managing their cultural heritage, their museums and their landscapes, as well as diverse institutional and conceptual frameworks. The document was then developed with a task: to find convergences for addressing the ecomuseums and their communities training needs. Additionally, the methodological approach combined qualitative and quantitative data for a broad understanding of the studied contexts – groups discussions, interviews with scholars, meetings and a survey were very helpful for enriching the interpretation of the contexts and to set a realistic guideline for the following steps.

One event was particularly important for the interpretation of contemporary ecomuseology: Babel Tower – Museum people in dialogue. It was organized as a series of webinars by the *Université de Liège UR Interfacultaire AAP* (Art, Archeology and Heritage) from February to April 2021. The EcoHeritage team was then represented at the event, with specific seminars conducted by Judite Primo, Mario Moutinho, Oscar Navajas Corral and Raul Dal Santo. Hugues de Varine also participated, bringing an up-to-date perspective about ecomuseums and the main elements related to understanding their role in societies, as well as their challenges and needs: broad involvement of the communities for which and with which ecomuseums plan and implement actions for the sustainable use of living heritage aimed at integral local development; effective communication also in an interpretative way; training of personnel, in particular volunteers and of the local community also for the development of innovative services; participatory monitoring also through self-assessment tools; measurement of the impacts of activities; fluctuating activity due to financial problems and the pandemic; educational vocation referred to the various age groups and in a cooperative way and concerning the in situ heritage in particular of the cultural landscape; interest in further adopting the SDGs 2030 as transversal objectives in its own activity.

This diagnostic stage made possible the understanding of the contexts identified in the four countries. The conceptual, institutional, legal and practical frameworks are diverse, but they converge to an understanding associated to ecomuseums original conception related to the triad heritage/community/territory. Additionally, ecomuseums are strictly connected to their time, updated with



EcoHeritage

contemporary issues related, for example, to cognitive justice, social development, gender issues, SDG's and climate action. The following steps of the project will involve the development of a best practices manual, a participatory heritage management toolkit and OERs, and a Web-based training app. All these stages will facilitate the strengthening of ecomuseums networks in the European context and abroad, as EcoHeritage could be replicated to other contexts and also approximate to ecomuseums from other regions and countries.