

FINAL RESEARCH

Master's Degree in Arts & Cultural Management (2017-2019)

TO RENEW OR TO DIE

Meaning, development, and use of the concept
“communicative accessibility” in cultural institutions.

Aida Fortuny Lobato
Official Master on Arts and
Cultural Managment
Universitat Internacional
de Catalunya (UIC)
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“Needful. A crack is a slid open the sight or even the path, through a wall with no door nor window; or that may be sealed.”

Quote by Guillem Martí. Translated by Aida Fortuny.

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Annex

GLOSSARY

ECHR	European Court of Human Rights
EEIG	European Economic Interest Grouping
EU	European Union
IYPD	International Year of Persons with Disability
MENA	<i>Menor Extranjero No Acompañado</i>
PWD	People With Disability
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGD	Speech Generating Device
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNE	<i>Asociación Española de Normalización</i>
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

The research here presented is a humble approach to the topic “communicative accessibility” in the cultural field using a very curious personal and professional mixture; the tools learned in the master Arts and Cultural Management in the UIC Barcelona, the criticism that I have acquired as a usual consumer of accessible services and finally and most importantly, the work experience that I recently had in the *Fundació Tàpies* in Barcelona, where I began questioning myself about the topic that stars this thesis.

1.1. JUSTIFICATION, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, GOALS AND GREETINGS

This thesis is dense in its nature and the clarifications along the pages may not contribute enough for the fluidity of the reader, so this may be a good moment to highlight some crucial details that really shape this project and also work as an overture to the whole content:

In the first place, this project aims to treat the concept “communicative accessibility” and for that, it has been necessary to make a progressive zoom that begins with the general idea of “accessibility”. In fact, the project starts by discovering the meaning of the concept “accessibility” and its “mother concepts” (meaning the concepts that existed in the past and along generated what we now understand by “accessibility”) in the *State of The Art* of the thesis.

This process of zooming in “accessibility” until reached the specificity of “communicative accessibility” in the cultural field was not designed to happen when I had the previous idea of what the project would look like at the end. However, it has finally been the decision of greater importance for the thesis to be coherent in its construction. Otherwise -and I’ve tried so-, the theoretical axis was cut by the lack of chronology of references

In second place, the project suggests 4 research questions that hopefully will guide the project until the conclusions:

1. **What does “accessibility” mean and how does it adjust to the cultural field?**
2. **Throughout history, what are the most influential steps defining the concept “accessibility” and whose?**
3. **Which is the most exact definition clarifying and concreting the theoretical and practical purposes, if any, implicit in the concept?**
4. **Which are the internal –management- and external – political, economic and social- factors determining the implementation and use of the concept “communicative accessibility” in cultural institutions?**

In third place, as the word “culture” and “cultural field” would be considerably repeated, it is important to limit the spectrum that matters in this research. According to the Cambridge Online Dictionary¹ the word has a variety of meanings from which I chose the two cited hereafter:

“In social studies: The way of life of a particular people, esp². as shown in their ordinary behavior and habits, their attitudes toward each other and their moral and religious beliefs.” (...)

“In arts: The arts of describing, showing, or performing that represent the traditions or the way of life of a particular people or group; literature, art, music, dance, theatre, etc.” (...)

Both social and art studies explain equally what culture is and therefore, would have the same weight in the research bibliography about “accessibility”. In other words, not only the artistic activities -included in the previous example- but also social sciences such as politics and philosophy and education would be considered to be “culture” or “cultural field” in this investigation.

¹ Cambridge Dictionary (online source) dictionary.cambridge.org [consulted the 1st February 2019]

² Abbreviation for English for Specific/Special Purposes: the teaching of English for use in a particular area of activity, for example, business or science.

In fourth place, the 3 main goals that this final project will be trying to archive:

- 1. To provide an accurate definition of “accessibility” that helps to expand knowledge about its importance.**
- 2. To provide a clear analysis of the applicability of the concept in cultural institutions with examples by making the most of the resources and tools provided by the Master.**
- 3. To link personal and professional interests in a way that can be useful and illustrative for a possible future PhD or a role job in managing accessibility.**

The goals are academic, personal, and hopefully professional. This mixture is not only determining the challenge of doing the most important project at the final stage of the master, but also a personal try to cope with a topic that has been always hard for self-acceptance issues. Here are the goals enounced:

Last but not least, the will of contributing in the constant but never enough work of promoting diversity, inclusion and social equity. I honestly see it as a needed change that may have very positive impacts if well treated. I feel happy to have the opportunity to do my bit in this amazing and sometimes overwhelming world called “culture”.

The chance of getting this opportunity would have not been possible without the help of some persons that made possible the existence of these thesis trough collaborations, emotional support, criticism and overall, time.

I appreciate every grain of sand provided in this project and **I especially want to thank:**

My tutor Marta Crispí for her patience and calming words in the moments that I felt more lost in the project, for her kindness in caring for me farther than for the research purposes, the precision in which she has corrected, for sharing with me her knowledge about doing research and overall, for believing in me.

My coach Maria Mateos and my psychotherapist Roser Reyne for emotionally preparing me to treat a topic that triggers my personal weaknesses and for their help finding a good approach; free of resentful judgments but with constructive criticism.

The professionals Barbara Roig, Guillem Martí, Josep Miquel Faura and Teresa Soldevila for their share of the vision of “accessibility”, their time meeting me, and filling with detail the questionnaires that I sent them.

The engineering professor Rafael Morillas and engineering student Nicolas Moncada for sharing the documents about accessibility and giving their vision of the topic.

To Lluís Montané and Berta Panades for the design of the project’s cover and for his predisposition to help in general.

To my family for their interest in the project despite the language barrier of not understanding English.

1.2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology has been the most changing feature in the project. Actually, it was part of the adventure to find the “right methodology” that solves most of each research question while trying it in many different ways.

Another important fact is the singular characteristics of each of the parts that configure the project: Although being all theoretical, they all require different levels of searching for resources and structuring. For example, the *State of the Art* demanded from a chronological axis that permitted the disposal of the huge amount of references, while the case studies included in *Chapter 3. Thematic of the research* did not.

Fruit of a personal decision, the aspects concerning methodology are in this project explained in each chapter’s introduction, previous to the development, so there is not the possibility to make a big chapter that reunites the condition in which the project has been done. Still, there are **methodological aspects that help the text cohesion and comprehension** and worth to be mentioned in this part.

To help the comprehension of this thesis, the language moves from formal to informal and looks for a gradient that is able to help anyone understand what is explained regardless their background and knowledge. The project aims to be accessible in its communication because it is indeed about “communicative accessibility”. What a mess would the project be if it wasn’t!

Following on the idea of the gradient, the project **provides many real and fiction examples** that illustrate the ideas, concepts and deliberations. When those are too abstract, I personally provided with some metaphors and little fiction stories that are framed in **dark text boxes** that I unconsciously **named “mind gaps”**.

These gaps between the information are the deepest reflections that I personally had on the treated topics. They were crucial to me to find the relation between the resources of the project, so I thought that expressing my mind through them may help the reader on its understanding and reflecting process too.

Another fact that contributes to the thesis cohesion and comprehension is **the order that the development follows** in a general way. In other words, **the stipulated directions** that the project should not miss in order to be the most clear possible to the eyes of the reader.

Here are the stipulated directions expressed in a table:

WHAT	WHERE	HOW
REGISTER	The whole project	Formal ↔ Informal
VISION	The whole project	Objective ↔ Subjective
RESEARCH DISPLAY	<i>Chapter 2. Theory of the research</i>	International → National → Regional
THEMATIC DISPLAY	<i>Chapter 2. Theory of the research</i>	"Accessibility" (general concept and mother concepts) → "Communicative accessibility" (The concept "accessibility" in the cultural field, in communication and for the project purposes)

Other than that, the only methodological detail left to mention is the **exaggeration of the line spacing and the bold highlighting**. This decision has been made at the end of the project in order to manage the density of text (not much graphics are included) and make it appealing to read. Thinking in the judges of the final project that will have and also for whoever interested in reading the thesis in the future, the highlights in bold will lead to the most important parts of it and the white spaces will help in visually giving a breath.

All in all, the choices have been made to make the thesis accessible in its communication of the content thanks to my tutor's advice and some other people's that read fragments. Since I am the writer and everything came from my mind, I wasn't able to notice the sudden jumps that I conceptually made and how inarticulate was my writing sometimes and that made the task of polishing difficult to me. However, I hope that this constant care serves me in gaining experience in the investigation and being better at expressing my work to possible readers, audiences, or just interested people.

Chapter 2: THEORY OF THE RESEARCH STATE OF THE ART

In 2019, the concept “accessibility is in a very growing stage of its life: defined in many dictionaries and clarified by many sources, it has not yet reached its full potential. The appearance of the concept in all of its branches of meanings and types of uses appeared for a need that was mainly social but also economic and political.

The “need” is motor and the reason of being of “accessibility” and it must be active until the concept and those who work on it are no longer needed. In other words, the concept only makes sense while it is tackling a need for change and therefore, when the need does not longer exist the concept will neither. In a world where diversity is not questioned, discrimination does not happen, and pluralism is present, the existence of a concept like “accessibility” makes no sense because there is nothing to tackle in a utopian dream.

Of course, not all the regions and countries will share the time when the utopian dream comes true, making the final stage of the concept “accessibility” visible, fully clarified, implemented and integrated in a way that is not relevant to be a matter of study and practice.

Although the future of the concept remains unknown, it is possible and worthy to look to its roots and development in a historical context.

2.1. METHODOLOGY OF THE CHAPTER

In the state of the art of this Final Project called *To Renew or To Die*, it is pretended to report the most relevant that has been investigated and said in relation to “accessibility”.

It is a difficult task due to the modernity of the concept and therefore, the lack of homogeneity in official descriptions that emerged during the history of the concept. Also, the little number of sources fully dedicated to the meaning of the concept and not to its applicability, has been a problem for the writing process of the chapter.

On the other hand, almost as a contradiction, the amount of studies that are partially related to the concept “accessibility” is so huge that it is hard to discern between them based on their relevance in the matter. Especially in the socio-sanitary field, the studies related to the disabilities – concept that has been historically attached to accessibility - have increased exponentially the last decade for what stating the limitations in researching portals had great importance.

There is a personal belief in the fact that the meaning given to “accessibility” is a crucial piece in defining its practice in the cultural field, as well as creating long-term consequences related to positive social change.

Therefore, this State of the art takes the challenge of analyzing theoretically a concept that has been mainly practical from the very beginning. The chapter aims to cover the highlighted parts of the following research questions also stated in the part called Justification, goals and research questions (see page 9).

- 1. What does “accessibility” mean and how does it adjust to the cultural field?**
- 2. Throughout history, what are the most influential steps defining the concept “accessibility” and whose?**
3. Which is the most exact definition clarifying and concreting the theoretical and practical purposes, if any, implicit in the concept?
4. Which are the internal –management- and external – political, economic and social- factors determining the implementation and use of the concept “communicative accessibility” in cultural institutions?

The access to the artistic or the cultural content does not exclusively depend on the space barriers (motor accessibility) but also communication barriers from the institutions that gather what we call “the artistic and cultural heritage”.

A way of interpreting the difference between motor and communicative accessibility is that motor accessibility can tackle physical barriers for a long period of time and so it can be “fixed” accessibility – only needs budget to be renewed when norms demand so -.

On the contrary, communicative accessibility appears and disappears as the content of the institution changes. There can be also “fixed” forms of communicative accessibility such as the institutions’ webpage that permit the monitoring process and qualification checking of “communicative accessibility” of the institution. In this project though, we will focus in the fact that communication is an intangible and much more expanded concept that goes through and beyond the cultural field.

For this reason, the selections of documents have the spotlight in the “communicative accessibility” and leave aside some details about the motor accessibility, being coherent with the background studies that I have: degree in Fine Arts and Master in Cultural Management.

Some extensions of this part explaining the Social Economies and measurments and some of the Dare included in the Annex.

In order to cover those sections of the research questions, the project is divided in three parts:

The first part corresponds to the section **2.2. Current definition of “accessibility”** (page 25). It is structured in three subdivisions that are:

2.2.1. Analysis on four online dictionaries: Merriam Webster, Oxford, Cambridge and Collins (page 27)

2.2.2. Analysis on the Google’s most searched questions about “accessibility” and the searcher’s recommended answers (page 33)

2.2.3. United Nations definition of “accessibility” and comments (page 37)

The second part corresponds to the section **2.3. Chronology of implementations made by institutions and authorities in relation to “accessibility”** (page 41),

It deepens in the implementations made by institutions in a chronological timeline during the history in relation with the mother concepts of accessibility. It focuses specially in the policies by the UNESCO and EU. Within this path, the research slightly deepens in the “communicative accessibility”, one of the branches of the original concept in which the project aims to focus.

For the named purposes, the part will be divided into:

2.3.1. The Human Rights and Participation in Culture: UNESCO actions against discrimination (page 43)

2.3.2. Social cohesion: EU Policies against the discrimination (page 49)

2.3.3. Diversity and development: UN and UNESCO actions against discrimination (page 57)

The third part corresponds to the section **2.4. Relevant studies and norms applied to “accessibility” applied to cultural institutions** (page 59). It goes through the most relevant policies and studies that apply – but not exclusively - to the “accessibility” in the cultural field. Those were elaborated from different fields and tackle both motor and communicative accessibility from: architecture, sociology, design and law. The intention is to find the pioneer geographical areas in those implementations and also reviewing the secondary bibliography.

The analysis will talk about the Universal Design, the Design for All and the DALCO criteria framed by the concept **Social health and security**, which in a first glaze, may look distant from the cultural field. However, as the pages aim to demonstrate, the most technical parts of “accessibility” are present and crucial for the cultural institutions too.

2.2. CURRENT DEFINITION OF “ACCESSIBILITY”

This fragment contains a critical analysis of the definitions that are on disposal for whoever that tried to search online for the meaning of “accessibility” and neighbor words. The panoramic view of the current situation of the most powerful media in spreading the concept’s essence will lead the project to start with the most generic tools of search, with a synthetic but not less professional approach.

The sources of the fragments selected are:

1. **Four online dictionaries** (Merriam Webster, Collins, Oxford and Cambridge)
2. **The most searched questions in Google** about “accessibility” with Google’s recommendations in answering them
3. **UN definition** of “accessibility”.

All sources will be commented in order to shape the content quoted according to the project purposes.

2.2.1. Analysis on four online dictionaries: Merriam Webster, Oxford, Cambridge and Collins

For the configuration of this part, it is important to look at the current dictionary definition in English. This is probably the most available source for knowing the meaning of “accessibility” between other concepts and words.

The sources cited here are extracted from the on-line dictionary service they provide because of its most updated version of modern definitions such as “accessibility”.

The selected are the Merriam Webster³, Collins⁴, Cambridge⁵ and Oxford⁶, being the pioneers as dictionaries and having a large history in the sector. All of them began around the 1820 (as stated in their respective official website) but have been correcting and improving the content regularly.

From all the chosen, only the Oxford Dictionary had a complete definition with examples for the word “accessibility” while the others attached “accessibility” to the word “accessible”, being less concrete and more generic (but also valid) in relating the general idea of the words.

According to the Oxford dictionary, the word “accessibility” has a main definition divided into four subcategories that can be related to subtopics and fields that make use of the noun in theory and practice. All sections are commented in order to classify and establish a relation within the meanings of the concept:

³ Merriam Webster (online source) www.merriam-webster.com [consulted the 21st February 2019]

⁴ Collins (online source) www.collinsdictionary.com [consulted the 21st February 2019]

⁵ Cambridge Dictionary (online source) dictionary.cambridge.org [consulted the 21st February 2019]

⁶ Oxford Dictionary (online source) en.oxforddictionaries.com [consulted the 21st February 2019]

“The quality of being able to be reached or entered.

‘the restoration project involved repairing the roof and improving accessibility’ (...)

Comment: A priori, the only deduction would be: the word is meant to add quality and value as a possible improvement linked to the adjective form “accessible”.

“The quality of being easy to obtain or use.

‘Students were concerned about the accessibility of quality academic counselling’ (...)

Comment: Accessibility here relates to a good or service and its exploitation⁷ regarding the utility and availability.

“The quality of being easily understood or appreciated.

‘The accessibility of his work helped to popularize modern art’ (...)

Comment: As J. Pitarch⁸ explains in his thesis about the communicative accessibilities in leisure and cultural spaces, when talking about accessibility for those who have a disability⁹ and/or impairment¹⁰, the concept can be divided in two main branches defined by the core need and responsibility type that “accessibility” has assigned.

⁷ **Exploitation** is the action of making use of and benefiting from resources, Oxford Dictionary (online source) en.oxforddictionaries.com [consulted the 21st February 2019]

⁸ Pitarch, J. *L'accessibilitat comunicativa en els entorns i espais de l'oci cultural: Implementació i millora dels elements d'accessibilitat comunicativa. Completar la cita*

⁹ **Disability**: A physical or mental condition recognized by the law that limits a person's movements, senses, or activities. Oxford Dictionary (online source) en.oxforddictionaries.com [consulted the 21st February 2019]

¹⁰ **Impairment**: The state or fact of being impaired, especially in a specified faculty like physical or mental impairment. Oxford Dictionary (online source) en.oxforddictionaries.com [consulted the 21st February 2019]

- Motor accessibility tackles physical and architectural barriers that can difficult the mobility: ramps, elevators, platforms and similar elements.
- **Communicative accessibility tackles barriers based in communication methods such as language and codes that can difficult the access to the informative and cultural contents: typography in big characters, comprehensive lecture, sign language interpretation, braille...**

The definition of communicative accessibility becomes an information of great relevance in the thesis, so it is important to pay attention to it as all the contents look back at this explanation.

Now, keeping with the Oxford definitions commented, we have the last one:

“The quality of being easily reached, entered, or used by people who have a disability.

‘Many architects believe that accommodating wheelchairs is all there is to providing accessibility’ (...)

Comment: Accessibility can then, be materialized and expressed in terms of architecture, environmental design and product design. Of course, it is not only about accommodating wheelchairs (dropped-curves, ramps, elevators...) as said in the example of the definition, but also covering other impairments such as visual, hearing, intellectual...etc.

Those previous definitions from the on-line Oxford dictionary match with the Merriam Webster, Collins and Cambridge contents, if any, about “accessibility”, ergo quoting them will not be necessary. Still, it is interesting to highlight the aspects in which they differ about the word “access” and add them to the consistent Oxford’s definition that is already commented.

In the Marriam Webster dictionary, there is the following variant on defining “access” that could also be attributed to “accessibility” as the dictionary strongly connects the two words:

“Capable of being influenced: OPEN

‘People who are *accessible* to new ideas’ (...)

Comment: In this case, the friendliness attribute expresses the multilateralism implicit in the concept “access” and “accessibility”. Making changes related to the motor and communicative availability has indeed its impact in being welcoming, free and operative to a wider range of public. This is mainly measured through audience studies¹¹ and sometimes, a correspondent study on social impact¹² or cultural impact¹³. Those two last ones are very expensive and rare to find in the cultural field.

The sense of reciprocity of exchanging access can be a cyclic process based on feeding back the agent that played first. For instance, a small hospital with a single entry of stairs that replaces them for a homologated¹⁴ ramp because the demand of it conceived as a need. After the episode, the improvement in the hospital is perceived as openness because of:

- The capacity of being physically open to people with mobility impairments, prams and lazy people.
- Being aware and listen to the petitions of the public that frequents the space. Probably will lead to more requests for the mutual betterment.

¹¹ **Audience studies** is a broad and multifaceted area of communication research that concerns with understanding the reason and manner of the audiences engagement into practices that can be cultural, social, political, economic...

¹² **Social impact** in projects is the ability to improve the quality of people’s living. Culture is a tool for the social cohesion and inclusion. Culture is the media and social transformation is the goal. Isabel Custodio. (2019). *Masterclass impacto social*. UIC Barcelona.

¹³ **Cultural impact** in projects is the ability to approach the culture to a concrete collective. It makes changes related to the culture’s regional acquisition and consumption in the receivers of the project. The culture is both the media and goal. Cultural impact has different indicators than Social impact. Barona Tovar, F., & Cuéllar Calcedo, E. J. (2014). *Índices de impacto cultural: Antecedentes, metodología y resultados*

¹⁴ **Homologation** is the process of certifying or approving a product to indicate that it meets regulatory standards and specifications, such as safety and technical requirements. Oxford Dictionary (online source) en.oxforddictionaries.com [consulted the 21st February 2019]

On the other hand, the Cambridge Dictionary points the following order showing the neighbor words to “accessibility”: Access provider¹⁵ – Accessibility¹⁶- Accessible¹⁷ while the Collins dictionary list the following synonyms of “accessible” that sum up the meanings analyzed before:

“Openness, susceptibility, exposedness, friendliness, informality, cordiality, affability, approachability, availability, readiness, nearness, availability, possibility, attainability, obtainability, understandable, plain, conceivable, user-friendly”.

¹⁵ **Access provider:** a company that allows you to use the internet and use email, and gives you space on the internet to put your documents. Cambridge Dictionary (online source) dictionary.cambridge.org [consulted the 21st February 2019]

¹⁶ **Accessibility** (uncountable noun): the quality and accessibility of health care. Collins Dictionary (online source) www.collinsdictionary.com [consulted the 21st February 2019]

¹⁷ **Accessible:** (*opposite* inaccessible) (of a person or place) able to be reached or approached easily. Easy to understand. Cambridge Dictionary (online source) dictionary.cambridge.org [consulted the 21st February 2019]

2.2.2. Analysis on Google's most searched questions about "accessibility" and the searcher's recommended answers.

When someone searches in google the word "accessibility" the platform provides with many links to Wikipedia, dictionary definitions, United Nations, etc. this may be the most common way to search the meaning of something – in this case "accessibility"- that is written in the searching table, placed in the upper part. However, there is another way of accessing information: having a look the most frequent questions that the persons that use Google have been more curious about and reading the answers that is recommended by the searcher.

Here below are the 5 selected questions that in my opinion shape the definition of "accessibility".

- **What does accessibility needs mean?**

"Accessibility is the design of products, devices, services, or environments for people with disabilities. (...) This is about making things accessible to all people (whether they have a disability or not)."

(Accessibility - Wikipedia¹⁸, unknown date of reference linkage)

Comment:

In this response, the use of "accessibility" is reflected as a big pattern that aims to suit each of the individuals in the society. Still, the response began mentioning the PWD collective, which again show how the movement began: with needs. Those needs, although being shared by many people, are characteristic in collectives that have "the disability" as the common denominator.

¹⁸ Wikipedia (online source) <https://en.m.wikipedia.org> [consulted the 20th June 2019]

- **What are the four major categories of accessibility?**

“We recognize that each of the major categories of disabilities (visual, hearing, motor, and cognitive) require certain types of modifications when designing content.” (...)

(Accessibility Guidelines - Coleman Institute for Cognitive Disabilities¹⁹, unknown date of reference linkage)

Comment:

The Accessibility Guidelines from where the quote comes is referred to web design and content. This is very attached to the “communicative accessibility”, that needs to cover all categories of disabilities (here defined as motor, hearing, visual and cognitive) but also other impairments that are not considered disabilities. For instance, analphabet or uneducated people are not disabled and require from “communicative accessibility”, in the case of the web –and from my ignorance- the option of hearing and easily interacting with visual content may help the case of someone that does not have the ability to read, so in my opinion, the definition of those four categories is incomplete due to the fact that many other individuals can benefit from accessibility apart from the PWD.

- **What is considered handicap accessible?**

“Simply stating that the facility is accessible means it is in compliance with the highest accessibility guidelines for that type of facility. Why not use the phrase “handicapped accessible”? A handicap is a barrier, such as stairs that handicap passage by a person using a wheelchair.” (...)

(Accessibility Tools²⁰: When a facility is considered accessible, date of reference linkage 8th March 2018)

¹⁹ Coleman Institute for Cognitive Disabilities (online source) www.colemaninstitute.org [consulted the 20th June 2019]

²⁰ Accessibility Tools (online source) <https://www.fs.fed.us/> [consulted the 20th June 2019]

Comment:

The fragment, by saying “the highest accessibility guidelines”, remarks the unreachable fully state of “accessibility”. Depending on the service, product, place, or entity, the concept will be able to acquire some forms but there will be always other possible forms that are locked. This is because the characteristics to unlock them are just not compatible with the essence of the item aiming to be “accessible”.

Answering to the rhetorical question, I would not recommend using the term handicapped accessible since “accessibility” is referring to the use and access of every person, not only the ones with a handicap card.

- **What is accessibility for disabled persons?**

“Accessibility is often used to focus on people with disabilities and their right of access to entities, often through use of assistive technology. (...) Products or services designed to meet these regulations are often termed Easy Access or Accessible.”

(Accessibility News and Information – Disabled World²¹, unknown date of reference linkage)

Comment:

As the quote says, the rights of the PWD require, sometimes from technology. It is not a fixed requirement: “accessibility”, and specially “communicative accessibility”, can be solved with people’s good will in helping those who need it. However, it may be true that as the technologies are rapidly evolving, the gap between those who have and those who have not access to it increases. Products and services are designed to meet expectations of “accessibility” and for that, follow regulation methods that can lead to official certifications. It is important to point at the fact that products and services not only want to be “accessible” for being valid in the market, but also for receiving an added value that distinguish it from the rest.

²¹ Disabled World (online source) <https://www.disabled-world.com> [consulted the 20th June 2019]

- **What is a characteristic of accessible language?**

“Accessible language is language that doesn't exclude anyone. People can feel excluded when: they don't understand words or phrases. Language is used in ways that pose challenges to users of other technologies, such as text-to-speech software.” (...)

(Accessible language, NZ Digital government²², date of reference linkage: 30th April 2019)

Comment:

Fully referred to “communicative accessibility” this quote explains why the interested people in receiving a message can be frustrated in the process. Not receiving the message at all can be a reason for quitting the attention on the matter, but having troubles in the process or receiving it in a no fluent way is also an incentive to avoid the communication through that channel. In this case, the channel that is put as an example is a text-to-speech-software, most famously known as the robot voice that is able to verbally express visual information like texts or images. This tool is necessary for the blind community as it provides a service that replaces the visual sense, but in a contradictory way can be also inaccessible if the software is not precise in the adjustments of spelling, rhythm and tone. In my experience as a visually impaired person, I've found many inaccessible audio books that were recorded software and had the mentioned issues.

²² DIGITAL.GOV.T.NZ (online source) <https://www.digital.govt.nz> [consulted the 20th June 2019]

2.2.3. United Nations' definition of "accessibility" and comments

In the compendium called *Accessibility and Development: Mainstreaming disability in the post-2015 development agenda*²³, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Social Policy and Development of the United Nations (UN from now on), faces the meaning of "accessibility" and its role in the agenda.

For analyzing this part of the project, the comments will be intercalated in the fragment selection with no title indicating it textually (*Comment:*) like the structure of previous parts. This format will correlate analysis in its quotes and comments.

The introduction states the following definition, from which the spectrum of the documents is limited:

"Accessibility usually embodies the special needs of a specific group, such as persons with disabilities. Accessibility is a precondition for an inclusive society for all, and may be defined as the provision of flexibility to accommodate each user's needs and preferences." (...)

It correctly defines the concept "accessibility", underlining its global and specific function in covering collective and individual needs. It clarifies that the concept is not only about needs but also about preferences that can be accomplished through the flexibility implicit on it. The definition talks indeed about the PWD and continues:

²³ DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS DIVISION FOR SOCIAL POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT, & UN. (2015). *Accessibility and development: Mainstreaming disability in the post-2015 development agenda*

“When used with reference to persons with disabilities, any place, space, item or service, whether physical or virtual, that is easily approached, reached, entered, exited, interacted with, understood or otherwise used by persons of varying disabilities, is determined to be accessible.” (...)

As in the comments extracted from Google’s most questioned aspects about “accessibility”, I do not agree in the possibility of using the concept only for purposes that have to do with disability or handicap. Still, as the quote says, the features can be “accessible” by starting questioning their openness, facility of use for the PWD. The relation between “accessibility” and “disability” is not unshakable in my opinion, but it is indeed a great point to start for the concept.

Moving to what “accessibility” means in the context of UN actions, we find the following clarification:

“Accessibility within the context of the United Nations is not only an inherent right of persons with disabilities, but a means of ensuring that persons with disabilities are able to exercise all rights and fundamental freedoms and are empowered to participate fully in society on equal terms with all others.”

Social equality and Participation are concepts here illustrated as the goals to which “accessibility” within the UN framework aims to get. It is an ambitious vision and to think about the plenary of freedoms and rights in society, because differences in society (like economic status) grow naturally as fast as the intergovernmental organizations act against it. Despite the difficulty that is inherent to it, the big organisms’ effort in looking out the rights of the persons makes the dream more possible.

As a summary, the key concepts of the document state that:

“Accessibility is best defined as the provision of flexibility to accommodate each user’s needs and preference.”

As we have seen in the first quote that refers to the definition, not only user’s needs such as the PWD’s but also preferences are driving the concept.

“Accessibility is both a human rights issue and a development concern.”

In a global scale, human rights have been formulated but the predisposition of permeability towards the concept of some countries, regions and cultures is not always the most desirable. On top of that, the differences in development make the integration of “accessibility” even trickier, which collides with a double barrier for it to consolidate in society.

“Accessibility bridges the gap between the special needs of persons with disabilities and the realization of social, economic, cultural and political inclusion.”

This fragment is being positive about the situation: How we have had to learn to exploit resources, force our limits and think outside the box to bridge the gap of PWD’s special needs. The origin was of course negative, but if we look at the outcome, we can see powerful impulse and movement that demonstrates the society capacity of overcoming problems.

“Accessibility has not yet been integrated into the goals, targets and policies that have shaped the international development agenda.”

Exactly how it is said, “accessibility” does not play an active role in the EU agenda. In its newest version, the 2030 agenda does neither include the concept explicitly nor “culture” as present goals. However, there is hope in the ubiquity of the concepts; since they emerge everywhere, they can be also developed from many sectors, like a tree that has its roots distributed in a large range.

2.3. CHRONOLOGY OF IMPLEMENTATIONS MADE BY INSTITUTIONS AND AUTHORITIES IN RELATION TO “ACCESSIBILITY”

A **fundamental distinction** that should be made before starting this part; the difference between the **“Policies against the discrimination” and the “Exclusive policies for the people with disabilities and other minorities”**. Although sharing a similar objective, there is a clear difference in the dedication to the collective that is here interpreted as a potential user of accessible services or accessibility.

Also, before we start with the following part, it is important to clarify the way in which the project presents the actions of the EU in its variety:

The following pages follow a **chronological order that initiate in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR from now on) in 1948**. The UNESCO is the main precursor of the concept “accessibility”, as it starts expanding and consolidating as a right, but we should not forget the non-binding power of this representative document. The consolidation of the concept would not have been possible without the sovereign power of the EU, that completed the cycle of the concept’s creation and empowerment.

Another factor that really helped polishing this condensed part is the **identification of the mother concepts of “accessibility”**. Those were previous to it and functioned as official concepts way before “accessibility” appeared in our modernity. Mother concepts were once independent from each other but are now particles in what “accessibility” is as a global.

It is important then, to explain them, because nowadays they are part of the essence of the chosen concept, just like little pieces that form a puzzle called “accessibility”.

2.3.1. The Human Rights and Participation in Culture: UNESCO actions against discrimination

In the context of policies against discrimination, many documents relate to “accessibility”: The most relevant ones by the **UNESCO are generic but also the ones that represent the most the extension of the “Human Rights” in covering minorities’ needs**. Those are very linked to the access and accessibility of “being able to” transformed to “having the right to”, which in the matter of expanding **Participation in Culture**, pretty much relates to “communicative accessibility”.

In “communicative accessibility”, the group of people with disabilities (PWD from now on) stands as one of the oldest collective that claimed for this special need and was seriously considered by the EU. Regardless the categorization of disability (cognitive, sensorial, physical... etc), there is a need of helping the communicative bridge between emissary and receptor. Hardening the access and right to communicate has a real impact in individual and grouped inclusion and participation. For this reason, many other collectives aside from PWD (like immigrants or victims of any kind) also benefit from the rights that refer to communicative accessibility and use it in equal favour.

A curious fact that is worthy to point out is that underfavoured collectives are not always minorities –within a concrete geographical area- . In fact, these collectives become majorities shown by public studies and this is when the need pops out as an emergency.



© UN Photo / Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt of the United States holding a Declaration of Human Rights poster in English

The UNESCO has not binding power but persuasive and diligent opinion about social situations that can influence another EU organism to act with its binding power on what the UNESCO has pointed. **This is the exact case of the UDHR the 10th December 1948 by UNESCO** turning into ECHR by the Council of Europe member states, entered into force on 3 September 1953. The declaration was also the first step in formulating the International Bill of Human Rights²⁴, which was completed in 1966, and came into force in 1976, after a sufficient number of countries had ratified them.

Focusing now in the UNESCO's work and duty, **The UDRH consists of 30 articles affirming an individual's rights which, although not legally binding in themselves, have been elaborated in subsequent international treaties, economic transfers, regional human rights instruments, national constitutions, and other laws in which "accessibility" appears directly and indirectly.**

According to Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights that wrote the Introduction to the 2015 edition²⁵, the declaration "promises to all the economic, social, political, cultural and civic rights that underpin a life free from want and fear. They are not a reward for good behavior."

He also states that "They are the inalienable entitlements of all people, at all times, and in all places — people of every colour, from every race and ethnic group; whether or not they are disabled; citizens or migrants; no matter their sex, their class, their caste, their creed, their age or sexual orientation."

The declaration means to be for all people regardless their characteristics but it is fair that the most vulnerable collectives with less access to have the right, get the UNESCO's special attention at the same time that awareness is equally spread

Within the UN system, many specific rights²⁶ are under direct competence of UNESCO. Here is developed the *article 27* because of its connection with the concept "accessibility" and their closeness to the cultural field, it has been considered the most relevant from the total of 30 articles. It developed and commented below. The *article 19* will be also quoted is included for its reference to communication that serves at its time to the cultural participation seen in the previous article.

²⁴ *III.A international bill of human rights | HUMAN RIGHTS/SOCIAL JUSTICE. Full list of articles* (1948). Leiden, Koninklijke Brill NV.

²⁵ UN (2015). *Universal declaration of human rights illustrated*

²⁶ UNESCO (online source) <https://en.unesco.org/udhr> [consulted the 1st April 2019]

Article 27: Right to take part in cultural life

Access to culture and the ability to enjoy it without fear of repercussion are necessary conditions for ensuring to the right to take part in cultural life.

Cultural life is manifested in everyday communication, expression, and traditions. Linguistic and religious minorities should not be denied their right to embrace the dimensions of cultural life for any reason.

Comment:

The quote can be explained as the right of access to, participation in and enjoyment of culture. Recognized under Article 27 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, cultural rights include the rights of individuals and communities to enjoy and make use of cultural heritage and cultural expressions, as well as the right to play an equal role in the identification, safeguarding and transmission of their cultural heritage.

Other human rights, such as the rights to freedom of expression, the right to information and the right to education, are key to the realization of cultural rights. However, varying degrees of cultural rights may be recognized, as cultural rights cannot be used as a justification to limit other human rights enshrined in international law.

As stated in the quoted article, culture is wide spreaded everywhere, but in the case of the institutions that are responsible for heritage; accessibility in all senses is 'a must' in order to meet the expectations of this right. Exclusion is an inevitable factor implicit in the diversity and the cultural confrontations between minorities and majorities everywhere. The existence of both motor and communicative accessibility in places that gather culture is important to shorten distances between cultural content and some public segments.

Cultural rights can be defined as the right of access to, participation in and enjoyment of culture. Recognized under Article 27 of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, cultural rights include the rights of individuals and communities to enjoy and make use of cultural heritage and cultural expressions, as well as the right to play an equal role in the identification, safeguarding and transmission of their cultural heritage.

Article 19: Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression

The right to communicate is a fundamental human right that underpins the very essence of democracy, and it is a key factor in the fulfillment of other rights. States are prohibited from restricting speech and beliefs, and have an obligation in protecting the right to freedom of opinion and expression. It includes the right to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Comment:

By “any media” the article 19 relates also to media that are sometimes inaccessible for its price like specific devices designed for covering the specific limitations of a pathology like Stephen Hawking’s speech-generating device (SGD) from which he could express himself in real time.

Explained by The Key Messages of the Right to Culture²⁷, the right of artists to express themselves freely is increasingly under threat. Freemuse²⁸ reported that, on average, one person per week was prosecuted for expressing themselves artistically in 2017. Violations of artistic freedom range from censorship (including self-censorship), killings, attacks, abductions, imprisonments and threats, with musicians suffering the most serious violations.

This right refers to the respectful treatment of expression once it comes out, but to begin with, there must be the ability to express. With no communicative accessibility, some people is isolated and restricted from the right to communicate and express like in the. An improvised simple example would be a complete deaf artist that wills to orally communicate the pieces that she/he painted but only can trough sign language. If the “communicative accessibility” is not there –for example as a simultaneous sign language translator- this artist cannot freely express as a professional. Accessibility in communication is also crucial for the participation of some collectives in the cultural ambit, as the *article 27* states.

²⁷ Stamatopoulou, E., & EU. (2007). *Article 27; the right to culture* Nijhoff.

²⁸ Freemuse (online source) <https://freemuse.org> [consulted the 29th April 2019]

General comment:

Both articles are a response to the challenges facing cultural rights in which UNESCO strives to protect cultural heritage under attack, support freedom of artistic expression, and foster the participation of local communities in the identification, safeguarding and transmission of their cultural heritage.

As stated in Articles 4 and 5 of the 2001 UNESCO *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*²⁹, the defense of cultural rights is inseparable from the achievement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in particular the rights of women, minorities and indigenous peoples.

Replying the needs that motivate the article 27 and 19, the UNESCO is currently acting and putting effort in:

Fostering equal participation and access to heritage (in response to article 27): Through the 2003 *Intangible Heritage Convention*, UNESCO works to ensure that local communities – including women and indigenous groups – can participate in the identification, inventorying, safeguarding and transmission of their intangible heritage. World Heritage sites such as Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo are working to ensure that women have access to every level of site management, including park ranger positions. To mark the “World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development” 2018 and the 70th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights, UNESCO brought together a panel of UN representatives, museum directors, artists, tech leaders, and experts to discuss strategies for expanding access to culture for all.

Supporting artistic freedom (in response to *article 27 and 19*). The UNESCO *Global Report Re|Shaping Cultural Policies*³⁰ takes stock, for the first time, of what UNESCO Member States are doing to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for the promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions. In June 2018, UNESCO launched a global survey on policies and measures taken to support the economic and social rights of artists.

Another related document is *Patent policy and the right to science and culture*³¹, that explains the right to access culture and science. Since both fields can work together and benefit each other by expanding knowledge, it makes total sense to combine them also in promoting their access right.

²⁹ UNESCO. (2001). *Universal declaration on cultural diversity*

³⁰ Azoulay, A., & UNESCO. (2017). *Re|shaping cultural policies: Advancing creativity for development*

³¹ UN, & Shaheed, F. (2014). *Copyright policy and the right to science and culture*

The previous chapter focused on policies by the UNESCO which were crucial for the creation of the concept “accessibility” and effective in helping underfavoured collectives and individuals to feel safe and supported by the UDHR. Despite being an important movement, it would not have been possible to construct the concept “accessibility” without the work of the European Union.

The UNESCO organization and general work in defining the rights that human beings deserve and the full Participation in Culture is complemented by the UE work in the matter of Social cohesion.

The differentiating peculiarity is that the EU policies aim to be applicable for everyone and everywhere and tackle discrimination in a very objective and impartial way, so they worked from the inside of the issue; the rights of the PWD –between others-. UNESCO, on the other hand,

There is an example that exemplifies the symbiotic relation of the EU and the UNESCO in fighting for the accessibility:

In a school classroom, there are children (majority) discriminating others (minority) in sharing the crayons for the activity that is about happen. The teacher notices and despite not knowing the details, the reason and the subjects taking part of the conflict, decides to yell at the whole class:

“All kids in this class must share the crayons! It may be a punishment for those who don’t and reward for those who do it.”

Differently, the teacher acting as the UNESCO would go to the minority and tell them:

“You have the right to have the crayons in the activity, come and take them”.

The similarity to the UE role is not just using the authority and sometimes the binding power for acquiring certain results but also looking forward general security, peace and functioning of the whole, also commented before as Social Cohesion.

In the second case, there is a special focus in the individuals suffering from the discrimination. It corresponds to the path for Equality that the unquestionable Human Rights by UNESCO have built.

Since Social Cohesion and Equality express a socio-demographical goal, the complementation of mechanisms is highly important for a solid a common gain in which Europe has clearly invested a lot.

2.3.2. Social cohesion: EU Policies against the discrimination

In the following part, **the chronology is decisive in following the selection of documents that have been chosen for its relevance in the creation of the concept “accessibility” and their relation with the mother concept Social Cohesion.**

The weight in the matter is actually on the prevalence of those policies and not in their creation itself. From my point of view, the implementations become powerful the longest they last. This is also when the ramification process makes possible to compare results in different regions, starting a coherent monitoring process.

The common point that unites all the documents mentioned is their will to tackle inequalities in society and create this cohesion where resources are invested to homogenize society in a variety of levels: international, national, regional.

The chapter will dig in the two first levels since the regional aspects worth to be mentioned later in the study cases.

First, we focus on the “Policies against the discrimination”. They have been the most traditional way of promoting a model of **Social cohesion**³², concept whose general aim is to ensure that all citizens, without discrimination and on an equal footing, have access to fundamental social and economic rights allowing them to function as a group in regions, countries, continents and finally the world.

Explained by Jensen (2010)³³, **Social Cohesion** is a concept with multiple definitions and uses in the development community; psychology focus on traits and similarities of the individuals that compound the group. Social psychology treats the concept as a trait that combines with others to influence the group. Finally, sociologists tend to look at cohesion as a structural issue measuring how the interlocking parts of the group interact to allow the group to function.

However, the side of the concept that will be here analyzed goes further than the previously explained. **Social cohesion** stands here as a common objective based on social norms – promoted, established or forced by the EU through binding or non-binding resulted documents- that define the standards of behavior configuring the final result of the group functioning.

It is important to pay attention to the concept **Social cohesion** since it is the mother concept of **Equality** which has nowadays gained so much recognition and is considered and worked worldwide (for example visible in the SDGs of the European agenda2030³⁴). Both concepts were and still are precursors of the actual “accessibility”.

The most representative and powerful political union in the issue of law for disability and accessibility is the EU and the most important intergovernmental organization is the UNESCO (Hurst 2005³⁵).

For more than 50 years of its existence, the EU has gradually discovered the disability as an explicit political ambit. It took to the EU around 20 years, after its beginning in 1957, to elaborate a first document explicitly relevant for the people with disabilities.

³² The set of characteristics that keep a group able to function as a unit. Carron, A. V., & Brawley, L. R. (2000). *Social cohesion: Definition, measurement and developments*; Centre for comparative welfare studies, aalborg university, Denmark.

³³ Jensen, J. (2010). *Defining and measuring social cohesion* Commonwealth secretariat & United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

³⁴ United Nations. (2015). *TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD: THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT; A/RES/70/1*

³⁵ Hurst, R. *Disabled peoples' international: Europe and the social model of disability*

As stated in The history of the European Union³⁶, the 10th of June 1974, the Council³⁷ “takes two decisions on the granting of assistance from the European Social Fund towards certain specific measures on behalf of handicapped persons and migrant workers”.

With the aim to promote the most of the employment and improve labour and life conditions, the Council also recommended the creation of a programme for the vocational and social integration of the disabled people including a review on national policies in this ambit. This resolution is directly linked to the establishment of the first Social Action Program³⁸ for the professional adaptation of disabled.

As stated in the chronology of the EU³⁹, “In 1976, the General Assembly proclaimed 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons (IYDP). It called for a plan of action at the national, regional and international levels, with an emphasis on equalization of opportunities, rehabilitation and prevention of disabilities.”

In the first half of the 80 century, we identify blockage in the policies referred to disabilities that has its correspondence to a general stop in the social policymaking. However, the influence of the policies for disabilities already existing would start having fruits:

The year 1981 was the first “International Year of Disabled Persons” (IYDP) by the United Nations and according to the General Assembly⁴⁰, “The theme of IYDP was full participation and equality, defined as the right of persons with disabilities to take part fully in the life and development of their societies, enjoy living conditions equal to those of other citizens, and have an equal share in improved conditions resulting from socio-economic development.”

“A major lesson of the Year was that the image of persons with disabilities depends to an important extent on social attitudes; these were a major barrier to the realization of the goal of full participation and equality in society by persons with disabilities.”

³⁶ European Union (online source) <https://europa.eu> [consulted the 4th March 2019]

³⁷The European Council is a collective body that defines the European Union's overall political direction and priorities. It was formalized after the Lisboa treaty on 2009. With no formal legislative power, it is a strategic and crisis-solving body that provides the union with general political directions and priorities, and acts as a collective presidency.

³⁸ Social action programme, (1973).

³⁹ Chronology EU (online source) The International Year of Disabled Persons 1981 www.un.org [consulted the 4th March 2019]

⁴⁰ A RES 31/123 by the general assembly, (1976).

Other objectives of the “Year” included:

- Increasing public awareness.
- Understanding and acceptance of persons with disabilities.
- Encouraging persons with disabilities to form organizations through which they can express their views and promote action to improve their situation.

As a reaction to this first IYDP, the Council and the Commission increased the publishing of relevant documents regarding the social integration of the PWD and a structure for the community action.

A remarkable example is the article called *The international year of disabled persons*⁴¹ included in the *Bulletin of Prosthetics Research* in 1981. It is one of the most complete documents available and also serves as a summary of the intentions of the creation of the IYDP as well as a professional commentary on them.

From the second half of the eighties until 1995, the UE progressively turned active in the area of integration in relation with the job market. Some policies are lead to the betterment of job opportunities for the PWD.

The most relevant are the HELIOS programme I and II⁴² (1988-1991 and 1993-1996) in action for the PWD focused in the formation y rehabilitation for the job market.

Their objectives comprise:

- Promotion of a comprehensive Community integration policy based on the best innovative and effective experience and practice in the Member States.
- Identification of innovation approaches and measures to improve the convergence and coordination of actions under the first objective.
- Continued development of exchange and information activities usefully contributing to the above.
- Cooperation with the European non-governmental organizations. Specific measures to attain these objectives include: Community networks for innovative local integration and exchange activities.

⁴¹ Murphy, E. (1981). *International year of disabled persons*.

⁴² EMP-HELIOS 1 - second community action programme (EEC) for disabled people (HELIOS), 1988-1991, (1988).

Following within the framework of the EU intervention in relation with the development and defining of accessibility, the most representative step was the *article 6a of the Treaty of Amsterdam* of 1997⁴³.

“Without prejudice to the other provisions of this Treaty and within the limits of the powers conferred by it upon the Community, the Council, acting unanimously on a proposal from the Commission and after consulting the European Parliament, may take appropriate action to combat discrimination based on sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation.”

(Article 6a inserted by the Treaty of Amsterdam)

It recognized for the first time, -and explicitly- the people with disabilities in the European project⁴⁴. The text of the article says basically; that in order to acquire equality with other collectives in Europe, the Council is allowed to take action against discrimination motivated by sexual, racial, ethnic, credo, age or disability differences.

Although it did not give any additional right to people with disability, this article would let the European institutions have enough legal base to promote new legislations and actions for attending the specific rights and needs of the people with disability.

From this point, the UE has used mechanisms of “soft law⁴⁵” in order to promote accessibility for the people with disabilities, as such as Codes of Conduct, Resolutions, Communications or Declarations between others. At their turn, each country has shaped the desires of the UE in a very different manner. In other words, the soft law does not pretend to be replacing the space that the law should be occupying in the matter. It makes pressure to transport the respective issue to the sovereign power.

⁴³ Treaty of Amsterdam. amending the treaty on european union, the treaties establishing the european communities and certain related acts. (1997).

⁴⁴ European Project is understood as the missions and objectives seeked by the EU in a limited period of time.

⁴⁵ Soft law is the term applied to EU measures, such as guidelines, recommendations, declarations and opinions, which – in contrast to regulations, directives, and decisions – are not binding on those to whom they are addressed. Eurofound (online source) www.eurofound.europa.eu [consulted the 25st April 2019]

From the mid 90es, the policies about rehabilitation lose their “mercantile essence” formed in the beginning. The EU documents in this stage focus in the equality of opportunities and the Non-discrimination. With the background left by the *Amsterdam Treaty* in 1997, the European policy for the PWD is reoriented. A new strategy that emphasizes with the equality of rights is gradually implemented as the year 2000 arrives.

From 2000 on, the UE maintains the objective of promoting social participation and equal opportunities. The right to the non-discrimination got into practice by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights along with the UNESCO.

The year 2003 was the second YIPD stimulated the public awareness about the matter of disability once more. It also gave a new impulse to the writing and publishing of new documents that are relevant for the PWD and therefore, for the definition of “accessibility”.

The representative is the book *The European Year of people with Disabilities*⁴⁶ by EYPD, The Eurobarometer⁴⁷ and the EEIG published on February 2004 (fieldwork started on September 2003).

The purpose of the second EYPD has consolidated and the Eurobarometer confirms the social agreement to it; the following options are extracted from the mentioned book. The bold sentences were the most voted along the polls made in the EU countries:

2. The purpose of the European Year of People with Disabilities

Q. 85 In your opinion, what is the purpose of the European Year of People with Disabilities? (MAX. 2 ANSWERS)

- *To raise money for disabled people*
- ***To increase understanding disability issues***
- ***To promote rights of people with disabilities***
- *To give a more positive image of people with disabilities*
- *To show that people with disabilities face many types of discrimination*
- *Other*
- *Don't know*

(Information retrieved from The European year of People with Disabilities (2004) pg.15)

⁴⁶ European Comission, The European Year of People with Disabilities, EUROBAROMETER & EEIG. (2004). *The european year of people with disabilities*

⁴⁷ Eurobarometer works in gathering the public opinion in the European Union trough surveys. It has been conducted each Spring and Autumn since 1973. From Autumn 2001, they have been conducted on behalf of the Directorate-Genera

The public opinion can be read as a reflection of the shaping of each country regarding the EU policies and action for the PWD, explained in the previous page in relation with the “soft law”. The results are interesting for the concept “accessibility” because:

- It helps the EU know what the global awareness of the European countries is in the matter of disability (primary but not the only social cause that has developed “accessibility” through the history). The comparison and analysis of the results is useful to avoid heterogeneity in the matter.
- The public opinion in the present is one of the possible indicators for the future reception and retention of new steps taken by the EU in this field.

Along the new century, the focus in the rights **Equality** has become more dominant (Waldschmidt, 2009⁴⁸). It is however unusual to find policies dedicated to the PWD that really compromise the Member States on making changes.

The decision of creating a *Community action programme* to combat discrimination (2001 to 2006)⁴⁹ along with the *article 26* of the *EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*⁵⁰ (2000) would increase the fight for the **Equality** of the PWD and their integration in the European society.

Article 26. Integration of persons with disabilities

“The Union recognises and respects the right of persons with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community”

⁴⁸ Waldschmidt, A. (2009). Disability policy of the European Union: The supranational level.

⁴⁹ COUNCIL DECISION of 27 November 2000 establishing a community action programme to combat discrimination (2001 to 2006), (2001).

⁵⁰ Official Journal of the European Union. (2000). *Charter of fundamental rights of the European Union* (2012/C 326/02) (3rd ed.) Oxford University Press.

Explicitly about the non-discrimination, occupation and employment, the *Directive in 2000*⁵¹ aimed to establish a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation. This is a very symbolic directive because it represents the first legislative intervention about the right of those people, requiring the Member States to adopt a respective national legislation before the end 2003. A selection of the most important Directive for PWD is included in the Annex.

From 2000, Access to the job positions is a synonym for the openness and respective -not favoritism- treatment that the employment market should have in each of the Member States. For a European person with disability, the “accessibility” in the job turns into the right to have equal choices than a person that is not disabled. Not only to be offered and given the job offer, but in the everydayness of it. For example, the possibility to escalate and creating a stability related to the job position with equal rights is also included in the aim of the Directive. In order to be inclusive to PWD, the job places may need to evolve in the field of motor “accessibility” trough Barrier-Free policies, but that belongs to a the part 3 of the State Of the Art.

The fourth Action Plan on 2003-2010⁵² for the “Equal opportunities for people with disabilities” and its successor, The European disability strategy 2010-2020⁵³ for “A renewed commitment to a barrier-free europe” are the most relevant examples that show that the European Comission is currently working in order to move “accessibility” away from an utopia and approach it to the reality in an increasingly and consistent way.

⁵¹ COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2000/78/EC of 27 november 2000 establishing a general framework for equal treatment in employment and occupation, 3151 (2000).

⁵² COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS. Equal opportunities for people with disabilities: A european action plan, (2003).

⁵³ COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT, THE COUNCIL, THE EUROPEAN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE AND THE COMMITTEE OF THE REGIONS. European disability strategy 2010-2020: A renewed commitment to a barrier-free europe, (2010).

2.3.3. Diversity and development: UN and UNESCO actions against discrimination

In this project, we consider the social branches of the concept “accessibility” just like UNESCO does. Recognizing and analyzing the society in which the cultural diversity must coexist, we find the people’s need to equal access for entering the culture or express the culture.

Held every year on 21 May, the “World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development” celebrates not only the richness of the world’s cultures, but also the essential role of intercultural dialogue for achieving peace and sustainable development. The United Nations General Assembly first declared this “World Day” in 2002, following UNESCO’s adoption of the 2001 *Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity*, recognizing the need to enhance the potential of culture as a means of achieving prosperity, sustainable development and global peaceful coexistence.

The “World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development” is an occasion to promote culture and highlight the significance of its diversity as an agent of inclusion in which accessibility takes part. It represents an opportunity to celebrate culture’s manifold forms, from the tangible and intangible, to creative industries, to the diversity of cultural expressions, and to reflect on how these contribute to dialogue, mutual understanding, and the social, environmental and economic vectors of Sustainable Development.

With the adoption in September 2015 of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* by the United Nations, and the on Culture and Sustainable Development adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 2015, the message of the “World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development” is more important than ever. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals can best be achieved by drawing upon the creative potential of the world’s diverse cultures, and engaging in continuous dialogue to ensure that all members of society benefit from sustainable development.

All are invited to join in, and promote the values of cultural diversity, dialogue and development across our globe. Just like with the IYPD, The “World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development” helps speeding awareness of a very serious matter in a very friendly way. There is a big chance of creating social impact by being constant with the events. Moreover, as it is a year/day of celebrating instead of graving or complaining about the remaining existence of unfairness, the inclusion of the subject as a matter of fact can penetrate in all cultures and regions –of course, in a different scale.

2.4. RELEVANT STUDIES AND NORMS ABOUT “ACCESSIBILITY” APPLIED TO CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

The beginning of this fragment of the State of the art is framed by the concept **Social health and security** and the end is framed by the concept **Communication**. That transition is extrapolated to the line that drives from motor accessibility to communicative accessibility.

In accessibility, North America has been and still is the more powerful core of its development but the review will be moving from this center to the region in which the case studies of this project are; Spain.

The concept **Social health and security** has been also evolving in what “accessibility” or an accessible practice in service are now. Moving then to the exclusive policies for the people with disabilities and other minorities, we find visible the changes that the legislation has made in the **Social health and security** sector, an unavoidable part of the “accessibility”, in and out cultural field. The concept becomes even more important when culture is conceived as an omnipresent concept that surrounds the space in which individuals are living in, starting from the architectural point of view that is directly connected to the motor accessibility.

The purpose of making buildings and designs accessible to people regardless their disability or impairment embodies the **concept Universal Design** (Mace. R⁵⁴), followed by the concept “barrier-free⁵⁵”, synonym for “accessible”.

The origins of the motor accessibility are in USA, North Carolina UD⁵⁶, founded and directed by Roland Mace (1941-1998), the precursor of the “Universal Design”. Yet, as the knowledge attached to the concept travelled and evolved into Design for all, Spain became a relevant country for the development of this branch of accessibility.

The mission spread was “Designing all products and the built environment to be aesthetic and usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of their age, ability, or status in life.” (Mace Roland, Hardie Graeme, & Place Jane, 1991).

The words of the architect R. Mace defined what accessibility meant in this context : “Accessible design is the design of entities (products, services and environments) that satisfy specific legal mandates, guidelines or code requirements with the intent of providing accessibility to entities for individuals with disabilities.” (Mace Roland et al., 1991)

However, it was the work of Selwyn Goldsmith⁵⁷, who really pioneered the concept of free access for people with disabilities. His most significant achievement was the creation of the dropped curb – now a standard feature of the built environment.

“Universal Design” goes hand by hand with the constantly evolving assistive technology⁵⁸ and adaptive technology⁵⁹ and also seeks to blend aesthetics into these core considerations.

⁵⁴ Mace Roland, Hardie Graeme, & Place Jane. (1991). *Accessible environment: Toward universal design*, New York: Voice &TDD.

⁵⁵ Barrier-free: Term that is used primarily in Japan and non-English speaking countries (e.g. German: *Barrierefreiheit*; Finnish: *Esteettömyys*), while in English-speaking countries, terms such as "accessibility" and "handicapped accessible" dominate in regular everyday use.

⁵⁶ The Center for Universal Design in North Carolina, USA is an active alliance between The North Carolina College of Design and the North Carolina University. Retrieved from <https://projects.ncsu.edu> [consulted the 30th April 2019]

⁵⁷ Goldsmith Selwyn. (1963). *Designing for the disabled: The new paradigm*. Oxford: Architectural Press.

⁵⁸ Assistive technology: Any item, system, or product used to improve the functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities. It can be bought off-the-shelf, modified, or custom-made. Retrieved from: <https://hiehelpcenter.orgassistive-adaptive-technologies/> [consulted the 10th February 2019]

⁵⁹ Adaptive technology: Subcategory of assistive technology that refers to something specifically designed for people with disabilities. Retrieved from: <https://hiehelpcenter.orgassistive-adaptive-technologies/> [consulted the 10th February 2019]

In 2012, the Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access at The University at Buffalo⁶⁰ expanded definition of the principles of “Universal Design” to include social participation, health and wellness. The principles developed according to the handbook wrote by E. Steinfeld and J. Maisel⁶¹ were:

“1, Body Fit. 2, Comfort. 3, Awareness. 4, Understanding. 5, Wellness. 6, Social Integration. 7, Personalization. 8, Cultural Appropriateness.”

Those additions are significant for its closeness to the communicational accessibility, that is sometimes dependent on the motor accessibility and the Social health and security that was set before as the main umbrella concept.

Following on the defining process of motor accessibility, the concept “Design for all” –synonym to “Universal Design” has its references in the book called Design for all published in 2008 by Optimastudio with the support of Spain's Ministry of Education, Social Affairs and Sports (IMSERSO) and CEAPAT.

Another book continued in 2011⁶², this time published by the architectural foundation COAM, talking about accommodating methodology in architecture and design of spaces.

These are handbooks for the technical use so there is a strong focus in details regarding reformation and building spaces from the correctness of accessible design recommends –or legally dictates in some countries-. The appearance of those texts meant a huge change of practice in the field of design and architecture. For this reason, the authors are and recognized as pioneers and main drivers of the concept “accessibility” regardless their distance from nd

⁶⁰ Center for Inclusive Design and Environmental Access at The University at Buffalo (online source) <http://idea.ap.buffalo.edu/> [consulted the 29th April 2019]

⁶¹ Steinfeld Edward, & Maisel Jordana. (2012). *Universal design: Designing inclusive environments*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

⁶² ONCE y Fundación Arquitectura COAM. (2011). *Accesibilidad universal y diseño para todos: Arquitectura y urbanismo*. Madrid: Fundación Arquitectura COAM.

Moving to the implementations made by Spain –that serve the further analysis of the Catalan cultural institutions- , and to continue with the motor accessibility studies in direction to communication, it is of highly importance to point the DALCO criteria, which summarizes the norm called *UNE 170001:2007*⁶³. The activities defined by The DALCO are: Deambulation, Apprehension, Localization and Communication. These are sustained by the UNE with the aim of regulatin the untangible assets such as “accessibility” in cultural institutions (see Annex).

The UNE stated in 2007 that “accessibility” is referred to the diferent dimensions of the human activity; travel, communicate, reach, understand, use and manipulate are some of the basic forms of human activity. To ensure accessibility means to ensure that those activities can be developed by any user who is not estrictly limited by physical barriers. As the times change and human evolve, the fluxus of information becomes increasingly important; it takes the space of what it once was the physical activity and therefore, the focus in “accessibility”.

By fulfilling the DALCO standards, the respective organization is ready to guarantee that is accessible. It shows that the accessibility is not occasional and it will be permanent as long as the norms are not amended –which is uncommon un a short period of time-.

The enterprise, organization, institution, etc. that adopts the system of Universal accessibility concreted by the DALCO criteria, benefits from the following advantages:

- Improves the strategical positioning in front of competitors
- Increments the quality of its the offer
- Provides with a public recognition that reflects compromise with the Universal Accessibility.
- Reduces the risky elements of accidents with clients and staff.
- The processes of interaction with the client and/or worker are simplified, indirectly incrementing their satisfaction levels; the social image of the enterprise is enhanced.
- The norm *UNE 170001* can be easily and immediately adapted to different management systems and models.
- The possibility of auditing the effectiveness of the system; used when the organization needs to show its capacity to proportion an accesible environment.

⁶³ The normative documents of the UNE are a group of Spanish norms, experimental norms and standards created in the CNT (*Comités Tecnicos de Normalización*) of the AEONOR (*Asociacion Española de Normalizacion y Certificacion*).

In Spain, the attachment to DALCO criteria is not only a trigger for the public value but also a mark in professional and healthy environment for the staff of the organization. This argument leans on my personal knowledge of those institutions that handle accessibility on their own; limiting the auditions to be external is not better or worse than doing self-monitoring of the accessibility, but it may be true that the more expanded the methodology is, the more effective. It ensures the staff a bigger backup than the self-criteria and this can be a reward; confirming that the hours dropped in projects are worthy and go in the desired direction – if it is public recognition-.

Chapter 3: THEMATIC OF THE RESEARCH

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

The theory of the research has fluctuated from the wide meaning of accessibility (and its creation by intergovernmental organizations, authors and entities) to the meaning that accessibility has in culture in its communication and social side (authors from a wide variety of fields). This opens the door to the next step of the project, which is studying cases in a geographical range; Barcelona.

Here are specified the names of the 4 cultural institutions and the fundamental characteristic that made them curious to analyse in relation to the implementation of accessibility in the cultural field:

- CCCB: As a cultural center, it does not own a collection of heritage but stands for its huge generation of activity, collected in their enormous archive.
- MACBA (*Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona*): Only focus in contemporary art (national and international) with a permanent collection, a foundation and job position related to the accessibility management.

The geographical limitation of the region where the study cases will take place has the Catalan language condition, which is not an inconvenient since it is my native language. This fact will not only help fluidity of the communication in the interviews and meetings but also the reading process of documents from the chosen institutions.

Another benefit of defining the study zone is that the experience that I got as a visitor and worker in the cultural field throughout the years will make much easier to follow chronological lines and to make interpretations. The last benefit is the simple closeness and comfort of doing the meetings at the same institutions, having the possibility to go anytime to consult anything needed.

3.1. METHODOLOGY OF THE CHAPTER

The information that configures the chapter is mainly obtained from the following three sources, in which we focus in finding specific formats of information that may help the analysis:

- The institution's communication channels with open access information (web, flyers, publications, educational program/plan, study of social impact, public studies). Some concrete documents were kindly sent from the institution to collaborate with this research (studies made externally, "old" studies that were removed from the web, links to the collaborator's studies).
- The professional point of view of the persons in charge of accessibility at each of the chosen institutions: configuration of an organizational chart, questionnaire and meeting diary (see Annex).
- My personal point of view in commenting and selecting information.

The spotlight on the 4 cultural institutions (CCCB, MACBA, MNAC, MMB) will fulfil the investigation in relation to the last research question:

1. What does "accessibility" mean and how does it adjust to the cultural field?
2. Throughout history, what are the most influential steps defining the concept "accessibility" and whose?
3. Which is the most exact definition clarifying and concreting the theoretical and practical purposes, if any, implicit in the concept?
4. **Which are the internal –management- and external – political, economic and social- factors determining the implementation and use of the concept "communicative accessibility" in cultural institutions?**

In order to cover the last of the research questions displayed before, the distribution of each case study will contain:

- An introduction: It approaches the reader to the main characteristics of the cultural institution that is analysed. That includes, seeing if it has collaborations with national and international institutions but also understanding the how and why of the internal management regarding “communicative accessibility”.
- An organization chart and comment: It identifies the task and role “accessibility”: in it and contains information that reflects the essence of the internal management complexity. In their respective websites, there are shown some insights from the team and role distribution. Yet, for the purpose of the project in this chapter, the macro vision (how) is prevalent to the details (people’s names of who).
From there, and adding the institution’s values, it is easier to identify how the actions related with communicative accessibility flow through the departments for its configuration, and through certain job positions for its confirmation.

Trusting the information given in the website could represent a risk for a fully objective interpretation of the data so the comments and the chart will be made out of both website and professional’s explanation (by each accessibility-related-person of the institution).

- An analysis connecting objectives and results: institution’s current stated objectives or missions compared to the most recent public study. As this is been written in the year 2019, the studies that will be taken are from a year ago. It can also be complemented with the opinion of the professional from each institution in the questionnaire, self-translated and selected.
- Two relevant actions for the institution’s “communicative accessibility”: an analysis of the two most relevant actions made by each cultural institution in the past 2 years that are the most remarkable and related to “accessibility”. The information will be contrasted with the studies that show either the objectives previously set or the results of the two relevant actions (ideally the two of them).
- A conclusion that shows my critical opinion on the matter of “communicative accessibility”. I also add my humble recommendations to improve the weaknesses that I find important and strengthen the qualities that I mentioned.

3.2. CCCB: CENTRE DE CULTURA CONTEMPORÀNIA DE BARCELONA.

BARCELONA CENTER OF CONTEMPORARY ART

This institution is interesting to analyse because of its outstanding from all the cultural centers in Barcelona.

Its huge activity in the city and its complexity for what its internal development has become. The person from the institution who kindly acceded to do the meeting and the questionnaire is Barbara Roig, responsible –not head- of the educational department.



CCCB, *Pati de les Dones* (inner yard of the cultural centre). Image retrieved from the CCCB's official website

Introduction to the cultural Institution

According to the description in the webpage⁶⁴, the CCCB “is a space for creation, research, exhibition and debate on contemporary culture where visual arts, literature, philosophy, film, music, transmedia activity and the performing arts are interconnected in an interdisciplinary programme” composed by a team of professionals that programme, produce, manage and communicate the cultural activities.

Its focus for the center’s activity goes around “creative research and the production of contemporary knowledge through a series of central projects produced in-house”, like the CCCB Lab, the literature platform *Kosmopolis* and the *Xcèntric* experimental film festival. The most remarkable international collaborations are the *European Prize for Urban Public Space* and the *Cultural Innovation International Prize*.

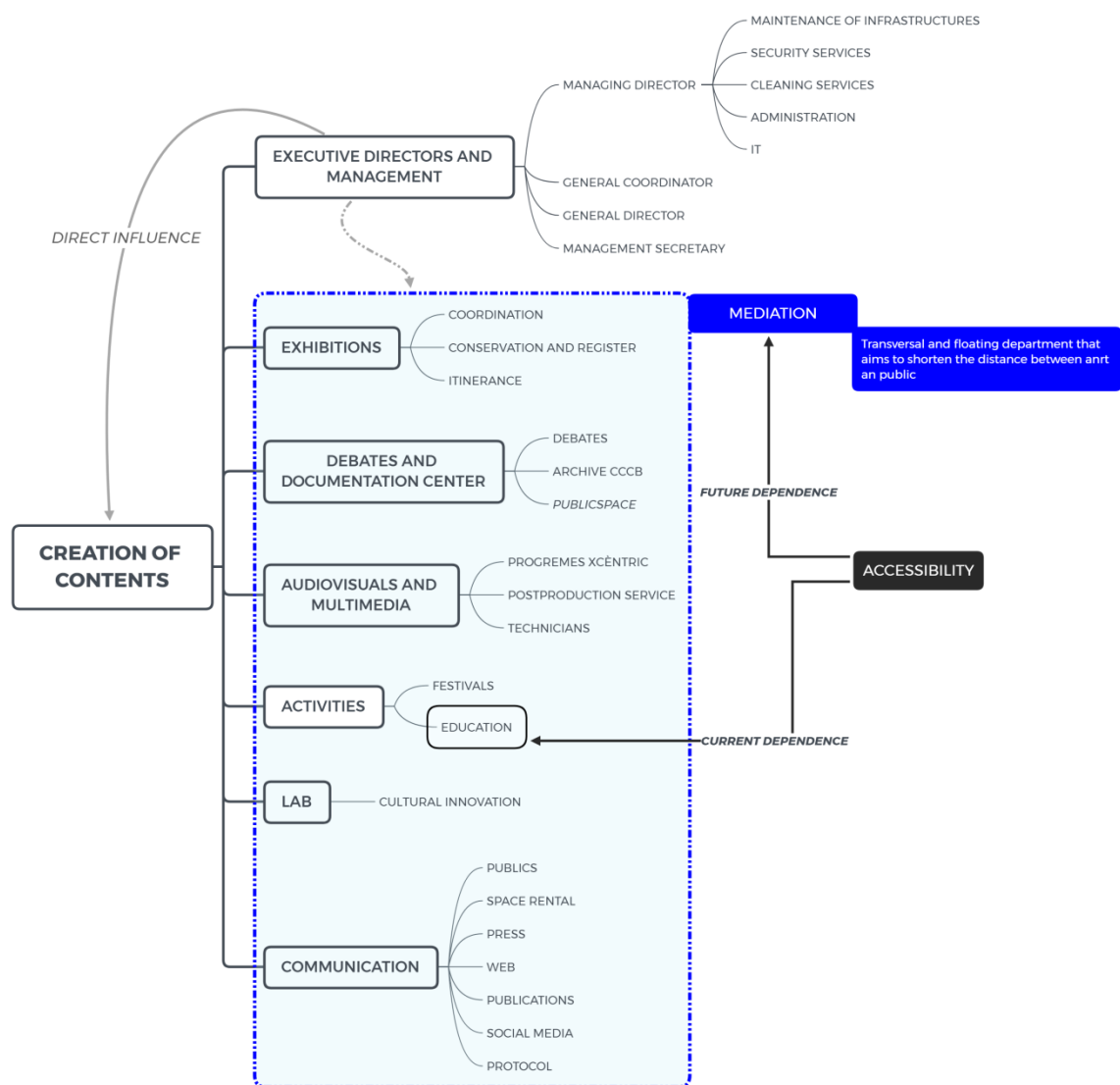
It is important to mention that its consortium is constituted by the Diputació de Barcelona (Barcelona Provincial Council) and the Ajuntament de Barcelona (Barcelona City Council), who annually covers a sum amounting to 75% and 25%, respectively, of the operating costs originated by the running of the Centre and its activities.

The CCCB does not have a permanent collection, so its strength is the huge amount of activity that creates and documents in the CCCB Achieve. It is important to highlight that the exhibitions approach topics that sometimes aren’t purely born in the artistic ambit; for example “*Quàntica*” that was about sharing some of the principles of quantum physics trough contemporary art, debates and other social activities that mediate the interaction with the chosen topic. After documenting, the information about each interaction is at disposal in the Achieve for any person interested in knowing this artistically approach and that means a big step for the investigation.

⁶⁴ CCCB (online source) <http://www.cccb.org> [consulted the 1st June]

Organization chart and “accessibility”

The internal management of the CCCB has many branches to cover and maintain all the generated activity. In the following organization chart – sketched by Barbara- we can see a general view of the distribution of departments and identify where “accessibility” as a task is.



Organization chart of the CCCB: information retrieved from the web and a personal perspective (Barbara Roig). Design (Aida Fortuny)

The effort in accessibility of the CCCB is expanded through the following free offers that refer to the possible needs that PWD may have: available wheelchairs, possibility to use elevator, guide dog allowance, adapted toilets and magnetic loop... Those respond to physical needs that increment the access to the cultural centre but do not assure the public's reception of the ideas, knowledge, art and experiences embraced by the CCCB.

Marked in the chart, the development of the "accessibility" is Education, division of the department called Activities. This placement is concrete so the "accessibility" does not influence the rest of departments although it receives help from them. Barbara is one of the persons that make possible the "changes" that facilitate the access in the activities. This is currently, the direction of "communicative accessibility" in the CCCB.

From there emerge many programs focused in shaping content to public's desires, cognitive limitations or simply facilitating the enjoyment of the visit. An example of offer is special tours for the blind and visually impaired. As part of the CCCB accessibility programme, a sign-language interpreter accompanies the guided tours of the exhibitions on designated dates.

The label accessibility in the chart –and where Barbara stands as a member of the staff- not only represents the development of the resulting activities but also all the internal processes of regulation (contracts, collaborations, internships, promotion design...) that she specified in the questionnaire as the 30% of the time division of accessibility.

The philosophy of the center states that:

"The CCCB researches new educational proposals, works on knowledge and production formats under constant critical review, and seeks methodologies based on collaboration and experimentation that materialize as open invitations for submissions and processes of dynamic promotion and mediation."

(CCCB website, an introduction to the CCCB)

Motivated by this philosophy is how the creation of the blue space in the chart called Mediation started as a developed strategy of considering Education⁶⁵ and Mediation as a floating department that has much more connectivity to the rest of departments since it envelopes all of them.

⁶⁵ Roig, B. (2018). *CCCB pla educatiu 2018*

The strategy is still half developed and meanwhile, some maladjustment like the lack of a head of department happens to be an inconvenience.

The practical consequences of this decision in the internal management are the quickness of approval of accessible projects -since it is not a dependent subcategory anymore- and the “have in mind” of the departments meaning collaboration and support that lead to the natural flow of “accessibility” practices.

On the other hand, “communicative accessibility” will not be casual or managed after the launching of activities but thought and designed from the very beginning. Starting from a Mediation point of view would help all people to reach an inclusion that is implicit in the center.

The decision of making a social goal one of the pillars of the center creates a value transformation that can keep growing as long as the methodology is coherent with the aim.

General objectives and results of the cultural institution

In the web are listed 18 objectives that are the umbrella of the whole institution. All have the same importance but I selected two that in my opinion relate with “communicative accessibility” and connect it to the Public Study made by the CCCB on 2018⁶⁶, where the center compares and analyses the public results between 2016 and 2018.

“To prioritize themes that allow an answer to be offered to the crucial questions of a hyper-complex, contaminated and intoxicated world” in one of the most relevant objectives in my opinion; it breaks the stigmatization in society that contemporary art is difficult. In the attempt of creating a bridge between science and art there is indeed a smart –but not obvious- simplification that makes the content much more accessible.

One of the anonymous comments gathered in the Public Study of the CCCB, answering: From “*After the end of the world*”, my favorite thing was:

“The immersive and accessible way of communicating the impact of climate change through a multidisciplinary approach...as a series of experiences”

(Anonymous answer)

Answering the same question about the exhibition “*Stanley Kubrick*”:

“More practical experiences. I am Brazilian and live in Sao Paulo. There a exposition about Kubrick in MIS bring not to much original artefacts like here in CCCB, but the interactive experience. But this expo in CCCB is great. I am so happy that I can see this. Thank you! Gracias!”

(Anonymous answer)

⁶⁶ CCCB. (2018). *El público del cccb 2018*

The interactives facilitate the “communicative accessibility” and the general satisfaction of the public. The idea of deconstructing classic museography strategies is present and supports the next objective: “To revitalize the public function of culture as a right and as an essential basic commodity” or differently said, to become part of people’s lives.

The question *what attracted you the most for you to come and visit the exhibition?* Was missing in the Public Study so there is no exact result on how the characteristic use of interactives of the CCCB is contributing to the “communicative accessibility”. Still, guessing a hypothetical case, there are visitors attracted by the idea of participating actively and enjoy no matter what the topic is.

A classical analysis of that fact would be incredibly negative because it shows a lack of interest in “art” and its intellectuality attached. However, a much modern lecture of the same fact can be positive because it talks about engaging new audiences that don’t belong to the cultural and artistic field. In other words, the “communicative accessibility” is seen in openness and attention to diverse segments of public.

“That all people can enjoy and feel invited to have a cultural experience, overcoming physical, cognitive and sensorial barriers”

(Barbara Roig description for “accessibility”)

Two actions for “communicative accessibility”

According to Barbara, the activities that represented a big step for “communicative accessibility” have been –and still are- named *Apadrina el teu equipament* and **Programa Alzheimer**. Both treat the idea of communicating the art and culture by being approachable to the public and predisposed to their preferences and needs.

APADRINA UN EQUIPAMENT SPONSOR YOUR FACILITY

Is collaboration between the CCCB and the Institute *Miquel Tarradell* to mix culture, education and social integration to bring culture to people and people to culture. The studies that the students course to take part of the project are Post mandatory studies of Social intervention (*cicle formatiu de grau superior*) and the subjects translated are: Context of social intervention, Methodology of social intervention, Enhancement of the personal autonomy, Attention to the coexistence units, Social habitats.

The “sponsoring” of this facility generates a project of Learning and Service that is useful for the students of the institute to know from closer the people with who they will work in a future –could be any collective of risk of social exclusion- in a very experiential way and real users.

The last time that the CCCB was “sponsored” from the exhibition “Stanley Kubrick” and the project was developed from October to May so it fits with the opening and closing data of the exhibition. Within this time, the students can do the work experience.

The activity is however, not exclusive or invented by the CCCB; it is a initiative managed by the foundation *Tot Raval*⁶⁷ with 15 members that have the connection to the neighborhood *El Raval*. According to the CCCB description in its webpage, the project “*Sponsor your facility*” “aims to strengthen the relationship between educational centres and the cultural facilities of the Raval. At weekends the educational programme also addresses a more general audience and offers a set of activities designed for their enjoyment by the whole family.”

⁶⁷ Fundació Tot raval (online source)<https://www.totraval.org> [consulted the 1st June]

Besides the activities born from this project, the CCCB has a website called *CCCBeducation*⁶⁸ serving as a free education platform for knowledge, communication, learning and participation, a network that allows the sharing of educational projects, experiences and resources. “This virtual space is open to primary and secondary schools, colleges and universities alike, as bodies that organize activities for these groups. Currently it has an archive of some 1,000 experiences that develop its work between the educational world and the cultural world.”

The practical side of “accessibility” can be found inside the visits like wheelchairs on disposal or braille texts –that bring the user comfort to reach the art-, be managed after launching the exhibition like adapting visits to concrete disabilities –in which the main character to visit is still the art- and can finally, as a third stage, offer itself for the collective purposes –the objective is people and the medium is culture-.

This third dimension of “accessibility” was described as “a triple extreme somersault” by Barbara in the meeting with her. Moving the focus point from culture to society is how the results change from cultural impact and social impact.

PROGRAMA ALZHEIMER **ALZHEIMER PROGRAMME**

The CCCB runs the *Alzheimer Programme* working with the *Diputació de Barcelona* (Barcelona Provincial Council), which brings art and culture to people who are suffering from the first stages of the disease as well as their carers and family members.

The programme’s offering is based on making visits adapted to the exhibitions so the visitors can enjoy the visit in a comfortable environment, sometimes selecting pieces that can initiate a dialogue and may bring memories to them. The program though, is not fixed to the CCCB venue, but independent and willing to find collaborations all over the region of Catalonia as stated in the

⁶⁸ CCCB educació (online source) <http://www.cccbeducacio.org> [consulted the 3rd June]

2018 Balance⁶⁹. It also connects with other national museums with similar programs as shown in the map of *Museos Alzheimer CCCB*⁷⁰.

In the web, the CCCB explains that “when a visit to an exhibition is not possible for any reason, we offer alternative activities: a cinema session at our auditorium with a selection of classical fragments of international and Spanish musical cinema, a session on the history of the *Casa de Caritat* based on photographs by Brangulí or alternatively a short itinerary to get to know the CCCB’s surroundings. The activities are offered on demand and take place on Mondays.”

The “accessibility” in the program is responding to physical -for the possible difficulties of the mobility in the third age-, cognitive –for what the Alzheimer is in its first stage- and even sensorial – linked also to the third age public-. Those three stages as a global, can be surprisingly easy or almost impossible to cover depending on the case and the occasion.

It is a major challenge to monitor the variabilities that make the program successful or unsuccessful, but there has been one attempt in doing some evaluation on it: The investigation sheet “*La cultura como camino de bienestar e inclusión social programa CCCB-Alzheimer from the Centre d'Estudis Sanitaris i Socials (Center of Social and Sanitary Studies) from UVIC-UCC*”⁷¹ in 2016 that deepens in the study and interpretation of the *participation* and *Balanç Programa Alzheimer 2018* that measures the growing process of the program, new contracts, plans and changes.

The *Alzheimer Program* also expands knowledge and for that it created a working group formed by people of the sector of museums and cultural institutions that share their problematics and solutions. As I had the pleasure to be in one of the working sessions the 27th November 2018 in the CCCB, I remember one of the issues related to “communicative accessibility” that I found more characteristic and unique in this program: The risk of precariousness.

As the program does not always have the same resources, collaborators and help, the consolidation of the average experience remains impossible and therefore, the qualitative aspect of the sessions are tricky to handle. For instance, the existence of a psychologist in the sessions can be crucial when users bring nostalgic memories or feel with powerlessness, but not all groups have one expert that can emotionally lead the group. That is sadly a reason why a session very positively organized can turn into a unpleasant experience.

⁶⁹ *Alzheimer balanç 2010-2017*

⁷⁰ CCCB MUSEOS Y ALZHEIMER. *mapa de similares en España*

⁷¹ Dr. Simó Algado, Garrido, J., Miguel, B., & Bugatell, A. (2016). *LA CULTURA COMO CAMINO DE BIENESTAR E INCLUSIÓN SOCIAL PROGRAMA CCCB-ALZHEIMER (informe de investigación)* (). Vic:

I understand that the fluidity of the program clicks right in between the art and the mental health. In a professional level, neither the culture as medium for joyful entertainment, nor the condition of mental health that is part of the group identity should be forgotten.

Conclusions

I would like to start the conclusions in the words of Barbara Roig, saying in the questionnaire that **Easy, Share and Inclusion were the words that summarize the focus point of working in “accessibility” in the CCCB.**

According to her, **the most worked word until now is Share, and it makes sense for the huge activity that the center is generating.** Through sharing experiences, spaces and time, people (from the center staff or visitors) can empathize and give credit to the importance that “accessibility has”. Moreover, those experience, if properly shared in the media (and CCCB does a great job in communicating) more persons can be attracted to the idea of pluralism, diversity and overall, the magic that makes everyone of us different and unique but at the same time equal in rights.

The less worked word or focus point, in her opinion was Easy; the questionnaire answers express a huge amount of work in transferring changes for the center’s “accessibility” and more importantly, a slow process of approving steps for the implementation of them.

As one of the persons that make communicative accessibility possible in situ (meaning in visits, receiving the persons with special needs and rethinking educational methodologies through visitor’s feedback), the desire of officializing the functioning of “accessibility” is present. The reasons are many, but in my opinion, the most important is the rush of pushing features to be accessible when they were not meant to be at all in its design. The trickiness of preparing the spaces (the best example are the exhibitions) for PWD is sometimes almost impossible.

This will hopefully be tackled when “accessibility” and “Mediation” become categories that are taken in account from the top of the organization branching so becoming transversal and implicit will not represent a big issue for the staff in the center that now dedicates its time to it, making the CCCB system not only efficient (as it is now) but also effective

Until this idea consolidates in the organization chart, my recommendations would be:

On the one hand, I suggest **making group pressure to the institution’s board of directors** so the matter is given the importance that worth. This may be in vain if we focus on immediate effects, but with time, persuading the most influential persons in the cultural institutions can be the only option to go a step farther in the development of “communicative accessibility” and the most general vision of “accessibility”.

On the other hand, I would be **to inform collectives with the precariousness of the situation that the center has sometimes,** ask for patience and not fear

the negative response when trying “communicative accessibility” methodologies.

It is very important to be transparent with the state and the real possibilities of the center, this way, the risk of not meeting the visitor’s expectations decreases. In other words, it is about caring for the trusting relationship with the common collectives. The organizations of PWD, mental health or other kinds of people with risk of social excision can be sometimes too focused in demanding and sometimes mandate their full inclusion, which is totally understandable when they don’t know the managerial issues that the CCCB goes through. However, the relation between of demand and possibilities has to be calibrated and contemplate the negative answer to some proposals.

The center’s activity is very into experimentation and tries to connect people to the art anytime that there is the occasion. Despite that, the results may be inconsistent because of the difficulty in acquiring the maximum of “communicative accessibility” (what works for a PWD collective may not work for others). In addition, the constantly changing of contents and their “communicative accessibility” do not leave room to improving its practice (the exhibitions are framed by a period of time and after that the pieces totally change).

The approach that the CCCB does to the treated concept is positive, and I personally see a good future to this path. Speaking out loud about the real options may not improve the options right away, but I’m sure it will in a long-term period, as well as creating a healthier environment in job relations.

3.2. MACBA: MUSEU D'ART CONTEMPORANI DE BARCELONA.

BARCELONA MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORART ART

The interest in this museum is in my opinion, the existence of the permanent collection in growth, parallel to a process of research and reflection on artistic activity. The person from the institution who kindly acceded to do the meeting and the questionnaire is Guillem Martí, technician of accessibility in MACBA.



Photo by Marcel·lí Sàenz, publicated by *El País* the 10th October 2009

Introduction to the cultural Institution

MACBA, as a museum of contemporary art owes his growth to the creation of its Consortium in 1988, comprised of the Government of Catalonia, Barcelona City Council and the *Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona* Foundation. The objective was to manage the museum multilaterally and to establish a permanent collection that according to the MACBA⁷² explanation in the official website, “represented the principal trends of contemporary art.”

“The three public administrations that form the Consortium contribute to the funding required for the day-to-day running of the Museum, while the MACBA Foundation is responsible for generating the capital required to build up the permanent collection.”

About the venue, it is relevant to point the location in the *Raval* neighbourhood and the closeness to the CCCB. The building represents a piece of art itself, designed by the architect Richard Meier and being fundamentally a formal reinterpretation of rationalism, with references to the masters of the modern movement, that is a characteristic point of interest in Barcelona. This is adding value to the museum by presenting it appealing in the surface.

The building is shaped by a combination of rectilinear and curved elements, a geometry that is softened by the external light that penetrates into the building through open galleries and large skylights. From the inside then, there is light entering from the windows and creating a diaphanous space that is also accessible to the circulation of visitors, the floors maintain equal distribution of spaces and connect with ramps.

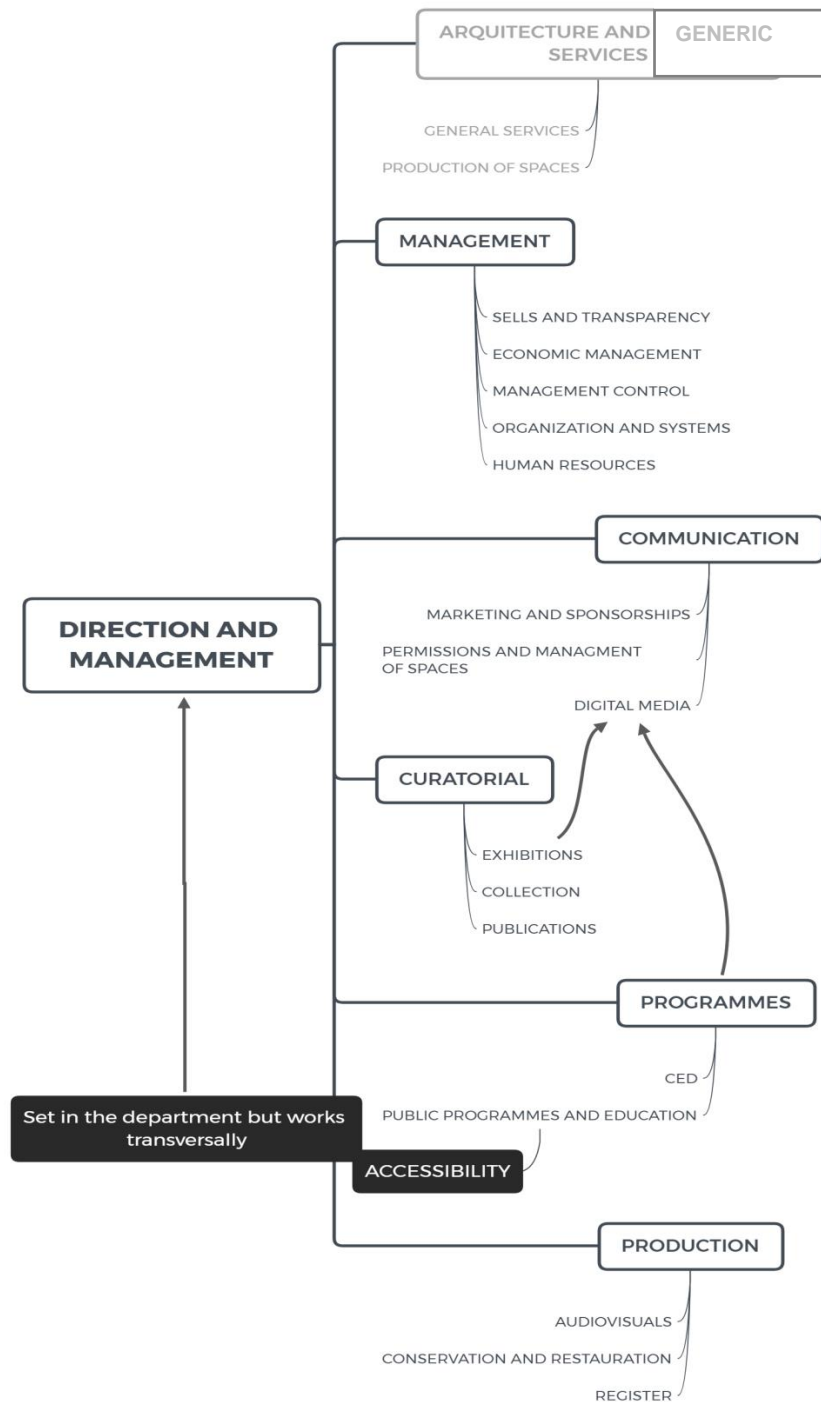
However, as a perfect example of the difficulties of full accessibility, the amount of light entering to a white and wide space can result overwhelming for some visual pathologies and create sense of disorientation. It could be tackled with simply adding signs that contrast the white, but altering a piece of art – in this case the architecture- can be far from “simple”.

In addition, the big success that the skate park represents; it hugs the entry of the museum and makes it look friendlier, but creates a wall of danger in the path that leads the visitor to the entry, especially if the visitor has a disability.

⁷² Macba (online source) <https://www.macba.cat> [consulted the 3rd June]

Organization chart and “accessibility”

The internal management of the MACBA has many branches to cover and maintain all the generated activity. In the following organization chart – sketched by Guillem- we can see a general view of the distribution of departments and identify where “accessibility” as a task is.



Organization chart of the MACBA: information retrieved from the web and a personal perspective (Guillem Martí). Design (Aida Fortuny)

This time, “accessibility” hangs from a subdepartment called *Public programmes and education* and that converts the concept into an aspect that is multilaterally treated.

Public programmes refer to the activity generated by the museum, distributed and designed to involve the most of the public segments as possible. It is actually from there, that the studies are made to identify the medium profile of the visitor in the museum and also the less common profile. “Accessibility” has a great role then in pushing conditions to be adequate to the segments that are less usual in the museums, even if they are minorities.

The subdepartment includes *Education* which may be, according to the questionnaires response, the narrower ambit to “accessibility”. Guillem, the person from MACBA who responded it, states the reason and function of the concept in relation to the variety of publics and the education, when he was asked for the function of “accessibility” in the museum right now.

“To improve the attention and experience of the public with disability. To explore educative possibilities that are critic in relation to art and diversity.”

It is indeed a matter of arousing public’s attention, finding new methods to show art in an educative way, and if the two are combined, educating the public with art. Any of the combinations would adjust to the most challenging barrier that MACBA has in relation to “communicative accessibility”, and it is the distancing discourse of art.

Although its effort in being accessible, the MACBA counts with an extra difficulty that is the stigma that people has about contemporary art. Nonsense, difficulty and worthlessness are generally in mind of the people and that convince them not to frequent, not even visit, a museum of contemporary art.

Once again, a contradiction about “accessibility” appears in a cultural institution. The contemporary art is flexible to format changes, multisensoriality and language variety that feeds “communicative accessibility” and represents a big facilitator to its practice in the cultural institution. Still, the negative idea of the contemporary art locks the chance of “communicative accessibility” to take place. This is a big concern for the department from where “accessibility” hangs, and of course, the reason why there is effort in pushing the concept to succeed.

Breaking with the troubles of “accessibility”, there is a big strength that should be mentioned: the contractation of a single person, in this case Guillem Martí, that has a role called Technician of accessibility and is able to dedicate its 100% of the time to the concept, not only in its communicative branch but also the physical.

That is probably, the most relevant advance that the MACBA has in comparison to other cultural institutions. It ensures the proper treatment of “accessibility” because the role has been assigned to a single person.

Guillem points its tasks in the design of workshops and activities, direct contact with collectives of PWD and catching new audiences of “accessibility” but its job strictly depends on the collaboration of the responsible of the department of *Public programmes and education*, the web coordinator, the exhibitions coordinator, and coordinator of education.

He also pints that he would personally take the roles of approving “accessibility” measures and interfering in the art pieces and exhibition, which would agilitate the development of all the museum actions that keep realltion with “accessibility”.

“The attempt of providing to all persons the chance of equal access, comprehension, action and discussion in culture.”

General objectives and results

In the web (very hidden) there are the Visions of the museum, stating that “as a public entity, the Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) assumes responsibility for disseminating contemporary art, offering a diverse range of visions, and generating critical debates on art and culture, while aspiring to reach increasingly diverse audiences.”(...)

MACBA is a museum that aside from focusing in the preservation of art, aims to be “an open institution where citizens can find a space of public representation, and also prioritizes education and innovation in its field.”. However, maybe for the stigmatization of contemporary art or maybe for the museum’s omission of the basic needs and preferences of the public -or maybe for both reasons-, the museum is a cultural space that remains unvisited for the majority. As the study of public from Memòria MACBA 2017⁷³ shows, the total of visitors of the year 2017 is 259.679, highlighting the importance of the festivities as such as *La nit dels museus*, that permit the number to increase.

The concept “communicative accessibility” though, is not just about physical visits, and MACBA has a great activity in social media that compensates the weakness that has been exposed.

⁷³ MACBA. *Memòria 2017*

Two actions for “communicative accessibility”

According to Guillem, the activities that represented a big step for “communicative accessibility” have been –and still are- *Flatus Vocis* and *Res a Veure*, activities that recently finished its periodicity in the current year so the textes will refer in past tenses.

The description of the following pages is based in the *Programes Educatius MACBA 2018-2019*⁷⁴. The publications that talk about their outcome are still not available but will be in 2020.

FLATUS VOCIS

This was an activity designed for families with children that have autistic condition. It took place one Saturday per month during 5 months and each session lasted 1 hour. The groups formed through entities and associations that treat the condition of autism, so the assistants were regular and fixed. The responsible was the artist Laia Estruch, who cared for the dynamic of the sessions and the person’s experiences.

The aim was to create a space and time for the voices to flow and express what autism is, even from the silence. The voice is the main character of the sessions, with the liberty to shape subjects in its physical, sensorial and mental consciousness. Trough movement, body and voice, the artist explores with the families and children the different ways to be together in the museum. The activities of *Flatus vocis* also aim to join investigation and experience in order to question “autism” from an artistic point of view.

⁷⁴ MACBA. (2018). *Programes educatius MACBA 2018-2019*

RES A VEURE
NOTHING TO DO / TO BE SEEN

This activity was designed for persons with visual diversity and general public. It took place every 15 days during 5 months, and each session lasted 1:30h. The group organizer is Guillem Martí.

The meetings aimed to think about the blindness component of the contemporary art, in particular, the pieces of the MACBA's collection that more disconnected from the "pictoric" factor, visible and tangible. The activity suggested a space and time to debate the limitations on art's perceptions, that regardless the visual condition of the viewer gets to find a blind spot.

The idea is that visually impaired persons as well as people interested in the approach of the meetings, get to dialogue with artists that have worked around the concepts like hidden, invisible and covered, consequently creating a welcoming space for blind and visually impaired people that makes the classical audio transcription of "what is supposed to be seen" happen in the opposite direction.

The idea wanted to vinculate investigation with the experiences as well, to provide with a reflection of the topic suggested, and transcend the stigmatization of contemporary art a little bit more.

It is a curious idea to talk about communication channels that affect art's perception. Vision is the sense from where the majority of information is received, and still, people with no vision or limited, are capable to receive contemporary art and teach someone else to do it. Maybe "communicative accessibility" requires from a concrete state of mind a part from the technologies and devices, and maybe the intangibility of art and the culture determines that "communicative accessibility" is in its nature intangible and abstract too.

Conclusions

Equality, Participation and right were the chosen words by Guillem to describe the focus of “accessibility” in his opinion. The most developed of the three is **Participation**: from the three, is the one that depends the most on MACBA’s decisions.

The least treated is marked **Right** because “there is no normative or juridical approach to the concept applications”. I do not agree in that, since I’ve analysed many norms that are applicable to the cultural institutions in the *Chapter 2. Theory of the research*, but I admit a lack of precision in tackling the exclusion when this is not obvious.

For example, a thematic museum that ignores a hypothetical public demand on explaining content from different fields because the museum counts with a stable number of visitors through other collectives that belong to a unique field connected to the thematic of the museum. Would that be enough exclusion to require from a normative? Has it to be about PWD to be considered exclusion that should be tackled?

The MACBA analysis made me reflect about the advantages of the most represented minorities like PWD versus those that do not have yet the tools to fight for their inclusion in general and specially in the cultural field.

The weakness and strength of the MACBA is paradoxically, the contentment: contemporary art. Depending on how played, the results can point a distinctive virtue or defect in the museum, and for now, the projects have an important role in making “communicative accessibility” an opportunity for the museum to rethink the normative of mostrating its art. The projects do not only respond to a logic of being “accessible” but also connect with wider objectives and investigations of the museum.

My recommendation would be first, to **keep being creative in opening “accessible communication” to a public that goes farther the PWD collective** like in *Res a Veure*. This way, the exclusive actions for exclusive needed people (involuntarily isolating actions) are left aside to embrace the idea of diversity and pluralism.

Secondly, to **start now exploring new ways to engaging collectives with risk of social exclusion**:

Entities and organizations will in my opinion disappear as the new generations have to face a stressful and precarious life that stops young people from

committing into an association (like in my case). Therefore, the activity of the groups will slowly dissolve and when that happens, the museum would have to come up with a good method to reach the individuals with risk of social exclusion one by one. If seen and studied with time margin, the *Public programmes* along with *Education* and *Accessibility* can work in it.

Chapter 4: CONSLUSIONS

The content of this chapter will be a compendium of what I have learned and hardened as conclusions, but also the reflexive directions that are still open. Many doubts that I had months ago are answered, like the research questions, but some others appeared while I was doing the research. As long as they are unsolved, the research follows in a personal way.

The chapter also contains a critical evaluation of the project, in which I question myself about the difficulties that have appeared in the long path that me and the project have come together.

The concept “accessibility” started as an unknown word and finished as a world to me. In the process of discovering it –in only some of its immensity of faces-, I felt overwhelmed and lost as well as amazed and incredibly provoked in curiosity.

In *Chapter 2: Theory of the research*, I learned that **the solidification of the concept does not come from the concept itself, but from other mother concepts** that represented goals (like **Equity** and **Social Cohesion**) or social issues to be tackled (like inequalities and social exclusion).

This finding made a turn in my project because I could not find a coherent structure from the newest articles that talk about the concept “accessibility”. In Scopus, the papers always pointed past sources in relation of the EU and UNESCO actions. I reviewed the secondary sources and decided that the core of the concept was in its creators so built the skeleton from there.

The concept, although being modern as a word, has been present since a long time ago, more concretely from **the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948**. There started a new argument that could not be debated. The human rights are undeniable and so is “accessibility” when included in them.

Either seen from the bright side or the negative side, the appearance of the concept has been a reason to be alert of an injustice that manifests in many situations and affects many collectives. We've treated the **PWD** in most of the examples because it is **the most antique in demanding and pushing “accessibility” boundaries**. However, I doubt the most powerful collective in the concept's impulse in society...

Later, the project talks about norms, documents, action plans and more efforts in establishing real **bridges between the vulnerable people and social rights**. **Those bridges are “accessibility”**; the option to; a path that is built for going from one side to another. The base of the bridge would be Human Rights.

I also learned **the importance of the persistence of the concept through the years**, as this is the way that is integrated and society and welcomed in cultures, population, regions... etc. For example, the “IYPD”, with its continuity created publications, spread knowledge, and in general, prepared the path in a very abstract way to the norms to become true.

It still surprises me how the combination of binding and nonbinding power have been complementing each other combining soft law and hard law. I now cannot help myself wondering: do the intergovernmental organizations predict a short term negative impact on "accessibility" in the right to access culture? Why is "culture" and "accessibility" -or access to culture- not in the plans of the 2030Agenda?

Another important conclusion is **the relevance of the technical aspects of the concept “accessibility”**: No matter how hard the concept is defined trough intellectual fields like art or law, if the practice does not happen, the concept will never evolve. This is why I felt a bit lost in so much theory and reviewing wishful words.

As a cultural manager, I am glad to have investigated in the meaning and use in the cultural field, but now more than ever value the work of engineers, technicians, architects, designers and scientific who create physically whatever the concept needs to exist.

It is in fact, a bit frustrating to think about **the extension of the concept in culture. Even specifying "communicative accessibility", the majority of work to do is from different fields, and the only thing left to do to me is managing.**

In the cultural institutions, “communicative accessibility” can be managed in infinity of ways as it has been seen in the case studies of *Chapter 4: Thematic of the research*. In the organization chart, accessibility kept a **close relation with Publics, Education, and Mediation, and had the ambition to move to the directive and principal branch of the chart to ensure its maximum efficiency.**

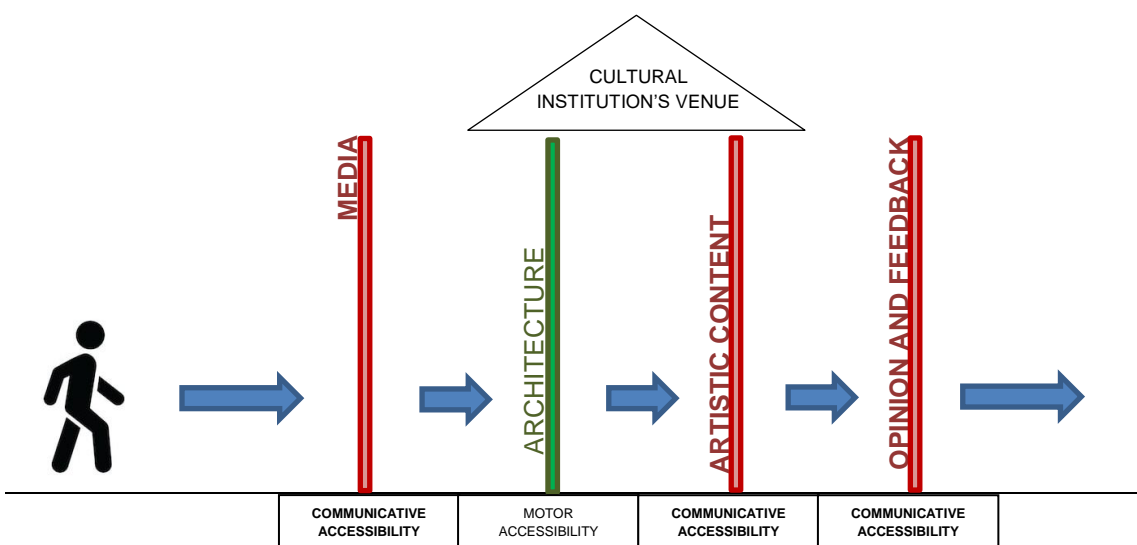
In the cases of the CCCB and MACBA, the integration of the "new" concept was not immediate and required from time, which makes me wonder: Will the finishing process of making "accessibility" a transversal element take a long time? In "communicative accessibility" is really at a matter of budget, or the problem is that it breaks the classical routines of cultural institutions -and someone may not approve that-? Those is a question that i should probably do to the board of directors of the cultural institutions that al look at.

After seeing the contrast between the documents that state that "changes must happen" and the slow and bumpy movement that "accessibility" has in real cases like the chosen ones, I am sure that the lack of predisposition has to be worked and this is even more abstract than the concept itself; being mentally open is also being "accessible".

This thesis has treated "communicative accessibility" in the cultural field and in cultural institutions. It is not urgent now, but in my opinion, it will someday be if not treated with seriousness.

Following on "communicative accessibility" in the cultural institutions, what I conclude are the levels in which it is visible and "controllable". The following graphical representation that I made and looks like a game hopefully shows it:

THE UBIQUITY OF **COMMUNICATIVE ACCESSIBILITY** IN A CULTURAL INSTITUTION'S OFFER



As we can see, the "accessibility" of a cultural institution is mainly related to communication and therefore "communicative accessibility".

Narrating the scene, the individual is firstly in contact with the cultural institution without entering it: through "the Media". Either if the person actively searches or if it is the cultural institution who reaches the person, the correct functioning of the media is crucial. It is represented as a barrier that has to be broken through "communicative accessibility". The synonyms that I choose for this stage are: Friendliness, Transparency, Predisposition, and Welcoming.

The second barrier “the Architecture” is physical: the individual has got in the cultural institution placement, but if there are physical barriers and the person has mobility limitations, the journey finishes here.

On the contrary, if “motor “accessibility” has been solved architectonically and in design, the subject can keep going. Synonyms of the “accessibility” in this stage are: Adapted, Easy reached, and Flexible.

The “Artistic content” is a feature that is inside the walls of the cultural institution but also outside (internet, social media). In any case, it is just about “communicative accessibility” that our main character stays or goes home right away. After passing the first two barriers, the person wants to understand, enjoy or at least feel the content.

The least of the barriers is about communication too: the chance for the visitor to “Give Feedback”. This is the barrier that if broken, can be more gratificant because it has the opportunity to check the effectivity of the 3 barriers behind: Media, Architecture and Artistic content.

At this point, the visitor is satisfied and goes home, and will – or not- keep in touch with the cultural institution depending on the unconscious judgments on those four levels of “accessibility” in which predominates the need of communication.

As a critical evaluation about my job in this project I could say so many things that I think I could have been better at, but in my opinion the most important are:

- **Extracting information in every occasion:**

I went to a congress named *El museo para todas las personas* that took place in Madrid the first week of April 2019, I did not take enough notes because I was so concentrated on making judgments of the Congress itself. Finally with the book of papers, I could not use any of the sources because I honestly did not understand the language of it. From this mistake comes one of the most important conclusions: never work in “accessibility” without being accessible.

- **Working from my tutor’s corrections**

Because I am very stubborn or because I am used to have tutors that don’t even pay attention to what I do until the last week, I made the mistake of not using my tutor’s help enough. I have the feeling that stopping and listening more to the recommendations of someone experienced would have gave me more security in this big research.

- **Realism in planning timing and calendar**

The calendar I made had to be forgotten when I got stuck in the State Of The Art and had to dedicate around 3 months to find a structure that worked. That created a rush at the end, that combined with my perfectionism results with me making final retouches at 6:35a.m the same day of delivery having no sleep. If I ever do another investigation, I know I must follow directives to prevent this undesirable outcome.

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Abstract:

In the last decades, the concept “accessibility”, which is attached to human rights, has expanded to many fields -in which culture is included- among the European Union. It has definitely a role of great importance as a tool connecting the purpose of non-discrimination with the goal of having an impact in diversity and social cohesion. The aim of this research is to look at the meaning, development, and use of “communicative accessibility” in the cultural field and cultural institutions in a very reflexive way; going from the amplitude of the concept to the specificity in touch with communication. The theoretical axis will be followed by an analysis of 2 representative cultural institutions in Barcelona, focusing on the way they relate and differ in the accessibility conception and use.

Keywords:

Accessibility, communicative accessibility, non-discrimination, diversity, European Union, human rights, cultural institutions, social cohesion, culture, meaning.