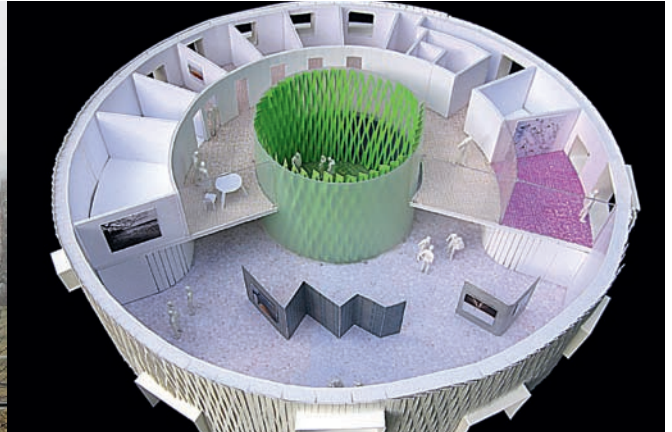


## Sustainability in Museums



Photos © Kjellgren Kaminsky Architecture AB

**Ulricehamn Visitors Centre, Sweden. Heating is produced through people and equipment, energy by solar cells on the roof.**

Interest and care for the environment is not a new phenomenon. In the early 1970s Western Europe experienced a temporary oil shortage which caused ideas for energy saving and sustainable energy to receive more general attention. Then, in the early 1980s, the United Nations established the World Commission for Environment and Development. In 1987 the report for the first time clearly defined the term 'sustainability' and 'sustainable development'. In their widely adopted definition this means to develop the planet in such way that future generations will not be harmed by our activities and moreover will be able to fulfil their own needs.

What does sustainability mean to museums? There are at least three ways of looking at it. One point of view regards a museum's very existence as intrinsically sustainable.

**“Collecting and conserving for future generations is after all core business for museums.”**

Though one could question the practice of their unbridled urge to collect new and more of the same. If we extrapolated the number of objects that find their way into Dutch and

other European museums each year it would, at least in the Netherlands, require the whole country to become a museum depot by the middle of the next century.

In the past few years a number of museums have become aware of the important and unavoidable issue of the earth's natural resources slowly depleting. This year the Danish Museums Association organised an international conference in March to discuss sustainability in museums. Some museums have become very active in implementing sustainable policies. Two years ago the UK Museums Association organised panels and debates on sustainability resulting in a report with recommendations and best practice examples. In that study, the notion of 'social sustainability' in relation to museums was also introduced. It means involving your local community into the core activities of your museum. Finally one can define 'green sustainability' by which museums act in an ecologically conscious way, saving energy and other resources in their day-to-day operational and management processes.

People working in museums find their inspiration for sustainable development from all kinds of sources. Some embrace the principle of 'cradle-to-cradle' whereby the

ecological system operates like a life cycle. In an on marketing language based concept of People, Planet, Profit, institutions aim to balance these three elements in a sustainable way. And then there is 'the natural step', a system based on the principle of our planet being a closed environmental system, which will probably survive, but if necessary, without us.

Whatever our ideas on sustainability may be, the topic is here to stay. Our very existence depends on it. Of course we cannot precisely predict the impact of the current damaging developments to the earth's eco systems, but the truth is that museums can no longer hide from this fact either. In the light of economic recessions and more conservative governments in Europe, it is likely that museums will have to prove in more ways that their maintenance by public funding is perfectly acceptable. The real challenge is for a shift in attitude to take place whereby being a sustainable and responsible organisation becomes something self-evident. And the good news? It does not necessarily cost more; in fact in the long run it is likely to save money as well as the environment. So don't wait and start right away with the obvious: involve your local community, print less, print paper on both sides, save energy and thus save money and our planet too.

By | **Margriet de Jong**

# NEMO

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**NEMO** – The Network of European Museum Organisations is an independent network representing the European museum community. For more information about NEMO, visit: [www.ne-mo.org](http://www.ne-mo.org)

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## News from Europe's Museums

### LATVIA: Museum sector reacts to financial crisis

In 2009, significant changes took place in the Latvian museum sector. The changes resulted from a drop in public financing following the global economic crisis. Looking for a way forward, the Latvian government opted for structural reform and savings measures.

The structural reform of the Latvian museum sector was both an event of centralisation as of decentralisation. A number of state museums were handed over to the jurisdiction of local councils or independent institutions (e.g. universities or companies). In the process of centralising the museums, larger institutions were created in the hope of increasing financial resources through the unification of supporting functions, such as administration, accounting, housekeeping, public relations and others. The decentralisation of state museums, by handing them over to the jurisdiction of other sectors, was warranted due to the lack of state finances, while it also provided an opportunity to draw museum activities closer to their direct target audiences. In this way museum resources could be used more effectively, as well as providing a greater opportunity to secure the maintenance of museums by attracting new sources of funding.

Up until now structural reforms have allowed museums to maintain their range of visitor services and the number of permanent and temporary exhibitions. It is too early to comment whether reforms have given other awaited results such as improving museum management and the quality of services. Only after analysing the results a year on will we be able to tell if Latvia's museums will be capable of sustaining their activities within the available budget. State subsidies for museums in 2010 were reduced by an average of 50 percent. Museums drastically reduced staff wages and reduced basic functions to a minimum. However, expenses concerning infrastructure and maintenance have not changed. Paid museum services are expected to provide a significant amount of finance for securing museum activities. The spending capacity of the local community has also been reduced, and the intensity of foreign tourism dropped in comparison to earlier years.

The structural changes combined with the financial conditions presented a challenge to Latvia's museums that drove them to reassess activities up until now and look for new approaches. Thus the sector is using the crisis as an opportunity to develop qualitative museum activities.

Change has also affected the management of the Latvian museum sector. According to what is set out in the Law on Museums, the management of the museum sector is to be undertaken by the State Authority on Museums. In order to economise resources, the government made the decision to abolish the State Authority on Museums from January 1 2010, and its duties to be taken over by the Ministry of Culture. A Museums and Visual Art Section now functions in the Cultural Policy Department of the Ministry of Culture, with the task of continuing the role of the State Authority of Museums.

By | **Janis Garjans**

### ICELAND: Cleaning up the volcanic ashes

The Skógar Museum, one of the largest municipal museums in Iceland, was considerably affected by the volcanic eruption of Mt Eyjafjallajökull. The ash permeated sealed windows and doors and produced a thin layer of dust on the artefacts. In the open air areas of the museum mounds of ash had formed.

As the volcanic ash is considered harmful a large clean-up operation has been incited. Draped in masks and goggles, Margrét Hallgrímsdóttir, general director of the National Museum of Iceland, and Nathalie Jaqueminet, head of conservation at the National Museum, received help from ICOM Iceland and around 40 volunteers



Photo © Hans-Martin Moser

from different museums along with friends of the Skógar Museum. In the areas most affected the artefacts were covered with protective sheeting and measures were taken to prevent further dust to enter the buildings. The museum was closed during 17 days and has since been reopened.

**Cleaning ashes in the Skógar-Museum in Iceland**

By | **Anna Bas Backer**

# A Letter from the NEMO Chairwoman

The first part of 2010 is already fully underway and a lot of activities on European policy level have been handled by NEMO.

During the network's executive board's meeting in June 2010 in Brussels, we had the chance to talk to various representatives of the European Commission, the Parliament and the Executive Agency. NEMO brought forward various issues that concern European museums such as the Mobility of Museum Collections, Digitisation Initiatives, Learning and Intercultural Dialogue and explained how museums are active in these fields and contribute to European cohesion. On another note, concerns and challenges for museums were discussed. NEMO was invited by the Education and Culture Committee of the European Parliament to give a presentation and to exchange views with the committee members on the various topics and make the policy makers aware of key points that are important for the museum landscape.

A week later, NEMO took part in the plenary meeting of the Civil

Society Platform on Access to Culture in Brussels for which NEMO has been working since 2008. Within the precept of the 'structured dialogue', a process to allow civil society to provide effective input to the policy-making process and take an active part in the implementation of the European Agenda for Culture, the platform contributions will feed into the political decision making of the Commission and the Member States. During the meeting the platform put forward its recommendations that shall reinforce the overall Access to Culture and requested strong support from the European Commission to work in partnership with civil society actors.

Shifting from Europe over to NEMO's annual meeting, the preparations are already advancing. On September 25, right after the MumAE-meeting, NEMO's members and partners are invited to meet in Copenhagen's Glyptotek. The one-day meeting will focus mainly on NEMO issues, including discussions about a new membership structure for the network. We will also have elections for a new chair and board for NEMO,



Photo © Elizabeta Petruša-Strukelj

which will be in charge of NEMO's activities from 2011 onwards. As has become tradition, all participants will have the opportunity to visit the museums of Copenhagen on Sunday, September 26. We hope many of you can come to contribute to our event.

By | **Elizabeta Petruša Strukelj**

## NEMO Activities

### NEMO Executive Meeting in Brussels

During their executive meeting in Brussels on June 1 and 2 this year, the NEMO board met with various EU representatives to discuss issues and activities in and around EU cultural policy and the role of European museums in the European culture. Views on topics such as collection mobility and professionals, digitisation, and activities of museums in the learning field were exchanged. NEMO also expressed its interest in the Commission's future strategies in the cultural heritage field.

Among NEMO's discussion partners were the new Director General Jan Truszczyński and José Amaral Lopes, from the Cultural Policy and Intercultural Dialogue Unit, DG Education and Culture; Catherine Sustek, responsible for the Culture programme and Actions, Intercultural Dialogue and UNESCO in the Cabinet of Commissioner for Education and Culture Androulla Vassiliou; and Corinne Mimran, Head of the Culture Unit, EACEA.

During this same visit, NEMO presented its views and standpoints on various topics to the Education and Culture Committee of the European Parliament.

The presentation can be downloaded at [www.ne-mo.org/index.php?id=85](http://www.ne-mo.org/index.php?id=85)



### International Conference in Copenhagen, September 23 – 24, 2010

The conference this year will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark and is the closing event of the Grundtvig project MumAE (Museums meet Adult Educators), in which NEMO acts as associate partner. The conference aims at supporting the encounter and transfer of knowledge between museum and adult educators at European level. It is addressed to professionals working in umbrella organisations both in the museum and lifelong learning field and to museum and adult educators.

Practical information and registration for the conference: [www.dkmuseer.dk/arrangementer/museumsmeetadulteducators-mumae](http://www.dkmuseer.dk/arrangementer/museumsmeetadulteducators-mumae)  
Further information about the project: [www.mumae.eu](http://www.mumae.eu)



# New Commissioner for Culture Androulla Vassiliou on the cultural heritage sector

**As of February 2010, Androulla Vassiliou has officially taken over office as the new EU Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth. Up to her current appointment Vassiliou was Commissioner for Health.**

All Europeans who value cultural heritage have a responsibility to ensure that the entire cultural heritage is respected and preserved for the sake of future generations. Caring for cultural heritage and its conservation and restoration is primarily a national responsibility, but the Union can lend a helping hand by funding restoration as part of regional development, as well as research and cultural cooperation projects with a heritage theme. Androulla Vassiliou is directly responsible for the EU's Culture Programme, which helps to build a European dimension into the citizens' cultural lives.

With her recent initiative to transform the European Heritage Label from an intergovernmental scheme into a formal EU action, she underlines her intention to "give visibility to sites that epitomise European ideals to foster a sense of shared European identity and belonging". The new European Heritage Label will be awarded to sites that have a symbolic value for the European Union. These are sites that highlight and symbolise European history, the building of the European Union and European values and human rights that underpin the process of European integration. The involvement in ambitious cultural and educational programmes that uphold networking between sites, sharing best practice and launch joint projects is a further factor.

Commissioner Vassiliou also believes that museums are not just the repository of the great achievements of the past: they are crucial actors in keeping cultural heritage alive for all to learn and take inspiration from. In the framework of the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) in culture, Member States and the Commission have formed a working group on museum activities and mobility of collections. The group has focused its

work on issues as indemnity schemes, long-term loans, illicit trafficking of cultural goods, insurance schemes and mobility of museum professionals.

“**Androulla Vassiliou believes that cultural heritage is about more than the past: it is about how to move towards the future.**”

Opening up culture to people, and in particular to the young, is indispensable for its long-term future, but today's creators also need to be properly rewarded for their creativity. Last April, Commissioner Vassiliou published a Green Paper on unlocking the potential of Europe's cultural and creative industries, launching a wide consultation. The objective of this consultation is to gather views on various issues impacting the cultural and creative industries in

Europe. On copyright, she predicts that Europe's new digital agenda will aim to achieve a balance between culture accessibility and fair remuneration for artists.

Otherwise, the European Commission has set up a Reflection Group on digitisation. The Group will advise to Commissioner Vassiliou and Commissioner for the Digital Agenda, Neelie Kroes, on the topics of digitisation, online accessibility and preservation of Europe's cultural heritage. Furthermore, it will examine ongoing initiatives involving both public and private partners (e.g. the Google Books project), copyright issues, look at how to fund digitisation and address copyright issues as well as licensing practices to facilitate the digitisation of copyrighted material.

By | **Catherine Sustek**

Catherine Sustek is responsible for the Culture programme and Actions, Intercultural Dialogue and UNESCO in the Cabinet of Androulla Vassiliou.



# Museums and Sustainability: Practice Examples

## United Kingdom: Mapping Sustainability and Museums

In 2008-9 the UK Museums Association (MA) ran a consultation about sustainability and museums. Around 20 discussion workshops throughout the UK were held, a discussion paper was published on the MA website and a printed summary leaflet was disseminated among its members.

It was observed that because of their work transmitting collections and knowledge from the past to the future, and their social purpose, museums are deeply involved in sustainability and yet rarely think about their overall contribution to sustainability.

The Museums Association encouraged museums to take a 'triple bottom line' approach that considers the three areas of economic, social and environmental sustainability. Practicalities of individual aspects of sustainability (such as energy use and relationships to local communities) were explored. The MA also discussed the deeper longer-term implications of sustainability for museums. Museums might be consuming more resources than is justified and UK museums' recent highly successful growth in buildings, expenditure and audiences might not be the most sustainable path to follow in the next decade, especially in view of the pressure to reduce energy consumption and the likely reduction in funding.

It was suggested museums might want to think less about growth, size

and quantity and more about quality and depth of relationships. The consultation period also coincided with a significant rise in fuel costs and the banking crisis. It therefore proved timely and relevant to museums at a number of levels.

The key aim of the consultation and workshops was to get people in museums thinking and talking about sustainability. The initiative was successful as 'sustainability' is now regularly talked about in UK museums. A memorable comment from the consultation was, "It's pointless showcasing history to the world if it costs the earth".

The main conclusion from the consultation was that UK museums are excellent at social sustainability and constantly think about economic sustainability (even more so now, as the UK faces significant cuts in funding for museums). However, museums need to think more about their environmental sustainability. Workshop participants had many ideas for improving museums' environmental performance; the measures identified most often were:

- Use better lighting
- Change staff behaviour
- Encourage greener travel
- Have more flexible collections-care requirements and use air conditioning less

But sustainability is about much more than becoming greener.



**The consultation showed that if museums are to be genuinely sustainable, they need to think more long-term.**

Even though museums aim to keep their collections 'in perpetuity', they rarely think more than a few years ahead, but sustainability needs museums to think at least 20-30 years ahead.

For more information visit [www.museumsassociation.org/sustainability](http://www.museumsassociation.org/sustainability)

By | Maurice Davies



Photo © David Grandorge

**The interior of the Garden Museum in London, UK, is made with farmed European timber from sustainably managed forests.**

## The Netherlands: **museumplaats**

Some years ago a group of museum professionals noticed many materials were being used only once and decided to act. Up until then, display cabinets and exhibition frames were thrown away after exhibitions. In reaction to this they created a website where museums in the Netherlands can log on and present surplus materials and objects. The website functions similarly to Ebay and is

operating quite successfully. From the start The Netherlands Museums Association has been recommending the online platform to its members. Recently they received a grant to further develop Museumplaats. The initiative aims to improve and extend its services and renew the website. For more information visit [www.museumplaats.nl](http://www.museumplaats.nl)

By | Margriet de Jong



### Further reading:

"The Green Museum: A Primer on Environmental Practice" by Sarah S. Brophy and Elizabeth Wylie, 2008.

[www.mcdonough.com/cradle\\_to\\_cradle.htm](http://www.mcdonough.com/cradle_to_cradle.htm)

[www.johnelkington.com/index.asp](http://www.johnelkington.com/index.asp)

[www.naturalstep.org](http://www.naturalstep.org)

[www.icse.nl](http://www.icse.nl)



Photo © Jan Truszczyński

# An Interview with Jan Truszczyński

Jan Truszczyński was appointed by the European Commission as Director-General for Education, Training, Culture and Youth in October 2009, taking office in May 2010. Jan Truszczyński, born in Poland, joined the European Commission in January 2007 when he was appointed Deputy Director-General for Enlargement. Prior to that, he was Ambassador of Poland to the EU in Brussels from 1996 to 2001.

## What is the Commission's view on museums?

**How do you see their role as places that attract tourists and generate income and interest; how do you see their potential to function as places that offer a sense of place, providing creativity and learning for those who engage with them?**

Europe has some of the world's richest and most diverse cultural heritage that draws millions of people every year from all over the planet, wishing to visit the monuments, historical city centres, archaeological sites and – of course – the museums.



**Museums are spaces for an intensive intercultural dialogue where new forms of cultural expression are born.**

They are also privileged places for lifelong learning in an informal environment. Museums have gained exceptional importance for local and regional economies, in particular for the tourism industry, and contribute to cities' regeneration and rebranding. It is therefore important to promote their

activities, to help make them attractive and to improve their accessibility for various audiences. The Commission can act as a facilitator of good practices between museums, in particular in regard to increasing collections' mobility across Europe.

## The cultural sector in Europe is significantly affected by the financial crisis.

**What approach can be undergone in the sector in order to reach long-term goals in regard to environmental, economic and social sustainability?**

The current crisis is affecting all areas of society. It urges decision makers to take measures aiming to streamline and reduce public budgets. But caution is needed in the cultural sector. Several independent studies and reports point out that culture reinforces social and territorial cohesion, drives creativity and innovation and produces a positive spill-over effect on a wide range of businesses and society at large. Thus culture and its surrounding industries are powerful drivers of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth, which can be used as a resource to exit from the crisis.

At the Commission level, we are now looking at ways to better embed culture in other sectors, for example through a better use of the European structural funds for culture-led projects. Our goal has always been to promote European culture and we will continue to do this not only through the Culture Programme but also through other European financial instruments.

## Will the financial crisis have an impact on the future strategy action of the DG Culture and Education?

The European Commission has been clear about where it stands on the crisis and the ways to deal with it. The EU budget for the period until 2013 has been determined, so for the time being our programmes can continue to work as set out in 2006.

As mentioned above, we believe that culture and its surrounding industries can be powerful motors for growth, generating revenue, developing skills and promoting social inclusion.

## In the digital age, museums regularly compete with other forms of entertainment and attraction. In your opinion, can digital images be as useful as real objects?

Digital content in cultural heritage institutions is becoming more and more central. The digitalisation of museum collections is extremely important not only for their preservation, but also to make exhibitions more attractive.



**Digitisation can help visitors to better understand exhibition contents and can even create new channels of communication.**

Digitisation also offers tremendous potential in increasing people's access to culture. The Europeana website





already allows Internet users direct access to 7 million digitised books, maps, paintings, newspapers, film fragments and photographs from cultural institutions all across Europe. The opportunity to encounter both digital images and real objects is at the heart of our efforts to promote access to culture.

**Museums are committed to sustainability in their work maintaining collections and knowledge of the past and making them available to present and future public.**

**How can their overall contribution to sustainability be brought to the attention of EU citizens?**

Cultural heritage is a fundamental component of both European identity and economic growth. Social and economic development can be pursued in an integral and long-term perspective if it is combined with effective cultural development. In recent years, new policy approaches have been applied in regional development programmes: with an increasing awareness that museums are an important factor to attract visitors, improving access to museum collections is one way to promote sustainable local and regional development.

“**Museums are essential for accessing knowledge.**”

They create bridges between Europe's common heritage and the diversity of its cultural expressions. What is more, in our digital age, museums could become leaders in creating digital resources that are accessible and useful for the benefit of all.

**What, in the eyes of the Commission, are currently the main challenges for sustainability in the cultural sector, especially in terms of cultural heritage?**

As I already mentioned, the cultural sector has a rich potential to contribute to the sustainable social and economic development of the EU. A coordinated and coherent approach is essential to unlock this potential, particularly in the field of cultural heritage. Close

cooperation between culture and local and regional development is required for successful sustainable rehabilitation or valorisation of heritage sites. It is important to foster the contribution of culture to sustainable tourism, which is a main factor for local and regional attractiveness and economic development, but also for highlighting cultural heritage in Europe. The development of cultural tourism, a key element of sustainable tourism, is to be encouraged with a strong focus on the protection of cultural and natural heritage. Sustainable management of cultural tourism should be embedded in an integrated local and regional development strategy.

**What EU programs or actions support museums in their objective to create environments beneficial to sustainability?**

The Culture and Research programmes are the main tools to support museums in this objective.

“**Museums contribute to the development of regions in which the establishment of sustainable tourism is combined with cultural heritage protection.**”

Such projects can take place in the framework of the European Cohesion Policy.

Finally, we should perhaps be inspired by the 'green museums' concept, which is flourishing in the United States.

**How does the Commission encourage museums in their function of fostering new relationships between visitors and local communities to promote sustainable development and encourage awareness about the role of museums in the development of society?**

I think there is a great variety of ways of doing this and across Europe museums are looking at new and innovative ways of opening up their collections to the general public. Digital developments

offer up-to-date ways of giving access to collections, but of course come with a cost - both in terms of digitising collections and paying commercial rights for exhibiting online. This is something the Commission's Digital Agenda addresses.

Our Culture Programme supports actions that are aimed at raising awareness and involving people in culture. To give an example, our annual European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage at the Europa Nostra Awards spotlights excellent examples of heritage care. During this year's award ceremony in Istanbul Mrs Vassiliou, European Commissioner responsible for Culture, underlined the importance of a balanced approach towards heritage care, on the one hand giving greater access to heritage and on the other hand seeing to it that new developments are sustainable.

Another example is the European Capitals of Culture. Many events taking place within a European Capital of Culture are linked to museums in the city. The lesson we've learnt from this action is that it strongly contributes to sustainable development in these cities, be it cultural, urban or social.

The Commission disseminates such positive results as widely as possible. Hereby illustrating to regions and cities across Europe the benefits of investment in culture - including in museums, as part of an integrated local and regional development strategy.

By | Anna Bas Backer and Julia Pagel

# About: SPAIN

**Most Spanish museums grew out of private collections, usually belonging to royalty, aristocracy and the ecclesiastical authorities. In the last two centuries, modern museums have developed as public institutions, committed to house, safeguard and spread knowledge on Spanish Heritage. Today, the museums dedicate themselves to the service they provide to the public.**

Although often housing national collections belonging to the State, the majority of the museums are administered by regional governments. Currently 84 museums are attached to the Spanish Ministry of Culture of which 17 depend directly on the General Directorate of Fine Arts and Cultural Goods. A few museums, such as the 'Museo Nacional del Prado' and 'Centro de Arte Reina Sofía', have a particular status: they are assigned their own budget and given greater autonomy in their management.

In the course of the last 10 years most of these museums have embarked on projects and reforms extending their buildings and exhibition spaces. The museums increased collections and upgraded their resources, meeting the demands and trends of a changing society.



Photo © Paola di Meglio Arteaga

**Museo Nacional del Romanticismo in Madrid**

The 'Museo Nacional del Romanticismo' in Madrid has been closed to the public for the past nine years undergoing renovations to the building and its spaces. The Museum was initially set up with the Marquis' extensive collection of paintings and furniture and set itself the goal to become one of Europe's reference centres in showcasing and researching the Romantic Movement.

Considered a place of research and education, the 'Museo Nacional Colegio de San Gregorio' is situated in the 'Colegio de San Gregorio' in Valladolid. The historical building – one of the most

beautiful examples of Spanish architecture from the 15th Century – was totally refurbished and awarded the Architectural Restoration National Award.

A number of important renovations are currently in process of which the most significant is the extension of 'Museo Arqueológico Nacional' in Madrid. Others are already waiting in line, such as a project involving the 'Museo Nacional de Etnografía' in Teruel.

Striving to achieve universal access to culture and to provide digital contents to all citizens, the Spanish Ministry of Culture recently launched CERES, an online catalogue of the collections of Spanish museums (<http://ceres.mcu.es>). The site offers a central access portal to all cultural goods found in Spanish museums regardless of their thematic scope or of the institution they are run by. The Digital network of Collections of Spanish Museums groups several museums that share a specific and unified documentation system called DOMUS and currently incorporates approximately 100,000 records and 130,000 pictures. All the information available in CERES will shortly be published in HISPANA which will be linked to Europeana, the European Digital Library.

Another project is the Museum Libraries Network BIMUS (<http://bimus.mcu.es>). The project will digitise the collections of the libraries housed in the 17 museums managed by the Ministry of Culture. BIMUS offers the possibility to search comprehensive library catalogues through a single interface, thus facilitating access to the numerous collections. Besides the catalogue, BIMUS will feature a "digital library", providing access to collections from the various institutions as well as electronic resources of common interest, such as databases, electronic journals, institutional repositories and other resources.



The Permanent Laboratory of Public Museums is a project the Ministry of Culture launched in 2008. The intention was to establish an ongoing investigation into visitors' needs and trends in order to improve the quality of museums and increase efficiency in their management. One notable fact stands out from these studies: a visit to the museum is seen as an enriching social activity by the majority of the public (over 85 percent) since it is done in company and transmits a high level of satisfaction.

By | **Leticia de Frutos**



## Spain

**is a constitutional monarchy located in southwestern Europe on the Iberian Peninsula. Its three biggest cities are Madrid, Barcelona and Valencia. Nearing 47 million people, native Spaniards make up 88 percent of the total population. The rest of the population originate mainly from Latin America, followed by North Africa, Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa. Spanish is the second most spoken first language in the world.**