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The internationalization of Italian art and archaeological museums. A qualitative study

Barbara Francioni*, Tiia Vissak**

Abstract

International management literature has extensively examined the internationalization processes of manufacturing firms, yet museums remain an understudied area. This paper seeks to address this gap by analyzing the internationalization strategies of Italian art and archaeological museums and exploring the factors that have recently influenced their internationalization initiatives. Based on interviews conducted with seven museums, the study explores the unique internationalization processes of Italian art and archaeological museums. The findings show that, beyond attracting foreign tourists, they actively cooperate with foreign museums (through loans and temporary exhibitions) and research centers (via joint research initiatives). Additionally, museums have recently intensified their digitalization efforts to engage a global audience. This study offers valuable insights into

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the complex dynamics of museums' internationalization. It emphasizes the importance of qualified staff, strong network ties, and effective use of social media in facilitating international expansion. At the same time, it highlights key challenges, including the delicate balance between internationalization and preserving authenticity, as well as managing bureaucratic obstacles in the process.

La letteratura sul management internazionale ha esaminato ampiamente i processi di internazionalizzazione delle imprese manifatturiere, mentre i musei rimangono un'area ancora poco studiata. Questo studio si propone di colmare questo gap analizzando le strategie di internazionalizzazione dei musei italiani d'arte e archeologia e i fattori che hanno recentemente influenzato le loro iniziative internazionali in tale ambito. Basato su interviste condotte con sette musei, lo studio indaga i caratteristici processi di internazionalizzazione dei musei italiani d'arte e archeologia. I risultati mostrano che, oltre ad attrarre turisti stranieri, i musei collaborano attivamente con istituzioni estere, sia attraverso prestiti e mostre temporanee con altri musei, sia mediante iniziative di ricerca congiunte con centri di ricerca internazionali. Inoltre, i musei hanno recentemente intensificato gli sforzi di digitalizzazione per coinvolgere un pubblico globale. Questo studio offre spunti preziosi sulle complesse dinamiche dell'internazionalizzazione dei musei, evidenziando l'importanza di personale qualificato, solide reti di contatti e un uso efficace dei social media per facilitare l'espansione internazionale. Allo stesso tempo, sottolinea le principali sfide, tra cui il delicato equilibrio tra internazionalizzazione e conservazione dell'autenticità, nonché la gestione degli ostacoli burocratici nel processo.

1. *Introduction*

International management (IM) and international business (IB) literature has focused on studying firms' internationalization processes since the 1970s. While the internationalization patterns of manufacturing firms have been extensively studied, the same cannot be said about the service-oriented ones. Even more conspicuously, the internationalization of museums, a unique subset within the service sector, has remained an underexplored area. According to Scopus and Google Scholar databases, the only works directly addressing museums' internationalization within the IB field are a journal article and a book chapter by Ritvala *et al.*¹ who stated that internationalization is not always linear and forward-oriented (from lower to higher foreign commitment), but can also encompass multiple foreign market exits and re-entries that can be caused by both internal and external factors. Meanwhile, several other scholars² in museum studies have examined related aspects but without referencing IM or IB literature. Additionally, although there are some studies on the internationalization of cultural and/or creative industries, entrepreneurs

¹ Ritvala *et al.* 2017, 2021.

² Passebois-Ducors 2019; Taylor 2020.

and/or products³, they do not specifically focus on museums, highlighting a notable gap in research.

In this respect, the review by Wang *et al.*⁴ on cultural industries in international business research suggests that scholars should focus their attention on innovative and unique internationalization strategies. Moreover, given that numerous authors⁵ have emphasized the significant impact of contextual factors on internationalization and considering that according to some studies, contemporary museums «are also business organizations where museum managers attempt to run their museums profitably across countries»⁶ while according to others, they are predominantly mission-driven instead of profit-driven⁷, it is evident that there is a strong need to connect the two fields to study the specifics of museums' internationalization.

With specific reference to museum studies, several articles⁸ have examined recent changes in museums' activities resulting from Covid-19 and other influencing factors. However, these studies have not sufficiently addressed the internationalization of museums, leaving a significant gap in the research that needs further exploration.

To fill all the above-mentioned research gaps, this paper aims to find out how Italian museums have internationalized and what has recently affected their internationalization initiatives. Applying international management theory to museums offers the opportunity to better understand how institutions that are mission-driven rather than profit-driven can strategically internationalize while preserving their core values. This perspective contributes both to advancing international management research into new organizational forms and to enriching museum studies by offering new insights into strategic management practices within cultural institutions.

The paper is structured as follows: it starts with a review of the literature on museums' internationalization. The findings section presents evidence from seven Italian museums. The paper ends with conclusions, managerial and research implications.

³ Etemad, Motaghi 2018; Höllen *et al.* 2020; Rabêlo Neto *et al.* 2022; Sasaki *et al.* 2021; Tomlins *et al.* 2021.

⁴ Wang *et al.* 2020.

⁵ Calabrò *et al.* 2023; Elbanna *et al.* 2020; Halme *et al.* 2024; Nummela *et al.* 2022; Schembri *et al.* 2023; Wang *et al.* 2020; Welch *et al.* 2011.

⁶ Ritvala *et al.* 2017, p. 145.

⁷ Xiang *et al.* 2025.

⁸ Cerdan Chiscano, Darcy 2023; Fissi *et al.* 2024; Klinowski, Szafarowicz 2023; Kociubuk *et al.* 2023; Meng *et al.* 2023; Roigé *et al.* 2024; Sokolovskiy *et al.* 2023.

2. Literature review

National museums emerged in Europe in the 18th century⁹. Until the beginning of the 20th century, many museums mainly focused on nation-building, involving the display of local art objects and/or scientific achievements, as well as the collection of some foreign artefacts (especially from the country's colonies), showing them mainly to local visitors¹⁰. Some foreign artefacts were also donated by self-funded enthusiasts or sponsors who supported their activities¹¹. Still, some museums – for instance, the British Museum (founded in 1753) and the Louvre (founded in 1793) – took a more international stance: they aimed to display artefacts from the whole world from their beginning. The first international touring exhibitions were organized in the 1930s¹². However, some objects were also displayed abroad before: for instance, the Hindeloopen Room from Friesland – a three-dimensional display of typically Dutch interior design – was displayed at the Paris World Exhibition in 1878¹³.

In the 1970s, a “museum boom” started, as many museums were constructed, expanded or renovated to attract more local and foreign visitors¹⁴. Simultaneously, museums started actively organizing touring exhibitions¹⁵.

Achiam and Sølberg¹⁶ highlight that museums must address contemporary challenges, including reduced funding, heightened demands for accountability, increased expectations for diversification and accessibility, and a higher level of competition from leisure experiences. Consequently, there has been a change in museums, redefined «as cultural centers which merge community outreach and education with consumption and entertainment»¹⁷. According to the International Council of Museums (ICOM), museums have even more functions.

A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing¹⁸.

⁹ Elgenius 2015; Fleming 2020.

¹⁰ Bouquet 2012; Elgenius 2015.

¹¹ Fleming 2020.

¹² Amsellem 2013.

¹³ Bouquet 2012.

¹⁴ Ritvala *et al.* 2017; van Aalst, Boogaarts 2002.

¹⁵ Rectanus 2006.

¹⁶ Achiam, Sølberg 2017.

¹⁷ Rectanus 2006, p. 384.

¹⁸ ICOM 2022.

A more detailed overview of museums' primary functions is also provided in Table 1. In response to these challenges, museums have sought to enhance the visitor experience by integrating modern technologies¹⁹, launching membership programs²⁰, expanding their collections and hiring famous curators²¹. However, they also face increasing costs and a decreasing state-level interest in culture²². Thus, without cooperation and attracting additional local or international funding, many of them cannot survive²³.

<i>Meta-function</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
<i>Conservational</i>	Collecting, restoring, conserving and protecting tangible and intangible heritage (material objects, artefacts, immaterial cultural practices, etc.) for current and future generations.
<i>Cultural</i>	Making the museum's collections accessible to the local and foreign public; emphasizing the local cultural heritage; creating opportunities for the visitors to participate in culturally meaningful activities and express themselves; organizing cultural events (e.g., concerts).
<i>Scientific</i>	Conducting research on the practices of the museum (e.g., on attracting visitors) and on the main field(s) of the museum (e.g., related to its collection and its conservation); dissemination of scientific results; popularization of science, art etc. (depending on the museum's focus).
<i>Educational</i>	Science communication; creating opportunities (for students and other audiences) to learn science, art, etc. (depending on the museum's focus); co-operation with (pre)schools, universities and other educational institutions; attracting and educating (young) talents.
<i>Social</i>	Achieving a large, diverse audience; contributing to social inclusion (e.g., minority groups, disabled and disadvantaged people: for instance, offering free or discounted admission to them, but also organizing special tours for the visually impaired).
<i>Network</i>	Within and cross-sector collaboration: sharing expertise with other institutions, pooling resources with others to reduce costs, developing new formats for knowledge dissemination (e.g., co-operating with libraries and the media, developing mobile applications together with IT experts), providing a nexus for experts (e.g., from universities).
<i>Political</i>	Strengthening national identity, patriotism and national pride; campaigning for important causes; promoting civil engagement in relevant socio-scientific issues; developing partnerships (getting political support and becoming involved in city marketing, urban development etc.) at local, regional and/or country level.

¹⁹ Leoni, Cristofaro 2021; Tesoriero *et al.* 2014.

²⁰ Ebbers *et al.* 2021.

²¹ Moulin 1995.

²² Amsellem 2013.

²³ Giakoumis *et al.* 2016; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013; Rectanus 2006.

<i>Economic</i>	Ensuring that the museum remains financially viable, attracting public and private funding (e.g., sponsorship, membership) and creating additional income sources (e.g., opening a boutique or a restaurant or selling catalogues and other publications or souvenir); supporting resilience of the local community (creating jobs, establishing links with local firms, attracting local and foreign tourists etc.).
<i>Symbolic</i>	Facilitating unique time and space-transcending personalized experiences (e.g., using sound, light and various interactive solutions in addition to displaying artefacts); helping visitors to comprehend the world.

Tab. 1. Museums' main meta-functions (Source: authors' elaboration from Achiam, Sølberg 2017; Dubuc 2011; ICOM 2022; Passebois-Ducors 2019; Plaza, Haarich 2015; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013, Rectanus 2006; Taylor 2020; Tesoriero *et al.* 2014; Utanova 2021)

While some museum managers adopt a defensive approach towards internationalization, aiming to protect their domestic market from foreign museums' competition, many others are actively developing their own international presence²⁴ as a strategy for long-term sustainability²⁵. Museums can internationalize through diverse avenues, including the attraction of foreign tourists²⁶ and the establishment of franchises abroad²⁷, as exemplified by the Louvre in Abu Dhabi, Centre Pompidou in Shanghai²⁸, Guggenheim in Bilbao, and Hermitage in Amsterdam²⁹. Museums also pursue internationalization through the organization of international events³⁰ and touring exhibitions³¹ either 1) via official partnerships with other museums to co-produce and/or co-organize exhibitions or 2) directly via organizing their exhibitions abroad³². The motivation behind touring exhibitions often includes special public or private funding, as well as opportunities to benefit from tax incentives, gain positive publicity, attract more visitors, enhance cultural diffusion, generate additional revenue, and reduce costs through economies of scale³³. Overall, the internationalization of museums differs considerably from the internationalization of manufacturing or service firms (Tab. 2).

²⁴ Amsellem 2013.

²⁵ Nugraheni *et al.* 2021.

²⁶ Passebois-Ducors 2019; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013; Tali, Pierantoni 2011; Utanova 2021; van Aalst, Boogaarts 2002.

²⁷ Bouquet 2012; Ponzini, Ruoppila 2018; Ritvala *et al.* 2017, 2021.

²⁸ Apor 2015.

²⁹ Grincheva 2020; Plaza, Haarich 2015.

³⁰ Buskirk 2012; Whitelegg 2018.

³¹ Ferraro 2011.

³² Amsellem 2013; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013; Rectanus 2006.

³³ Amsellem 2013; Plaza, Haarich 2015.

<i>Forms of internationalization</i>	<i>Benefits from internationalization</i>	<i>Challenges of internationalization</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Direct and indirect export (M, S) - Licensing (M, S) - Franchising (M, S) - Joint ventures (M, S) - Wholly owned subsidiary (greenfield or acquisition) (M, S) - Non-equity alliances (M, S) - Strategic partnerships (M, S) - Management contracts (M, S) - Turnkey projects (M, S) - Supply agreements (M) - Strategic sourcing and assembly operations (M) - E-commerce and digital platforms (M, S) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing customer base (M, S) - Finding additional markets for niche products (M) or services (S) - Improving firm performance through economies of scale, lower production costs and/or higher prices (M, S) - Risk diversification (M, S) - More efficient use of the firm's resources (M, S) - Benefiting from host countries' more favorable business environment (M, S) - Technological transfer/spillovers (M, S) - Knowledge/innovation diffusion (M, S) - Greater cost efficiencies (M, S) - More learning opportunities (M, S) - Improved reputation (M, S) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate resource constraints (M, S) - Lack of production capacity (M, S) - Lack of business network relationships (M, S) - Lack of staff dedicated to internationalization (M, S) - Lack of management and organizational competence (M, S) - Limited digital or foreign language skills or knowledge about foreign cultures (M, S) - Competitive pressure (M, S) - Bureaucracy (M, S) - Environmental differences (M, S) - Psychic and cultural distance (M, S) - Liability of foreignness (M, S) - Increased costs (marketing, translation, transport etc.) (M, S) - Political and discrimination hazards (M, S)

Tab. 2. Manufacturing (M) and service (S) firms' internationalization (Source: authors' elaboration from Buckley *et al.* 1992; Capik, Brockerhoff 2017; Chetty, Holm 2000; Cervo-Cazurra *et al.* 2015; Delios, Henisz 2003; Ekeledo, Sivakumar 2004; Fenwick *et al.* 2003; Francioni *et al.* 2017; Galati *et al.* 2014; Hout *et al.* 1982; Ibeh *et al.* 2012; Jensen, Pedersen 2014; Kim *et al.* 1993; Knight, Cavusgil 2004; Leonidou 2000; Liu *et al.* 2022; Majocchi *et al.* 2013; Martinez, Dacin 1999; Nummela *et al.* 2022; Wagner 2004; Wan *et al.* 2023; Zaheer 1995; Zahra *et al.* 2000; Zhang *et al.* 2014)

Different authors have also identified various obstacles and challenges that museums face in their internationalization efforts. For instance, some scholars³⁴ stated that internationalization tends to be easier for museums with a strong reputation and considerable resources. In contrast, many regional museums, especially those that are far from other tourist attractions, tend to remain focused on their local markets. Nugraheni *et al.*³⁵ concluded that attracting foreign tourists can be problematic when museum guides have limited

³⁴ Passebois-Ducors 2019; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013; Taylor 2020.

³⁵ Nugraheni *et al.* 2021.

foreign language skills. Turnbull and Utanova³⁶ emphasized the importance of correctly and comprehensively translating information about the museum and its artefacts. Tali and Pierantoni³⁷ highlighted the importance of investing in marketing to attract a broader audience. However, Dubuc³⁸ noted that an overemphasis on tourism could lead to a decline in local interest, as museums risk becoming too tourist-oriented. Ponzini and Ruoppila³⁹, along with Ritvala *et al.*⁴⁰ highlighted the complexities in obtaining support from local authorities for museums aspiring to establish franchises abroad. Additionally, Amsellem⁴¹ warned that international exhibitions can be risky as some objects could get lost or damaged during transportation. Finally, Graburn⁴² warned that maintaining a balance between commercialism such as gift shops, fast food outlets, commercial events and authenticity can be challenging for museums, as excessive commercialization can undermine their cultural and educational mission.

Based on the above, it can be concluded that museums – especially those with considerable resources but increasingly also smaller ones – are becoming more international. Their efforts focus on attracting foreign tourists, organizing international events and exhibitions abroad, and, for some large museums, establishing franchises in foreign countries. However, it is essential for museum managers to acknowledge that international expansion is not always easy, as museums face various challenges. Therefore, a more in-depth examination of museums' internationalization is essential to provide valuable insights into its complex dynamics. After the methodology section, an overview of seven Italian museums' internationalization activities and challenges is provided.

3. Methodology

Qualitative methodology emerges as the most appropriate approach for this study due to its inherent capacity to delve into the nuanced complexities and multifaceted dimensions of museums' internationalization efforts and initiatives. Qualitative research is particularly valuable for studying complex and emerging phenomena in real-life contexts⁴³, as it enables the development of novel, empirically valid theoretical and practical insights on the subject. Even

³⁶ Turnbull 2018; Utanova 2021.

³⁷ Tali, Pierantoni 2011.

³⁸ Dubuc 2011.

³⁹ Ponzini, Ruoppila 2018.

⁴⁰ Ritvala *et al.* 2021.

⁴¹ Amsellem 2013.

⁴² Graburn 2008.

⁴³ Fletcher *et al.* 2018; Mingione, Leoni 2020; Welch *et al.* 2013; Yin 2018.

when definitive answers are not yet available, this approach helps deepen understanding and generate new perspectives⁴⁴. The main advantage of qualitative research lies in its ability to capture and explain the complexity of a particular phenomenon, thereby making significant contributions to academic conversation. Moreover, it has been widely employed in museum studies⁴⁵, as well as in IB and IM research⁴⁶. Notably, Ritvala *et al.*⁴⁷ used qualitative methods in their studies on Guggenheim Foundation's internationalization.

This study focuses on museums because of their unique dual identity: while they are primarily non-profit institutions with a cultural and social mission, they also increasingly face pressures similar to service-oriented firms, such as attracting audiences, securing funding, managing international collaborations, and adapting to technological changes (Tab. 1). Moreover, we decided to focus the attention on seven cases of Italian museums, a choice motivated by the unique Italian context. The transformation of Italian state museum system started after the Franceschini reform in 2014, granting many state museums greater autonomy in resource allocation and decision-making⁴⁸. After the reform, they could decide how to spend their budget: how much on operating costs, collaboration, events, research projects, etc. Also, the museums covered by the reform became somewhat more independent in making staffing decisions⁴⁹, but still, due to getting funds for personnel from the state, they could not expand their staff as much as necessary⁵⁰. As a result, several museums started to become more active in internationalization.

Studying several museums allowed to achieve «more theory-driven variance and divergence in the data»⁵¹ and, through that, contribute to theory generation⁵². The purposive/purposeful sampling approach⁵³ was employed, necessitating that all selected museums exemplify a phenomenon of interest⁵⁴. To ensure the production of contrasting results, diverse museums⁵⁵ were selected in terms of geographical location, thematic focus, ownership, size, and other characteristics (Table 3 in the Appendix); for instance, two of the selected

⁴⁴ Eisenhardt 1989; Eisenhardt *et al.* 2016; Richards, Morse 2012.

⁴⁵ Giakoumis *et al.* 2016; Grincheva 2020; Passebois-Ducors 2019; Plaza, Haarich 2015; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013; Ponzini, Ruoppila 2018.

⁴⁶ Calabrò *et al.* 2023; Nummela *et al.* 2022; Schembri *et al.* 2023.

⁴⁷ Ritvala *et al.* 2017, 2021.

⁴⁸ Agostino, Arnaboldi 2021; Alfano *et al.* 2023; Bergantino *et al.* 2023; Marzano, Castellini 2018.

⁴⁹ Bergantino *et al.* 2023.

⁵⁰ Casini 2018; Pangallozzi 2019.

⁵¹ Pauwels, Matthyssens 2004, p. 129.

⁵² Eisenhardt 1989.

⁵³ Miles *et al.* 2014; Yin 2018.

⁵⁴ Patton 2015, p. 266.

⁵⁵ Pauwels, Matthyssens 2004; Seawright, Gerring 2008.

museums (Museum 4 and Museum 7) are not autonomous state museums but they were deliberately included to enrich the diversity of the sample and capture different governance models within the Italian museum sector. Moreover, the interviewees (directors or curators; see Table 3 in the Appendix for details) had to agree to offer illuminative and information-rich insights⁵⁶.

All semi-structured in-person interviews with one respondent from each museum mostly contained open-ended questions. They were conducted between October 2022 and September 2023 in Italian language, the mother tongue of the interviewees and one of the authors. To develop and refine the interview protocol, the suggestions of Castillo-Montoya⁵⁷ were followed. The interviews focused on the following main topics: the general description of the museum (ownership, size, uniqueness of its collection, number and origin of visitors, the use of digital solutions), its internationalization (why and how it has expanded, how important it is, which challenges it has faced) and how its activities were affected by recent events. Additional questions were also asked to clarify some issues or get more details about some topics⁵⁸. All interviews were transcribed verbatim, and the interview results were shared with the interviewees so that they could comment and make revisions, if necessary⁵⁹. In addition to the on average hour-long interviews, to enhance the robustness of the findings and to achieve triangulation, secondary data – the museums' websites and other public online data sources – were also used⁶⁰. Data collection was finished after reaching the saturation point where no new themes emerged⁶¹.

Manual coding was used to analyze the data. Insights from each interview were compared with those from others to detect similarities and differences⁶² between the studied museums and their internationalization experiences, and to reach a more general understanding about the studied phenomenon⁶³.

4. Findings

This section is dedicated to an in-depth exploration of various facets of the internationalization strategies pursued by the studied museums. This encompasses the examination of the different forms of internationalization, the im-

⁵⁶ Patton 2015; Yin 2018.

⁵⁷ Castillo-Montoya 2016.

⁵⁸ Qu, Dumay 2011.

⁵⁹ Mingione, Leoni 2020.

⁶⁰ Miles *et al.* 2014; Yin 2018.

⁶¹ Aguinis, Solarino 2019.

⁶² Baiocco *et al.* 2023.

⁶³ Mingione, Leoni 2020.

portance of internationalization for the studied museums, the factors facilitating these museums' internationalization, the main challenges and the negative aspects related to internationalization, and, finally, an evaluation of the impacts of recent events on the studied museums' internationalization strategies.

From the analysis of the studied seven Italian museums, it emerged that they engaged in internationalization in different ways⁶⁴: they all attracted foreign tourists (Table 3 in the Appendix), but they also co-operated with foreign museums, especially, in terms of loans of exhibits to foreign museums, but also in organizing temporary exhibitions in foreign countries. In addition, some co-operated with research centers and immigrants.

The loaning of artworks and entire exhibitions abroad emerged as a key component of museums' internationalization. Museum 3 stated that «the museum's job is to lend out pieces» and noted that its current international exhibitions «are in the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Georgia, Poland, Denmark, Greece, and France; in the past, exhibitions have also been held in China, Mexico, Peru, and Venezuela». Museum 4 explained that its artwork loaning strategy has been in place for «about 20 years» and that it is often used to finance restoration projects through loan fees or reciprocal exchanges. Museum 5 reinforced this practice, stating: «we have always lent several artworks in Italy and abroad each year, having a well-known and studied collection». Similarly, Museum 6 highlighted how it has «always collaborated with foreign entities from all around the world, including USA, France, and England», while Museum 7 confirmed that it «has often loaned its pieces to foreign institutions that request them» and «has also exported entire exhibitions abroad».

Many museums emphasized the importance of institutional partnerships for internationalization. Museum 1 highlighted that «collaboration is required» and explained that partnerships with both Italian and foreign museums range from simple artwork loans to more complex shared scientific projects. Similarly, Museum 2 underscored its extensive cooperation with European and non-European universities, engaging in «study and research projects, but also educational projects [...], publication projects, through the publication of catalogues, rather than monographs, which always have an internationalization profile». It further explained that they «collaborate with scholars from all over the world», reinforcing the role of academia in its internationalization process.

Beyond traditional collaborations, some museums integrate multicultural and social dimensions into their international strategies. Museum 2 described «a project [carried out] a few years ago with migrants, political refugees and those who had received the right to asylum, comparing the great migrations of the past with current migrations». According to the museum, «for us, internationalization is also this: multiculturalism and dialogue between cultures».

⁶⁴ Amsellem 2013; Passebois-Ducors 2019; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013; Rectanus 2006.

This expands the definition of museums' internationalization, demonstrating that it is not only about exhibiting collections abroad but also about promoting intercultural dialogue and inclusivity.

Among the forms of internationalization discussed in the literature review, none of the museums had established franchises abroad⁶⁵, nor did they have plans to do so. Some interviewees provided detailed explanations for this decision. For instance, representatives from Museums 3, 4, 5, and 7 stated that franchising would not be feasible, as their collections are deeply contextualized to the places of origin of the artefacts. Similarly, Museum 6 stated that their collection would need more extensive support to support such an expansion. However, its director acknowledged that it «could be a good option for other Italian museums».

Internationalization is considered as necessary by all the studied museums⁶⁶. According to Museum 1, «it is somewhat in the nature of the heritage that we actually have and also a necessity [...] it is in the very nature of the museum to be open». It also added that «there have undoubtedly been benefits because it is an open museum, both from the point of view of scientific collaboration and also to the public who frequent our rooms». Museum 2 stated: «we started internationalization in a strategic way» and explained that they have «certainly, a strong belief in cultural cosmopolitanism, a museum that talks about the world». In addition, Museum 3 mentioned: «the director believes that internationalization could certainly be useful for the museum». According to Museum 4, «the fact of having an exhibition abroad is also synonymous with international promotion». Museum 5 added that international exhibitions «attract people passionate about a particular type of art or a specific painter, both from abroad and from our own territory». Museum 6 stated that «it is crucial to [...] strive to enhance international relationships» and that «seeing artworks from the museum displayed in foreign countries has certainly increased awareness among foreign visitors». Finally, Museum 7 explained that «significant collaborations usually occur when organizing an exhibition or borrowing artworks from foreign museums; typically, a partnership is established with those museums that lend important or a large number of pieces». In addition, they emphasized that «the aim of internationalization is also to create a sort of showcase for the museum and to be able to be sponsored, even abroad».

According to the museums, having competent staff and strong network relationships with the regional authorities, other museums and research centers are significant for internationalization. Indeed, Museum 1 highlighted the importance of multilingual staff or professionals with expertise in historical-ar-

⁶⁵ Bouquet, 2012; Ponzini, Ruoppila 2018; Ritvala *et al.* 2021.

⁶⁶ Amsellem 2013; Nugraheni *et al.* 2021.

tistic disciplines and international relations, as these skills facilitate relationship-building and cross-border collaborations. Establishing formal agreements and participating in international fairs was also identified as a key strategy. As Museum 2 explained:

through the agreements we have made, we are present in the major international fairs, at events concerning cultural tourism, but also at all events concerning the relations of territorial networks. Together with the Puglia region, we are present in numerous projects including scientific research, education, and training, which are also based on internationalization.

Collaboration with foreign institutions was another important aspect, with Museum 3 noting that «currently, the museum has numerous collaborations with foreign countries, and often the desire to collaborate comes from outside». Similarly, Museum 5 highlighted the role of study projects and artwork loans in promoting scientific exchange and knowledge sharing, pointing out that «there are study projects scheduled through loans that can serve as opportunities for scientific exchange and knowledge sharing. There are also proposals for international collaboration».

Social media also emerged as a powerful tool for internationalization, allowing museums to enhance visibility and strengthen their international presence. Museum 4 emphasized how «social media reaches everywhere, for example, now with [...] exhibitions in England, staff who have an English cultural prominence have collaborated». Additionally, some museums benefit from their already well-established international reputation, which naturally attracts collaborations. Museum 6 described itself as «a highly renowned museum internationally, with numerous foreign organizations involved in its activities». Likewise, Museum 7 underscored the importance of personal and professional networks, explaining that «collaborative relationships are cultivated through contacts between colleagues».

Despite the many advantages of internationalization, the museums also highlighted several challenges and negative impacts associated with the process⁶⁷. One of the key concerns was related to cultural issues. Museum 1 noted that internationalization often brings «a slightly less tailored and less attentive type of tourism», while Museum 2 pointed out that cultural mediation and communication present major challenges, explaining that «being international does not only mean having multilingual translation, but it means cultural mediation [...], the great challenge of intercultural communication. It is necessary to know the various cultures at the base». Additionally, another concern was the risk of overlooking local communities while focusing on international expansion, with Museum 2 emphasizing that «internationalization does not

⁶⁷ Graburn 2008; Passebois-Ducors 2019; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013; Taylor 2020.

mean forgetting the local community. There should be no conflict». A similar issue was also reflected in Museum 5's statement, which also highlighted the difficulty of prioritizing international partnerships while ensuring engagement with local visitors, noting that «it is essential to prioritize engaging with the tourists already present in Siena, to first make them aware of the museum's offering».

Financial constraints and lack of direct economic benefits were also frequently mentioned. Museum 3 explained that loans of artworks abroad rarely generated revenue, stating that «the museum does not receive any income from the loan of pieces for the exhibitions», and even when foreign institutions offered art pieces in exchange, the financial burden of transportation often fell on the lending museum. The museum also noted that exporting full exhibitions internationally had not led to an increase in foreign visitors, as hoped. Furthermore, some museums, like Museum 4, were unable to import foreign exhibits due to financial limitations, stating that «the museum has never imported exhibits from abroad, only from Italy, as it is too expensive for the available finances». Similarly, Museum 3 described how every initiative required approval from regional and national authorities, often leading to negative outcomes due to a «lack of money».

Bureaucratic obstacles represented another major challenge. Museum 4 pointed out inefficiencies in loan management, mentioning instances where the ministry misallocated approvals, allowing important artworks to be lent while restricting less significant pieces. Museum 7 further elaborated on the complexity of the loan authorization process, stating that loans outside the European Union required multiple levels of approval, including from the General Directorate of Museums, the export office, and the Customs Agency, making the entire procedure «already lengthy and even more complicated». In addition, Museum 3 highlighted how research projects with foreign institutions were hindered by excessive bureaucracy.

Finally, staff shortages emerged as a structural issue affecting internationalization efforts. Museum 7 observed that «in Italy, museums suffer greatly from a lack of staff», in contrast to other countries where dedicated teams handle specific disciplines. Similarly, Museum 3 mentioned the absence of dedicated staff, explaining that «everything is developed by the director and by some of the curators».

Recent events, particularly the Covid-19 pandemic, significantly affected some of the studied museums, forcing them to temporarily close their doors to visitors. For instance, Museum 1 reported that in 2021, «it was closed in January and was closed for more than a month between March and April, with limitations also in numbers due to the anti-contagion containment rules». Similarly, Museum 4 acknowledged that «Covid also contributed to lowering the numbers [of visitors]», while Museum 7 confirmed that the pandemic «obviously affected the number of visitors». Naturally, the pandemic led to a

decline in foreign tourism (Table 3 in the Appendix) and a shift in the origins of international visitors⁶⁸. For example, Museum 1 observed: «now we don't have Americans. [...] The Chinese have long since disappeared».

On the other hand, most museums have managed to recover very well from the impact of the pandemic. For instance, Museum 2 observed that «the post-lockdown is currently creating interesting trends. We have an increase in visitors compared to pre-pandemic». Similarly, Museum 3 reported that «after Covid the same numbers of visitors are being recorded as before the pandemic, with the difference that in the pre-Covid period, the museum was open every day and all day, while now the museum is open for half a day, and only one Sunday a month». It also noted a shift in visitor demographics, stating, «after Covid there was a sudden surge in French and other visitors from countries that had never been there before, such as Brazil, Peru, Korea, Japan, and China». Museum 4 highlighted a significant recovery, stating that «in the first months of 2023 [...] compared to 2022, there was a 70% increase in visitors [...]. Now the percentage of foreigners is increasing to 35%». Museums 5 and 6 also noted that the number of visitors has returned to pre-pandemic levels. At the same time, Museum 7 reported attracting even more visitors than before, largely due to the success of a major exhibition in 2023.

In addition to benefiting from increased tourist flows, some museums also became more active in digitalization⁶⁹. For instance, according to Museum 2,

there is a digital platform, which is not simply a website, and it is in eight languages: the major European ones and then also Arabic, Chinese and Russian, precisely because we focus on internationalization. Then there are the multilingual multimedia contents. The site is all translated and updated in various languages. [...] The entire permanent collection has been digitized.

Still, according to Museum 7, this is not always possible as «for ensuring an accurate translation, the support of a translator who takes care of this daily is necessary, but consequently this would lead to additional costs».

5. Discussion and conclusions

This paper aimed to find out how Italian museums internationalized and what has recently affected their internationalization initiatives. Findings highlight the multifaceted nature of museums' internationalization, emphasizing

⁶⁸ Cerdan Chiscano, Darcy 2023; Giusti 2024; Kociubuk *et al.* 2023; Roigé *et al.* 2024; Sokolovskiy *et al.* 2023.

⁶⁹ Fissi *et al.* 2024; Klinowski, Szafarowicz 2023; Lee *et al.* 2022; Meng *et al.* 2023; Simone *et al.* 2021; Taormina, Baraldi 2022.

both the opportunities and challenges faced by Italian art and archaeological museums. While internationalization has become an integral strategy for attracting foreign tourists, expanding collaborations, and increasing international visibility, the study also highlighted the institutional, financial, and logistical obstacles that museums must manage.

Firstly, the results showed that all seven museums had experienced several forms of internationalization: they attracted foreign tourists, organized temporary exhibitions abroad and were also active in loans of artworks to (and in some cases, from) foreign museums. Moreover, some museums also collaborated with foreign research centers. This aligns with previous literature on cultural industries, which suggests that cooperation with external stakeholders enhances international reach and strengthens academic and artistic networks⁷⁰.

Museum managers view internationalization as a means to enhance sustainability and promote cultural exchange. Overall, internationalization was important for all museums, as they acknowledged that it contributes to cultural cosmopolitanism and attracts a diverse audience. This aligns with the notion that internationalization can broaden a museum's reach and impact⁷¹. It also reflects a shift in the role of museums from local institutions to global cultural centers⁷². Thus, Italian and other museums should continue expanding their international activities to increase visibility and reach wider audiences.

Secondly, to assist museum managers in their internationalization initiatives, the study also stressed the importance of having qualified staff with language and cultural abilities and strong network ties. These elements are coherent with the idea that museums must build their human and social capital to successfully cope with international expansion⁷³.

Moreover, the study reveals the increasing role of digitalization in museums' internationalization. Museums have begun leveraging digital platforms to reach a wider international audience, with some institutions investing in multilingual online content and virtual exhibitions. This trend reflects broader shifts in the museum sector, where digital technologies are being used to enhance accessibility⁷⁴, broaden the museums' educational impact⁷⁵, overcome geographical limitations, and engage a global audience. However, these initiatives require significant financial and human resources.

On this respect, museum managers also mentioned several challenges, including cultural issues – like maintaining a balance between international-

⁷⁰ Amsellem 2013; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013; Rectanus 2006.

⁷¹ Nugraheni *et al.* 2021.

⁷² Rectanus 2006.

⁷³ Passebois-Ducors 2019; Poisson-De Haro *et al.* 2013.

⁷⁴ Bruno 2019; Giusti 2024.

⁷⁵ Terui 2025.

ization and authenticity (avoiding excessive commercialism) – and financial constraints, excessive bureaucracy, lack of staff, and, in one case, no direct positive effect on the museum's income. These findings emphasize the complexity of internationalization and the need for careful planning and resource allocation⁷⁶.

Recent events – especially the Covid-19 pandemic – had a mixed impact on the studied museums. While some reported a decrease in visitor numbers due to lockdowns and reduced tourism, others experienced a post-lockdown surge in visitors, often with changes in the origins of tourists. However, overall, all museums have recovered relatively well. This reflects the resilience of museums in adapting to changing circumstances⁷⁷. Additionally, recent events accelerated the digitalization efforts of some museums, enabling them to engage with a global audience more effectively.

5.1. *Theoretical implications*

Theoretically, the study provides several contributions (Tab. 4). Firstly, it addresses a significant gap in IB and IM literature by focusing on museums' internationalization, a topic that has received limited attention. Previous research has primarily centered on manufacturing and service firms, making this exploration of museums' internationalization a novel contribution to the field.

Secondly, the paper emphasizes the importance of contextual factors in museums' internationalization. This is consistent with a larger body of IB and IM literature that acknowledges the impact of contextual factors on internationalization initiatives. It further supports the need for context-specific approaches when analyzing how different organizations expand internationally.

Thirdly, the study highlights the role of cultural and intercultural competence in museums' internationalization. This finding aligns with broader IB and IM research emphasizing the importance of cultural awareness, adaptation, and mediation in international business success. Museums, as institutions profoundly embedded in cultural heritage and knowledge dissemination, require not only managerial competence but also an understanding of cultural sensitivity and audience diversity to ensure engagement in foreign markets.

The paper also discusses the impact of recent events – including the Covid-19 pandemic – on museums' internationalization efforts. Indeed, it resonates with recent research across various sectors, emphasizing the need for organizations to adapt and innovate in response to global crises⁷⁸.

⁷⁶ Graburn 2008; Taylor 2020.

⁷⁷ Cerdan Chiscano, Darcy 2023; Kociubuk *et al.* 2023.

⁷⁸ Ahamed *et al.* 2025; Giusti 2024; Kádár, Jáki 2024.

Moreover, this study introduces a new perspective on the role of networks and collaboration in internationalization. While traditional IB literature has explored business partnerships and joint ventures, this research highlights the critical role of inter-institutional collaboration among museums, research centers, and cultural organizations. The study reveals that cross-border partnerships in loans, co-curated exhibitions, and research collaborations act as essential mechanisms for museums' internationalization, providing an alternative model distinct from conventional export or foreign direct investment strategies.

Lastly, the study examines the increasing role of digitalization in museums' internationalization. While IB literature has extensively covered digital transformation in business contexts, this paper extends the discussion to cultural institutions, showing how digital tools, multilingual content, and virtual exhibitions enhance global accessibility and audience engagement. It underscores the potential of digitalization as a strategic enabler for museums aiming to reach international audiences, thereby bridging IB research on technological advancements and market expansion with museum studies and cultural management.

<i>Forms of internationalization</i>	<i>Benefits from internationalization</i>	<i>Challenges of internationalization</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attracting foreign tourists - Establishing franchises abroad - Organizing international events - Organizing exhibitions abroad either directly or via official partnerships with other museums - Organizing virtual visits for foreign audience - Loans of objects to foreign museums - International scientific projects - International educational projects - International publication projects - Co-operating with foreign migrants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased reputation among foreign and local visitors - Attracting more foreign and local visitors - Better financial sustainability (increased income due to attracting more visitors, etc.) - Temporary exchange of objects (for exhibitions) leads to more visitors - Meeting society's expectations - Higher scientific reputation - Increased local and international scientific co-operation - Promoting multiculturalism and dialogue between cultures - Getting objects restored abroad through loans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bureaucracy - Lack of support from local or state authorities - Lack of staff dedicated to internationalization - Increased costs (marketing, translation, transport, etc.) - Limited digital or foreign language skills or knowledge about foreign cultures - Damaged objects (during international exhibitions) - Unattractive location for foreign tourists - Attracting "wrong" (less culture-oriented) visitors - Increased commercialism and reduced authenticity lead to locals' reduced interest

Tab. 4. Museums' internationalization: a framework (Source: authors' elaboration from the literature and the analysis of the seven cases)

5.2. *Managerial implications*

Museum managers could consider learning from the seven cases analyzed in this study. Results emphasize the importance of active collaboration with both local and foreign institutions, including other museums, ministries, and regional or local authorities, as a key factor in successful internationalization. Establishing and maintaining these collaborative relationships can open doors to new opportunities, such as joint exhibitions, artefact loans, and shared research projects, ultimately strengthening museums' international engagement. Given the complexities of operating in an international environment, museum managers should invest in developing and sustaining these partnerships to maximize their reach and institutional reputation.

Museums should also perform a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis before starting internationalization projects. In particular, they should: a) analyze the possible financial effects, considering costs such as those incurred for overseas loans, loans, and marketing initiatives; b) ensure that the museum's internationalization initiatives match its financial sustainability objectives.

To mitigate the financial challenges associated with internationalization, museums could explore collaborative funding opportunities, such as partnerships with international organizations, grant programs, and sponsors. In addition, digitalization and active advertisement via social media could result in more international cooperation and attract more foreign tourists. Using multilingual content and engagement strategies will improve the efficacy of social media outreach. Moreover, to attract more foreign and local visitors, more effort is needed in addition to only promoting a valuable collection: it is also important to develop interactive exhibits and offer information about the museum and its collections and events in several languages.

Museum managers and staff should also prioritize developing cultural and intercultural competence, such as language skills and effective cross-cultural communication. Such competence is fundamental for successful internationalization efforts, particularly for attracting different audiences and cooperating with foreign institutions. However, while internationalization is essential, museum managers should achieve a balance between global and local engagement. This is necessary to maintain local support and relevance, even as museums expand their international presence.

Additionally, digitalization of the museum sector has never been more important. The continued adoption of digital technologies will improve museums' ability to interact virtually with visitors worldwide. Some examples are digitizing collections, offering virtual exhibitions, and providing online teaching resources. Moreover, the importance of adaptability and resilience has become evident for museums. Thus, managers should have backup plans to handle unexpected challenges and adjust their internationalization strategies when necessary.

Lastly, our study highlights that museum managers should recognize that the internationalization of Italian museums needs to be adapted to the specific context in which each museum operates. Internationalization can effectively take place through targeted strategies, but the feasibility and success of these strategies depends on several context-specific enablers, including the availability of qualified multilingual staff, strong institutional support, existing international reputation, and efficient network ties. Conversely, inhibitors such as bureaucratic complexity, financial constraints, insufficient digital infrastructure, and location-related disadvantages can significantly limit internationalization. Managers should therefore conduct a careful context analysis to examine the pros and cons of pursuing internationalization, balancing global ambitions with the museum's mission, resources, and local engagement.

5.3. *Limitations and suggestions for future research*

The main limitations of the present study are primarily related to the relatively small sample of Italian museums. Indeed, although these museums provide valuable insights, results may only be partially representative, mainly for museums with similar characteristics. With a larger sample of museums, it would be possible to find out how museums' characteristics – like size, geographical location and museum managers' previous international experience – influence their internationalization strategy: for instance, organizing exhibitions abroad or attracting foreign tourists.

Moreover, the study's specific focus on Italian museums may further limit the generalizability of the findings to museums in other countries with different cultural, economic, and regulatory environments. In this respect, it is important to note that museum management and internationalization are strongly conditioned by national cultural policy models⁷⁹, as different macro-areas have developed distinct approaches: the American model relies on private funding and market orientation, the Anglo-Saxon model combines private and public support, and the European model depends mainly on public funding (although, of course, some museums are privately funded)⁸⁰. This distinction is very important, as internationalization strategies can vary considerably depending on the governance model. For instance, the expansion strategy of a private contemporary art museum like the Guggenheim cannot be directly compared to the internationalization approach of a municipal museum in Ascoli Piceno hosting medieval artworks. Therefore, while museums may adopt business practices, their internationalization remains deeply influenced

⁷⁹ Lord 2024.

⁸⁰ Vicente *et al.* 2012; Woodward 2012.

by historical, cultural, and institutional contexts. Based on these limitations, future research could build on this by conducting cross-cultural comparisons of internationalization strategies among art and archaeology museums and take different financing models into account.

Researchers might also explore the internationalization processes of museums focused on other fields (e.g., science, sports, music). This would help them determine whether other museums internationalize similarly or differently, if they are facing analogous challenges, and how they have responded to them.

Moreover, longitudinal studies to track museums' internationalization efforts over time would permit researchers to examine changes, trends, and the long-term impacts of international strategic decisions and global events. Additionally, by considering the growing importance of digitalization, future research should dive deeper into how museums employ technology to attract international audiences. This involves studying the effectiveness of different technologies, such as interactive digital platforms, virtual exhibitions, and on-line educational resources. Lastly, future studies should also investigate ethical and long-term effects of museums' internationalization, mainly focusing on equal access and cultural heritage preservation.

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Appendix

	Museum 1	Museum 2	Museum 3	Museum 4	Museum 5	Museum 6	Museum 7
Interviewee's role	Curator	Director	Director and curator	Curator	Director	Director	Curator and administrator
Collection (main focus)	Art (paintings, sculptures); furniture	Archaeology	Archaeology	Pre-medieval art (paintings, jewelry, etc.)	Art (paintings and sculptures)	Art (paintings, sculptures); furniture, coins, etc.	Art (paintings, sculptures); ceramics, textiles, jewelry, etc.
Location	Rome	Taranto	Florence	Ascoli Piceno	Siena	Urbino	Perugia
Owner	Ministry of Culture (National Museum with special autonomous status)	Ministry of Culture (National Museum with special autonomous status)	Regional Directorate of Museums of Tuscany	Municipality of Ascoli Piceno	Ministry of Culture (National Museum with special autonomous status)	Ministry of Culture (National Museum with special autonomous status)	Ministry of Culture (National Museum with special autonomous status)
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valuable collection (famous Italian and foreign artworks) and building - Competent staff - Active co-operation with local and foreign museums - Materials for visitors from different age groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valuable collection (local and Mediterranean focus) - Active co-operation with local and foreign museums and research centres - Competent staff - Mobile app for geolocating visitors to find out how much time they spend viewing each exhibit - Several interactive exhibits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valuable collection (Egyptian, Etruscan, Greek, and Roman artefacts) and building - Several interactive exhibits (more will be added soon) - Active co-operation with local and foreign museums - Active in digitalization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valuable collection (artefacts documenting development of Lombard civilization in Italy) - Several interactive exhibits and touch screens - Plans to become more active in digitalization in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valuable collection (Siena cultural heritage) - Plans to become more active in digitalization in the future - Relatively active co-operation with local and foreign museums - Many local sponsors and supporters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valuable collection (famous Italian artworks) and building - Active co-operation with local and foreign museums - Plans to become more active in digitalization in the future (some YouTube videos with English subtitles already exist) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Valuable collection (famous Italian artworks) and building - Extensive digital archive - Active co-operation with local and foreign museums - Several interactive exhibits - Plans to become more active in digitalization in the future
Share of foreign tourists (average)	60% (only 40% during Covid-19)	20%	45%	30%	20%	50%	Less than 50%

	Museum 1	Museum 2	Museum 3	Museum 4	Museum 5	Museum 6	Museum 7
Tourists' main countries of origin	Global (mainly from Europe, but also from America and Asia)	Global (mainly from Europe, but many also from outside Europe)	Global (mainly from America and France)	Mainly from Europe (especially the Netherlands, UK and France)	Global	Global (mainly from France and Germany)	Mainly from Europe, but some also from America and Asia
Number of visitors annually (average)	600,000 (231,000 during Covid-19 in 2021)	30,000	80,000	8,000	20,000	180,000	100,000 (higher numbers during popular exhibitions)
International co-operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loans of exhibits to and from foreign museums (globally) - Scientific projects - Temporary exhibitions abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loans of exhibits to and from foreign museums (globally) - Scientific projects - Temporary exhibitions abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loans of exhibits to and from foreign museums (globally) - Scientific projects - Temporary exhibitions abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loans of exhibits to European museums - Temporary exhibitions abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loans of exhibits to European and American museums - Temporary exhibitions abroad (if the artworks are not "fundamental") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loans of exhibits to European and American museums - Scientific projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Loans of exhibits to and from European and sometimes other museums - Temporary exhibitions abroad - Scientific projects
Franchises abroad	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Online information and/or services in foreign languages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ticket reservation - Information about the museum, and its collection - Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ticket reservation - Information about the museum, and its collection - 3D virtual tour (in English) - Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ticket reservation - Information about the museum, and its collection - Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Some information about the museum and its exhibitions - Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not yet (currently it is only in Italian); some information about the museum and its collection will be translated in the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ticket reservation - Information about the museum, and its collection - Social media (mostly in Italian) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ticket reservation - Information about the museum, and its collection - Social media (mostly in Italian)

Tab. 3. Museums' main characteristics (Source: authors' elaboration)

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