

SUMMARY

Over the last thirty years, the conservation of photographs has become one more specialized branch of the conservation of cultural assets. This evolution and consolidation has come about thanks to a world-wide awareness of the historic and aesthetic value of original photographs, their economic value and their fragility. This awareness began in the United States in the 1970s when, based around the Eastman Kodak Company and the George Eastman House International Museum of Photography and Film in Rochester, New York, a number of professionals created a group interested in the conservation of photographs taken with outdated techniques and research into their preservation. At the same time, and during the 1980s, France was going through a period of recognizing the heritage value of photography and photography collections were included in museums. Public bodies at the time created the necessary conditions, human resources and infrastructure for managing and conserving collections. In Catalonia, a country with a rich photographic legacy that is not exploited to the full, the discipline hardly exists and public bodies are not convinced of the importance of recognizing the heritage value of photography by providing collections of reference with the required resources in terms of facilities and specialized personnel.