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ENGLISH SUMMARY

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The Institute for Museum Research (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz) reports annually on visitor attendance in all museums in the Federal Republic of Germany. This publication documents the 2020 statistical survey for all German museums. It is regarded as most comprehensive in this field and is used by the Government – both Federal and at the level of the 16 Federal State Countries („Bundesländer") – , as well as the regional and local bodies and cultural organizations in Germany.

The total number of museums taken into account for the 2020 survey was 6.854. This figure remained after combining the data of a few museums that counted their visits together into one figure, and after leaving out a few museums that were closed during 2020. The quota of returned questionnaires for 2020 was 70%.

The Institute for Museum Research uses an operational definition of „museum" in order to enable precise counts. This definition primarily serves to provide a delimitation with the greatest possible discriminatory power vis-à-vis other institutions. It thus contains by far not all elements of a general museum definition such as for example the specification of functions, tasks and relationships with other cultural organizations (cf. e.g. ICOM-Germany, ICOM-Austria, ICOM-Switzerland (eds.): Ethical Guidelines for Museums 2003). Therefore, the purely operational definition used by the Institute does not at all claim to subsitute the recognition as a museum, as it is done by the ministries, museum associations and offices in the individual Federal States.

Regarding the classification system for museums, the Institute for Museum Research stays close to the categories employed by UNESCO (UNESCO/STC/Q/853). Due to the particular museum structure in Germany, local ethnography and regional museums are grouped together in one class. Contrary to UNESCO and ICOM usage, too, zoological and botanical gardens as well as monuments and sites without inventory were not incuded in the survey. Furthermore, the classification does not cover purely commerial exhibits of private and state industries. Thus, the Institute for Museum Research currently distinguishes the following nine museum types:

1. Local history, local ethnography and regional museums
2. Art museums
3. Castles with inventory
4. Natural history and Natural science museums
5. Science and technology museums
6. Archaeology and history museums
7. Complex museums with different kinds of collections
8. Specialised museums
9. Museum complexes with different kinds of museums

The total number of visits counted in museums in Germany 2020 was 41.519.876
Of the 6.854 museums who were sent a questionnaire, 3.584 (52,3%) reported their data on visitor attendance 2020. As compared to 2019, the total number of visits saw a sharp decline due to the pandemic situation caused by Covid 19 outbreaks and repeated lockdowns throughout Germany starting from March 2020. The decline in visit numbers in museums was -62,8%. Table 06 shows that 83,6% of all answering museums reported up to 15.000 visits in 2020. Due to different methods of counting, the aggregated total numbers include some estimated figures. The data also includes attendance of special exhibitions held in museums or organized by them. Only a few museums were able to count visits to their special exhibits separately from visits to their permanent exhibitions. Therefore, total attendance figures for special exhibitions only cannot be given.

Variations in **attendance as correlated with the different museum types** are shown in table 05. Art museums (430 museums) led the listing with 8.6 million counted visits. In second place came the History and Archaeology museums (341 museums) with almost 7.8 million, followed by Science and Technology museums (445) with roundabout 6.3 million. Local history, local ethnography and regional museums accounted for the highest number of reporting museums (1.442), however they added only 5.2 million visitors to the total. Table 12 shows the distribution of museum types in the individual Federal States („Bundesländer").

For the survey year 2020, 877 museums reported that they were closed for the entire year. This is 18.3% of the responding museums or 12.8% of all museums contacted. By comparison, for 2019, 183 (2.7%) of the 6,834 responding museums reported being closed for the entire year, and 9.4% of responding museums reported being consistently closed for pandemic reasons in 2020. Many of these museums are among those institutions with seasonal winter closures.

The first lockdown, imposed nationwide in mid-March 2020, coincided in some facilities with the spring reopening date. The ability of museums to reopen was regulated differently from Federal State to Federal State and also varied from museum to museum. Also, the protective and sanitary measures that had to be implemented by museums after the lifting of the lockdowns, could not be implemented in all museums. On average, in 2020 museums in Germany were closed for 5.6 months (see table 01).

Museum visits in 2020 belonged to the **less expensive cultural activities** for the German consumer; however there are differences between the former states of West-Germany and East-Germany. In the western part of the Republic, 39% of the museums asked no entrance fee, in the eastern part only 19.3% of the answering museums were free of charge. Table 18 summarizes our findings on conditions of museum visits.

In order to achieve compatibility with other statistical data, our findings on museums are also allotted to **categories of administrative jurisdiction** that are used by the Association of German Cities („Deutscher Städtetag") in order to achieve a clearer picture of private and public patronage of museums. Table 15 shows the distribution of museums according to this classification. About 51% of the institutions contacted were under public administration, 44.2% were privately operated, and 4.8% had a mixed public and private governing board.

4,643 special exhibitions in museums 2020 were reported by 1,856 institutions. As compared to 2019, this is a decrease of 43.8% in exhibiton activity. These numbers do not include exhibitions in sales galleries („Verkaufsgalerien"), exhibitions not intended for the public and/or exhibitions in exhibition halls.

Exhibition halls do not have their own collections, but they organize large museum-type exhibitions. The Institute for Museum Research therefore raises attendance figures of exhibition halls separately from the museum statistics. For 2019, the Institute has asked 505 exhibition halls for their data on visits and received 376 filled out questionnaires. These institutions have organized a total of 1.193 exhibitions in which 2.172.976 visits were counted.

3,617 museums (72.7%) commented on Citizen Science projects at their institutions. Table 46 illustrates that at the time of the survey, only 4.4% of the participating museums were currently conducting a Citizen Science project. However, 13.3% indicated that they had already conducted such projects and 4.5% had them in planning. Overall, then, a good fifth (22.2%) of the museums participating in the survey were familiar with Citizen Science projects.

The special questionnaire of the overall statistical survey for 2020 dealt with the consequences of the pandemic. 41.9% of responding museums reported to have increased their digital activities since the pandemic began in spring 2020. Intensification of social media activities was particularly popular (68%), reported by two-thirds of museums. In comparison only just under a third (29.4%) of the museums increased their activities in traditional digital communication via newsletters and blogs. Also popular was the development of entirely new digital content and media, which was undertaken by more than half of digitally active museums (53.4%), while existing digital content, such as exhibition stations, was put online by 33.2% of museums in the 2020 pandemic year (Fig. 22b). A basic prerequisite for museums' digital activities is their online presence. At the end of the first pandemic year, 90.2% of museums had this presence, a trend that had already been apparent in previous years (Fig. 21).
A repetition of the question already asked in the special questionnaire on collections in 2019 about the accessibility of online collection holdings showed that considerable progress has been made in the important aspect of (digital) collection work. The percentage of museums that made their online collections accessible not only to internal but also to external users increased from 19.8% in 2019 to 31.3% by the end of 2020. Figure 27 shows that progress was also made with respect to the quality and depth of accessibility.
By the end of the 2020 pandemic year, the percentage of online collections making only up to 10% of the analogue collections accessible to external users had decreased by ten percentage points. At the same time, the percentage of online collections that provide external digital access to 75% or more of their analogue holdings increased from 8.4% to 9.3%.
71% of museums expected the COVID pandemic to have a long-term impact on their own work at the end of the first pandemic year 2020. 40% absolutely see it that way, while 31% would only partially agree with that statement. One fifth of the museums (19.7%) could not see any long-term impact of the pandemic on their own work at that time (Fig. 30).