

S U M M A R Y

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 (FRG).

The Government – both Federal and at the level of the 16 „Länder“ (Federal State Countries) –, as well as regional and local political bodies and cultural organizations in Germany are regarding these statistics as their most comprehensive instrument in this field.

This publication documents the 2016 statistical survey for all German museums.

The total number of museums taken into account for the 2016 survey was 6.712. The figure of 6.712 museums remains after the data of some museums have been combined (from the point of view of feasibility of counting visits) into one figure, and after leaving out some 100 from the survey which were known to be closed during all of 2016.

While the Institute for Museum Research uses an operational definition of „museum“ to enable precise counts, it is not decreeing in any way which institutions are museums and which are not. Such decision, where required, pertains to the regional organizations of museums in the Länder of Germany; as a consequence of the political structure of Germany which is federal. Which museums are taken into account for the annual statistics and registered in our data base, however, will normally reflect those decisions taken locally.

The quota of returned questionnaires for 2016 is 75,8 %.

Museum attendance in 2016:

The total number of visits counted in museums in Germany was

111.877.085.

Of the 6.712 museums which were asked for their attendance data, 4.699 were able to report them (70,0 %). The number of visits given above also includes attendance in special exhibitions held in museums or organized by them. Since different methods of counting are used in different museums, this figure includes also some estimated data.

8.546 special exhibitions were reported by 2.786 museums in 2016. No complete survey of all visits to special exhibitions is possible since only a few museums are able to count them separately from the visits to their permanent exhibitions. Therefore, in order to avoid misinterpretations, no attendance figures are being given for special exhibitions. As already mentioned, the figure of 8.546 exhibitions does **not** include neither exhibition halls (see below) nor 'Verkaufsgalerien' (sales galleries), and/or exhibitions not intended for a general public.

As compared to the preceding year, less museums were able to report temporary exhibitions for 2016.

As compared to 2015, the total figure of museum attendance for 2016 shows that visits in German museums in that year have decreased by about 2,6 mio.

Table 5 on page 23 shows that 74,7 % of all museums listed reported up to 15.000 visits in 2016.

Out of 8.546 special exhibitions of 2.786 museums, a number of 8.195 were held in the respective museum itself.

Altogether, 1.088 museums have replied to our question about **marked increases or decreases of attendance figures** in their relative institutions.

For 1.251 museums (564 with reasons named), the attendance figures had significantly increased in 2016 as compared to the preceding year. Main reasons stated were important special exhibitions, increased public relations work or educational activities in museums and special events.

524 museums named reasons for a significant decrease of the attendance figures in 2016 as compared to the preceding year. The reasons included less number of groups, less attractive (less important) temporary exhibitions and less attendance of tourists.

A listing of causes for significant increases or decreases in attendance in the museums for 2016 as to 2015 can be found in table 2 on page 20.

Apart from this, **museum-related exhibitions** are often being shown or organized by institutions which do not have own collections. Therefore, the Institute for Museum Research (IfM) within its statistics for 2016 has asked 470 further institutions (exhibition halls) which are organizing museum-type special exhibitions for their attendance figures. These institutions have organized 1.822 temporary exhibitions in which

6.252.751 visits

were counted.

Also in 2016, visiting a museum belonged to the less expensive cultural activities for the German consumer; there are differences between the former states of West-Germany and East-German states. In former West Germany, in 40,2 % (1.370) of museums which have answered this question no entrance fee was asked at all, in the „Länder“ of former East Germany 17,9 % (187) were free of charge (see table 19 on page 44 which summarizes our findings on conditions of museum visit).

Already in 1987 the Institute for Museum Research had modified its own classification system for museums and is now very near to the categories employed by UNESCO (cf. UNESCO/STC/Q/853).

Altogether we have now the following **classification**:

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. Specialized museums
9. Museum complexes with different kinds of museums

Due to the particular museum structure in the FRG, ethnography and anthropology museums (UNESCO 2.e) and regional museums (UNESCO 2.g) have to remain in class no. 1. Contrary to UNESCO and ICOM usage, zoological and botanical gardens as well as monuments and sites without inventory are **not** included in our survey.

Furthermore, the classification does not cover: purely commercial exhibits of private and state industry, industry fairs, and churches.

Table 6 on page 27 shows the variations in attendance as correlated with the different types of museums: Item no. (1), museums for local history and local ethnography (2.915 museums), have counted about 14,8 million visits in 2016, (2) art museums (all in all 711) have counted about 18,2 million visits.

Table 4 on page 22 and table 7 on page 30 show the variation in attendance figures according to these different types of museums.

Table 12 on page 36 shows the distribution of museum types and their visitor attendance in the individual Federal Countries (Bundesländer).

In order to achieve a better compatibility with other statistical data and inquiries, especially with those of Deutscher Städtetag, we allot since 1992 the museums also to a further

classification, one of administrative jurisdiction; by this method, a clearer picture of private or public maintenance of museums is achieved. Table 14 shows the distribution of museums onto this classification. It shows that about 52 % of museums (3.457) are under public administration, 44,6 % of museums are privately operated, and 3,9 % have a mixed (public and private) governing board.

Along with our regular annual questions regarding attendance figures and conditions of visits in museums, we ask varied questions every year.

For 2016, we asked again for information on „stocks of permanent Collections and their digitalization“ (data on that topic were collected already for the year 2006 and 2011). Of 5.088 museums returning the questionnaires, about 74,5 % answered these questions. 2.762 museums reported to have permanent collections with a stock of about 333 millions objects (see table 31 on page 55.). 1.128 museums have digital data for 61,5 Mio. collected items in their databanks. see chart 16 on page 61. Inventarisation with a computer reported 1.989 museums.(see table 36 on page 60.).