

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).

Government - both Federal and at the level of the 16 „Länder“ (Federal States Countries) -, 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 2006 survey statistical data for all German museums. The total number of museums taken into account for the 2006 survey was 6.175 (4.736 museums in former West Germany and 1.439 museums in former East Germany). The figure of 6.175 museums remains after the data of some museums have been combined (from the point of view of counting feasibility of visits) into one figure, and after leaving out some 100 from the survey which were known to be closed during all of 2006.

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. The museums taken into account for the annual statistics and registered in our data base, however, will normally reflect those decisions taken locally.

The quota of questionnaires for 2006 which were returned to us is 82,6 %.

Museum attendance in 2006:

The total number of visits counted in museums in Germany was

102.645.078.

Of the 6.175 museums which were asked for their attendance data, 4.747 were able to report them (76,9 %). 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.

9.198 special exhibitions were reported by 2.652 museums in 2006. No complete survey of all visits to special exhibitions is possible since only a few museums are able to count them as distinct 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 9.198 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 special exhibitions for 2006.

As compared to 2005, the total figure of museum attendance for 2006 shows that visits in German museums have increased by about 1,2 mio.

Table 5 on page 16 shows that 74,7 % of all museums listed reported up to 15.000 visits in 2006.

Out of 9.198 special exhibitions of 2.652 museums, a number of 8.708 were held in the respective museum itself.

Altogether, 1.102 museums have replied to our question about **marked increases or**

decreases of attendance figures in their relative institutions.

For 1.289 museums (564 with reasons named), the attendance figures had significantly increased in 2006 as compared to the preceding year. Main reasons stated were increased public relations work or educational activities in museums and important special exhibitions.

538 museums named reasons for a significant decrease of the attendance figures in 2006 as compared to the preceding year. The reasons included less attractive (less important) special exhibitions and organizational issues.

A listing of causes for significant increases or decreases in attendance in the museums for 2006 as to 2005 can be found in table 2 on page 12.

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 within its statistics for 2006 has asked 496 further institutions (exhibition halls) organizing museum-type special exhibitions for their attendance figures. These institutions have organized 1.956 temporary exhibitions in which

7.056.912 visits

were counted.

Also in 2006, visiting a museum belonged to the less expensive cultural activities for the German consumer; in West Germany, in 41,2 % (1.439) of museums which have answered this question no entrance fee was asked at all, in East Germany 19,8 % (215) were free of charge (see table 15 on page 35 which summarizes our findings on conditions of museum visit).

The Institute for Museum Research already in 1987 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, churches.

Table 6 on page 20 shows the variations in attendance as correlated with the different types of museums: Item no. (1), museums for local history and local ethnography

(2.783 museums), have counted about 15,6 million visits in 2006, (2) art museums (all in all 628) have counted about 19,9 million visits.

Table 4 on page 15 and table 7 on page 23 show the variation in attendance figures according to these different types of museums.

Table 8 on page 26 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 allotted 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 10 shows the distribution of museums onto this classification. It shows that approximately 56 % of museums (3.430) are under public administration, 41,1 % of museums are privately operated, and about 3 % 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 2006, we asked for information about stocks of permanent collections and their digitalisation. Of 5.103 museums returning the questionnaires, about 70 % answered these questions. 1.135 museums reported to have stored text to their exhibits in their in-house databases, 349 museums have saved digital copies of their collection items (see table 32).

2.658 museums have about 180 million objects in their permanent collections.