

SUMMARY

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 2018 statistical survey for all German museums.

The total number of museums taken into account for the 2018 survey was 6.741. The figure of 6.741 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 2018.

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 follow those decisions taken locally.

The quota of returned questionnaires for 2018 is 79,1 %.

Museum attendance in 2018:

The total aggregated number of visits counted in museums in Germany was

111.662.229.

Of the 6.741 museums which were asked for their attendance data, 4.865 were able to report them (72,2 %). 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.

8.750 special exhibitions were reported by 2.861 museums in 2018. No complete survey of all visits to special exhibitions is possible since not all 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 8.750 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 2018.

As compared to 2017, the total aggregated figure of museum visits for 2018 shows that visits in German museums in that year have decreased by about 2,7 mio.

Table 5 on page 24 shows that 75,1 % of all museums listed reported up to 15.000 visits in 2018.

Out of 8.750 special exhibitions of 2.861 museums, a number of 8.312 were held in the respective museum itself.

Altogether, 1.197 museums have replied to our question about **marked increases or decreases of attendance figures** in their relative institutions.

For 1.165 museums (491 with reasons named), the attendance figures had significantly increased in 2018 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.

706 museums named reasons for a significant decrease of the attendance figures in 2018 as compared to the preceding year. The reasons included less number of groups, less attractive (less important) temporary exhibitions and construction works.

For the first time in history of German museums statistics, the weather was the most frequent mentioned reason for the decrease of attendance figures.

A listing of causes for significant increases or decreases in attendance in the museums for 2018 as to 2017 can be found in table 2 on page 21.

Apart from this, **museum-related exhibitions** are often shown or organized by institutions which do not have own collections. Therefore, the Institute for Museum Research (IfM) within its statistics for 2018 has asked 504 further institutions (exhibition halls) which are organizing museum-type special exhibitions for their attendance figures. These institutions have organized 1.955 temporary exhibitions in which

5.660.677 visits

were counted.

Also in 2018, visiting a museum belonged to the less expensive cultural activities for the German consumer; there are, however, differences between the former states of West-Germany and East-German states. In former West Germany, in 41,2 % (1.497) of museums which have answered this question, no entrance fee was asked at all, in the „Länder“ of former East Germany 18,0 % (198) were free of charge (see table 19 on page 45 which summarizes our findings on conditions of the 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 28 shows the variations in attendance as correlated with the different types of museums: Item no. (1), museums for local history and local ethnography (2.958 museums), have counted about 14,7 million visits in 2018, (2) art museums (all in all 718) have counted about 19,2 million visits.

Table 4 on page 23 and table 7 on page 31 show the variation in attendance figures according to these different types of museums.

Table 12 on page 37 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 14 shows the distribution of museums onto this classification. It shows that about 51 % of museums (3.463) are under public administration, 44,8 % of museums are privately operated, and 3,8 % 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 2018, we asked again for information on the web presence of museums. Former statistical surveys on the web presence collected data for the years 2013, 2008 and 2001. About 84 % of the museums, which answered the questionnaire, made statements of their web presence. 2.975 museums reported to have their own homepage. 26,1 % of the museums give information in foreign languages (see tables 44 and 45 on pages 66 and 66).