

S U M M A R Y

The Institute for Museum Studies (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz) reports annually on visitor attendance in all museums in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG).

The German government, regional and local political bodies and cultural organizations in the FRG are regarding these statistics as their most reliable instrument in this field.

This publication documents the 1992 survey of attendance figures of museums. This survey includes the museums in the former German Democratic Republic, which ceased to exist on 2nd October 1990.

The total number of museums taken into account for the 1992 survey was 4.475 (3.601 museums in West-Germany and 874 museums in East-Germany).

The Institute for Museum Studies is not pretending to decree which institutions are museums and which are not. This decision is being taken by the regional organizations of museums in the Federal Countries (Bundesländer) of the FRG; such a procedure is a logical consequence of the political structure of the FRG, which is federal. Therefore the museums taken into account for the yearly statistics and registered in our data base are in general accordance with the decisions taken locally by the Federal Countries themselves.

The quota of questionnaires for 1992 which were returned to us is 89,3%.

Museum attendance in 1992:

The total number of visits in museums in the FRG (western or 'old' Federal Countries plus eastern or 'new' Federal Countries) was

93.020.297.

Of the 4.475 museums which were asked for their attendance data, 3.615 were able to report them. The number of visits given above also includes attendance in special exhibitions held in museums or organized by them.

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 Studies within its statistics for 1992 has asked 347 more institutions organizing special exhibitions of museum type, for their attendance figures. These institutions have organized 1.705 special exhibitions in which

5.255.583 visits

were counted.

Beside these exhibitions in special exhibition institutions, 7.787 special exhibitions were reported by 1.929 museums in 1992. Of course no complete survey of all visits to special exhibitions is possible, since only a few museums are able to count their visits

to special exhibitions as distinct from those to their permanent exhibitions. As we have already mentioned, the figure of 7.787 exhibitions does not include "Verkaufsgalerien" (art shops), and/or exhibitions not intended for a general public. Therefore, in order to avoid misinterpretations, no attendance figures are being given for special exhibitions.

As compared to the precedent year the number of exhibitions shows that more museums were able to report special exhibitions for 1992.

As compared to 1991 the total attendance number for 1992 shows that visits in museums have increased by about 0,6 mio.

Taken for themselves the museums in the 'old' Federal Countries – compared with the figures for 1991 – show a slight decrease of 388.139 (0,5 %) to the amount of 73.622.626 visits.

On the other hand it must be emphasized that the decline in attendance figures in the 'new' Federal Countries seems to have come to an end.

Museums in the 'new' Federal Countries show an increase of 1.008.236 (5,4 %).

Visitor attendance figures in museums of 'new' Federal Countries as compared to the preceding year 1991, have increased by about 5 percent to the figure of 19.785.810 (1991: 18.777.574 visits). Most museum institutions which had been included in the preceding survey have survived through 1992. Very few institutions have had to close down.

Altogether 432 directors (heads) of museums have replied to questions about marked increases and/or decreases of attendancy figures in their relative institutions.

268 museums informed that the attendancy figures had significantly increased in 1992 as compared to the preceding year. Main reasons given were increased public relations work or educational activities in museums and important special exhibitions.

About one third, i.e. 164 museums informed that the attendancy figures had significantly decreased in 1992 as compared to the preceding year. Main reasons given were that certain groups of visitors had ceased to come, f.e. from holiday camps, visitors from eastern European countries, or because new tourist destinations were available which hitherto had been inaccessible.

In the year 1992 the number of museums of West-Germany with a marked rise in attendancy figures was lower than those with a marked decline in these figures. When announcing an increase of visits, the following main reasons were being listed by the museums of the 'old' Federal Countries:

- great international or national exhibitions
- public relations or educational activities in museums
- (re)opening of museums

One principal reason given for a decrease in attendance figures was that certain groups of visitors had ceased to come; this was followed by less attractive (less important) special exhibitions or organizational reasons.

A listing of causes for significant increases or decreases in attendance in the museums of the 'old' countries for 1992 as to 1991 can be found in table 1 on page 13.

The survey on special exhibitions brought the result that of 7.787 special exhibitions of 1.929 museums a number of 6.999 were held in the museum itself.

Also in 1992 visiting a museum has belonged to the less expensive cultural activities for the consumer; in West-Germany in about 49 % (1.420) of museums which have answered this question no entrance fee was asked at all, in East-Germany about 13 % were free of charge (see table 36 on page 57 and table 37 on page 58).

Table 7 on page 23 shows that more than half the number of all museums listed reported less than 15.000 visits in 1992.

The Institute for Museum Studies already in 1987 had modified its own classification system for museums and is now very near to the categories employed by UNESCO (cfr. 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 usance zoological and botanical gardens as well as sites with monuments are not included in our list.

Furthermore the classification does not cover: information exhibits of private and state industry, industry fairs, castles and monuments without any own collections, churches.

Table 10 on page 28 shows the variations in attendance as correlated with the different types of museums for 'old' and 'new' Federal Countries taken together: Item no. (1), museums for local history and local ethnography (2.177 museums), have counted about 18,0 million visits in 1992, (2) art museums (in all 473) have counted 16,3 million visits.

Table 3 on page 15 and table 13 on page 31 show the variance in attendance figures according to these different types of museums.

Table 31 on page 52 shows the distribution of museum types and their visitor attendance in the single Federal Countries (Bundesländer).

Table 32 on page 53 shows forms of administration for museums, as correlated with attendance figures.

In order to achieve a better compatibility with other statistical data and inquiries, especially with those of Deutscher Städtetag, we have allotted the museums to a different classification of administrative possibilities; by this method results a clearer picture of private or public maintenance of museums is achieved. Table 33 shows the distribution of museums on the different newly created classifications. It shows that approximately 60 % of museums (2.697) are in public administration, 33 % of museums are privately operated, and about 7 % have a mixed (public and private) financial support.

Private financing in the 'new' Federal Countries is not yet as common as in the 'old' Federal Countries. Cities and communes (regional bodies) are much more frequently supporting museums there. In this field a comparison with the developments in the following years will be of special interest.

In the 'old' Federal Countries an increasing tendency to privatize existing or newly founded museums can be observed. Only future surveys will allow to say if similar tendencies can be observed also in the 'new' Federal Countries.

Along with our usual questions regarding attendancy figures and conditions of visits in museums in this year's survey for the second time we have asked for information on educational activities in museums (first: in 1987). The number of educational personnel active in the museums is being published in this booklet. More results of our evaluation of this complex will be published in a separate booklet, because of the wealth of material resulting.