

ENGLISH SUMMARY

8.

8. English 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. This publication documents the 2019 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 2019 survey was 6.834. 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 2019. The quota of returned questionnaires for 2019 was 72,8%.

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 substitute 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 included in the survey. Furthermore, the classification does not cover purely commercial 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 Cultural heritage museums
9. Complexes with different kinds of museums

The total number of visits counted in museums in Germany 2019 was 111.633.603.

Of the 6.834 museums who were sent a questionnaire, 4.543 (66,5%) reported their data on **visitor attendance 2019**. As compared to 2018, the total number of visits stayed more or less the same, with a negligible decrease of -0,03%. Table 06 shows that three quarters (74,1%) of all answering museums reported up to 15.000 visits in 2019. 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 cannot be given.

Variations in **attendance as correlated with the different museum types** are shown in Table 05. Archaeology and history museums (395 museums) led the listing with almost 22 million counted visits. In second place came the Art museums (520 museums) with almost 20 million, followed by Science and Technology museums (555) with roundabout 16 million. Local history, local ethnography and regional museums accounted for the highest number of reporting museums (1.889), however they added only 15 million visitors to the total. Table 12 shows the distribution of museum types in the individual Federal States („Bundesländer“).

For 2.785 museums, the **attendance figures** had **significantly increased or decreased** as compared to the preceding year. Those who named reasons for the increase of visits, named large special exhibitions, followed by intensified public relations measures and special events as main causes. Those who named reasons for the decrease of visits, named less group visits than in the previous year, followed by large special exhibitions in the previous year and (re)construction works as main causes (see Table 02).

Museum visits in 2019 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, 40,3% of the museums asked no entrance fee, in the eastern part only 18,2% 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 Städte-tag“) 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 55,8% of the answering institutions contacted were under public administration, 40,4% were privately operated, and 3,8% had a mixed public and private governing board.

8.255 **special exhibitions in museums 2019** were reported by 2.675 institutions. More than 95% (7.862 exhibitions) were held in the respective museum itself. As compared to 2018, 495 exhibitions less were reported. These numbers do not include exhibitions in art selling 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 362 filled out questionnaires. These institutions have organized a total of 1.729 exhibitions in which 5.428.460 visits were counted.

Less than 10% of the German museums saw high relevance in Global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for their own strategic planning.

Our question concerning the relevance of SDGs for their strategic planning was answered by 3.917 museums (80,3% of those who answered the questionnaire). 7,6% attributed high relevance, 17,2% medium and 16,3% little relevance to the SDGs. 15,8% stated that SDGs had no relevance at all for them, and almost one in four museums (23,4%) were unfamiliar with these targets.

The total number of objects reported in museums in Germany 2019 was 406.212.006.

For 2019, we asked for information on collection numbers and content, resources invested in collections and collecting as well as the role of strategic planning for collection management, see Chapter 4.

Of 4.972 museums returning our questionnaire, 48,5% answered our questions related to collections. The minimum stock of permanent collections in Germany for 2019 can thus be estimated to 406 million objects. Figure 20 shows the distribution of object numbers according to museum types. Table 42 gives an overview on the degree of inventorization according to grouped object numbers and museum types. Castles with inventories (79%), Art museums (72,5%) and Archaeology and history museums (64,2%) alongside with museums that kept between 5.0001 and 10.000 objects (63,6%) had the best ratio of inventorized objects.