

## 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 1991 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 1991 survey was 4.316 (3.471 museums in West-Germany and 845 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 1991 which were returned to us is 88,8%.

### Museum attendance in 1991:

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

**92.400.200.**

Of the 4.316 museums which were asked for their attendance data, 3.492 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 1991 has asked 344 more institutions organizing special exhibitions of museum type, for their attendance figures. These institutions have organized 1.670 special exhibitions in which

**3.585.454** visits

were counted.

Beside these exhibitions in special exhibition institutions, 7.282 special exhibitions were reported by 1.868 museums in 1991. 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 7.282 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 1991.

As compared to 1990 the total attendance number for 1991 shows that visits in museums have decreased by about 4,7 mio.

Taken for themselves the museums in the 'old' Federal Countries – compared with the figures for 1990 – show a slight decrease of 159.991 (0,2 %) to the amount of 73.622.626 visits.

Museums in the 'new' Federal Countries show a decrease of 4.529.344 (19,4 %).

Visitor attendance figures in museums of 'new' Federal Countries as compared to the preceding year 1990, have decreased by about one fifth to the figure of 18.777.574 (1990: 23.306.918 visits). This marked decrease can be attributed to the political and economic (social) situation in that region. Most museum institutions which had been included in the preceding survey have survived through 1991. Very few institutions have had to close down.

Alltogether 472 directors (heads) of museums have replied to questions about marked increases and/or decreases of attendancy figures in their relative institutions. Of these three quarters, i.e. 358 museums informed that the attendancy figures had significantly decreased in 1991 as compared to the preceding year. Main reasons given were political and economic changes, and that consequently certain groups of visitors had ceased to come, f.e. from holiday camps, visitors from eastern European countries, and because of unemployment; new tourist destinations were available which hitherto had been unaccessible.

Only few museums in the 'new' Federal Countries have markedly higher attendancy figures than in the preceding year. Amongst them are mostly institutions of more than regional repute, f.e. East-Berlin, Halle/Saale.

In the year 1991 the number of museums of West-Germany with a marked rise in attendancy figures was about the same as 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

The principal reason given for a decrease in attendance figures was given as fewer or less attractive (less important) special exhibitions; this was followed by closure caused by construction works or for organizational reasons.

A listing of causes for significant increases or decreases in attendance in the museums of the 'old' countries for 1991 as to 1990 can be found in table 1 on page 14.

The survey on special exhibitions brought the result that of 7.282 special exhibitions of 1.868 museums a number of 6.410 were held in the museum itself.

Also in 1991 visiting a museum has belonged to the less expensive cultural activities for the consumer; in West-Germany in about 50 % (1.416) of museums which have answered this question no entrance fee was asked at all, in East-Germany about 12 % were free of charge (see table 23 on page 42 and table 24 on page 43).

Table 6 on page 21 shows that more than half the number of all museums listed reported less than 15.000 visits in 1991.

The Institute for Museum Studies 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 the following classification:

1. Local history and 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 9 on page 26 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 (2.111 museums), have counted 17,9 million visits in 1991, (2) art museums (in all 456) have counted 15,8 million visits.

Table 3 on page 16 and table 12 on page 29 show the variance in attendance figures according to these different types of museums.

Table 19 on page 38 shows the distribution of museum types and their visitor attendance in the single Federal Countries (Bundesländer).

Table 20 on page 39 shows forms of administration for museums, as correlated with attendance figures. In our 1991-survey we included some questions concerning the forms of administration of museums, so that we are able now to report forms of administration of museums also for the museums of the 'new' Federal Countries (Table 22 on page 41). In the FRG museums are run by (1) countries, (2) district areas, (3) communes, (4) national or governmental institutions, (5) societies and other public bodies, (6) private institutions, (7) foreign institutions, (8) several different institutions for one given museum and (9) several different institutions for one given complex of museums.