

Germany

Report by

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Introduction - Key Issues

Germany has a federal structure. This results in decentralised responsibilities for culture. Since 1998, there is a State Minister for culture in the Federal government but the main responsibility for cultural matters lies within the 16 Länder. (see: <http://www.kmk.org/aufg-org/home.htm>). Out of these, five are "new" Länder since the German reunification in 1990. 3 out of the 16 Bundesländer are "city"-States covering not more than the area of the city (Berlin, Bremen and Hamburg).

A central provider of museum statistics in Germany (number of museums, number of visits, opening hours, entrance fees, etc.) is the Institut für Museumsforschung (IfM) in Berlin, founded 1979. The Institute is a part of the public administration and is the only museum-related institute in Germany with a mission stretching out nation-wide. It provides the annual museum statistics and works closely together with the institutions in the Länder. It is a part of the State Museums of Berlin (SMB), which in turn belong to the foundation Prussian Cultural Heritage (SPK), which is held jointly by the Federal government and the 16 Länder of Germany. The data of the individual museums are not published by the IfM, only aggregated data are publicly released.

The Institute also produces annual statistical data on exhibition halls (since 1987).

Other than a general museum statistics, the IfM also undertakes specific studies on visitor research and on cultural/economic behaviour - often in cooperation with partners outside the Institute. There is for example a study on the relation between museum entrance fees and the expenditure by the visitors (What effects does a rise in museum entrance fee have? How does the fee interrelate with the readiness to visit and to spend extra money in the museum facilities?) This study was undertaken at eighteen different museums, situated in six different German cities. Another study focussed on exhibition catalogues, where one question was for the acceptable price level which an exhibition catalogue should not exceed from the visitors point of view. Yet other studies, carried out at individual museums, did research into: who is the museum audience, how often do they visit a museum, do they come alone or in groups, etc.

Definition of Museum

The term "museum" is not officially (by law or other legal sources) defined in Germany. Anybody who wishes to do so, may call their institution a museum. The 16 ministries of culture and the museum bodies in the 16 Länder determine what is a museum - in their region - under the aspect of granting funding.

The "Deutscher Museumsbund" - DMB - (the German Museum Association) studies this question from time to time. The latest published definition dates from 1978 ("Museumskunde" 1978, Nr. 2, back cover page). In general practice, it is resorted to the ICOM definition (the current German language translation of the "Code of ethics" was published by ICOM-D, ICOM-A and ICOM-CH in 2003).

For the purposes of the German museum statistics as established by the IfM, to be included in the annual museum survey an institution shall require

- presentation of objects (of a cultural, historic or general scientific nature)
- defined terms of accessibility to the general public, i.e. opening hours
- by majority, no commercial exhibitions - serving no commercial purpose
- clearly delineated exhibition space which foremost serves for exhibition purposes

(source: Annual statistical report by the IfM: Materialien aus dem Institut für Museumsforschung).

Obviously, every one of these conditions can still have a wide range of interpretation, for example a museum could be open to the public 10 or more hours a day. On the other hand, there are smaller museums for which it is necessary to make an appointment in advance to be able to visit the museum.

In the context of official statistics on public expenditures as well as on staff, museums are not listed by one identical concept and in one category only but in different categories (places) in the public budget schemes. A distinction, e.g., is sometimes made between "scientific" and "non-scientific" museums. This, then, has less to do with the question whether the museum is actually carrying out scientific research, but is largely due to the different sources in the public budget from which different museums are funded (were they are public museums). See Kulturfinanzbericht 2008. - Statistisches Bundesamt, Wiesbaden 2008.

Existence of Museum-related Laws

Neither on the Federal level of Germany as a whole nor on that of the 16 German "Länder" there does exist a law which explicitly tackles museums in general. Individual laws do exist which serve to set up individual museums, e.g. as foundations. Cultural affairs, on the whole, are mainly subject to political regulation by the 16 Länder. Laws do exist on "monument protection" and archaeology, in individual cases also on cultural policy with relevance to museums (Kulturraumgesetz Sachsen).

The IfM has published a handbook series "Handbuch des Museumsrechts" whose individual volumes describe legal provisions which have not been devised exclusively for museums but have a bearing on the operation of museums as well, e.g. the international protection of museum objects (see "Rudolf Streinz: Internationaler Schutz von Museumsgut" (Handbuch des Museumsrechts, Bd. 4)).

Categories used regarding Type of Collection

The IfM in 1987 has modified its own classification system and now distinguishes, very near to the categories by UNESCO (UNESCO/STC/Q 853), 9 types of museums by nature of collection:

1. Local history, local ethnography and regional museums
2. Art museums (including architectural museums)
3. Castles with inventory
4. Natural history museums
5. Science and technology museums
6. Archaeology and history museums
7. Museums with collections covering several of the points from 1. to 6.
8. Cultural history museums on specialised topics
9. Museum complexes (different museums in one building).

Categories used regarding Type of Ownership

The IfM in 1992 has modified its classification system in accordance with the statistics of the "Deutscher Städtetag" to the following types of ownership. These are the bodies legally responsible for the museum, but not always necessarily the funding bodies:

1. Federal government and governments of the Länder (including all establishments under their jurisdiction, e.g. universities)
2. Local communities
3. Other bodies (under public law), e.g. public foundations
4. Private associations
5. Companies, cooperative societies
6. Private foundations
7. Private persons
8. Mixed public and private ownership.

Existing Data - Basic Figures and Diagrams

In 2007, the database of the IfM contained about 6.500 museums (strictly, buildings, because attendance figures are counted which requires separate counting at every separate building). Of these, 6.197 were included in the annual statistical survey. The response rate was 81,8 %, 76,0 % did indicate visit numbers. Also included in the survey were 482 exhibitions halls, i.e. non-commercial institutions which have no own collections but do devote their space to ever changing special exhibitions. In 2007, they counted 6.155.155 visits.

The statistical museum questionnaire consists of

- questions which are asked every year (e.g., attendance figures, entrance fees, opening hours, special exhibitions)
- changing subjects (e.g., security in museums, museum education, staff, computers in museums).

The following table shows a grouping of the German museums by type of collection. The by far biggest number is found in type "Local history, local ethnography and regional museums", which also receives the biggest number of visits. These are in the majority small local museums, often not run by professional staff. Next in line are the art museums, with nearly the same number of visits, although they are much smaller in number. In all, about 10 % of all German museums are art museums.

Type of collection	Number of museums	Number of museums providing data	Number of visits 2007	Number of temporary exhibitions
Local history, local ethnography and regional museums	2.787	2.117	15.643.433	4.389
Art museums	631	480	21.410.435	1.698
Castles with inventory	262	224	12.755.295	213
Natural history museums	318	225	7.654.894	366
Science and technology museums	754	556	15.318.400	724
Archaeology and history museums	419	330	16.290.671	468
Museums with a variety of collections	27	25	2.382.329	124
Cultural history museums on specialised topics	925	685	11.040.859	986
Museum complexes	74	70	4.807.630	267
Total	6.197	4.712	107.303.946	9.235

Visits to German museums 2007 - grouped according to type of collection

Type of ownership	Number of museums	Number of museums providing data	Number of visits 2007	Number of temporary exhibitions
Federal government, Länder governments	477	431	25.209.081	791
local communities	2.521	2.131	24.141.988	4.852
Other bodies under public law	429	390	25.990.132	763
Private associations	1.707	1.341	12.816.020	1.828
Companies, cooperative societies	268	222	11.135.263	314
Private foundations	119	100	3.027.613	237
Private persons	467	294	2.699.862	180
Mixed public and private	209	161	2.283.987	270
Total	6.197	5.070	107.303.946	9.235

Visits in German museums 2007 – grouped according to type of ownership

If a company or a private person owns or holds a museum, they are free to do with their collection what they like. But if they apply for public support, the body which grants it often has special requirements which the applicant has to accept. What requirements these are depends on the body providing the money. Every "Land" has its own regulations, which define under what conditions a museum can ask for financial support.

The following table shows the distribution of German museums among the 16 German Länder. It is apparent that the two big Southern countries Bavaria (Freistaat Bayern) and Baden-Württemberg are hosting more than one third of the German museums and count roughly one third of the visits to all German museums.

Land	Number of museums 2007	Number of museums providing data	Number of visits 2007	Number of temporary exhibitions
Baden-Württemberg	1.026	784	14.296.753	1.116
Freistaat Bayern Bavaria	1.115	816	18.705.800	1.318
Berlin	147	124	13.981.333	404
Brandenburg	343	239	3.368.025	496
Bremen	31	24	1.480.610	71
Hamburg	54	42	2.205.025	108
Hessen Hesse	434	324	4.776.173	668
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania	211	170	3.172.089	378
Niedersachsen Lower Saxony	634	501	6.816.282	861
Nordrhein-Westfalen North Rhine-Westphalia	686	510	15.558.956	1.215
Rheinland-Pfalz Rhineland-Palatinate	385	287	4.631.060	373
Saarland	59	45	753.683	109
Freistaat Sachsen Saxony	391	320	8.130.784	879
Sachsen-Anhalt Saxony-Anhalt	225	175	2.509.853	412
Schleswig-Holstein	229	174	2.698.098	342
Thüringen Thuringia	217	177	4.219.422	485
Total	6.197	4.712	107.303.946	9.235

There is a wide spectrum of museums ranging from very big institutions down to small, often local, houses. Thus, some museums have hundreds of staff members and a full-time-director, whereas smaller institutions are often totally run on a voluntary basis. This also can be seen from the percentage of types of directorship. In the following table, "full-time" means a person whose occupational role is to run the museum, "part-time" in this context means that the person beside her or his responsibility for the museum, has responsibilities in other places, too, like e.g. being the Head of the culture department of the municipality. "Voluntary" shall mean that the person is not getting paid for performing this task.

Directorship	Number of museums	% of museums in survey
Full-time director	1.978	32,6
Part-time director	366	6,0
Voluntary	1.920	31,7
Question not answered	1.022	16,9
No questionnaire returned	773	12,8
Total	6.059	100

(Data from the 2002 survey)

Beside the IfM statistics, there was one by the "Deutscher Städtetag" (Association of German municipalities), collected approx. every four years (last edition 1993), relating to museums in municipalities over 20.000 inhabitants. This statistics had an emphasis on data concerning expenditure for museums (public and private) and for number and positions of staff. This statistics has been discontinued for the time being, due to lack of funding. I.a. for this reason, the IfM has included in the survey for 2002 questions concerning directorship and staff working in museums.

The Statistisches Bundeamt together with the Statistische Landesämter (the Statistical Bureaus of the 16 Länder of Germany) produces in general bi-annual separate publications on the analysis of funding of culture in Germany (Kulturfinanzbericht 2008). This publication documents the development of public expenditure for museums (except those grouped in the category "scientific museums" and exhibitions.

Year	Public expenditure for museums and exhibitions -
1975	235.800.000 EURO
1985	5688000.000 EURO
1995	1.129.600.000 EURO
1997	1.132.700.000 EURO
1999	1.218.100.000 EURO
2000	1.283.500.000 EURO
2001	1.376.400.000 EURO
2005	1.535.600.000 EURO

(see Kulturfinanzbericht 2008, p 55 f)

In addition to the "Kulturfinanzbericht" a special publication on data on German museum within the German Länder has been published as "Museumsbericht 2004" in 2005.

List of References

Annual reports are available since 1981 (complete list can be found on the website of the Institut für Museumsforschung (www.smb.spk-berlin.de/ifm))

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