

Norway

Report by

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Introduction - Key Issues

ABM-utvikling - Statens senter for arkiv, bibliotek og museum (The Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority) was established in January 1st 2003. The institution is a governmental agency which has taken over most of the responsibilities from Norsk museumsutvikling (The Norwegian Museum Authority, 1994 - 2002) ABM-utvikling works for development of, and co-operation between archives, libraries and museums. ABM-utvikling is a subordinate to the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, and carries out the governmental archive, library and museum policy.

As a result of political decisions, the museum sector will go through major changes during the next few years. Museums are encouraged to merge with neighbouring museums to form stronger regional units in order to increase efficiency by sharing personnel, conservation and storage facilities, establishing joint programmes for maintenance of buildings and equipment, etc. Not least, by going through such a consolidation process, they are promised increased governmental funding.

As of today, there are about 750 museums run by 650 administrative units. ABM-utvikling sends the statistic form to every museum. Many museums do not fill in or send in the form. ABM-utvikling puts considerable efforts into increasing the number of reports. The results of the yearly survey is published in print by ABM-utvikling.

The statistics is processed by Statistics Norway, and forms a part of the Official Statistics of Norway. From 2002 the official Norwegian museum statistics is based on a limited population of museums that is open to the public and has at least one full time employee in 2002. In 2002, 274 museums met these criteria.

Although the data are not expected to be sufficiently sophisticated in every case, the statistics nevertheless furnish meaningful results for such issues as government budgeting and determination of future political objectives and priorities. For the approximately 90 % of the Norwegian museums eligible for public funding, the statistics represent an important source for assessment and argumentation.

The statistic are grouped in seven areas:

general information on the institution, e.g. ownership and legal status

collection

attendance

exhibitions

staff

budget

security, restoration, and archives

Definition of Museum

ICOM's definition of a museum describes the most resourceful museums in Norway. It may also serve as a goal for the less well situated ones.

In Norway, any person can gather a collection and start a "museum". However, to be registered in the list of museums at the Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority, there are certain demands:

- The museum has to be open for visitors, with regular opening hours
- The collection has to be permanent. The objects have to be registered in an open public access catalogue.
- The museum must have by-laws that defines the ownership of the collection, the organisational framework of the museum, and states what will happen to the collections if the museum ceases to exist.
- The museum is obliged to respond to the annual museum statistics form.

A growing number of museums are employing professional staff.

Categories used regarding Type of Collection

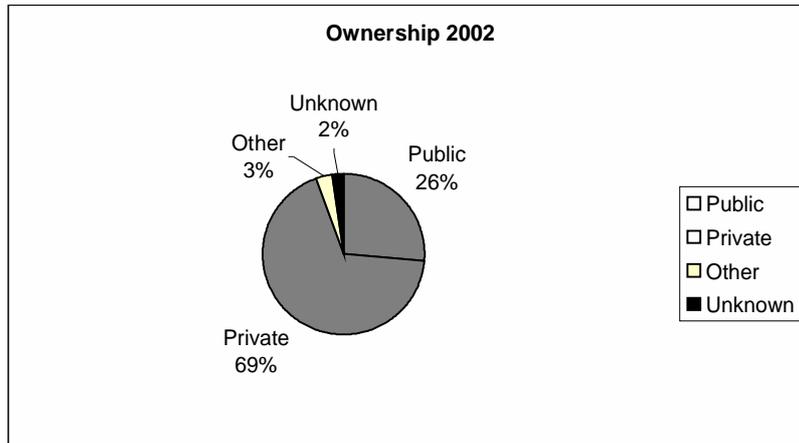
For statistical purposes, the Norwegian museums are grouped into four categories: (1) arts and crafts museums, (2) social history museums, (3) natural history museums, and (4) mixed social history and natural history museums. There are no definite characteristics or demands behind each definition, and the museums identify their own category when they fill out the statistics form. For the year 2002, of a total of 274 museums, 28 reported that they belonged in category (1) above, 214 in category (2), 5 in category (3), and 27 in category (4). The UNESCO museum classification is not being used.

Social history museums include not only a large number of open-air museums and municipal museums, but also industrial museums such as mills, sawmills, mines, fishing industry plants, transport museums and hydroelectric power plants. There are 4 universities in Norway, all with museums with relatively vast collections. The vast majority of the natural history collections are held by the university museums.

The Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority offers an Internet service to all museums and visitors: the Museum Net Norway (<http://museumsnett.kulturnett.no/>). Here the museums are thematically divided into the following categories: Archaeology; Town Museums; Certain Special Museums; Open Air Museums; Estate Museums; Social history; Arts and Crafts; Farming; Railroad Museums; Natural history; Sami collections; Marine and Coast; Theatres; and Technique, Industry and Mining. The Norwegian Archive, Library and Museum Authority supports networking and co-operation between museums within the same category.

Categories used regarding Type of Ownership

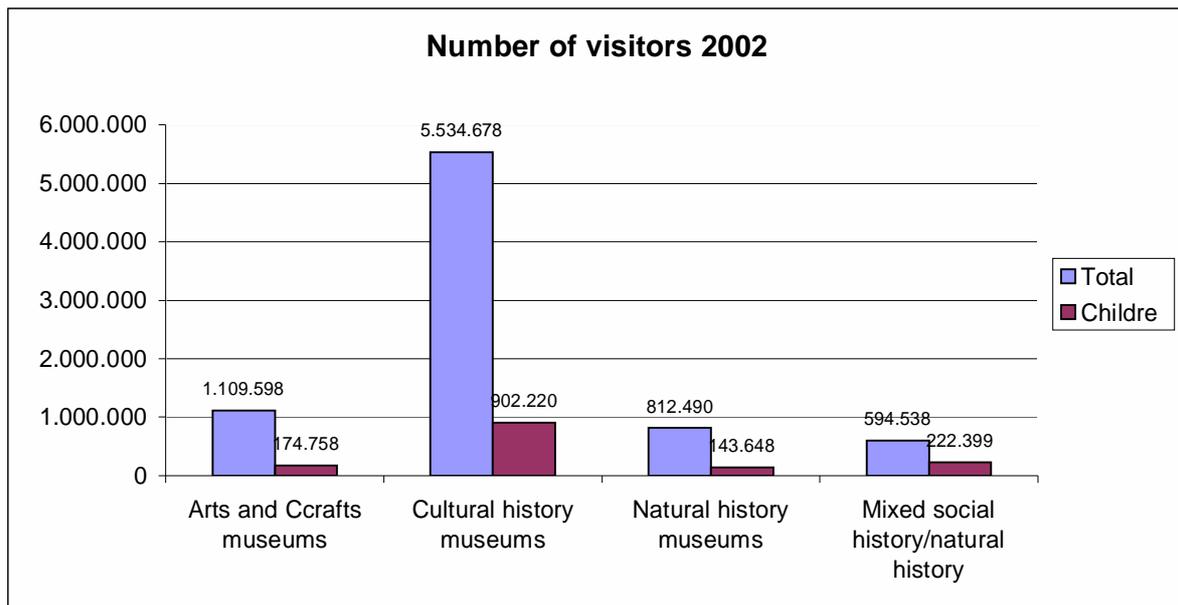
In the annual museum statistics for 2002, 26 % of the museums reported to be owned by the state or



the municipality, while 69 % were private, mostly foundations. Municipal museums are often housed in buildings owned by the municipality, while a local foundation receives some economic support to keep the museum open to the public.

Existing Data - Basic Figures and Diagrams

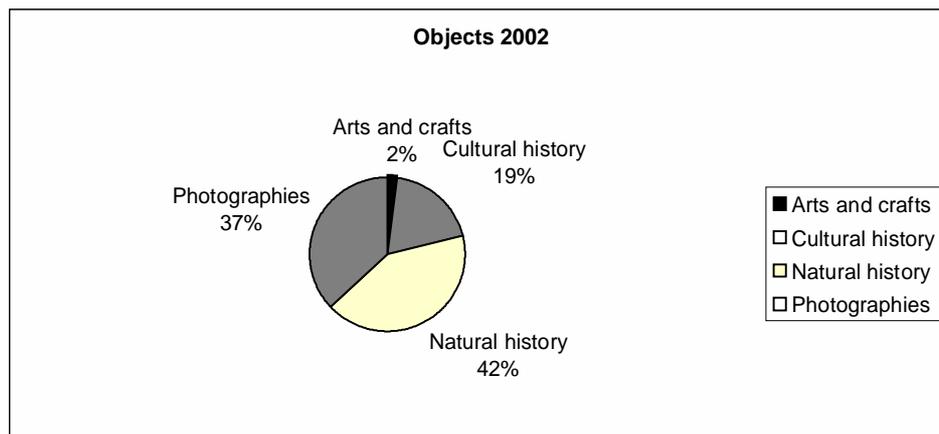
According to the Official Museum Statistics for 2002, there are 274 museums responsible for a total of 3.808 buildings; among these 101 were acquired in 2002. The vast majority of these buildings belongs to social history museums. The museums had a total of 16.913.989 collection items and 9.861.878 photographs. The number of photographs are growing fast, with an acquisition of 636.398 photographs in 2002. 38 % of all items are not properly registered, but there is a growing number of museums using electronic software for registration purposes. 193 of the 274 museums in the survey used electronic registration in 2002.



According to the statistics Norwegian Museums had 8.336.172 visits in 2002. This is equivalent to 183.124 visits per 100.000 inhabitants. Average number of visits per museum is 20.423. The museums with the largest number of visitors are: The University Museums of Cultural Heritage, Oslo (453.506

visitors), The Natural History Museums and Botanical Garden, Oslo (428.184 visitors), Nidaros Cathedral and the Archbishop's Palace, Trondheim (423.000 visitors), The National Gallery, Oslo (388.451 visitors) and The Ski Museum in Holmenkollen, Oslo (354.000 visitors).

46,5 % of the visitors paid entrance fees. Often children have free admission. Public expenditure for museums was 160.681.385 Euro in 2002, that is 3.529.752 Euro per 100.000 inhabitants.



List of References

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