

Romania

Report by

Virgil Stefan NITULESCU

Counsellor with the Committee on Culture, Arts and Mass Media of the House of Deputies

Editor-in-Chief of the Romanian journal for museums, *Revista muzeelor*

Chair of the ICOM Romanian National Committee

Introduction - Key Issues

For the time being, Romania has not an official document standing for a policy for museums. Several attempts have been made for this and they are mentioned in a document (www.eurocult.ro/en/policies/policies.htm) that has been proposed to the Government, under a Phare programme. The most recent official document containing references to the museum policies was published by the end of 2002⁵. Unfortunately, it contains only very general provisions.

Museum statistics is done in Romania since the inter-wars era. However, one may observe two periods of stronger interest for this field: in the early '70s and in the late '90s. The first period is linked with a time of museum mushrooming and with a new law on the protection of the cultural heritage (1974). The second period is connected with the first draft of a museum law (1998), with the new law on the protection of the moveable heritage (2000) and with the research carried by the Institute for Cultural Memory. Unfortunately, there is little communication between the national cultural bodies and the national statistics institutions.

Definition of Museum

At the 8th of July, 2003, the Law on museums and public collections was promulgated (Law no. 311/2003).

Here are the definitions established by the law (art. 2):

With respect to this law, the following terms are defined:

- a) *museum* – the public cultural institution, in the service of the society, that collects, conserves, researches, restores, communicates and exhibits, for purpose of knowledge, education and enjoyment, material and spiritual testimonies of the human communities existence and evolution and of the environment;
- b) *collection* – assembly of cultural and natural goods, systematically and coherently constituted, by physical or private or public legal persons.

The definitions in Romanian are:

- a) *muzeu* – institutia publica de cultura, aflata în serviciul societatii, care colectioneaza, conserva, cerceteaza, restaureaza, comunica si expune, în scopul cunoasterii, educarii si recrearii, marturii materiale si spirituale ale existentei si evolutiei comunitatilor umane, precum si ale mediului înconjurator.
- b) *colectie* – ansamblul de bunuri culturale si naturale, constituit în mod sistematic si coerent, de catre persoane fizice sau persoane juridice de drept public sau de drept privat.

Article 3 of the Law defines two types of collections, as it follows:

With respect to this law, *the public collections* are the collections that are accessible to the public and to the specialist, irrespective of the holder of the owners' rights, which are gathering goods that are significant for their artistic, documentary, historical, scientific, cultural and memorial value.

The private collections accessible to the public are the collections which are in the private ownership of physical or private legal persons, where the public and the specialists have access only with the permission of the holder.

These are the definitions in Romanian:

⁵. *Cultura si cultele 2003*, Ministerul Culturii si Cultelor, Bucuresti, 2003.

În sensul prezentei legi, *colectiile publice* sunt colectiile accesibile publicului si specialistilor, indiferent de titularul dreptului de proprietate, care reunesc bunuri semnificative prin valoarea lor artistica, documentara, istorica, stiintifica, culturala si memorialistica.

Colectiile private accesibile publicului sunt colectiile aflate în proprietatea privata a persoanelor fizice sau juridice de drept privat, la care publicul si specialistii au acces, numai cu acordul detinatorilor.

Article 8 defines the museum patrimony as the “totality of goods, rights and duties with patrimony value that are belonging to a museum or, as the case may be, to a public collection.

Here is the definition in Romanian:

Patrimoniul muzeal reprezinta totalitatea bunurilor, a drepturilor si obligatiilor cu valoare patrimoniala ce apartin unui muzeu sau, dupa caz, unei colectii publice.

Existence of Museum- related Laws

Apart from the Law on museums and public collections (Law no.311/2003), Romania has a law on the protection of the moveable national cultural heritage (Law no. 182/2000, that was amended, already, four times), which is important for the museums, as they are the most important specialised institutions managing objects that are to be classified in the national cultural heritage.

Also, Romania has a Law on public zoo gardens and aquariums (Law no. 191/2002). The law establishes a system of accreditation and a central registry for public zoos and aquariums, administrated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Rural Development The law pays interest to the wildlife conservation. Though it makes no explicit connections between zoo gardens and aquariums, on one side, and museums on the other, it is obvious that the natural sciences museums that have zoo gardens (vivariums, terrariums etc.) and/or aquariums must obey, also, to the provisions of this law.

Categories used regarding Type of Collection

The Law on museums and public collections has a chapter entitled “Classifying, establishing and accrediting museums and public collections”. Considering the coverage territorial area, the size and the importance of the patrimony, the museums and the public collections are classified as it follows:

1. museums and collections of national importance;
2. museums and collections of regional importance;
3. museums and collections of county importance;
4. museums and collections of local importance.

The National Institute of Statistics makes an “official” classification of museums.

The Institute has two types of classifications, in terms of the type of collection. One is made available, publicly, in the *Romanian Statistical Yearbook* and the other is published only for the state authorities (*The network and activity of the cultural – artistic units*). The first one encompasses the following categories:

- natural sciences
- technics and science history
- history
- ethnography
- culture history⁶
- art
- mixed.

The second classification has the following categories:

- art
- archaeology and history
- natural science and history
- science and technical
- ethnography and anthropology

⁶.*Cultura si cultele 2003*, Ministerul Culturii si Cultelor, Bucuresti, 200⁶. *Cultura si cultele 2003*, Ministerul Culturii si Cultelor, Bucuresti, 200⁶. *Cultura si cultele 2003*, Ministerul Culturii si Cultelor, Bucuresti, 200

- specialised
- regional
- general
- mixed
- botanical and zoological gardens, aquariums
- natural reserves

Both classifications are poor enough in order to create confusion. For instance, in the first one, any museum that would not meet the criteria for the first 6 types would be placed in the 7th. The second classification is even worse, because it is mixing the criteria. The first five types are connected with the field of collecting, but are not exhausting the domains; the 6th is telling nothing about the content of the collection (the first five types are, in fact, also “specialised” museums); the 7th could be also met in each of the first five types or it could be met in the 8th or 9th type a.s.o. For instance, a botanical garden devoted to the flora of a certain region could be placed in the 6th or the 7th or the 10th category. Which criterion would prevail?

The Institute for Cultural Memory uses, in its annual questionnaires, another typology, marking the “principal profile” of the museum:

1. Archaeology for the Dacians and Romans period
2. Mediaeval archaeology
3. Prehistoric archaeology
4. Applied arts
5. Mediaeval arts
6. Romanian fine arts
7. Universal fine arts
8. Religious arts
9. Old books
10. Ethnography
11. Ethnography – folk architecture
12. Ethnography – folk architecture, Memorials – Personalities
13. Local ethnography
14. Foreign ethnography
15. History of the pharmacy
16. History of the theatre
17. History
18. Military history
19. History, Memorials – historical personalities
20. Memorials - history of the science
21. Memorials – arts history
22. Memorials – literary history
23. Memorials – music history
24. Memorials – historical personalities
25. Site museums
26. Numismatics
27. Science and technique – transportation history
28. Science and technique Memorials – history of the science
29. Natural sciences – aquariums
30. Natural sciences – botany
31. Natural sciences – geology
32. Natural sciences – mineralogy
33. Natural sciences – observatory
34. Natural sciences – caves
35. Natural sciences –zoology

Though it is a much better classification, there would still be room for improvement.

Regarding the way of financing the museums that are public institutions, they are funded from the state budget (if subordinated to a ministry or other governmental agency), from the county council’s budget (if they are subordinated to such a council) or from the local council (if they are subordinated

to a mayorship). All of these museums are using, also, their own revenues, in order to increase the level of financing. Some other museums, that are not legal persons, are funded, entirely, by the institutions that are organising them. The private museums are entirely funded from private sources.

Categories used regarding Type of Ownership

The Law considers that the museums and the public collections may be (regarding the form of ownership, the way of constituting and the way of managing the museum patrimony) in public or in private ownership.

The National Institute of Statistics considers two categories, regarding ownership:

- majority state owned (with the following “sub-species”: majority state owned, completely state owned, public of national and local interest)
- majority private owned (with the following “sub-species”: majority private owned, integral private owned, communitarian, co-operative and foreign)

However, one may note that the Romanian laws are recognising only two types of property: *public* and *private*.

Existing Data – Basic Figures and Diagrams

The Law on museums and public collections has three annexes, mentioning the names of the museums (public institutions), divided into the three, already mentioned categories. The lists are containing the names of 28 museums and collections of national importance, 14 museums and collections of regional importance, and 41 museums and collections of county importance; the rest of the existing museums are considered museums and collections of local importance. However, it is obvious that the lists would be, sooner or later, revised, as at least one museum of county importance (if not of a greater one) is not to be found on any of the three lists. Already, in March 2004, the number of museums and collections of national importance increased to 29.

The last edition of the *Romanian Statistical Yearbook* has the following data concerning the museums:

	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Units – total (end of year)	453	458	487	512	506	515	519	524	548
Visitors (thousands)	7997	8422	8817	9149	10926	8818	9594	10550	11114
	Of total, units:								
Natural sciences	36	36	36	41	36	36	36	37	40
Technics and science history	10	10	9	13	11	11	10	15	15
History	64	64	62	76	82	92	96	93	90
Ethnography	59	58	62	66	64	58	63	61	68
Culture history	39	39	62	69	92	108	121	113	130
Art	84	85	93	102	115	119	113	118	121
Mixed	163	166	163	145	106	91	80	87	84

The most complete and recent official statistics is offered by the National Institute for Statistics, but it is not a public document, being distributed, only in Romanian, to some public authorities, under the title "The network and activity of the cultural – artistic units" and it counts the situation at the 31st of December 2002. The Institute mentions, for the first time, in its records, the activity of “museums and related institutions”, without defining the “related institutions”. The Institute considers the existence of 244 “basic units”, encompassing 548 units (which means, 244 institutions with 548 museums), using an exhibition surface of 21,894,000 m². The total number of pieces in these museums was 16,840,000. The museums were visited by 11,114,000 visitors (5.3% [= 564,000] more than in 2001). Of the total number of 548 museums, 491 (88.3%) are in public ownership and they are administrating 16,840,000

pieces (99.6%); 57 are in private property and they are administrating 62,000 pieces. 3,760 persons were considered to be “specialised personnel”, working in museums. 813 (temporary) exhibitions were organised, during the whole year, and they were visited by 1,729,000 visitors. 7,376,000 persons have visited the public owned museums and 3,738,000 visitors the private ones. In 2002, the museums have published, 268 publications, with a total circulation of 266,000 copies.

Here are the figures of these statistics:

Type of museum	Units		Museum objects - thousands -		Visitors - thousands -	
	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
TOTAL	524	548	15969	16840	10550	11114
Arts museums	118	121	370	389	4043	4261
Archaeology and history museums	93	90	3988	4082	881	942
Natural science and history museums	37	40	3579	3981	558	753
Science and technical museums	15	15	64	67	100	71
Ethnography and anthropology museums	61	68	661	667	677	669
Specialised museums	68	71	2197	2324	608	687
Regional museums	6	5	340	420	92	130
General museums	5	5	340	305	227	190
Other museums (mixed)	87	84	3954	4498	1060	1067
Botanical and zoological gardens, aquariums	27	31	486	102	2187	2143
Natural reserves	7	15	*)	5	117	199

*) are included in the total

Type of ownership	Units		Museum objects - thousands -		Visitors - thousands -	
	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
TOTAL	524	548	15969	16840	10550	11114
Majority state owned*)	472	491	15906	16778	7705	7376
Majority private owned*)	52	57	63	62	2845	3738

*) see my comments at the chapter “Categories used regarding type of ownership”

The Institute for Cultural Memory, in the first edition of the *Guide of the museums and collections from Romania*, is offering the following statistics, counting the existing museums, for the year 2000:

1.	Archaeology for the Dacians and Romans period	51
2.	Mediaeval archaeology	24
3.	Prehistoric archaeology	61
4.	Applied arts	24
5.	Mediaeval arts	10
6.	Romanian fine arts	56
7.	Universal fine arts	11
8.	Religious arts	67
9.	Old books	13
10.	Ethnography	77
11.	Ethnography – folk architecture	17
12.	Ethnography – folk architecture, Memorials – Personalities	1

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13.	Local ethnography	130
14.	Foreign ethnography	1
15.	History of the pharmacy	5
16.	History of the theatre	7
17.	History	95
18.	Military history	11
19.	History, Memorials – historical personalities	1
20.	Memorials - history of the science	9
21.	Memorials – arts history	19
22.	Memorials – literary history	67
23.	Memorials – music history	11
24.	Memorials – historical personalities	34
25.	Site museums	12
26.	Numismatics	14
27.	Science and technique – transportation history	3
28.	Science and technique Memorials – history of the science	1
29.	Natural sciences – aquariums	8
30.	Natural sciences – botany	24
31.	Natural sciences – geology	6
32.	Natural sciences – mineralogy	6
33.	Natural sciences – observatory	5
34.	Natural sciences – caves	9
35.	Natural sciences –zoology	37

It is easy to observe that the number of museums counted by the Institute for Cultural Memory is not the same as that one counted by the National Institute of Statistics. The reason lies in the different understanding of the word *museum*.

An online edition of the guide (<http://www.cimec.ro/scripts/muzee/muzen.asp?>) is updated yearly (last time, at the 1st of December, 2003). The online version has a much limited number of museum profiles: archaeology, arts, ethnography, history, memorial houses, numismatics, natural sciences, science and techniques, and village museums. The online list contains descriptions of 711, which are identified as follows (considering their main profile): 56 of archaeology, 1 of numismatics, 138 of arts, 81 of ethnography, 110 of history, 110 village museums, 128 memorial museums, 65 of natural sciences and 22 of science and technology.