

## Slovenia

Report by

Jerneja Batic, Ministry of Culture

Ljubljana

### Introduction - Key Issues

On the territory of Slovenia, there are 252 museums, galleries and museum collections, which are open to the public and are linked together in the Museum Association of Slovenia. As the major museum linkage, it regularly re-establishes contacts among museums and runs the individual joint projects of Slovene museums. The Museum Association of Slovenia started the first systematic data gathering which resulted in the appearance of the publication "The Guide to Slovene Museums".

In the year 1999/2000, the Ministry of Culture began with the more systematic gathering of data in the museums it finances in order to prepare the strategic plans and resolutions for the field of cultural policy and the development of museum activity. Therefore, the statistical data quoted below are referring to 47 museums only, and namely to those financed by the Ministry of Culture. They are mutually linked in the museum network, which is implementing the public service-protection of the movable cultural heritage on the entire territory of the state.

### Definition of Museum

In Slovenia is in force the ICOM definition which says:

*"a museum is for public open, non profitable, permanent foundation in service of the society and its development which for purposes of study, education, training and recreation, acquires material evidence of peoples and their environment, is keeping the record of it, collects, documents, stores and conserves, researches, provides information on it, exhibits and popularizes it in the public."*

In accordance with this definition, a museum is therefore an institution whose founding act ensures the following conditions:

- a defined concept of regulation and development of the museum and its collections, its mission and a defined collection policy
- a defined and specified (professional) field of work and (territorial) area of museum activity,
- in accordance with definitions from the first standard (condition): safeguards the collected and stored museum material,
- employment of the professional museum staff for the work of the museum and its collections, which, in accordance with the basic museological criteria, carries out protection, storage, conservation, research and presentation of museum material,
- appropriate premises for the protection, storage and conservation of material as well as other necessary premises for the work of the museum and its staff and for exhibiting material,
- appropriate equipment for museum premises intended for the protection, storage and conservation of museum material (lighting, air condition, alarm system)
- accessibility of museum material and collections for the visit and for research work, specified opening hours, guard service and/or guide service,
- guaranteed permanent funding for the operation of the museum.

### Existence of Museum-related Laws

The first Slovene museums act was passed in 1945 and later underwent several subsequent modifications. The passing of new legislation ("The Cultural Heritage Protection Act") in February 1999 led to the adoption of a number of bylaws in the year 2000.

- Decrees on the re-establishment of a museum network to provide a public service in the field of movable cultural heritage protection and on the definition of national museums,
- Regulation on the definition of types of cultural heritage objects,

- Regulation on professional and technical conditions for the implementation of a public service in the field of cultural heritage protection.

Regulations which are still under preparation include

- Standards and norms for the implementation of museum activities,
- Regulation on the protection of museum material,
- a redefinition of the Regulation on the exportation, importation and trading with movable cultural heritage.

Due to deficiencies of the Cultural Heritage Protection Act from 1999, the Ministry of Culture was forced into the preparation of the new act in which a significant part will be dedicated to the museum activity as well.

### **Categories used regarding Type of Collection**

Museums which are linked in the museum network in order to implement the public service have a defined professional field of work and (territorial) area of museum activity.

Their professional field of work is defined in accordance with the variety of collections they are keeping and storing. In Slovenia, there are museums for the following professional fields of work:

- archaeology,
- numismatics,
- history,
- applied arts,
- fine arts,
- ethnological heritage,
- technical heritage,
- natural history,
- cinema and cinematography,
- theatre and ballet,
- heritage of schools, sport, recent history.

The state museums cover as a rule one of these professional fields quoted, while the regional and town museums combine, regarding their collections, several professional fields. There are appearing more and more specialised museums which are placed in the category of special museums and are representing an individual field of work such as architecture, maritime affairs, and similar.

### **Categories used regarding Type of Ownership**

Regarding the ownership, the museums in Slovenia are classified as follows:

state, regional, inter-municipal, town and private museums.

In the group of 47 museums financed by the Ministry of Culture, there are State, Regional, Inter-municipal and Town museums. The other museums are, before all, in private ownership of enterprises, societies and institutions; some are in local community ownership as well. In the majority of the 252 museums and museum collections recorded in Slovenia, these are keeping the museum collections.

### **Existing Data - Basic Figures and Diagrams**

The museum public service in Slovenia is defined with the decree on the re-establishment of a museum network in order to provide a public service in the field of movable cultural heritage protection and on the definition of national museums, as well as regulations. In Slovenia, there are at present operating:

- 10 national museums and galleries,
- 9 regional museums,
- 6 regional galleries,
- 15 town and inter-municipal museums and galleries,
- 8 special museums.

The above represents a network of museum activities – protection of the movable cultural heritage of Slovenia – which is directly funded by the national budget. The state (provides means and) enables the implementation of this public service.

Regional, town, inter-municipal and special museums provide the following public service:

- care of movable cultural heritage within and outside of the museum, on the territory of the municipalities covered by its activity,
- care of collections located at a distance from the main museum building,
- recording, collecting, documenting, inventorying objects, keeping a register, studying, protecting – conservation, storage,
- preparation of expert proposals for the promulgation of movable heritage outside museum collections,
- preparation of annual reports on the implementation of public service to be sent to the Museum's Council,
- presentation, popularisation programmes.

State museums are those museum which are founded by the Republic of Slovenia in order to protect movable cultural heritage within the territory of the Republic of Slovenia. State museums provide a public service in co-operation with regional, inter-municipal, town and special museums.

In addition to providing a public service, national museums have the following role:

- medium-term and short-term programme of the movable cultural heritage protection,
- preparation of expert guidelines for staff development and physical development,
- professional assistance to museums,
- keeping the movable heritage register,
- co-operation and co-ordination of work with academic institutions at home and abroad,
- co-operation with other public institutions in the area of cultural heritage protection.

For co-operation in carrying out the tasks from the field of movable cultural heritage protection imposed on museums by the Decree on the Founding of a Museum Network, the Museums Council is the professional consultative body at the Ministry of Culture. The Museums Council monitors and supervises the implementation of public service within the framework of the museum network. On the basis of analysis regarding implementation of the movable heritage protection programmes, it offers proposals for performing the public service in this field, proposes changes and additions to the museum network, makes suggestions for resolving specific issues and proposes appropriate measures, proposes changes and additions to laws and other regulations relating to the movable heritage protection and proposes a development strategy for museum activity as well as annual and medium-term orientations.

In the current year (2000) the Museums Council has carried out the following analyses:

- staffing levels,
- analysis of the state of premises and the needs for storages,
- analysis of computerisation level,
- analysis of the public service activity,
- analysis of the mediation of information to the interested sections of the public.

The museums co-financed by the Ministry of Culture (47) employ 525 people. Out of these: 91 are in the administrative service (director, secretary, public relations service and accounting), 279 are in the professional service (university degree) and 155 are in the technical service - professional staff with middle education, i.e. guards, maintenance workers, etc.

Last year, we prepared a new form of reports which will enable us to carry out comparative analysis of efficiency and inefficiency in the work of individual museum. On the basis of data collected, we intend to prepare proposals for higher quality and more successful development of museum activities.

Until now, our museums did not have a defined mission and a real collection policy. This year's call for tenders for the co-financing of programmes in the forthcoming year introduced, for the first time, this requirement as a precondition for submitting a tender at all.

In order to present the museum activities, we should emphasise that the work is mainly focused on recording, documenting and conserving museum objects. Another major task awaits us here, it is the informatisation of museums and the introduction of a movable heritage register. The project started this year, and the Ministry will co-finance the purchase of computers and software. Approximately one third of the museums are already using computers for entering data into a database. We hope to accelerate this activity through methodical co-financing. This year, the Ministry has also invited tenders for setting up the system for the movable cultural heritage register. We expect to see the first tangible results within three years from now. The particular attention of the Ministry of Culture is

focused on the regulation of circumstances in the field of protection, storage and documentation of material, which means that the priority tasks are:

- construction and arrangement of storages,
- heritage register.

Much attention is also being devoted to education in the field of conservation-restoration activities and training of management personnel. The efficiency of museums is increasingly reflected in the management training of directors. We are setting up a system of training centres in individual restoration workshops, where restoration technicians can be trained. Next year, the first generation of specialised restorers - for paintings and sculptures only - will graduate from the Academy of Fine Arts. The Ministry is providing scholarships to allow some of the students to undertake specialist studies abroad. This line will continue to be developed. In the field of management in culture, last year the project had been carried out where 60 museum directors and curators received management training. The project will continue this year and will be developed in areas where the knowledge of museum staff is most lacking – i.e. project work.

In recent years, Slovene museums have widely opened up to the public. So, last year there were exhibitions, events and teaching programmes at museums, co-financed by the state, attended by 1.000.000 visitors.

### **List of References**

The Statistical Bureau of the Republic of Slovenia has, on the basis of the UNESCO questionnaire, been gathering data about museums for a number of years. But, due to the fact that until recently we did not have the appropriate record about museums and museum collections - it has been set up along with the preliminary work for the publication 'Guide to Slovene Museums' – these statistics have not been used as a reference. The Statistical Bureau is for the year 2001 processing the latest returns for which we anticipate to bring us relevant statistical data for all 252 Slovene museums.