

National Museum Reports

2019



# European Museum Academy

## How are the museums doing in Europe?

*The European Museum Academy Reports on The National Museum Temperature by the end of 2019.*

We all think we know something about how museums are doing in our own country and we know that we can find statistical information produced for specific research projects and in continuous statistical series from our governments, The European Union, The Council of Europe and even UNESCO.

But what's going on beneath the numbers?

The European Museum Academy is proud to present the following more subjective inside views about how museums are doing and what the museums experience as their current challenges being it political, financial, organisational or something else.

We thank all our dedicated representatives across Europe who makes it possible for our independent network to present this report.

Enjoy the reading!  
European Museum Academy

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## How were museums in Europe doing in 2019?

– an analytical summary by Emek Yilmaz & Henrik Zipsane

For the second time the European Museum Academy can present an overview about the situation and the trends in the European museum landscape. The overview consists of reports from 26 colleagues across the continent who have simply been asked “what’s going on?” and “how are you doing?”.

Let’s begin with the positive impression we get from a first overview: There are lots of investments in museums all over Europe! In many countries we see investments or plans for investments in new or refurbished and modernised museums in the capitals, in major cities and in rural regions. That’s the case in Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Romania and Turkey.

The massive investments are a clear sign of the importance of museums and even more the importance given to the museums by the investors – being private or public sponsors. The imagined or real power of museums seems to be intact and growing. The position and role of museums as organisations and places with huge out-reach potential is clearly the reason behind the investments. It is also clear that in many countries the potential in out-reach popular education impact is combined with ambitions in tourism. Many of the museum investments in Europe are dedicated to creating attractive environments for children and families.

International cooperation is considered a significant contribution to museum work both for visitors and museum professionals. (Romania, North Macedonia, Serbia) European Museum Night is a Europe wide celebrated activity that stimulates museums to engage with visitors to the fullest as it demands enrichment of activities. In addition, National Museum award schemes are celebrated in Finland, Austria, Bulgaria, Czechia and Slovenia, and participating in these award schemes both nationally and internationally stimulate museums to be up-to-date and their visitors to be more enthusiastic to explore these museums.

In some countries we see positive news about the museums ability to finance their work. In Bulgaria, Finland and Ireland, the governments are raising their financial support for museums and in Denmark a four year long annual reduction of government support has stopped. Besides, to take the pressure off the state, a new regional financial support scheme is planned in countries such as Finland, Norway. Culture plans are important part of the governments' policies and involve development of culture and heritage sector along with museums. One of the important aspects of these plans can be seen in investments in technology in Austria, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Moldova and Slovenia. Conservation techniques, curatorship and storytelling are also among the subjects that are emphasized and need improvement.

On the other hand, we also see worrying signs. Museums in rural and urban areas have inequality in terms of subsidies received. In Norway the government in real terms reduce its financial support for museums as the index rise is lower than the growth in prices and in Sweden museums outside the capital and other major cities are struggling. In Norway and in Sweden there are signs of a struggle between governments and regional councils about responsibilities for museums. In both countries the outspoken ambition is about decentralisation of decision making and administration but there's no consensus so far about the financial responsibilities. In United Kingdom and even Ireland, the leaving of UK from the European Union has already an impact on museums. In UK there is evidence that the uncertain financial climate in the UK has influenced consumer spending and visitor numbers.

The dependence on public funding is visible all over Europe but there are initiatives which shows aspirations for growing diversity in the financial basis. In Italy the government is trying to stimulate bigger interest for private business to be involved in museums. In Finland the success story of the museum card which was inspired by the Dutch role model continues and the visitor numbers are now so high that the museums undoubtedly make a surplus from the museum card. In the Netherlands a

very interesting initiative combines the worries for the growing costs for preservation of the collections with entrepreneurship! A growing number of museums are engaged in the interesting Museum Depot Shop where de-accessed pieces from the collections are put on sale. The success is so far already that big so museums in other countries wants to join. It will be interesting to follow how that develops. On the one hand almost, all museums are in the situation that there are a percentage of the collections which are duplicates or without any provenance which are the background for de-accessing and removing them from the catalogues. But the items are still there on the shelves. On the other hand, museums are trusted by the people and don't want to jeopardize that public trust.

Maybe the public trust is even the reason for the investments mentioned above and maybe that trust is also the reason for growing political interest in museums. In several countries new legislation and regulation has been passed by parliaments or are on its way. That's the case in Bulgaria, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, North Macedonia and Slovenia. New ambitious visions for museums has been presented in Finland, Ireland and Luxembourg.

The wave of legislations, regulations and visions – or even the Italian example with a growing number of “super intendencies” as representatives of the government – for museums demonstrates political engagement. Beside the dissonance between political engagement and financial support for running costs there are however some signals which ought to be considered. In several countries there are now examples on central, regional or local political drive to take a governing role for the museums. The arm's length principle for the relation between politics as representatives for the popular voice and museums as representative for independent arts & culture is under growing pressure.

Emek Yilmaz and Henrik Zipsane  
European Museum Academy

## COUNTRY REPORTS

### AUSTRIA by Nikola Köhler-Kroath

In Austria there are currently about 770 museums. This number includes a wide range of museum types: National Museums, regional (city) museums, private collections and regional cultural initiatives with museum character. In 2019 the Austrian Museum landscape grew: We have collected the most outstanding new museum projects of the year.

#### **Landesgalerie Niederösterreich/State Gallery of Lower Austria**

On 25 and 26 May 2019, the Landesgalerie Niederösterreich opened a new museum in one of Austria's most important cultural landscapes: The striking new building sets a strong signal for the fine arts at the gate to the Wachau World Heritage site.

The new museum reflects Lower Austria as a modern cultural land, which is an important part of the European art in conjunction with Vienna and neighboring countries. The Wachau is historically a region of high cultural value, think of finds such as the Venus of Willendorf.

#### **CoSA – Center of Science Activities/ Graz**

The Graz Children's Museum FRida & freD and the Natural History Museum of Universalmuseum Joanneum have jointly created CoSA – Center of Science Activities, a science centre which stands for easily accessible, interactive and entertaining education for teenagers, on technology and science. The Centre opened its doors to the public on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2019. On a space of almost 1,000 sq. metres, the focus is on participation. Each area of knowledge is conveyed and designed in different ways, ranging from a 'Cabinet of Knowledge' about medical research, to the possibility of assuming the role of 'Mobility Developer'. In 'Energy and Resources', sustainability is treated in a playful manner. A journey into the unknown of 'Space and Deep Ocean' stimulates visions and dreams; the 'Maker Space' is on offer to carry out one's own ideas and "Science Shows" offer spectacular

experiments. Over 250 m<sup>2</sup> floor space, CoSA A(R)dventure is dedicated to the storytelling based use of Augmented Reality. Visitors move between the real and virtual world in order to solve different tasks. The CoSA is assuming a leading role globally when it comes to combining interactive exhibits with AR technology. What's special, too, is that in Graz 18 AR glasses are in use at the same time for the first time world-wide.

### **3D Trick-art Museum/Vienna**

With the motto "be part of the show", Vienna's first 3D TrickArt attraction is a museum of a completely different kind. It is not about visiting the exhibits, but rather the visitor himself becoming part of the exhibition. The interactive museum offers its visitors a stage for around 90 minutes, where each of the exhibits on photo and video comes to life in 3D and reaches out to the selfie and Instagram generation.

### **Haus der Geschichte/ House of Austrian History/Vienna**

Opened in November 2018, the House of Austrian History is the republic's first museum of contemporary history. Presented in a modern and insightful way, the new museum invites visitors to the Hofburg to examine and discuss Austria's history. Starting with the founding of the democratic republic in 1918, the exhibition focuses on social change and political fault lines. While the questions it asks are aimed at the past, they remain relevant to the present as well. Conceived as a discussion forum for Austria as a whole, the museum opens up new perspectives on the country's past and present – with an eye to the future. It also offers a wide range of educational services and an innovative web platform.

### **NEW DIRECTORS**

In 2019 the following institutions welcomed new directors: Landesmuseum Oberösterreich/ State Museum Upper Austria, Technical Museum Vienna, ZOOM

Children's Museums Vienna, Arbeitswelt Steyr, Kunsthalle Vienna, State Museum Tyrol and probably The Art History Museum Vienna (appointment delayed).

## **CLOSINGS**

Unfortunately, some well-known museums closed their doors in 2019. For instance the museum for music instruments and the Snapsmuseum, both located in Vienna.

## **GENERAL NEWS**

### **15 years 'Hunger auf Kunst und Kultur'**

Created in 2003, 'Hunger auf Kunst und Kultur' is an initiative that focuses on the discourse about the significance and accessibility of culture for all people.

People living in precarious financial circumstances have the right to enjoy art and culture too. The so-called "Kulturpass" offers the possibility to do so. By using this card, socially disadvantaged persons can obtain free entrance at numerous cultural institutions.

Every cultural institution participating in "Hunger auf Kunst und Kultur" grants free entrance to "Kulturpass" holders. Each of these institutions funds these tickets through the donations of individuals, organizations or sponsorship efforts. Cultural institutions disposing of restricted seats are usually providing quotas for "Kulturpass" holders. "Kulturpass" holders may have in general to book in advance.

Currently, more than 600 cultural institutions take part in the project, granting access and cultural participation to 52000 beneficiaries in all parts of Austria.

### **Austrian Museum Prize for Museum Arbeitswelt Steyr**

Since 2000, the federal government annually awards the Austrian Museum Prize with the aim of stimulating Austrian museums with different legal entities, designing their content, presentation and communication in an appealing and contemporary manner and honoring outstanding achievements in the field of

museum work. In 2019 Arbeitswelt Steyr was awarded with this prize. The museum is owned by the non-profit organisation Museum Arbeitswelt, consisting of the founding members (owners) – the City of Steyr, the Upper Austrian Chamber of Labour and the Austrian Trade Union Federation – as well as 200 individual members.

The judges stated: “Since its founding in 1987, it has played an important role as a source of inspiration in the Austrian museum landscape. Although it is deeply rooted in the region and its working world, its topics go far beyond that. The topics of democracy, racism, migration and participation are discussed here in an open dialogue.”

### **“Long Night of Museums” celebrate 20-year-anniversary**

For the 20th time the “ORF Long Night of Museums”, launched on the initiative of ORF (Austrian Broadcasting Corporation), took place throughout Austria and in parts of Slovenia, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and Germany. On Saturday, October 5th of 2019, from 6 pm to 1 am, more than 730 museums, galleries and cultural institutions presented their collections and exhibitions and offered a diverse program to 389.075 visitors.

## **BULGARIA** by Nikolay Nenov

In 2019 there are no new museums in Bulgaria, as well as reconstructions in existing museums.

In 2019, the Ministry of Culture continued to work with museums to fund project-based funding, with a focus on museum pedagogy. The Ministry of Education also supported about one hundred schools in the country that will work with museums next year.

In 2019 for the first time in the country there was a tangible introduction of digital technologies in expositions, presence of VR and AR, 3D projections and other forms of interactivity. Museums in the periphery of the country are more active in cooperation, as they have the opportunity to participate in cross-border and transnational projects for the presentation of common heritage with neighboring countries. Museums in the capital are finding more funding opportunities.

In 2019 Plovdiv was the European Capital of Culture, but this household did not create memorable museum exhibitions, did not lead to the opening or reconstruction of a museum.

Some museums are becoming increasingly active in their search for funding. Not only historical science but also museology are among the highlights in museum and scientific conferences.

The Bulgarian Museums Association organizes awards for the best museum in the country, for educational initiatives and public activities. The awards stimulate the work of museums.

It was agreed with the Ministry of Finance that the 2020 budget support of the museums should increase by 8%.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC** by Jana Souckova

The year 2019 in the Czech Republic was the 30th anniversary of the "Velvet Revolution" and was dedicated to memories of the hopes of that time, ideas of the future and evaluation of subsequent developments in memory institutions. In the museums there were exhibitions of various orientations related to this anniversary.

It was also the 50th anniversary of the burning of Jan Palach and his followers. The National Museum, with the support of the Ministry of Culture, built the Palach Memorial in Palach's hometown, right in his home, and opened it to the public.

The evaluation of the 17th Gloria Musaealis – National Museum Competition – in May 2019 mainly reflected the year 2018 and the establishment of Czechoslovakia. A total of 93 projects participated, of which 39 were museum exhibitions, 43 were museum publications and 11 were unique actions. In the category of exhibitions, the Olomouc Museum of Art took first place with the title *Broken Home 1908-1928*, which documented the advent of avant-garde art in the territory of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and the key points of its development. The exhibition was repeated in Krakow, Bratislava and Pecz. The second place went to the West Bohemian Museum in Pilsen through the project *Roots*, which in an engaging way introduced the life hidden in the soil with the help of models. His extraordinary contribution was also the involvement of children and various groups of volunteers as amateur artists. The third place was the exhibition *I Am...* Zdeněk Nejedlý, as a significant contribution to the current discussion of musicologist, historian and politician Zdeněk Nejedlý, a controversial person of his time and present.

In the category of Museum Publications, the volume *Amendar: A View into the World of Roma Personalities* won as it represents personalities who were able to resist prejudice and stereotypical image of the Roma population. The second was the book *New House Brno 1928*, dedicated to a functionalist style of houses in Brno, set in the European context. The third place was taken by the processing of a set of weapons and armor from the non-European countries, part of the militaria collection of the South Moravian Museum in Znojmo, *Heritage of Steel*. In the Museum Achievement category, a unique event – *Presidents' Train* – commemorating the establishment of Czechoslovakia took the first place. The second place went to the new *Portheimka Glass Museum*, which was created by the Museum Kampa - Jan and Meda Mládek Foundation and the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague in a charming Baroque summer house. The third place went to the reconstruction of the *Memorial of Patriots in Paseky nad Jizerou*.

2019 was also the year of many scientific conferences, seminars and discussions organized by relevant expert groups across memory institutions. Negotiations on the restitution of collection items to church continued (see Report 2018). After a long break and complete building reconstruction, the National Museum in Prague was opened, and it was possible to proceed with the preparation of its expositions.

## CYPRUS by Demetra Anagnostopoulou

An island with a unique geographical position, situated at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and Africa, Cyprus has a long history and a rich culture that spans more than 10,000 years. This is evidenced by its many cultural sites, museums, monuments and galleries.

Museums in Cyprus are distinguished into two different categories, state and private. State museums are dedicated mainly to archaeology and very few to folk art. Leaving behind the period when the financial crisis (2017-2018) hit Cyprus, the Department of Antiquities is now undertaking studies and local competitions in order to refurbish the main archaeological museums situated in the four main cities on the island. After many years of anticipation, the international competition for the new Archaeological Museum in the capital came to an end, the final design has been approved by the Government, and tenders for the construction of the new museum are now being sought. The State Gallery of Contemporary Art opened its doors with a well-received temporary exhibition dedicated to one of the most important Cypriot artists, Christoforos Savva. The permanent collection has not yet been moved into the new building, but small temporary exhibitions and events keep the space open to the public.

With regards to private museums, six out of many have so far been accredited and perform under the Private Museums Law of the Republic of Cyprus 2009. In 2019 one of the oldest private museums, the Leventis Municipal Museum of Nicosia,

which received the European Museum of the Year Award in 1991, celebrated its 30th anniversary, and one of the newest, the A. G. Leventis Gallery, celebrated its 5th anniversary. It is evident that an increasing number of private collectors are making an effort to make their collections accessible to the public with the establishment of small private museums all over the island. However, the majority of them are designed with no museological standards in mind. Also, besides private collectors, the Church and monasteries are owners of museums related to the Byzantine history and tradition of Cyprus, and these are considered private.

Important steps have been made by Government and private initiatives to educate and inform all people working in Cypriot museums and cultural institutions. More and more museum professionals are travelling abroad to attend museological conferences and short courses, but, most importantly, conferences are organised in Cyprus with speakers from all over the world, on such subjects as museums and intangible heritage, museums and education, museum management, copyrights and many more.

## DENMARK by Kit Boding-Jensen

More museums are renewing themselves in Denmark and many museums are making exhibition centered around the visitor experience. Quite a few museums have new buildings where the architecture also is a selling point:

Fx.

- MS Søfart 2013
- Moesgaard Museum 2013
- Danmarks Borgcenter 2014
- Ragnarock – (Rock Museum) 2016
- Tirpitz 2017

- Strandingsmuseet 2017

The museums in Denmark can be divided in 3 categories:

- State museums (5) – directly under the Ministry of Culture  
<https://slks.dk/museer/fakta-om-museerne/statslige-museer/>
- State recognized museums (97) – each museum has a core responsibility  
<https://slks.dk/museer/fakta-om-museerne/statsanerkendte-museer/>
- Private museums or municipality funded

As a state museum or a state recognized museum the museum, receive subsidies from the state. Often the state recognized museum also receive subsidies from the municipality and have private funding to generate their own income. Private funding is getting more and more important for Danish museums.

After four years the new government has decided from 2020 to stop the cut of 2% a year on the state subsidy to the museums. This is good news for a lot cultural institutions.

The discussion is still going on on a political level to split the subsidies between the museums in a new way. No solution has been found.

Quite a lot of museums and culture institutions have during the years received funding from Arbejdsmarkedets Feriefond (The National Labour Life Holiday Fund). It has been formulated as a loan, but museums have been told that it was only technicality. The museums should see as a funding. Now 25 years after for some, Arbejdsmarkedets Feriefond claim the money back. A political agreement has been landed in January 2020 and the institutions shall return between 10-20% of the fundings for loans over 1,5 million Danish Crones. Loans under 1,5 million are depreciated.

## ESTONIA by Triin Vaaro

In 2019, there are **190** museums in Estonia with **249** places to visit, which preserve about **7.4 million** museum objects.

**As of 1 May 2019**, in addition to heritage protection, the National Heritage Board is also curating the museum field.

Ministry of Culture:

- legislative drafting
- strategic planning
- operating subsidies and investments
- Museum Council

National Heritage Board:

- MuIS, the museum information system
- joint depository
- national collection policy
- monitoring of museum collections
- compensation for damages related to international exhibitions
- studies, analyses
- consultation, training, instructions
- project grants

### **Rearrangement of museum Network**

Starting from 2012 the network of museums has been rearranged and the legal status of museums has been changed on the basis of the specifics of a museum and local circumstances.

The state has established 13 new museum foundations, local governments now manage 7 former state museums.

Foundations are preferred to state institutions as this form gives the museums more flexibility in management and more opportunities to take regional or professional specifics into account.

## **News**

In December 2019, a family-centered attraction was opened by the Estonian Maritime Museum. After opening of the museum, the Great Coastal Gate and the Fat Margaret artillery tower will be serving the visitors in the full extent. The new family-focussed exhibition, which offers a wealth of experiences, will take the visitor to the exciting world of maritime trade and shipbuilding. The extent of accessibility exceeds anything seen in Estonia so far: the medieval building is turned wheelchair-accessible in the maximum possible extent, almost 90%, and will be equipped with an elevator, an induction loop with sound amplification which is compatible with hearing aids, a guide line for the visually impaired, tactile copies of selected ship models, etc.

In June 2019, Haapsalu's episcopal castle and museum, which have undergone extensive renovation, were reopened to the public. The museum introduces visitors to the history of the castle and the city. A new addition are an observation platform as well as a walkway along the castle walls. The platform offers a view of the castle hill and the city as well as the surrounding bay area.

In March 2019, a new permanent exhibition *Explore Space!* for children and young people was opened in the Estonian Museum of Architecture. It teaches how to experience space and grasp the essence of architecture. The exhibition is compiled by the teachers of the "School of Architecture" at the Museum of Estonian Architecture, who teach children how to think about space and help them look into houses and beyond – at the city and the natural environment. During the process of making the exhibition, school students also had a say by talking about the spaces

they would enjoy being in and what they find fascinating about architecture. *Explore Space!* deals with the various facets of creating architecture, from the idea and the materials to the creation of the actual spatial experience.

## FINLAND by Leena Tokila

2019 was a very successful year for Finnish museums, with the number of museum visitors increasing for the fourth year in a row. Preliminary figures for 2019 show a growth of 500,000 visitors, with a total visitor number of 7.64 million. These high figures can be explained by interesting and well-designed exhibitions, a growing interest in museums and culture in general, and new ways to visit museums, especially using the Museum Card, which is a ticket to over 300 museums in Finland.

The Museum Card is valid for one year from the date of purchase and permits the holder to visit Finnish museums as often as they like – even on a daily basis. There are over 225,000 Museum Cards in active use and 1.4 million visits were made using the Museum Card in 2019. According to research by the Nordic Institute of Business & Society, current Museum Card holders visit museums almost five times more often compared to those who do not have a Museum Card.

*Museum of Opportunities – The Museum Policy Programme 2030* of the Ministry of Education and Culture was published in 2018. The policy programme outlines the main success factors of the museum sector up to the year 2030. The ambitious vision declared in the policy is that by 2030 Finland will have the most up-to-date museums and the most enthusiastic clients in Europe. *Museum of Opportunities – The Museum Policy Programme 2030* is a tool for understanding, or at least a way of perceiving, the changes that have taken place or are taking place in the museum's operating environment (<http://urn.fi/URN:ISBN:978-952-263-559-4>).

In 2016, the Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a working group of museum and cultural heritage experts, which was tasked with reviewing the state subsidy system and evaluating the Museum Act and the need for a comprehensive reform of the law. The working group completed its work by proposing a new state subsidy system and a new structure for the museum sector, as described in the revised Museum Act. The new Museum Act and the new Act on the Financing of Education and Cultural Activities came into effect on 1.1.2020.

All professionally maintained museums applied for a revised state subsidy in 2019, and they had the opportunity to apply for the status of regional and national designated museums with responsibility for specific areas or fields. The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture duly designated the regional museums and national specialist museums in November 2019. There is now a total of 31 regional museums and 17 specialist museums nationwide. The revised state subsidy system includes an increase of EUR 4 million for the implementation of a new structure for the museum sector, as described in the revised Museum Act. This additional appropriation is mainly aimed at strengthening the operation of museums with a regional responsibility.

Finland has a considerable number of professionally maintained museums, 154 of which are responsible for the management of 323 museums. There are over 1,000 museums nationwide altogether, but most of these are small local museums run by volunteers and local residents. The museums employ over 1,800 museum professionals (permanent full-time employees), although there is a total of 2,500 employees all told (Museum Statistics 2018).

## FRANCE by Philippe Guillet

Numerous renovations or creations of museums in France. The news about French museums is intense whatever the type of museum.

Projects have recently been launched and many renovations are underway. These include, but are not restricted to, the Bordeaux Natural History Museum, the Museum of Illusion and the Cité de l'Economie à Paris in 2019. In 2020, the reopening of many museums : Musée Cernuschi (Asian Arts), museum dedicated to fashion in the Gabrielle Chanel rooms of the Palais Galliera, Musée Carnavalet (renovation, extension, event spaces and catering), Maison de Victor Hugo, Hôtel de la Marine, Musée des égouts, extension of Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature, the Muséum d'Orléans pour la Biodiversité et l'Environnement.

In June 2020, the opening of the Pinault-Paris Collection in the former Bourse de Commerce, fitted out by Tadao Ando: 3000 m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space dedicated to contemporary art. In 2021, the Musée des Tissus de Lyon, the new Musée d'Art Ludique in the Saint-Lazare railway station in Paris, and the completion of work on the Musée de Cluny. In 2022, the opening of the Musée des Collectionneurs in Angers, in 2023, the reopening of the Musée Lorrain in Nancy, the zoological museum in Strasbourg... In Paris, a very important renovation begins in 2020 at the Grand Palais and the Palais de la Découverte until 2024 (reopening for the Paris Olympic Games): enlargement of the spaces dedicated to major events and the 6 exhibition galleries. During the closure, an ephemeral Grand Palais will be built on the Champ de Mars. In addition, many scientists are concerned about the possible disappearance of the Palais de la Découverte on this occasion.

All these renovations or new museums should not hide the fact that the financial situation of museums is generally very difficult. Notably the associative museums (ecomuseums for example) which are struggling to find funding for their

operations.

### **Debates in French museums**

Two major debates are currently taking place in French museums: the repatriation of looted works (and in particular artworks related to the looting of the Palais d'Abomey in Benin) and the definition of a museum as proposed by ICOM International at the Kyoto Congress. The French section of ICOM, together with professional associations are particularly active on these two issues.

### **GERMANY** by Karl Borromäus Murr

A few new museums were added to the rich German museum landscape in 2019. The list is by far not complete, but rather selective and exemplary. In June the Museum of Bavarian History was opened which is tracing the democratic development of Bavaria from 19th century onwards. The Berlin Museum Island got a new and very spacious entrance building (James Simon Galery) opened up in July. The architecture planned by David Chipperfield Architects comprises 10,900 square meters. The opening of the new Bauhaus Museum Dessau took place in September in the Bauhaus anniversary year. The Berlin Futurium was also launched in September. The Futurium as a federal institution is centered about the question: How do we want to live in the future? The long-awaited Humboldt Forum is scheduled to open in 2020.

The German Museum Association (GMA) in its annual conference that took place in Dresden in September focused on museums as educational platforms. The conference raised questions of audience development as museums must reach out to a more and more diverse society. The central question was, what role could museums play in an information society. How could museums be relevant for marginalized people? How can the cycle of educational alienation be broken? The

GMA published a few new guidelines: one on provenance research, another one on museum visitor research tailored to the practical needs of museums, and a third one on professionalism in museums in the sense of professionalised mode of working in the museal context. The latest edition of „Museumskunde“ (2019) was dedicated to museums in the digital age.

The ICOM Germany annual conference that took place in Munich in September discussed opportunities and side effects of the „Museum 4.0“. How shall museums deal with comprehensive digitization that penetrates almost all areas of work, life and experience today. ICOM Germany came up with a series of publications in 2019. The spectrum ranges from ICOM Ethical Guidelines for museums, preservation of cultural heritage to the relation of commerce, industry and museums under the title „From the World Exhibition to the Science Lab.“ The ICOM Germany magazine featured the museums 4.0, immaterial heritage as well as the National Museum Rio De Janeiro.

## ICELAND by Anita Elefsen

In Iceland, a country of 338,000 people, there are close to 200 museums, exhibitions and cultural and historical centres. But only 46 museums are accredited by the Icelandic Ministry of Education, Science and Culture and work according to the Icelandic Museum Act and the ICOM code of Ethics. Three of the state-funded museums are listed as principal museums; The National Museum of Iceland, The Museum of National History and The National gallery, and they have the role of forming strategies for other museums in their respective fields.

Accredited Icelandic Museums are still in the process of adapting to new regulations and demands as their legal duty to collect, preserve, safeguard and promote their collections is now monitored by the Icelandic Museum Council. Each Museum

reports annually to the Museum Council, which has the role of monitoring all museum operations, according to the Museum Act.

Icelandic Museums have in the past years emphasized more on professional work, such as research, registration of their collections, setting up proper storage facilities and so on, due to higher demands from the Icelandic Museum Council and its supervision and monitoring process. The main challenge is that most Icelandic Museums have an average of only three employees, which means that projects and tasks need to be prioritized each year, based on the number of employees as well as financial status. Last year, The Icelandic Museum Association hosted their annual workshop in Patreksfjörður in October 2019. These annual workshops, called *Farskóli*, are an important venue for Icelandic Museum workers to strengthen their relations, broaden their horizons and learn from each other. This year's mini workshops were focused on different factors, such as museum education, transporting museum collections, storage facilities, museum events, boat and ship preservation, to name a few.

Overall, Museums in Iceland have been seeking to expand and strengthen their operations, by promoting professional work within their collections, making new exhibitions and therefore seeking more visitors, by hosting workshops and lectures about different parts of museum work; research, preservation, deaccession, registering-systems, education, marketing, multimedia, social media and so on. But at the same time, many Museums in Iceland struggle with funding, leading to them not having enough employees, and having to rely more on tourism as a source of income – which for some, the consequence is that more time is spent on the visitors, and less time on the collection itself. As, in Iceland, Museums have managed to become a vital part of the tourism industry to increase their income, now with over 1.2 million visitors annually! Museums are spread around the country, so in each part of the country there are various museums to visit. In general, Icelandic Museums operate in a diverse field and deal with various tasks regarding culture, art

and natural history. The museums promote human well-being, social development, tolerance and respect by advocating multicultural and multilingual expressions in their promotion of their collections of both tangible and intangible heritage. They also create a favourable environment for connections between the community and the museums for a harmonious relationship between both parties, with events, student-programs, new exhibitions and so on.

## IRELAND by Marie Bourke

An overview of events impacting on Irish museums in 2019. We are a small country on the western European periphery. Our 230 museums (*Irish Museums Survey 2016*) are represented by: the Department of Cultural, Heritage & Gaeltacht, Heritage Council, Irish Museums Association and Office of Public Works. In Northern Ireland the Department for Communities, National Trust NI, and NI Museums Council.

Headlines:

**Heritage Ireland 2030, the new national heritage plan**, involved Irish cultural heritage organisation and museums in a consultative process under the auspices of the Department of Culture, Heritage & Gaeltacht, aided by the Heritage Council. The new plan aims to be a comprehensive, inspiring framework of values, principles, strategic priorities and actions to guide-inform the heritage sector over the next decade.

**Culture 2025 - Ireland's first ever national cultural policy framework published** setting the direction for Government policy across the cultural sector - the arts, Irish language, creative, heritage and audio-visual sectors underpinned by a commitment to double funding to €576m by 2025.

***Brexit dominated every facet of life*** with Irish Museums Association/IMA members adding to IMA strength in promoting the interests of museums to policy makers and those managing-developing the sector. The IMA published ***Bridges Over Brexit***, case

histories that explored the potential effects of Brexit on the museum and cultural sectors. Also, **Exploring Cross-Border Cultural Policy in Practice:** IJAMCP editors V Durrer, J Corrigan, R Munck, outlined the importance of cultural policy in a cross-border context, from events co-organised by Cultural Policy Observatory Ireland, Social Innovation Network and Dublin City University.

*The IMA and Ulster University announced 'The EU and the museum: an investigation of cross-border museum projects in Ireland'*, a Collaborative Doctoral Award with the Northern Bridge Consortium forming a Doctoral Training Partnership (NBCDTP) funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

### **The Heritage Council's Museum Standards Programme Ireland/MSPI:**

59 institutions across 65 sites participate in a process of benchmarking and promoting professional standards in the care of collections, accrediting those achieving standards within the Irish museum sector - including those working towards accreditation, have received accreditation and seeking to maintain accreditation.

### **Museum openings**

- Museum of Irish Literature/MoLI, Dublin
- Seamus Heaney Exhibition, Bank of Ireland Cultural-Heritage Centre, Dublin
- 14 Henrietta Street, Dublin
- Gallery of Modern Art, Waterford
- James Connolly Visitor Centre, Belfast
- HMS Caroline, Belfast
- Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, Co Down
- Tipperary Museum of Hidden History, Clonmel

### **Awards**

**The Director of Waterford Museum of Treasures** appointed Officer, Knight First Grade, of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit for raising awareness of Waterford's Viking history, strengthening connections between Norway and Ireland.

**The National Museum of Ireland - Country Life** presented Sandford Award for excellence in heritage education by the Heritage Education Trust and Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln.

**EPIC Ireland, Irish Emigration Museum, Dublin** voted Europe's Leading Tourist Attraction at 26th annual World Travel Awards.

**National Museums Northern Ireland** presented Outstanding Contribution to Tourism at the Northern Ireland Tourism Awards.

**14 Henrietta Street Tenement Museum** won Best Conservation- Restoration- Overall Project at RIAI Irish Architecture Awards.

**The Little Museum of Dublin & EPIC Ireland** presented Best Dublin Tourism Experience and Best Entrepreneurial Tourism Innovation at Irish Tourism Awards.

## ITALY by Giovanni Cella

### Institutional framework

In September 2019, the change of national government brought back Dario Franceschini, as Minister of Cultural Heritage and Tourism (MiBACT Italian acronym) – he was already Minister from 2014 to 2018. In December 2019, the "New MiBACT organization regulation" was presented which takes up and broadens the reform<sup>i</sup> started in his previous assignment and which will be implemented starting from 2020:

3 new autonomous national museums:

- Gallery of the Academy of Florence
- Archaeological Park of Appia Antica

- Etruscan Museum of Villa Giulia in Rome

New peripheral offices:

- 7 new autonomous Superintendencies for Archeology, Fine Arts and Landscape
- 3 Archival and bibliographic superintendencies.

New direction of the State Museums of Rome, strengthening of the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity, divided into 5 Services: urban regeneration, suburbs, cultural and creative industries, photography, design and fashion.

Announcements

- National Superintendence for Underwater Heritage with headquarters in Taranto and branches in Naples and Venice.
- Project for the National Library, the Institute for the digitization of Italian cultural heritage.

### **Some data on museum in Italy**

4,908 among museums, archaeological areas, monuments and eco-museums open to the public. Widespread heritage throughout the territory: in one out of three Italian municipalities (2,311) there is at least one museum structure. There is one every 50 sq km and one every 6 thousand inhabitants:

- 3,882 museums and collection collections (79.1%)
- 630 monuments (12.8%)
- 327 archaeological areas (6.7%)
- 69 eco-museums (1.4%)

The regions with the most structures are Tuscany (553), Emilia-Romagna (454), Lombardy (433), Piedmont (411), Lazio (357) and Veneto (304).

The cities with the most structures are Rome (121), Florence (69), Turin (49), Milan (47), Bologna (46), Trieste (41), Genoa (40), Naples (38), Venice (37) and Siena (34)

Over 128 million visitors visited the Italian cultural heritage in 2018: almost 10 million more (+ 8%) than in 2017. The greatest increase is recorded by monuments and monumental complexes (+ 11.5%) and museums (+ 9.6%). Visitors to archaeological areas decreased (-11.3%). Visitors in the cities of Rome, Florence, Naples, Venice, Milan, Turin, Pisa, Pompeii, Siena and Verona, where over half of the visitors are concentrated (55.5%).

There are an estimated 58.6 million foreigners who, in 2018, decided to visit Italian museum heritage (46% of the total audience); almost half visit museums (45.9%), 42% monuments and 12% archaeological areas. However, not all structures are adequately equipped to accommodate foreign audiences: only 53.5% of museums offer panels, captions and cards in languages other than Italian and in less than two thirds of cases (63.7%) they can count on staff able to provide foreign public with information in English (the share drops to 29.9% for the French language, 11.6% for German and 10.5% for Spanish) even if 73, 1% make available printed information material translated into various languages and 73.4% offer multilingual audio guides for better use of the exhibitions.

### **Main topic regarding museums in Italy:**

#### **National Museum System**

The Commission for the National Museum System was appointed by Minister Alberto Bonisoli with Decree dated 9 August 2018. Thus, after a long study process, the Italy's National Museum System, a network of museums and cultural places connected to each other in order to improve the use, accessibility and sustainable management of the cultural heritage, is born.

The National Museum System is based on the document "Adoption of uniform minimum quality levels for public museums and cultural places and activation of the National Museum System". In addition to state cultural places, museums not belonging to the state, both public and private, may access the System, on a

voluntary basis and through a defined accreditation system as laid down in the Decree. The uniform quality levels for museums are the instrument for activating the System and for achieving the aims it pursues. Distributed in three areas (I. Organisation, II. Collections, III. Communications and relations with the region), these uniform quality levels are an important document to verify the museums' compliance with the minimum standards.

Considering the variety of our cultural places, due to historical and territorial reasons, the definition of museum standards and the establishment of a National System appear to finalise the reorganisation reform by the Ministry (Decree of the President of the Council of Ministers no. 171/2014), but can also be an opportunity for growth for small museums and a reference document in order to define progress and improvement objectives.

The National Museum System is headed by the Directorate-General of Museums and is coordinated on a regional and provincial basis, according to the procedures defined in the decree.

### **Accessibility**

The theme of accessibility remains, today more than ever, a sensitive issue in Italian museums. Numerous exhibition structures still have physical and sensory barriers: only half (53%) are equipped with ramps, toilets and elevators for people with reduced mobility and just over one in ten (12%) offer tactile routes and sensory information materials for visually impaired and blind people. In recent years, much has been done both at ministerial level and at the level of associations involved both in terms of interventions (see in particular what has been done since 2008 and the document produced by the MiBACT "Guidelines to overcoming architectural barriers in places of cultural interest") in terms of training and sensitization of museum professionals.

Among the museums in Italy to underline in this sense the role played by Christian Greco, head of the Egyptian Museum of Turin, institution for years at the forefront in the defence of the right to culture and hospitality, supported by a high-level exhibition program, which makes the archaeological heritage and ancient history accessible to the general public. Accessibility is one of the keywords used by Greco himself to describe the Egyptian Museum's approach to its audience.

### **Digitization of heritage and national catalogue**

Italian museums are still not very present and active in the adoption of digital tools for the management and valorisation of their heritage. Only 10% of the structures have a digital scientific catalogue of their heritage. Among these, the museums of ancient art (23%), history and natural sciences (16%) stand out, which more than others have collected the objects owned on digital media.

With the aim of encouraging this type of tool and providing a reference framework in the adoption of digital solutions, the Triennial Plan for the Digitization and Innovation of Museums was presented in August 2019. Among the main objectives of the plan:

- Increase protection processes through the available cataloguing standards and new enhancement paths.
- Present the cultural heritage both through the exhibition and narration of the works and in terms of marketing services.
- Making museums spaces for sharing.
- Offer tools about accessibility from a system perspective.
- Activate partnerships with private companies.

In this context an important work was done by the ICCD in the renewal of the tools dedicated to the cataloguing of objects which had the first result of the presentation of the ArCo project. ArCo is the Knowledge Graph of the Italian Cultural Heritage: it consists of 7 vocabularies describing the cultural heritage domain and data from

the General Catalogue of the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MiBACT) published as RDF. The ontologies connected to ArCo vocabularies are organized in a network for modelling different kind of cultural properties and their corresponding catalogue records. Those cultural properties and records are currently managed by the SIGEC system of the Italian Central Institute for Cataloguing and Documentation.

### **Museum storage**

The reduction of resources on the one hand and the ever-increasing opening of the collections of the Museums on the other to the public put the theme of storages at the centre of the national but also international debate. In this direction, the Recommendation presented at the ICOM 34<sup>th</sup> General Conference is specifically dedicated to the issue of storage of which Italy, through its national delegation, was among the promoters.

### **LITHUANIA** by Gita Sapranauškaite

In Lithuania with a population of 2 793 350 people, 104 museums are subdivided into:

- national (established by the Ministry of Culture) (4),
- regional (established by the Ministry of Culture or other state institutions) (15),
- municipal (established by municipalities) (55),
- departmental (established by public legal persons, institutions, organizations) (22),
- and other (public institutions, private) (8).

These museums were visited by 5 026 000 visitors in 2018.

On 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2018 the Minister of Culture approved the Order "Of the Free Museum Visit Scheme for Students and Socially Excluded Citizens and its Implementation Concept".

Since 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2019 Museums permanent exhibitions are free of charge every last Sunday of the month. The free museum attendance model applies to national and regional museums under the Ministry of Culture. Under this model everyone can visit museums for free. 415,026 visitors on the last Sundays of the month visited more than 70 national and republican museum departments in all Lithuania in 2019. The free museum attendance model is funded by the state budget, and museums are compensated for lost revenue.

2012-2018 joint project "Lithuanian Museum Route" was implemented. Engagement of the society in Museum Route activities encouraged museums to create the program "In Search of the Fatherland" 2019–2021 – the second stage of development – devoted to 30th Anniversary of the Restoration of the Republic of Lithuania in 2020. The program focuses on cultural landscapes of Lithuania. The new "Lithuanian Museum Route" program was inspired by Nobel laureate and honorary citizen of Lithuania Czeslaw Milosz (Czeslaw Milosz) - one of the great writers of the twentieth century. The program is coordinated by the Lithuanian Museum Association.

In 2019 theme of "Lithuanian Museum Route" was "Lithuanian Landscapes: The Cultural Memory of Waters ". 60 museums invited society to 126 events: virtual exhibitions and exhibition halls, educational programs and concerts, sightseeing and theatrical tours, plein airs and civic initiatives, hiking and even motorcycle rides.

In 2020 theme of "Lithuanian Museum Route" will be "Lithuanian Landscapes: Cultural Views of Mountains and Hills" in 2021 the theme of Lithuanian parks and gardens will be developed.

MO Museum, whose building was designed by world famous architect Daniel Libeskind, opened its doors in October 2018.

MO Museum has become an excellent new place to spend free time. MO Museum, a personal initiative of Lithuanian scientists and philanthropists Danguolė and Viktoras Butkus, functioned as an art museum without walls for close to ten years. The collection of 5000 modern and contemporary pieces contains major Lithuanian artworks from the 1960s to this day.

## LUXEMBOURG by Julia Kohl

In autumn 2018, the Ministry of Culture in Luxembourg introduced the first national Cultural Development Plan after a long process of consultations, discussions and exchanges with the cultural and public sector. The whole process lasted more than two years. The Cultural Development Plan offers an overview of the cultural history and policy in Luxembourg and its current cultural landscape while drawing up an ambitious list of objectives for the next ten years. The document identifies 62 recommendations, which should improve the structuring of the cultural scene and set it for the future. Another aspect of the Cultural Development Plan is to enhance professionalism throughout the cultural sector as well as to set up a framework reference for cultural activities in all disciplines.

Museums are a vital element on our dynamic cultural map. As such, an assessment of the current museum landscape takes place within the framework of the implementation of the Cultural Development Plan in order to get a better and more complete understanding of the needs in the area of museology. First reflection sessions on the development of coherent national museum policies have taken place within the Ministry of Culture in 2019 and they will progress over the course of the next years.

For our museums, collection management has been an important subject over the last years. Ensuring the long-term safety and sustainability of cultural artefacts and artworks can be a challenge, especially for smaller museums who often lack

financial resources and the professional background. The National Museum of History and Art (MNHA) plays an important part in the efforts to share expertise and best-practice solutions for preventive conservation. In summer 2019, the MNHA organized a series of workshop-conferences aiming to convey the technical bases of inventorying, storing, marking and efficient transport of museum artefacts. These meetings addressed in particular smaller institutions in Luxembourg.

As digitalization becomes more thoroughly woven into the overall museum fabric, many museums in Luxembourg focus their energies on documenting and digitizing their collections, thus making them accessible to a wider public. Throughout 2019, the MNHA, in collaboration with a handful of local museums, has been in the process of developing a prototype of the MuseumPlus software for the management of collections in smaller institutions. The objective is to have a single interface connecting these museums in order to do research beyond their own collection and to create links between objects having the same roots (same author, same type of object, etc.). For now, the implementation of this software is still an ongoing process.

Museums in Luxembourg are more and more reaching out to the public in an attempt to connect with their audiences through socially engaged and participative practice. An interesting example in this context is the exhibition series “a museum for all”, launched in 2017 by Villa Vauban, an art museum situated in Luxembourg City. Based on the concept of accessibility and inclusion, the project “a museum for all” takes into account a wide range of needs from people with disabilities, including blindness and low vision, deafness and hearing impairment and makes sure everyone has a great time in the museum. Special installations and adapted furniture provide an original and interactive approach to art: hands-on sculptures and tactile models of paintings, explanatory films, a puzzle book for children, etc. An app provides additional information about the works and serves as a reading aid for the visually impaired. After “The course of life” in 2017 and

“Confrontations” in 2018, “Variations”, structured in the same vein, has been inaugurated in July 2019 and will be on display until January 2021.

Striving to foster a future-oriented vision, some museums reinvent themselves and are adapting to today’s cultural consumer behaviour. The opening of the extension of the National Museum of Military History (MNHM) in Diekirch in 2019 might be a good example. Started in 1982 by a handful of enthusiasts and volunteers, the MNHM has grown over the years into a key attraction of international renown. The renovation of an adjoining hall made it possible to create the much-needed space for a conference room, a specialized library, as well as a surface for temporary exhibitions. The latter is all the more important as themed temporary exhibitions nowadays tend to draw the public’s attention more than the traditional museum experience.

In Luxembourg as well as on an international scale, the *International Museum Day* is a unique opportunity for museum professionals to meet the public and demonstrate their potential to create meaningful experiences. 2019 marked the 22<sup>nd</sup> edition of the “Luxembourg Museum Days”. With more than forty museums opening their doors across Luxembourg and inviting young and old to guided tours, participative workshops, performances, exhibitions and other activities, this event is the perfect opportunity to explore the many facets of our cultural heritage and raise public awareness.

**MALTA** by Alexander Debono

## **The Museum Landscape**

The museum landscape in Malta has been undergoing significant changes since 2003 with the enactment of the cultural heritage act establishing a regulator-operator relationship. Percentage wise, Malta has close to 36 percent state run museums and heritage sites. 30 per cent are managed by voluntary or non-profit

organisations and the remaining 35 per cent are run by the Catholic church or private enterprises. The sector has benefitted greatly thanks to Malta's accession to the European Union in 2004. Thanks to European Regional Development Funds, significant improvements could be registered across the museum landscape, particularly with regards to state run museums and heritage sites. The national network (Heritage Malta) was the one to benefit most from EU and other international funding (Norwegian Development Fund) on a large scale. Other EU funding strands were also tapped by Religious denomination museums, particularly the Catholic church, and other voluntary organisations/NGOs running small museums. Local funding for NGOs and other organisations is also regularly available.

Significant developments and sustained growth have been registered during period under review, which can also be understood as a continuation of the structured expansion of the sector happening since 2003. This significant boost is also due, at least in part, to Valletta's 2018 European Capital of Culture title, registered in particular during the decade pleading up to 2018. The main legacy project for Valletta 2018 capital of culture title is the complete rethink and relocation of the National Museum of Fine Arts, now MUŻA, rethought into a national community art museum. This is the first museum of its kind and the concept, acknowledged in 2018 by The UK newspaper The Guardian and Architecture Digest Magazine as one of the latest must-see museums opening in 2018. The project vision also holds potential as an export model.

### **The National Network - Heritage Malta**

Throughout 2019, the national network has continued works on a number of museum refurbishment projects, besides a new museum in Gozo (Malta's sister island). Over the last two years, It has also been entrusted with a significant cache of heritage sites that have expanded its remit considerably. The main museum

refurbishment projects managed by the national network are tapping EU and Norwegian Development Funding.

Visitor attendance continues to be proportionately high when taking due consideration of the fact that Malta's population does not go beyond the half a million mark. The latest figures available (2018) add up to 1,904,222 visitors (both paying and non-paying). The majority of these would be tourists. Data in hand is not collated in such a way as to clearly distinguish between locals and non locals.

In 2019 visitor attendance has also been significantly boosted thanks to a free access scheme for specific categories and identities (the Heritage Malta Passport Scheme) initially introduced for school children and subsequently extended to senior citizens. The scheme is certainly a step in the right direction but would need to be assessed in terms of impact. The scheme would have nonetheless registered a significant increase in museum visitors in line with the sustained growth registered in 2016 when 38% of respondents engaging with cultural activities confirmed that they had visited a museum (up 8 percentage points when compared to 2011). Figures registered so far are significantly encouraging but long-term impact, relevance and significance remains to be quantified.

The national network continues to be centrally managed, including project management and administration. A strong conservation division supporting the needs and requirements of the sector's museums and heritage sites is complemented by an equally strong project management arm supporting the ever-expanding growth of the national sector which had its portfolio of sites increased significantly over the past two years. The curatorial arm is significantly much less present in comparison to the cache of architects and conservators within the national network.

The only exception to the central administrative model is the joint management agreement struck with a local NGO running an early nineteenth century historic site. This agreement holds potential for further development with regards to

support and collaboration by the national network with local non-governmental organisations.

The main challenge ahead is for the national network to sustain and effectively implement the arm's length principle at all levels of management in line with principle 1.10 of the ICOM Code of Ethics.

### **Religious Denomination Museums**

The Catholic Church in Malta is the religious denomination institution that is mostly active in the museum landscape. This is also in part driven by the fact that the Catholic Church still holds the legal title to cultural heritage within its remit and national legislation also empowers the institution to regulate it. Museums run by the catholic church mostly includes parish museums managing collections featuring works of art of objects in use or that were once in use within the parish church or the locality in general. Most of these museums are run on a voluntary basis. Some have also reached significant benchmarks in presentation, interpretation and Significant development has been registered with regards to the Cathedral Museum as it continues to undergo refurbishment in stages, also thanks to the support of national funds. The museum's collection continues to expand with significant donations, in some instances featuring entire collections, and initiatives aimed at improving display, outreach and interpretation. Data with regards to visitor attendance, management and funding is limited.

### **Museums run by NGOs, Foundations and private museums**

The private museum sector featuring museums and heritage sites run by foundations and nongovernmental organisation has registered significant developments since that date too. This sector includes a healthy mix of house museums and heritage sites. *Fondazzjoni Patrominju Malti* and *Fondazzjoni Wirt Artna* are the two main NGOs active in this sector. Most of their funding comes from private sponsorship and revenue generated from entrance tickets, besides venue

hire for events, and thanks to this both continue to register significant improvement in collections development, programming and access.

The private museum sector is relatively small with the main museum run by the Central Bank of Malta (The Victor Pasmore Gallery). Casa Rocca Piccola is one of the very few house museums that is privately run. Data with regards to visitor attendance, management and funding is limited.

## MOLDOVA by Elena Plosnita

In 2019, 127 museums were registered in the museum system of the Republic. The vast majority of them are local historical and ethnographic museums. There are no museums of science and technology.

In 2019, the museums worked in a normal way, according to the annual activity programs, being focused on the process of digitizing museum heritage. In October, 130 years have passed since the founding in 1889 of the first public museum in Bessarabia – the Zemstvo Museum, today the Museum of Ethnography and Natural History. Several scientific and cultural activities have been organized to honor this event. The museum was awarded the highest order of the country, *the Order of the Republic*.

In October 2018, the government made a decision to create a new museum, the Museum of the History of Jews of Moldova. In 2019, work began on the organization of this museum. 2019 did not bring radical, conceptual changes to the museum system of the Republic of Moldova.

## MONTENEGRO by Isidora Kovarevic

There are several museums in Montenegro, Natural History Museum of Montenegro, Maritime Museum of Montenegro, Museums and Galleries of

Podgorica, Polim Museum, Budva Museums and Galleries, Museums and Galleries Nikšić etc. In 2019. the situation in Montenegrin museum is almost as in the 2018., most of them carry out audits of museum objects and documentation according to prescribed laws, and they are working to prepare for next touristic season.

The main museum institutions in the Montenegro is the National Museum in Cetinje. It was worked carry out audits of museum objects and documentation according to prescribed laws too, and besides that in 2019, National museum organized over 90 programs - 23 exhibitions, 36 educational programs, archaeological research and a number of other activities.

National museum is financed from public funds and from its own resources. During 2019, 75 percent was from public funds and 25 percent was from its own sources of income (selling books, tickets, souvenirs, projects).

It is a complex public cultural institution comprised of four separate organizational units: The Historical Museum, an integral part of which are King Nikola's Museum, Petar II Petrović Njegoš Museum, Njegoš's Birthplace, Njegoš's Mausoleum on Mount Lovćen, Court Church at Ćipur, Bishop Danilo's Mausoleum on Orlov Krš and the Relief of Montenegro; The Art Museum with the Montenegrin Art Gallery "Miodrag Dado Đurić" and DADO Atelier; The Ethnographic Museum; and the newly founded Archaeological Museum with the Lapidarium. All units of the National Museum of Montenegro (except for Njegoš's birth house and Njegoš's Mausoleum on Mount Lovćen) are in the historic town of Cetinje. The museums are housed in edifices which are cultural and historical monuments in themselves.

The National Museum of Montenegro has several departments: Documentation Department, Preventive Conservation Department, Communications Department, IT Department, and Library and Archives Department.

The Government House, erected in 1910 in the neo-Renaissance style, is the administrative building of the Museum, which also houses the permanent exhibitions of the Art and Historical Museums.

Under the Statute of the National Museum of Montenegro of 2012, the Historical Museum, in addition to its permanent exhibition, came to incorporate: Njegoš's Museum (The Biljarda and Njegoš's Birthplace in Njeguši), King Nikola's Museum, Bishop Danilo's Mausoleum on Orlov Krš, the Mausoleum of Petar II Petrović Njegoš on Mount Lovćen and the Mausoleum of Montenegrin Rulers – Court Church at Ćipur.

From the oldest recorded remains of human activity to modern times, the permanent exhibition of the Historical Museum, in a timeline, takes the visitor through the history of this area. King Nikola's Museum was founded in 1926 in the palace of the royal family, Petrović Njegoš. The permanent exhibition of the museum is conceived of as the reconstructed interior of the royal palace, displaying a wide array of objects related to the Petrović Njegoš dynasty. The rich royal library also contains copies of books produced by the Crnojević printing house – The first book ever printed among the South Slavs - Octoechoes of the First Voice, printed in Cetinje in 1493. King Nikola's Museum is the most attractive museum for tourists boasting the largest number of visitors every year. Njegoš's Museum – the Biljarda was founded in 1951 in the former residence of the Montenegrin ruler Petar II Petrović Njegoš, which was built in 1838. The permanent exhibition of this museum is dedicated to Njegoš's life and creative work and contains his personal belongings, works of art, as well as his library and manuscripts, the most prominent of which is the original manuscript of Gorski vijenac (The Mountain Wreath).

The museum also includes a space adapted for temporary exhibitions. In the courtyard of the Biljarda lies a relief map of Montenegro at a scale of 1:10,000, created in 1917 during the period of the Austro-Hungarian occupation of Montenegro. As a historical object, the relief map has a significant cultural and

artistic value and represents a successful cartographic work. The house in the hamlet of Erakovići in Njeguši, in which Njegoš was born in 1813, is a building the appearance and furnishings of which provide a picture of a more affluent Montenegrin house from the beginning of the 19th century. Njegoš's Birthplace, built by Njegoš's uncle Petar I Petrović in 1779, in 1973 was converted into a memorial museum dedicated to Njegoš. The museum displays ethnographic material and fine pieces of crafted weapons. The Art Museum is located in the Government House. Founded as an Art Gallery in 1950, it later grew into the Art Museum of Montenegro. The museum boasts around 4,000 items in its collection, including many principal works of Yugoslav art, icons, copies of frescoes and the largest collection of Montenegrin fine arts.

The Montenegrin Art Gallery "Miodrag Dado Đurić" was opened in 2012 in the building of the former Trgopromet trading company. It is designed as a modern exhibition space the activities of which are organized into the following groups: the promotion of works by prominent Montenegrin artists; exhibitions presenting the current artistic trends and artists on the national and international scene organized in collaboration with related institutions from Montenegro, from the region and beyond. "DADO Atelier" is a gallery founded in 2002 with the aim of promoting contemporary trends in art.

The Ethnographic museum stores extremely valuable material from Montenegrin territory which illustrates the richness of the material and spiritual culture of the peoples inhabiting the country. The museum boasts valuable collections, which present economic activities, food practices, housing culture, textile crafts, ways of dressing, weapons, music instruments, coins and the like.

The Archaeological Museum is the newest unit of the National Museum of Montenegro. Thanks to the Programme of the protection and preservation of cultural heritage of the Montenegrin Ministry of Culture, the Archaeological Museum conducted archaeological and conservation research within the project

“The Roads of Continuity”. The seven-year archaeological and conservation research activities were aimed at collecting the archaeological material for the Archaeological Museum of Montenegro.

## **NORTH MACEDONIA** by Gordon Nikolov

Generally speaking, 2019 was a year where nothing special happened concerning the museums in the Republic of North Macedonia. Two interesting temporary exhibitions were opened in the Archaeological Museum in Skopje. The first one is: “100 years of Trebeniste” , where were displayed for the first time precious artefacts from the Ohrid necropolises of Trebeniste and “Gorna Porta”(North Macedonia), which are now owned by North Macedonia, Bulgaria and Serbia. This is probably the most desirable, most anticipated and important exhibition for Macedonian, Balkan and European archaeology. Second one is: “The Great Steppe: History and Culture - Altyn Adam (Golden Man) Procession through the World’s Museums project” from the Kazakh National Museum from Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan.

This exhibition is displaying the archaeological and ethnological heritage of Kazakhstan and is the first of its kind in the North Macedonia. Also the Archaeological museum is reorganizing the permanent exhibition and also the Museum of Macedonian Fight in Skopje. The work on “Law on Realization of the Public Interest in the Culture” (Law on Culture) is progressing and is now in its final phase, which in my opinion is detrimental, especially for the museums and protection of cultural heritage. Finally, in December, after almost 20 years, the “Collective agreement” between the Union of cultural workers and the Ministry of culture was signed, so also the salaries of museum workers finally increased.

## NORWAY by Ann Siri Hegseth Garberg

When it comes to budgets, public money is still reduced compared to the growth in prices and wages. Museums are encouraged to apply for private money from companies and funds. These gifts are reinforced by extra money from the state. There is increasing focus on more collaboration between and economic effect of travel activities and creative industries.

There are a lot of changes going on in Norway according to national and regional responsibilities. The museum sector will be influenced by these changes, but it is too soon to know to which extent. A new regional reform is on its way, where the economical responsibility for museums will be moved from the national to the regional level. There are discussions going on of how a division between the state, region and municipality levels should be and if some museums still should belong to the national level – and if that should just be museums in Oslo or not? There are also suggestions for further mergers between museums. Many museums will however prefer extended cooperation instead of new mergers to be able to focus more on their core activities.

A new white paper concerning museums will be launched in 2021. Several surveys and reports are under elaboration for the moment and a Museum Law and an accreditation system are discussed as well.

When it comes to “new” museums, The National Art & Design Museum will open its new building this year, and it will be the largest art museum in the Nordic countries. The new Munch museum will also open in Oslo in 2020. In 2019 the Bergen Museum reopened after six year of renovation and several museums, like Jektefartsmuseet in Bodø and Allmenninger at Sør-Troms Museum opened. Several important buildings – both exhibition buildings and storages – are on the investment list of the Culture Ministry and will be built in the years to come. The investment budget the last two years has been increased from the prior years.

This document has been read and elaborated by Liv Ramskjær, General Secretary of the Norwegian Museum Association.

## ROMANIA by Valer Rus

The museums in Romania had a normal evolution in the year 2019. In 2018 the activity of the Romanian museums was under the sign of the events celebrating the end of the First World War, which led to the emergence of the united Romanian state. Therefore, some of the public museum activities of the year 2019 were still under the auspices of the Centenary (1918-2018) celebrations. However, there is also a return to the normal program of activities of the museums, which fulfil, within the limits of the financial and human resources available, the classical functions of conservation, research and enhancement of the heritage. The first half of 2019 meant for our museums the common cultural season Romania-France, among the more than 300 common events being organised also dozens of temporary or traveling exhibitions.

The museums in Romania are still very much subordinated to the state authority, either through the Ministry of Culture and National Identity, or through various regional or local public authorities (county councils or town halls). The number of private museums is still very small, compared to public ones. The professional national organisations that contribute to the development of the museum activity are the National Network of Romanian Museums (over 70 member museums) and ICOM Romania (membership and access card to affiliated museums). This year also appeared the National Association of Museum Managers from Romania, a specific organisation in national premiere.

In 2019 was reopened the permanent exhibition of the Vaslui County Museum.

Unfortunately, the National History Museum of Romania is still closed, and in this category of the national museums closed in order to carry out repairing works, the

National Museum of the Romanian Peasant has also joined.

In the chapter of national debates in which a museum was involved we should mention the controversy caused by the allocation of space for the establishment of the National Museum of the Jews and the Holocaust in Romania, the initial plan being to occupy part of the land of the National Museum of Natural History "Grigore Antipa". Fortunately, this plan has been replaced with a better one, by allocating by the City Hall of Bucharest a representative building on the oldest boulevard in the capital of Romania, Victory Road.

Three museums from Romania have competed for the European Museum Academy's nomination for the Micheletti prize: the ASTRA National Museum Complex Sibiu, the Vaslui County Museum and the Bucovina National Museum in Suceava. The prize was won for the first time for Romania by CNM ASTRA Sibiu, as a form of recognition of the quality of the cultural offer of this prestigious Romanian museum institution, located in a former European Capital of Culture, Sibiu (2007).

The phenomenon of the closure of museums was stopped - a phenomenon caused, in the last two decades, by the handover of the buildings in which these museums worked, to the former owners, expropriated during the communist regime.

The European Night of Museums remained the most successful event with national coverage, being again organised by the National Network of Museums from Romania. In 2019 there have been no changes in the specific legislation, but the Ministry of Culture is working on a future Cultural Heritage Code.

Unfortunately, in 2019, there was a decrease in the number of specialists in the field of conservation and restoration of museum assets, although, in general, there is a remarkable rejuvenation of museum staff, with more specialists in auxiliary fields: IT, writing cultural projects, educational activities.

In 2019, the number of national and international specialized conferences, organized by museums, has remained constant, as a privileged place where specialists can

exchange experience. We mention here the 5th edition of “Museums Meet Museums”.

At the same time, the number of Romanian museums' participation in exhibitions abroad has increased, a fact which is due, in particular, to the Presidency of Romania at the Council of the European Union, the Romania - France Cultural Season and the status of the invited country within the Creative Europe program.

The end of 2019 also marked the dismissal of the Romanian government through a censorship motion and the validation of a new government, with a new minister of culture, the 30th minister of the last 30 years (1989-2019). Government instability unfortunately affects the continuity in the act of regulation and operational decision, directly and indirectly affecting national, regional and local museums.

## SERBIA by Tijana Palkovljevic

When we summarize 2019, we can say that it was a year of great success for museums in Serbia, illustrated by an active and attractive museum life.

Firstly, it was predominantly a year of **Marina Abramovich** and her retrospective exhibition *Cleaner* presented in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Belgrade. It was an extraordinary example of a high-level museum production that attracted visitors from the whole region to visit Belgrade. It was also the example how one unique and spectacular museum event with a high budget can change the visibility and the perception of the whole country, pointing out at the same time the importance of museums for the society.

Following this good practice, many other museums in Serbia started to organize attractive **projects with multidisciplinary approaches** which drew attention of wider

public and media. Consequently, during 2019, museums in Serbia became much more visible and present in everyday life.

In 2019, the most important goal was the **implementation of the project on digitalization and education** in museums with the idea of attracting children, young people and families to visit museums and become a part of their future development.

Moreover, projects on **reconstruction of museum buildings and on creation of new permanent exhibitions** are in progress in many museums in Serbia. One of the most important is the reconstruction of the Museum of Nikola Tesla which will be completed with high-tech multimedia contents.

Finally, it must be pointed out that the decision of making a new **Museum Law**, for the first time in Serbia, is crucial for further development of cultural institutions. We hope that this law will make a better platform for the progress of museums, as well as for the prosperity of cultural life in Serbia in general. Consequently, it will allow better opportunities for cooperation with museums from other European countries, with projects of great interest and importance not only for Serbia, but also for the whole European society.

## **SLOVENIA** by Mirjana Koren

Because of the removal of the Minister of Culture after only four months in the post, the cultural scene in Slovenia in 2019 was quite confused. But in spite of this, the new team managed to implement two new measures important to the field of heritage. The Strategy for Cultural Heritage 2020-2023, which takes as its starting point the integrated conservation of heritage, was accepted and the Law on Ensuring Resources for Urgent Cultural Programmes was passed, in line with which in the coming years some threatened items of cultural heritage should be renovated.

With regard to the presentation of material to the public, it is worth mentioning first the exhibition Coptic Textiles from the Collection of the National Museum. What is one of the best-preserved collections of this kind in Europe was until recently completely unknown to both the general and the professional public. In an extensive piece of research involving both domestic and foreign experts, this collection was processed, evaluated and in 2019 presented to the public for the first time in compressed form in a temporary exhibition and an extensive museum catalogue.

Two visiting exhibitions from the Russian Federation were well received by the public. Ljubljana's City Museum staged an extensive exhibition of icons from Moscow's Tretjakov Gallery, the Yaroslavl Museum of Art, and the Sergiev Posad Historical and Art Museum. The Slovene Ethnographic Museum hosted its fellow museum from Saint Petersburg with the exhibition *Shamanism of the Peoples of Siberia*.

We are proud of the efforts of the Celje Regional Museum, which in 2019 received the prestigious Europa Nostra award for its Pavilion for the Presentation of Archaeological Remains. The presentational film of the project Ljubljana also received attention on the international scene, receiving the Heritage in Motion prize in the category Film & Video, as well as a UNESCO award for the best practice in underwater cultural heritage.

There was a large Slovene team at the ICOM General Conference 2019, which actively participated in the discussions of a new definition of a museum.

In cooperation with the Forum of Slavic Cultures the EMA Annual Meeting and EMA Awards Ceremony took place in Ljubljana.

## SWEDEN by Anna Hansen

In 2019 we have seen an increasing divide between different types of museums in Sweden. While the national museums, funded by the government, has received increased funding, other museums have had a less advantageous financial development. In particular, the regional museums have raised the issue of little increase in funding, and sometimes even decreased funding, from regions, the government and municipalities, which has caused some attention in media. This is due to the financial situation of many regions and municipalities, which are now seeing the impact of an ageing population with decreased income as a result.

Another trend in the museum sector has been an increased focus on the difference in situation in urban and rural areas, when it comes to access to museum, and the conditions for museum. The Swedish Agency of Cultural Policy Analysis has published a couple of reports in 2019 drawing attention to the fact that many large museums are located in the two largest cities, and these museums are also the ones receiving increased funding and allowed to increase their expenses, while museums in more rural areas have a harder situation. This leads to inequalities concerning the access to museums and other experiences and programmes arranged by museums, even though the larger museums in larger cities are also visited by people from all over the country.

Since 2017, when a Museum law was introduced in Sweden, there has been an ongoing conversation within the museum sector concerning Museums' role in research. The Museum law clearly states that museums should contribute to research, but how this could be done is something museums are discussing and trying to find the right format to do and find ways to cooperate with universities.

Many museums, as well as the national museum association, had a focus on democracy during 2019, due to the centennial jubilee of the right to vote for both men and women. This has been marked by exhibitions as well as podcasts, debates

and other activities in museums across the country. The minister for culture is also the minister for democracy, so there is also a clear political link between the two areas.

## THE NETHERLANDS by Wim van der Weiden

### **Deaccession/the Museum Depot Shop**

Collecting has always been and will always be an integral part of the core business of museums. Until the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century disposal of any object was considered to be a sacrilege/mortal sin. But nowadays deaccession is more and more accepted in the Dutch museum world as one of the means to improve the scope of a collection of a museum and/or to clean up the store rooms.

The question of what has to be preserved - why and for whom - is crucial.

Rationalization of the collections must be the starting-point. In the past thirty years museums have developed strategic acquisition policies in tandem with general collecting and deaccession/disposal policies. The selection criteria have been redefined based on the mission of the museum: taking into account the adequate use of the storage rooms, the human resources, the budget and the standard of care.

In 2003 Keith Thomson, the former director of the Oxford University Museum, wrote: "In the future museums will no longer be defined by their collections, but collections will be defined by museums". His words have come true in The Netherlands!! (Keith.S. Thomson: Treasures on Earth, London, 2002).

An interesting outcome of this change of attitude concerning the collections is the MuseumDepotShop, founded in April 2019. It is a webshop which offers superfluous objects, put at disposal by the participating museums, to individuals like collectors and museum-visitors. Starting with eight museums the number has grown to twenty participants at the end of 2019 – Beeld en Geluid (Image and Sound Institute), Hilversum, the Bible Museum, Amsterdam, the Fries Museum,

Leeuwarden and the City Museum, Schiedam, just to name some of them. A growth to 80 participants is expected in 2020. Negotiations with British museums to join the webshop have begun.

The idea of a webshop was born from the observation that from the 45.000.000 objects in store in the Dutch museums about 10% can be discarded and therefore deaccessioned.

Depending on the involvement of a museum at the sale, the museum receives 30-70% of the proceeds. All objects which are on sale meet the legal requirements for disposal. It means for instance that no other museums are interested in acquiring them. The collection offered consists of prints, musical instruments, furniture, ceramics and so on. The profit for museums: more storage space, less care for unused objects and some extra income.

### **Limits to the growth**

Nowadays it has become hardly possible to be 'alone' with a famous painting, to wander along the Rembrandts or Van Goghs in museums like the Rijksmuseum, the Van Gogh museum or even the Mauritshuis. On the contrary: people are complaining about the crowds in front of such paintings, the queuing at the entrance, the shortage of seats in the restaurants. This kind of museums are the victims of their success.

Discussions started on how to get the right balance. Solutions suggested include varied entrance fees, to open the doors from 8.00-22.00, online reservations, time slots, recommendations for the best 'silent' hours and so on.

So far, nobody knows how to solve the problem of the ever-growing number of visitors to the so-called top museums.

### **Some facts and figures for 2019**

The Netherlands count 425 **registered** museums:

- more than 32.000.000 visits are registered: 37% more than in 20
- 1.400.000 museum pass holders visited a museum altogether 9.300.000 times. 7% of the card holders are younger than 12 years old. The price of the card is 64,90 euro per year, 32,45 for youngsters up to and including 18 years.
- each visit is compensated for 62% of the entrance fee. 64.000.000 euro is paid to the participating museums.
- 41.000 people are working in the Dutch museums. 28.000 of them are volunteers
- 60 museums are 'Kids Proof ' according to the 'museum inspectors' (children up to and including 12 years)

## TURKEY by Ahmet Ö. Erdönmez

Overall developments in the field of museums is positive in Turkey. The state continues supporting museums either by renovating or constructing new buildings which used to have old ones.

Association of Turkish Historic Towns and ÇEKUL Foundation continue contributing to museology work in Turkey. There are currently about 300 museums in the network of these two associations.

As a member of CEKUL Foundation Museology Committee, we continue introducing EMA at several meetings throughout the year.

Many of the private museums, currently, are established by local governments. They are mainly financially dependent on public funding. These museums sometimes also receive financial support from the central government.

Local governments at first establish city museums and archive, then they aim at focus on establishing specialized museums.

Museums that are under construction or being established in 2019 and 2020 (projects continue under CEKUL's consultancy):

- 1- Province of Samsun Medical(Health) History Museum
- 2- Province of Adana Food Culture Museum
- 3- Province of Kocaeli Atatürk Museum
- 4- District of Kadirli Children and Toys Museum
- 5- Province of Nigde City Museum
  - a. Historical Kadioğlu Mansion – Life-culture museum
  - b. Akmedrese (from Seljuck Period) Intangible cultural heritage studies museum
  - c. Greek Church – Concert, meeting, symposium hall
  - d. Armenian Church – Culture and arts center

Panorama 1326 Bursa is open to public visit and it's been a year now. Over 750 thousand people visited the museum so far. Besides temporary exhibitions, there are cultural activities carried out at the museum.

Last, I am now in the process of establishing a new museum. The collection belongs to me. The museum area covers about 3000m<sup>2</sup> and will have library, exhibition hall, education room. It will be completed by the end of this year. If EMA Board finds it appropriate, it could also be used as the EMA Turkey office. I would like to gather all the work related to museums and museology in this centre and manage it from there. Construction work is still undergoing.

## UNITED KINGDOM by Tim Bryan

### **Brexit and Political Turmoil**

Inevitably the uncertainty and disruption caused by the prolonged and somewhat rancorous process by which the UK has departed from the European Union has caused difficulties for museums. Quite apart from the administrative issues

surround the movement of people and goods, there is evidence that the uncertain financial climate in the UK has had an effect on consumer spending and visitor numbers.

### **The Climate Crisis**

The rise of global warming and environmental issues more generally up the political and social agenda has been reflected in the museum world; individual institutions have introduced initiatives to reduce their carbon footprint and a number of prominent museums have declared 'climate emergencies'.

### **The Post-Colonial Museum**

UK institutions have been grappling with a range of issues linked to how they deal with both the legacy of collections that originate from colonial sources, but importantly also how museum narratives better represent the stories of indigenous people and colonial history more generally. The repatriation of museum objects is the most high-profile result of this work, but important debates are now being had within the sector to ensure that museums better represent these stories.

### **Diversity**

Linked to the post-colonial debate is a more general discussion about ensuring that UK museums more closely represent their communities. This includes a number of areas:

- Breaking down barriers to enable people from diverse background to visit museums and telling stories that resonate with non-traditional audiences Of for example Black & Ethnic Minority groups, LGBTQ+
- Creating a more diverse workforce that moves away from the traditional white middle-class norm
- Using museums and their collections to support community development and community cohesion projects

## **Museums and People**

The role of museums in doing more than just displaying objects has meant that their role in changing lives has been debated and developed. The use of collections to 'change lives' and 'make a difference' through improvements in well-being, community cohesion and engagement is also linked to various initiatives linked to breaking down barriers between museum staff, volunteers and visitors. The co-curation of exhibitions is becoming more common, enabling that content is more directly linked to the community's museums serve.

## **Workforce**

A number of other issues remain ongoing within the UK museum sector; pay for staff remains an issue with staff from the Science Museum taking unprecedented industrial action in support of higher salaries. Questions remain about gender balance, especially at a senior level, along with the lack of diversity already mentioned. Funding cuts continue to effect the museum world, with one direct consequence being a reduction in the number of specialist curatorial staff, and there are worries (outside the national museums) that the lack of collections expertise will have a long-term effect on the sector.

## **The Outlook**

Despite some difficult issues to face, the UK museum sector remains vibrant and positive. Visitor numbers remain healthy, and national local government and independent museums (that make up 2/3 of all museums) are still undertaking new and important projects and maintaining high standards.

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