

[Museum visitors in Serbia \(2010\)](#)

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Abstract

The research project [Museum Visitors in Serbia](#), conducted by the Center for Study in Cultural Development in 2009-10, came out of the project that the Center did for the conference Cultural Policy in the Field of Cultural Heritage and Institution Transformation organized by the Ministry of Culture in May 2009.

The research covered the visitors of 31 museums in Serbia: 24 county museums and the 7 most visited museums in Belgrade.

According to the survey results, both women and men visit museums equally, but greater difference between the genders is observed in the visits to certain types of museums. In the indicated research period, museums were visited the most by respondents aging between 36 and 50 (20.8%), and the least by those from the group of under 12 and over 65 years of age (a total of 9.7%). The most represented visitor structure in Serbian museums consists of the highly educated (37.2%), with more than half of them from urban areas. As for visitor occupation, the majority are 'experts' in various fields, or students.

Examination of the frequency of museum visits shows that two-thirds of museum audiences consist of occasional visitors (63.8%) visiting museums once or twice in a period of three months, while only one-third of the respondents go to museums on a regular basis (29.9%). The factors influencing attendance are related to current exhibitions (58.1%) or an interestingly designed permanent exhibition (30.4%), whose existence is one of the biggest problems for museums in Serbia today. This is a fact that could help curators find a basis for the future, for more intensive work on a more dynamic conceptualization of exhibitions, by listening to the wishes of their fellow citizens and encouraging greater openness for contemporary trends.

When speaking of old and new media, the most accessible source of information about museum events are daily newspapers, as well as highlighted information visible on the museum building, banners, billboards, etc. Also, the audience usually makes their choice about the museum visit based on advice from the people they are close to (31.7%). Furthermore, the reasons for visiting museums are mostly of a cognitive nature (43.9%); however, there are many who want to experience their visit to a museum as creative, exciting, or a relief from everyday duties (54.5% in total), which can serve as a good guideline for museum curators in Serbia, who can turn museums into places for creative learning, conversations, and entertainment. Different types of cultural animation and mediation, such as lectures, workshops, concerts, film projections, literary evenings, panels, and performances could contribute to the complementing of the vision of a particular exhibition, but they are still undeveloped in the minds of both visitors and curators.

Respondents mostly find the working hours of museums to be acceptable, as well as ticket prices, which is always symbolic. The last two questions of this survey were related to giving recommendations and assessments of their museum visits: the majority of visitors (98.1%) would recommend to others to visit the museum they were in, and the most frequent assessments of a specific visit were excellent (61.5%) and very good (28.4%).

The analyzed results of the research project Museum Visitors in Serbia help in opening new perspectives related to working with audiences, assessing how museum institutions affect their environment, and indicating the necessity for employees in museums to take a more active stand towards the social and cultural environment.

[Link](#)