



MAIN DATA ON CULTURE IN THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA FOR 2023

Statistical surveys in the field of culture conducted by the National Statistical Institute provide information on the activities of museums, theatres, libraries, cinemas, radio and television programme activity, film production.

1. Cultural institutions

In the coverage of cultural institutions are included museums, theatres and music formations (performing arts) and libraries.

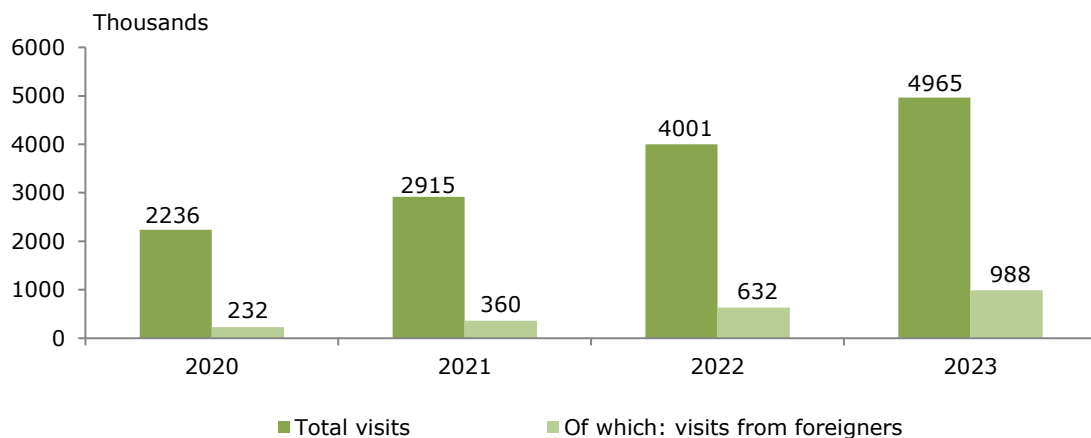
1.1. Museums

As of 31.12.2023, in the country, there were 189 functioning museums registered according to the Cultural Heritage Act. By thematic scope, museums were 101 general and 88 specialized (incl. art galleries).

Movable cultural values in 2023 forming the National Museum Stock were 7 845 thousand stock units, and in comparison with 2022, their number increased by 43 thousand (0.5%). 472 thousand stock units were digitized, which is with 9 thousand more in comparison with the previous year.

Visits to museums in 2023 were 4 965 thousand, and in comparison with 2022, their number increased by 21.1% (Figure 1). During the days of free admission, 15.9% of all visits (789 thousand) were carried out. An increase in the number of visits by foreigners to museums was also registered - with 356 thousand, or by 56.4% in comparison to the previous year.

Figure 1. Museum visits



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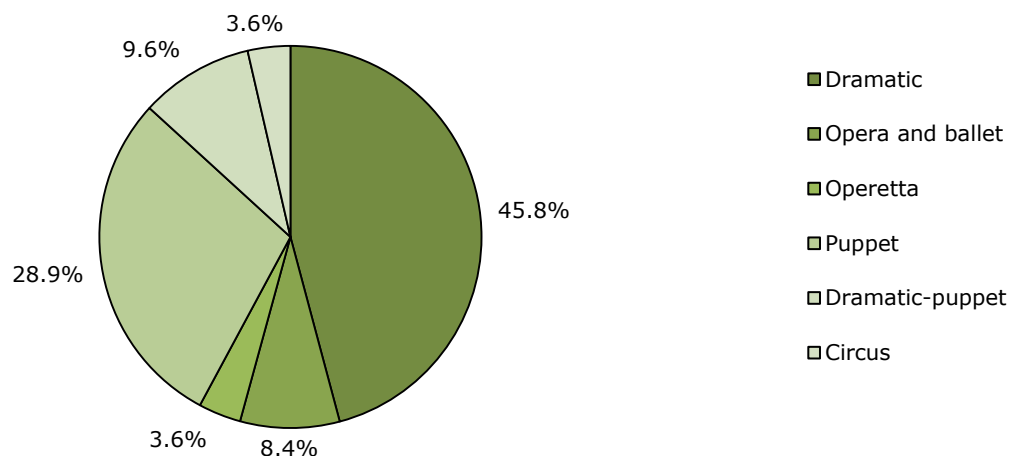
1.2. Performing arts

In 2023, in the currently operating 83 *theatres* in the country were organized 16 125 performances, visited by 2 249 thousand visitors, and in comparison with 2022, the number of performances and the number of visits increased respectively by 22.2% and 31.5%. The average number of visitors per one performance was 139, and increased by 9 persons compared to the previous year.

The distribution of theatres by type (Figure 2) and by realized performances in 2023 was as follows:

- 38 dramatic theatres with 6 387 performances;
- 7 opera and ballet theatres with 1002 performances;
- 3 operetta theatres with 464 performances.
- 24 puppet theatres with 5 785 performances;
- 8 dramatic-puppet theatres with 2 094 performances;
- 3 circuses with 393 performances.

Figure 2. Structure of the theatres by type



In 2023, there were 76 *music formations* operating in the country - 11 philharmonic and symphony orchestras, 28 professional ensembles for folk songs and dances and 37 orchestras. In comparison with 2022, the number of their performances increased by 37.6%.

1.3. Libraries

In 2023, the number of libraries with library collections above 200 thousand library units was 49. Their total collection was formed by 35 901 thousand library documents (Figure 3) - books, continued editions - newspapers, magazines, bulletins and others, with books

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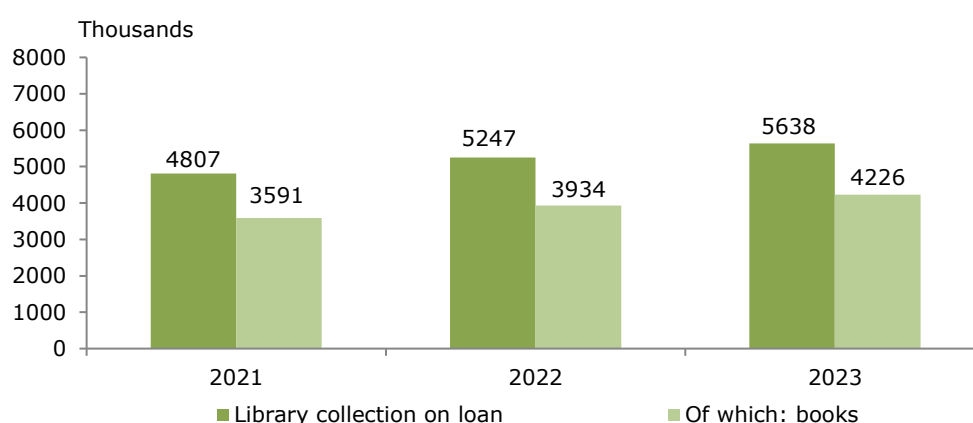
having the highest share of its structure - 55.3% (19 848 thousand), followed by the other library documents (audio-visual, electronic, graphic and cartographic editions, micro-forms, patents and standards) - 29.5% (10 608 thousand) and continued editions - 15.2% (5 445 thousand).

Figure 3. Library collection



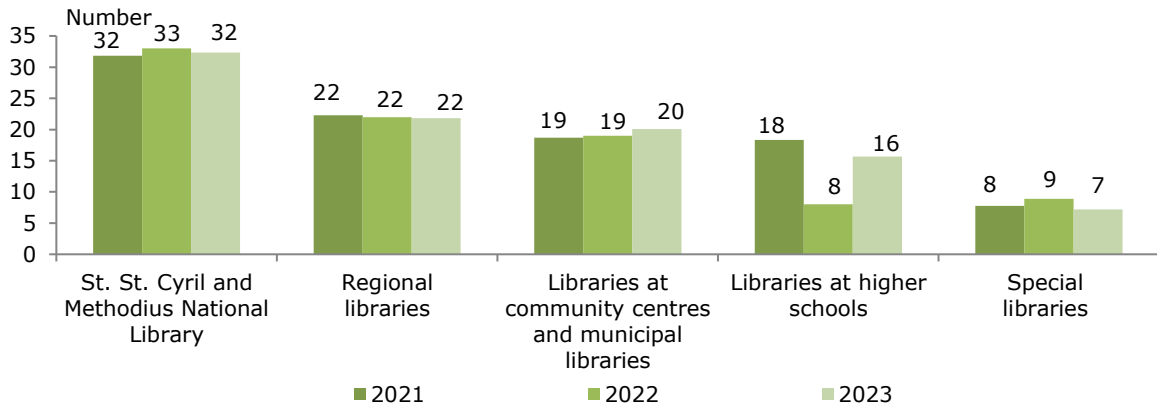
The registered readers (library users) were 270 thousand, which is 14% less than the previous year, and the library visits have increased by 15.7% and reached 4 337 thousand. The total library collections loaned was 5 638 thousand library units (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Library loan collection



In 2023, in the National Library 'St. St. Cyril and Methodius' were registered 8 491 thousand library documents, which is 53 thousand more in comparison with the previous year. In the regional libraries (26) in the district centers, there were library collections of 11 957 thousand units and the library collection loaned there increased by 277 thousand in comparison with 2022.

Figure 5. Library collection loaned per reader by kind of the library



2. Audio-visual activities

Audio-visual activities cover the activities of film production, cinemas, and radio and television programme activities.

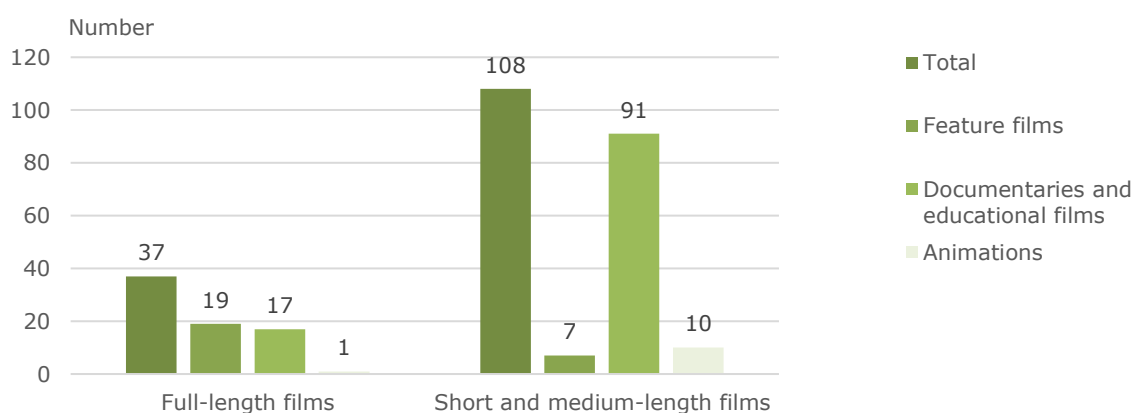
2.1. Film production¹

In 2023, a total of 145 full-length, short and medium-length films were produced², of which 48 for the cinema network, 92 for the television and 5 for other purposes.

There were 37 full-length films reported (19 feature films, 17 documentaries and 1 animation).

The number of the reported short and medium-length films was 108 (including 5 series with a total of 47 episodes), of which 7 feature films, 91 documentaries and 10 animations.

Figure 6. Film production by kind and genre in 2023



¹ Includes nationally financed film productions and co-productions with the financial participation of national producers.

² Preliminary data.

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2.2. Cinemas

At the end of 2023, the number of cinemas in the country was 81, and the number of screens - 225, and their number decreased by 4 and 2 respectively, in comparison with 2022. The multiplex cinemas³ were 11 and in them, 57.2% of all screenings were performed, and 63.8% of all cinema visits were made (table 1).

Table 1. Cinemas, screens, screenings and visits

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Cinemas - number	70	76	85	81
Screens - number	215	221	227	225
Screenings - thousand	163	211	301	310
Visits - thousand	1316	2400	3816	4412

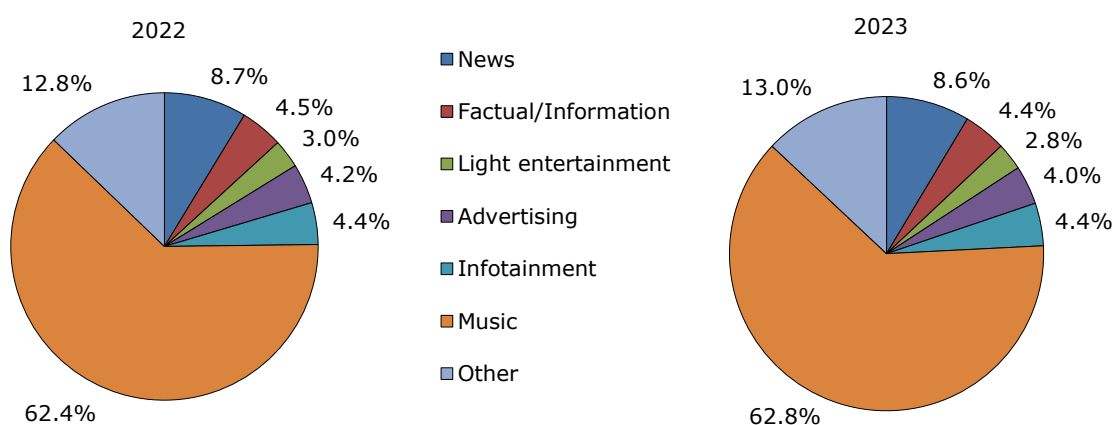
In 2023, in comparison with the previous year, the number of the screenings in the cinemas increased by 2.8%, and of the visits - by 15.6%.

The biggest number of cinemas was found in the Yugozapaden region - 27 cinemas with 122 thousand screenings, visited by 2 184 thousand persons. In the capital, 18 cinemas were functioning with 76 screens, and 2 117 films were screened.

2.3. Radio programme activities

In 2023, in the country, there were 73 registered and licensed radio operators, which broadcasted 606.0 thousand hours of radio broadcasts. This is with 2 415 hours more in comparison with 2022. The biggest share of radio broadcasts was of the musical ones - 62.8%, followed by the news (bulletins, commentaries, sporting news and forecasts) - 8.6% (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Structure of radio broadcasts by type



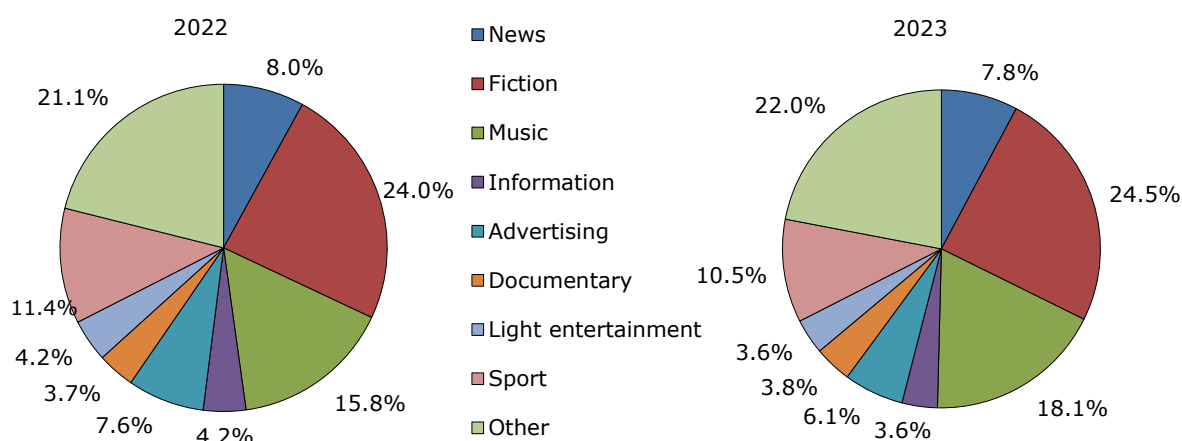
³ Cinema complex with 8 or more screens.

2.4. Television programme activities

In 2023, in the country, there were 113 registered and licensed Bulgarian TV operators, which was one more than the previous year. Terrestrial, cable and satellite televisions broadcasted a total of 772.3 thousand hours of programmes, or 0.7% less in comparison with 2022. The specialized programmes (Figure 8) were distributed by hours as follows:

- Fiction programmes (feature and television) - 188.9 thousand hours;
- Music programmes - 140.1 thousand hours;
- Sport programmes - 80.7 thousand hours;
- News - 62.1 thousand hours;
- Advertisements - 60.4 thousand hours;
- Educational programmes – 8.4 thousand hours.

Figure 8. Structure of TV broadcasts by type



Methodological notes

Source of information about the activities of **museums** is a regularly conducted annual survey. Their activity is characterized by: museum stock units, visitors, cultural and educational activities of museums, personnel, revenues and expenditures and material-technical base of museums. In the number of museums are included independent museums, established by the order of art. 25, para. 1 and para. 2 of the Cultural Heritage Act (promulgated, SG No. 19 of 13 March 2009), and carrying out activities during the respective year.

Performing arts are object of a separate annual statistical survey. Units of observation are theatres, operas, operettas, circuses, musical formations, companies and associations that organize and hold recitals and concerts (pop, folk, symphonic, chamber, choral music, brass bands, mixed and others). Their activity covers the following main characteristics:

stages, seating capacity, performances, visitors, stagings by nationality of the author, including new stagings.

Activity of **libraries** with over 200 thousand library units is object of an annual statistical survey. Their activity has the following main breakdowns of characteristics: library collection (books, continued editions and other library documents), readers, visits, library loan collection, personnel, revenues and expenditures, computers, libraries area.

Film production statistical data comes as a result of an annual exhaustive survey. Subject of observation is the activity of the Bulgarian film producers, which covers produced films for the year intended for exhibition in cinemas as well as for television broadcasting. Films produced exclusively for the internet are excluded. The activity of **cinemas** includes the following main characteristics - cinema seats, screens, screenings, visitors, ticket revenues. Film clubs and mobile cinemas are not observed.

Activity of **radio and TV operators** includes the following main characteristics - programs by type/genre in hours, incomes and expenditures.

More information and data on culture can be found on the NSI website, theme Culture (<http://www.nsi.bg/en/content/4526/culture>) and Information System 'Infostat' (https://infostat.nsi.bg/infostat/pages/module.jsf?x_2=36)