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“Museum Tendencies and Perspectives: Focus on Lithuania and Latvia”
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Museums and Tourism: Tendencies and Perspectives

Latvia’s Experience During the Pandemic

Authors of the study:
Dr art. **Baiba Tjarve,** Senior Researcher at the Scientific Research Centre, Latvian Academy of Culture
Mg. sc. soc. **Gints Klāsons,** Senior Researcher, “Laboratory of Analytical and Strategic Studies” Ltd
Bc. art. **Laura Brutāne,** Scientific Assistant at the Scientific Research Centre, Latvian Academy of Culture
Mg. sc. soc. **Anna Selecka,** Researcher, “Laboratory of Analytical and Strategic Studies” Ltd

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1. Introduction

During the last two years (2020-2021), both the cultural and tourism industries have experienced significant changes in their daily operations within organisations, as well as with their customers/visitors as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Both industries witnessed a sharp decline in their level of activity, as well as in the size of audiences. The situation in both sectors has fluctuated greatly over these two years. In May 2020, the Baltic countries created the so-called “Baltic Bubble”, allowing free travel between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania throughout the summer. Nationals of the Baltic states and persons with the right to reside in these countries could travel without restrictions to Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia if they had not been outside the Baltic states in the previous 14 days, if they did not have to self-isolate and if they did not show signs of a respiratory infection. The “Baltic Bubble” lasted until the beginning of September 2020, when travel restrictions were reinstated in Lithuania and Estonia as the number of Covid-19 cases grew. In 2021, the situation was different and travel restrictions were less strict. Vaccination began and digital Covid-19 certificates were introduced. For vaccinated and recovered persons, travel was already possible in a much wider range of countries.

In 2020, the “Baltic Bubble” created conditions for more active tourism flows from neighbouring countries and, at the same time, motivated people to travel more locally — within their own country. As data shows, it has also contributed at least partly to the growth of audiences in Latvian museums. Whether the changes in tourism flows and audiences introduced by the “Baltic Bubble” will create new patterns in tourism between neighbouring countries and locally can only be assessed over the next few years. But this study summarises data and information on initial observations, as well as defines preconditions and factors for the more active attraction of tourists from neighbouring countries to visit Latvian museums. In addition, the importance and potential of local travellers (Latvian residents) as a separate target group for tourism in museums is highlighted.

In 2020, there were 111 state-recognised, i.e., accredited, museums in Latvia, which, together with their territorial units, accounted for 156 museum attractions[1]. In addition to the accredited museums, there are around 200 private, non-accredited museums and collections[2]. In total, it comprises more than 350 museum attractions (museums, their branches, private collections, individual exhibitions), which are densely dispersed throughout the territory of Latvia. Every municipality in Latvia has several museum attractions. In this respect, museums are easily accessible objects for tourists almost everywhere in Latvia.

This study has been prepared by the initiative of the International Council of Museums Latvian National Committee (ICOM Latvia) and in collaboration with the International Council of Museums Lithuanian National Committee (ICOM Lithuania) as part of a broader project[3].

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[1] Annual Public Report 2020 of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia. Available from: https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/media/16523/download

[2] Sedleniece U. “Museums in Latvia” (“*Muzeji Latvijā”*) National Encyclopaedia. https://enciklopedija.lv/skirklis/21879-muzeji-Latvijā (accessed on 14.12.2021)

[3] Within the framework of the International Council of Museums Solidarity Project “Museum Tendencies and Perspectives: focus on Lithuania and Latvia” (ICOM Solidarity Project “*Museum Tendencies and Perspectives: Focus on Lithuania and Latvia”)* various activities took place, more information on which is available on the ICOM Latvia website: www.latvia.icom.museum.lv.

2. Methodology of the Study

The aim of the study was to analyse the current practice of Latvian museums in working with foreign and local tourists in a comprehensive and detailed way, as well as to identify the potential for the near future. In order to obtain a diverse view of the topic, the methodology of the study involved analysing the topic from two perspectives: (1) from the tourism aspect (how the tourism sector sees the role of museums in tourism, what strengths and weaknesses can be identified in the tourism aspect), (2) from the museum sector aspect (how museums themselves see their role in tourism, what the current practice in tourism activities is, what the indicators for attracting tourists are). The synergistic analysis of these two aspects allows defining of the most objective conclusions about the current situation and possible potential for attracting tourists to Latvian museums. It should be emphasised that the study included both accredited and non-accredited museums, which make up a significant part of the total offer of Latvian museums. The conclusions and recommendations therefore apply to the entire museum sector, not just to the accredited set of museums.

The following research activities were carried out as part of the study:

1) Secondary analysis of previously conducted studies, surveys, statistical data (gathering data and indicators describing trends in the tourism sector and the development of museum attendance).
2) Individual in-depth and expert interviews with representatives of the tourism sector (12 interviews).
3) Individual in-depth and expert interviews with representatives of the museum sector (10 interviews).
4) In-depth interviews with experts in the tourism and culture sectors (six interviews).
5) Quantitative sociological survey of the Latvian population (sample size — 1015, survey fieldwork implemented by the research centre SKDS, method — face-to-face interviews at respondents' homes).
6) Quantitative sociological survey of museums in Latvia and Lithuania (sample size — 124 museums in Latvia, 67 museums in Lithuania, 191 museums in total).

The study was carried out between April and December 2021.

3. Main Conclusions

(1) **Before the pandemic, on average, around two million foreign travellers came to Latvia for leisure purposes each year.** Research shows that around **one in four tourists also visit museums.** So **the total number of foreign tourists before the pandemic was at least 0.5 million.** This is also in line with the official museum attendance statistics, which show that an average of 345 thousand foreign travellers visit Latvian museums annually in organised groups, and it is possible to guess that there are at least 150 thousand individual visitors. Of course, **in a pandemic these figures were much lower.** For example, in 2020, the total number of leisure tourists in Latvia was only 0.49 million.

(2) Approximately **60% of all foreign holidaymakers stay in Latvia for just one day.** This aspect plays an important role in the offer of museums — if travellers stay only one day in Latvia, the offer of museums must be attractive enough to compete with other leisure options. For the multi-day traveller target group, museums already have more opportunities to become part of the overall tourism offer and an additional stop.

(3) **The countries most represented in the target group of leisure tourists** in 2020 **are: Lithuania** (79.3 thousand), **Estonia** (52.4 thousand), **Russia** (48.5 thousand), the **United Kingdom** (45.3 thousand). **Germany** (32.2 thousand) and **Finland** (31.2 thousand) are also worth mentioning. Accordingly, these could be considered as target countries for promoting visits to Latvian museums.

(4) **Local travellers — residents of Latvia who go on trips around the country — could also be considered an important part of the potential audience of museums.** The number of people travelling domestically in Latvia increased significantly during the pandemic. **The total number of Latvian citizens who travelled in Latvia in 2020 was 868.7 thousand** (54% of the total Latvian population over the age of 15 years old). This is significantly more than in the three years before the pandemic, when an average of 644 thousand people (40% of the total population) travelled across Latvia.

(5) **In Latvia, there are a total of 350 museum attractions** (accredited museums and their branches, non-accredited museums, private collections, individual exhibitions), which are dispersed throughout the territory of Latvia. **Every municipality in Latvia has several museum attractions.** In this respect, **museums are easily accessible objects for tourists almost everywhere in Latvia.**

(6) Museums are just one stop on the way for tourists. It is therefore **essential that the museum, as a tourist attraction, is integrated into a wider and comprehensive tourism offer.** For example, local tourists (residents of Latvia) prefer to visit nature and animal parks (76%), manor houses and castles (47%), and historical sites such as memorials, ruins, etc. (45%). Museums, art sites and private collections are frequented by 25% of local tourists. Local tourists are equally interested in leisure and amusement parks (26%). Analysis of the survey data shows that in 2021 there was a strong correlation between local travel and museum visits — **43% of those who had travelled around Latvia also visited museums.**

(7) **Latvian museums themselves are cautious in evaluating their success in attracting tourists from neighbouring countries** — only 12% of museum representatives in the survey rate this work as successful, while 64% rate it as moderately successful, and 21% could not give a specific rating overall.

(8) **Latvian museums identify local Latvian travellers from their own or other regions as important target groups of tourists, but less often — tourists from neighbouring countries.** 49% of museums name travellers from other regions of Latvia as an important target group for

tourism, and 27% — travellers from their own region. 39% of museums identify tourists from Lithuania as their key target group, and 30% — tourists from Estonia.

(9) **A majority (63%) of museums believe they have great potential to attract tourists from neighbouring countries.** At the same time: only 30% of museums take into account tourists' interests and preferences when planning museum educational activities; only 27% of museums regularly follow tourism trends in order to adapt their offer; only 21% of museums claim that tourists are an important priority in their work; only 19% of museums have exhibitions or activities aimed specifically at foreign tourists. In particular, **only 8% of museum budgets are allocated for attracting foreign tourists.** The data shows that **while a large number of museums have the potential to attract tourists, their current capacity to implement this potential is very limited.**

(10) Data on the activities of museums in attracting tourists show that **Latvian museums are currently rather passive in the field of tourism** — information is being prepared and disseminated through more easily accessible information and communication channels, but **only a few museums are more active and proactive in attracting tourists.**

(11) **The majority of museums point to a lack of funding** (72%) **as the most significant obstacle to more active work in attracting tourists. Lack of human resources** is almost as common (62%) (and an additional 49% point to overworking of employees). Some museums also reported **a lack of skills and knowledge** — 55% said they lacked tourism marketing skills, 39% — foreign language skills, 32% — tourism data and information. It should be stressed that the case of each museum is different and this data cannot be applied in the same way to all museums. In some museums, the most important constraints are related to skills and knowledge, in others — to infrastructure, and in others — to location or other leisure opportunities in the area. At the same time, **almost all museums are constrained by a lack of funding and human resources.**

(12) The research shows that the geographical location of a museum, the extent and diversity of its exhibitions, whether it is located in an outstanding cultural and historical monument, etc. are not decisive for tourists' interest in a museum. While these individual aspects may attract the attention of tourists, **any museum can become a tourist attraction** — even a small one or one that is further off the usual tourist routes. **The overall experience of the visit and the story of the exhibition are key success factors.** However, factors that contribute to attracting tourists (but do not determine the success of a particular museum) include: a city or a larger geographical area that attracts tourists (e.g., Cēsis or Kuldīga); an outstanding cultural heritage monument, a special object (Rundāle Palace, Cēsis Medieval Castle, Riga Art Nouveau Centre); the museum has a surrounding area — a garden, castle ruins — as a place for walks and additional activities; there are other tourist attractions nearby that tourists choose as their destination — these are both competitors but also attract tourists.

(13) For museums to be more active in the field of tourism, it is essential **to raise awareness and discuss tourism activities in the sector as a whole.** Museums have different defined functions — working with tourist audiences is just one of their tasks. Moreover, Latvia's museums are very diverse — the same solution for developing tourism potential does not fit all of them. Each museum should articulate, as part of its development strategy, the extent to which it is positioned (or more accurately, can be positioned) as part of the tourism industry.` The overall potential of museums to attract tourists depends to a large extent on joint decisions and actions by the sector, so a common sector opinion on the role of museums in tourism development would facilitate both the coordination of activities and greater synergies between the cultural sector and the tourism sector.

(14) In order to develop and communicate the museum offer to specific target groups, including tourists from specific countries, **it is necessary to understand the existing and potential audience of**

the museum, as well as the specifics of the target groups. It is impossible to work effectively in the tourism sector without knowledge of tourism tendencies and analysis of the flows of specific target groups. This would certainly not be **a task for each individual museum, but should be implemented jointly and centrally in the sector** (e.g., as an annual overview of the latest data and information, seminars with tourism experts, etc.).

(15) **Capacity strengthening of museums is crucial for growing tourism potential.** The data and evaluations obtained within the framework of this research show that currently the capacity of museums to cultivate tourism is very limited (in terms of human resources, time resources, financial resources). The question of available support to strengthen museums' tourism activities is therefore relevant.

(16) **It is necessary to provide financial support for specific tourism activities in museums.** In addition to the availability of human and time resources, the availability of funding is also a crucial factor in promoting tourism in museums. According to this research, only one in ten museums has at least a minimum budget for tourism activities. Given the limited financial capacity of museums, it can be argued that additional external funding is possibly the only way to significantly strengthen museums' tourism activities.

(17) **It is necessary to provide training for museum staff.** The information from this study shows that there are several aspects of training needs: (a) foreign language skills for staff working directly or indirectly with tourists or coordinating the tourism aspect of the museum, (b) tourism-specific competences and skills (both in terms of data acquisition and analysis and adaptation of the museum offer), (c) museum-specific external communication and marketing skills (both nationally and internationally).

(18) One museum has limited resources to carry out targeted advertising or communication campaigns in other countries. **Communication with target countries and potential audiences should therefore be developed in cooperation with other players in the sector** — national and local authorities, tourism associations and service providers. Municipalities are one of the most important partners of museums in developing the tourism offer and reaching target groups of tourists. Most often, it is the offer of a city or region as a whole that is developed and promoted as a tourist destination, rather than the activities of an individual cultural organisation (including a museum). Close cooperation and **integrated cultural and tourism policies** are therefore essential for a museum's successful inclusion in tourist routes. Cooperation can be discussed in several aspects: a) cooperation between museums in developing joint tourism offers, b) cooperation between museums and tourist information centres for successful information circulation, including information updating, c) cooperation between museums and tour operators and guides, d) possible cooperation between museums and diaspora organisations to provide more information to diaspora members who travel to Latvia more or less regularly.

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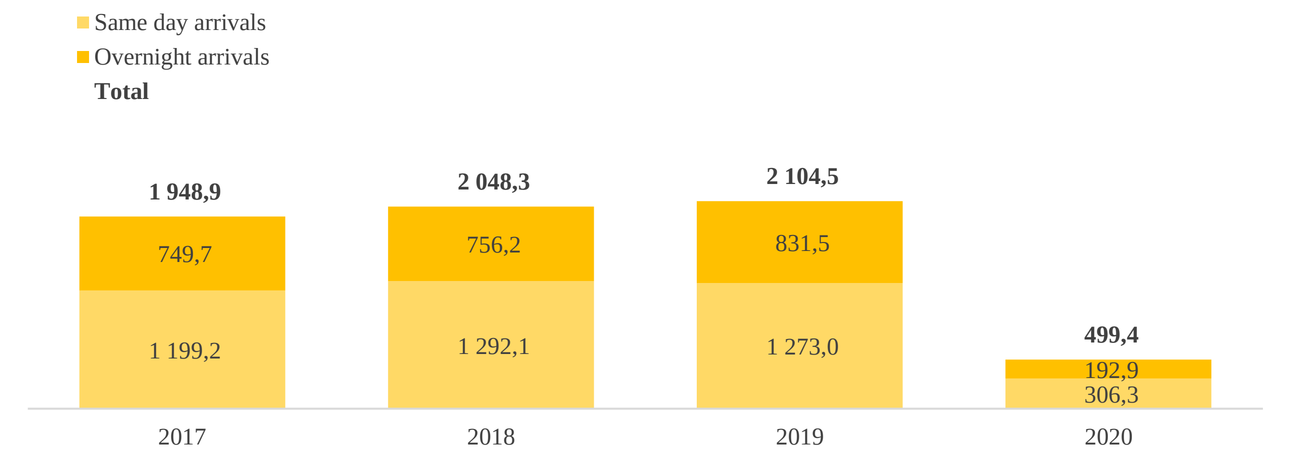
4. Context Description: Tourism and Museums

This chapter provides a contextual **description of the current and potential attraction of tourists to Latvian museums, based on tourism and museum industry statistics and research data.** This gives an idea of how successful museums have been so far in attracting tourists from local and neighbouring countries, and what the potential for attracting this target audience could be in the near future.

4.1. Tourism Tendencies

The number of foreign travellers to Latvia for leisure purposes increased annually in the last three years before the pandemic — 1.95 million foreign travellers came to Latvia for leisure purposes in 2017, and **2.10 million** in 2019.[4] In 2020, the number of such travellers fell to 0.50 million. Approximately **60% of all foreign holidaymakers stay in Latvia for just one day.** This aspect plays an important role in the offer of museums — if travellers stay only one day in Latvia, the offer of museums must be attractive enough to compete with other leisure options. **For the multi-day traveller target group, museums already have more opportunities to become part of the overall tourism offer and an additional stop.**

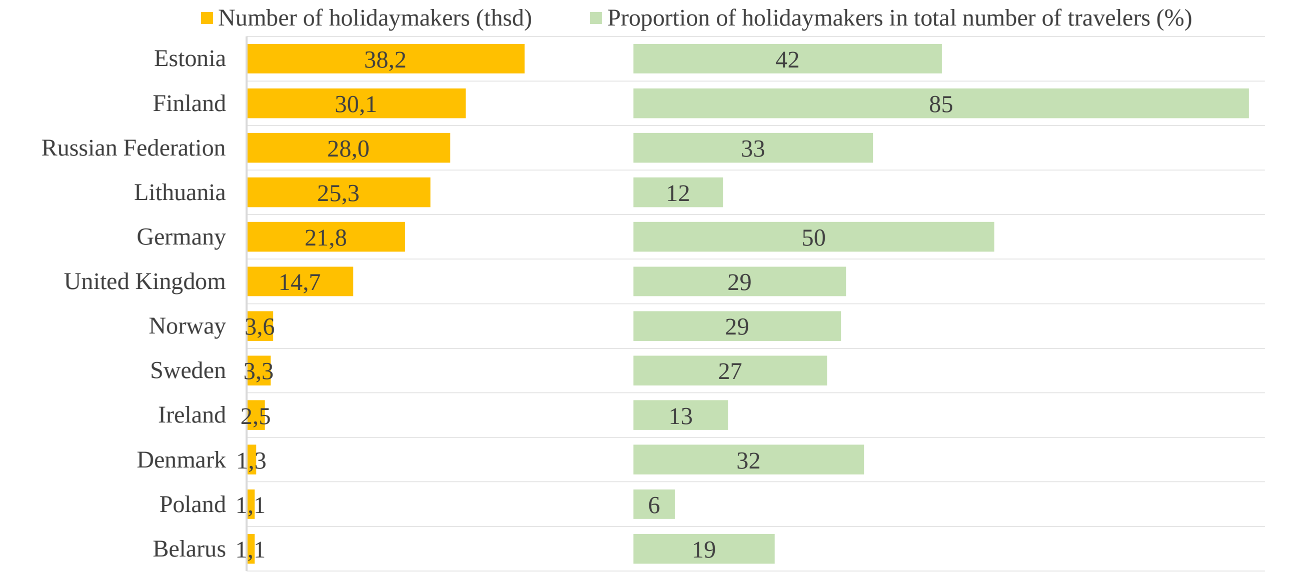
Graph 1. Foreign travellers to Latvia for leisure purposes (in thousands)
Data source: Official Statistics Portal. Central Statistical Bureau. Available from: https://data.stat.gov.lv/



More detailed information is available for multi-day holidaymakers. **In 2020, the largest number of multi-day holidaymakers in Latvia came from Estonia** (38.2 thousand travellers in total), **Finland** (30.1 thousand), **Russia** (28.0 thousand), **Lithuania** (25.3 thousand) and **Germany** (21.8 thousand). Interestingly, there are marked differences in travellers' intentions by country in Latvia. For example, 85% of all Finnish travellers visited Latvia for leisure purposes, while only 12% of all Lithuanian travellers visited Latvia for recreational purposes, while the rest had other reasons of visit (transit for a large proportion of travellers). Here we should also stress an important statistical point: **when analysing tourism statistics, it is not the total number of people entering the country that should be taken into account, but a more detailed assessment of the purpose of the visit.** If we want to define the potential audience of museums, it does not make sense to include transit migrants or those who come to Latvia on business. Realistically, the potential audience could be those who come here for leisure trips and possibly also those who come to visit friends and relatives.

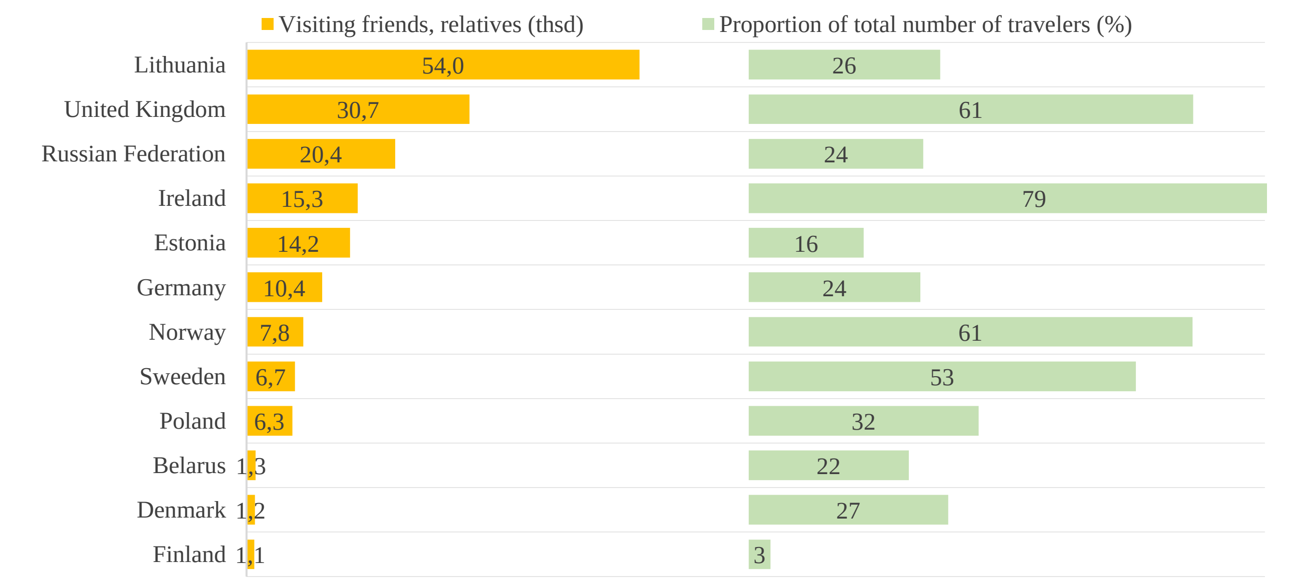
[4] Note: The total number of foreigners entering Latvia is considerably higher (before the pandemic — about 7 million a year), however, in the context of this study, the number of foreigners entering Latvia for leisure purposes is relevant. Therefore, this chapter uses data specifically on leisure travellers.

Graph 2. Number of foreign multi-day holidaymakers in Latvia in 2020 by country
Data source: Official Statistics Portal. Central Statistical Bureau. Available from: https://data.stat.gov.lv/
Note: Only countries for which 2020 statistics are available are included.

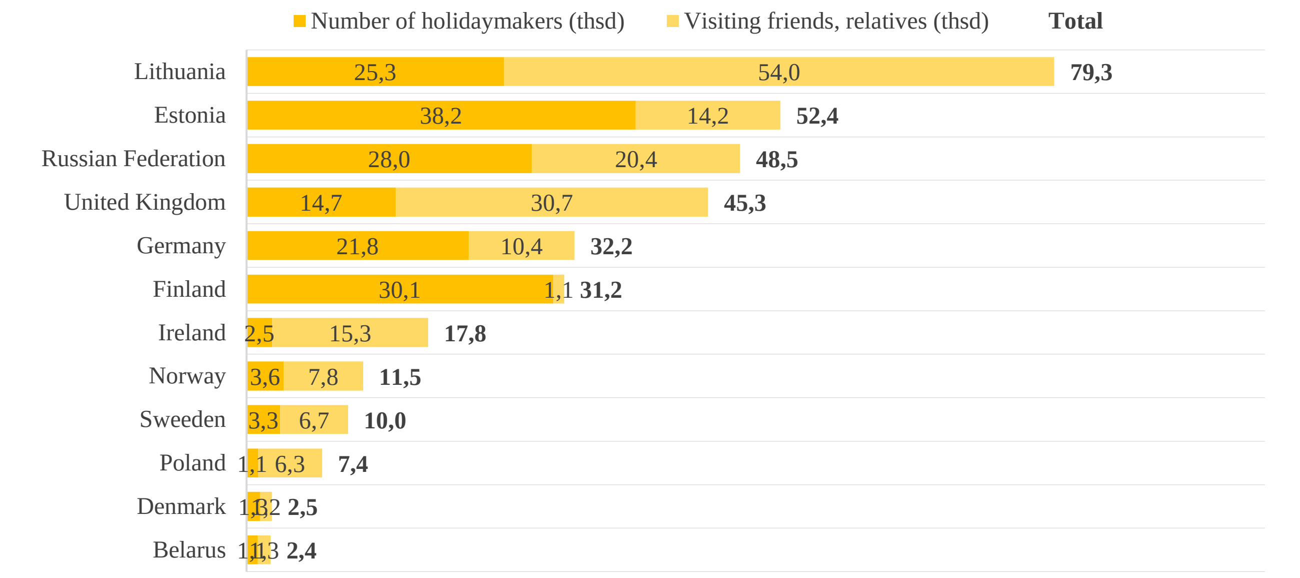


Visiting friends and relatives living in Latvia is also an important reason for foreigners to visit Latvia — these migrants could also be considered potential museum visitors (especially as **a large number of them are members of the Latvian diaspora).** In 2020, 29% of all foreign travellers to Latvia were visiting friends and relatives. In the case of individual countries, the majority of travellers to Latvia went to visit relatives and friends — 79% of all travellers from Ireland, 61% from the UK and Norway. In the case of the countries in question, it is possible to speculate that many of these travellers are members of the Latvian diaspora. **Museums should consider attracting this target group,** and the local Latvian population is an important communication channel for reaching it, which does not require specific communication campaigns abroad. **In this context, museums could also benefit from cooperation with diaspora organisations.**

Graph 3. Number of foreign holidaymakers in Latvia in 2020 by country, whose purpose of travel was to visit friends, relatives
Data source: Official Statistics Portal. Central Statistical Bureau. Available from: https://data.stat.gov.lv/
Note: Only countries for which 2020 statistics are available are included.

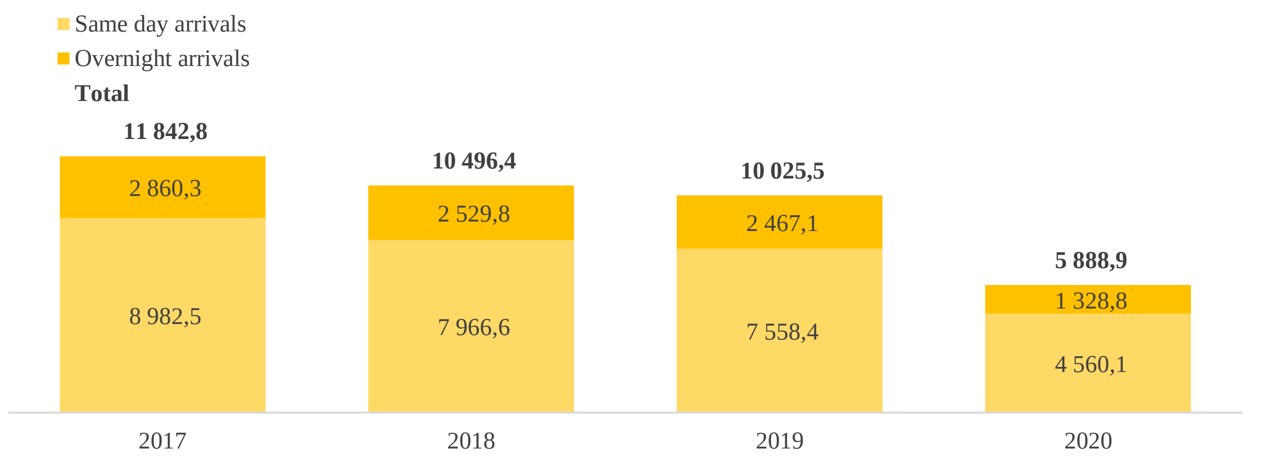


__Graph 4. Number of foreign travellers in Latvia in 2020 by country (in thousands), whose purpose of travel was to visit friends, relatives or for recreation__
Data source: Official Statistics Portal. Central Statistical Bureau. Available from: https://data.stat.gov.lv/
Note: Only countries for which 2020 statistics are available are included.



Local travellers — residents of Latvia who go on trips around the country — **could also be considered an important part of the potential audience of museums.** While the target group of foreign travellers made about 2 million leisure trips to Latvia per year in the pre-pandemic period, Latvians made five times more leisure trips – about 10 million each year (total number of domestic trips, including visits to relatives and friends). In 2020, the number of such journeys had fallen to 5.8 million, which is also a significant number. A common feature for foreign and Latvian travellers is that **the majority of these trips are one-day trips** (60% for foreign tourists, 75% for Latvian travellers).

__Graph 5. Latvian resident leisure and other personal trips in Latvia (in thousands)__
Data source: Official Statistics Portal. Central Statistical Bureau. Available from: https://data.stat.gov.lv/

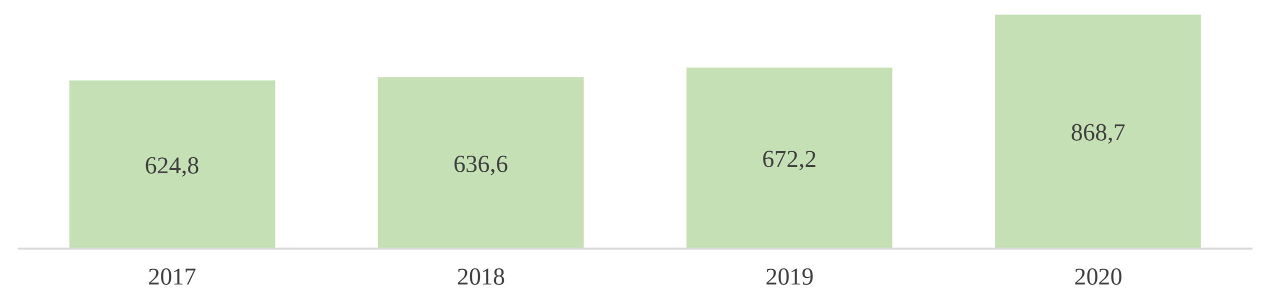


The number of people travelling domestically in Latvia increased significantly during the pandemic, however, the frequency of trips decreased significantly. The total number of Latvian citizens who travelled Latvia in 2020 was 868.7 thousand (54% of the total Latvian population over the age of 15 years old[5]). This is significantly more than in the three years before the pandemic, when

[5] Age group for which tourism statistics are calculated.

an average of 644 thousand people (40% of the total population) travelled across Latvia. At the same time, 2020 saw a significant decrease in the number of trips made by each traveller. While in 2017 each Latvian traveller made 19 trips per year on average, in 2020 it was only 6.8 trips on average (this is of course due to pandemic restrictions).

Graph 6. Latvian residents who made leisure and other personal trips within Latvia (in thousands)
Data source: Official Statistics Portal. Central Statistical Bureau. Available from: https://data.stat.gov.lv/



Graph 7. Latvian residents who made leisure and other personal trips within Latvia – average number of trips per year
Data source: Official Statistics Portal. Central Statistical Bureau. Available from: https://data.stat.gov.lv/

4.2. Museum Visits

In 2020, **there were 111 state-recognised,** i.e. **accredited, museums in Latvia**, which, together with their territorial units, accounted for **156 museum attractions**[6]. In addition to the accredited museums, there are **around 200 private, non-accredited museums and collections**[7]**.** In total, it comprises **more than 350 museum attractions spread across the entire territory of Latvia.** Every municipality in Latvia has several museum attractions. In this respect, **museums are easily accessible objects for tourists almost everywhere in Latvia.**

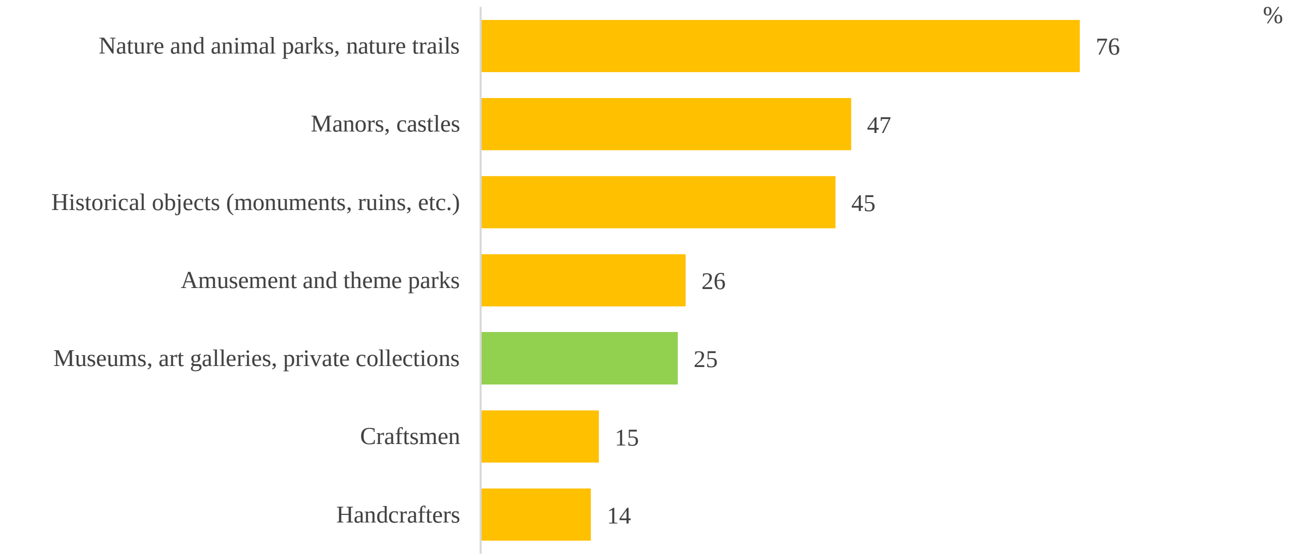
About one in four tourists visit museums. Data from a survey[8] conducted by the Investment and Development Agency of Latvia (LIAA) in November 2021 show that local tourists (residents of

[6]Annual Public Report 2020 of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia. Available from: https://www.km.gov.lv/lv/media/16523/download
[7] Sedleniece U. "Museums in Latvia" ("*Muzeji Latvijā"*) National Encyclopedia. https://enciklopedija.lv/skirklis/21879-muzeji-Latvijā (accessed on 14.12.2021)
[8] LIAA survey of the Latvian population, November 2021, "Norstat Latvija": https://lvportals.lv/dienaskartiba/335648-liaa-aptauja-iedzivotaju-galamerki-latvija-visbiezak-ir-dabas-takas-un-dzivnieku-parki-2021

Latvia) prefer to visit nature and animal parks (76%), manors and castles (47%), as well as historical sites such as memorials, ruins, etc. (45%). Museums, art sites and private collections are frequented by 25% of local tourists. Local tourists are equally interested in leisure and amusement parks (26%). The fact that museums as a tourist attraction are of interest to approximately one in four tourists is also confirmed by research conducted by the University of Latvia on the travel habits of members of the Latvian diaspora in the territory of Latvia[9]. It identified that 25% of the Latvian diaspora had visited museums and 27% —– cultural and historical sites during their holidays in Latvia. The most frequent diaspora tourism activities are visiting restaurants and cafés (68%), relaxing by the sea, lake or river (60%), visiting nature attractions (45%), attending events and tourist attractions in Riga (30% and 37% respectively).

The 25% of tourists who choose to visit museums accounted for around 500 thousand of the total foreign tourist flow in the years before the pandemic. This estimate is also broadly in line with the official statistics on museum visits (discussed later in the report) – an average of 345 thousand foreign travellers visit Latvian museums annually in organised groups, and it is possible to guess that there at least 150 thousand individual visitors. Whether and how these tendencies will change in the coming years in the context of the pandemic is impossible to predict. But these calculations can be used to analyse and plan tourism activities in museums.

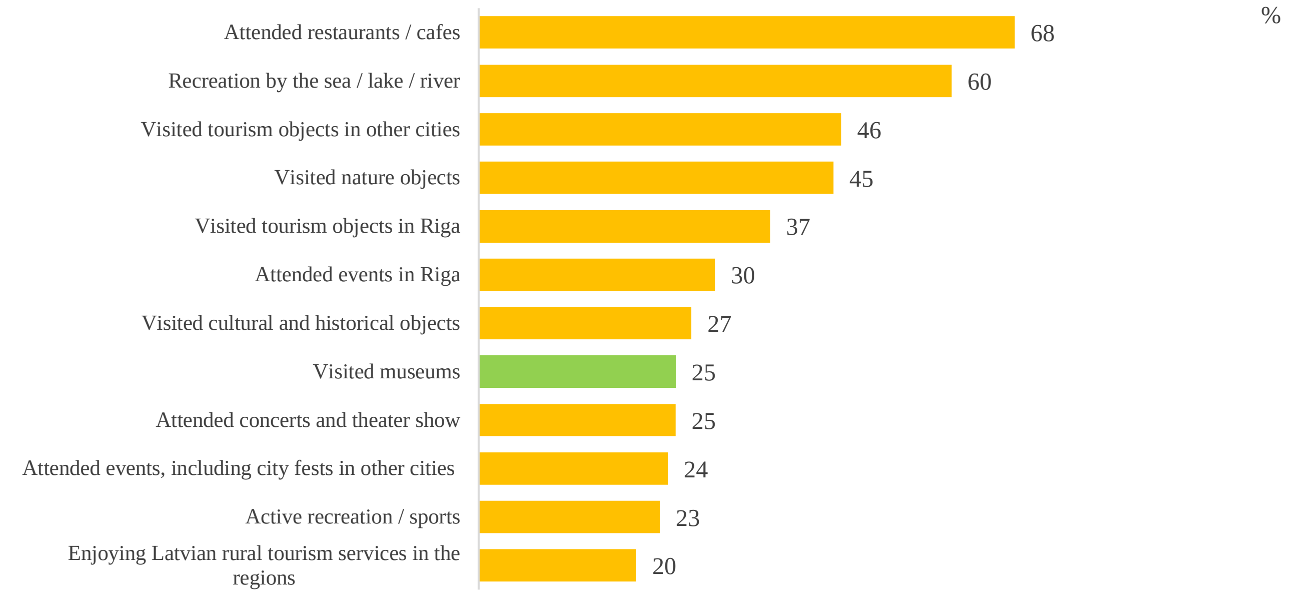
Graph 8. Interest of local tourists (Latvian residents) in various tourist attractions
Data source: LIAA survey of Latvian population, November 2021, "Norstat Latvija": https://lvportals.lv/dienaskartiba/335648-liaa-aptauja-iedzivotaju-galamerki-latvija-visbiezak-ir-dabas-takas-un-dzivnieku-parki-2021
Survey question: Which tourist attractions do you like to visit?



[9] Travel habits of Latvian diaspora representatives in the territory of Latvia. University of Latvia, 2021. Available from: https://www.liaa.gov.lv/lv/media/4899/download

Graph 9. Latvian diaspora's interest in various Latvian tourist attractions

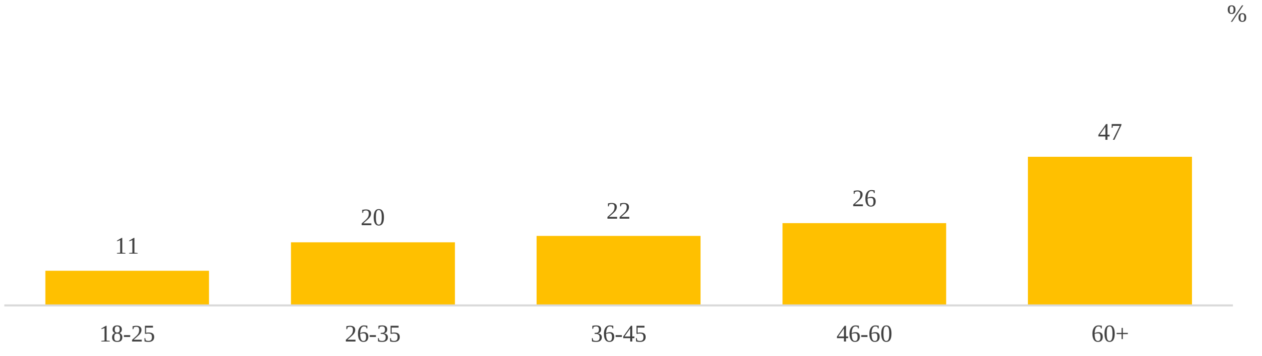
Data source: Travel habits of Latvian diaspora representatives in the territory of Latvia. LIAA, University of Latvia, 2021. Available from: https://www.liaa.gov.lv/lv/media/4899/download



Museums as a tourist attraction are more attractive to foreign travellers who are elderly (60+). The above-mentioned diaspora representative travel behaviour survey shows that interest in museums varies considerably between different age groups. While 47% of the 60+ age group have visited museums in Latvia, only 11% of the 18-25 age group have. Authors of the study point out: "Older tourists (age group 60+) are more interested in sitting in cafés and restaurants, visiting Riga and tourist attractions in other cities. They are also the biggest fans of cultural and historical sites, museums, concerts and theatre performances. Young people were much more likely than other respondents to have spent time by the water, to have taken part in various leisure and sports activities, to have enjoyed rural tourism services."

Graph 10. Latvian diaspora's interest in Latvian museums: by age group

Data source: Travel habits of Latvian diaspora representatives in the territory of Latvia. LIAA, University of Latvia, 2021. Available from: https://www.liaa.gov.lv/lv/media/4899/download

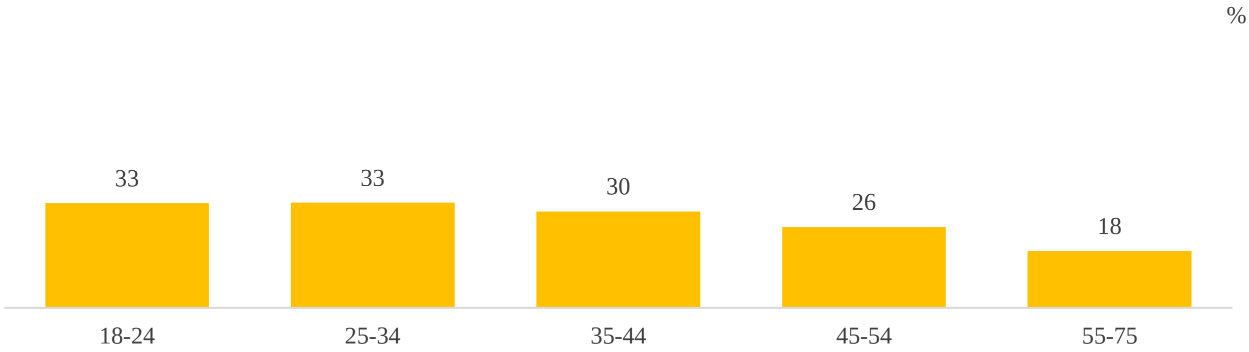


However, **younger people (up to 34 years old) within local traveller target groups were more interested in museums in 2021,** while the share of museum visitors after the age of 45 is significantly lower. The 2021 survey data also shows that **this year, museums were visited by a significantly higher percentage of people with higher education** (45% of those with higher education, 22% of those with secondary education and 20% of those with vocational secondary education), as well as **those with high incomes** (37% of those with a family income per family member exceeding EUR 650, while only 14% of those with an income below EUR 299 and 20% of those with an income between EUR 300-499). The data also shows that **families with minor children were significantly more**

likely to visit museums (34% of them had visited museums). Analysis of the survey data shows that in 2021 **there was a strong correlation between local travel and museum visits — 43% of those who had travelled around Latvia had also visited museums** (while only 4% of those who had not gone on a trip had visited museums). This also explains the prevalence of the high-income target group among museum visitors – people with higher incomes were significantly more likely to go on trips.

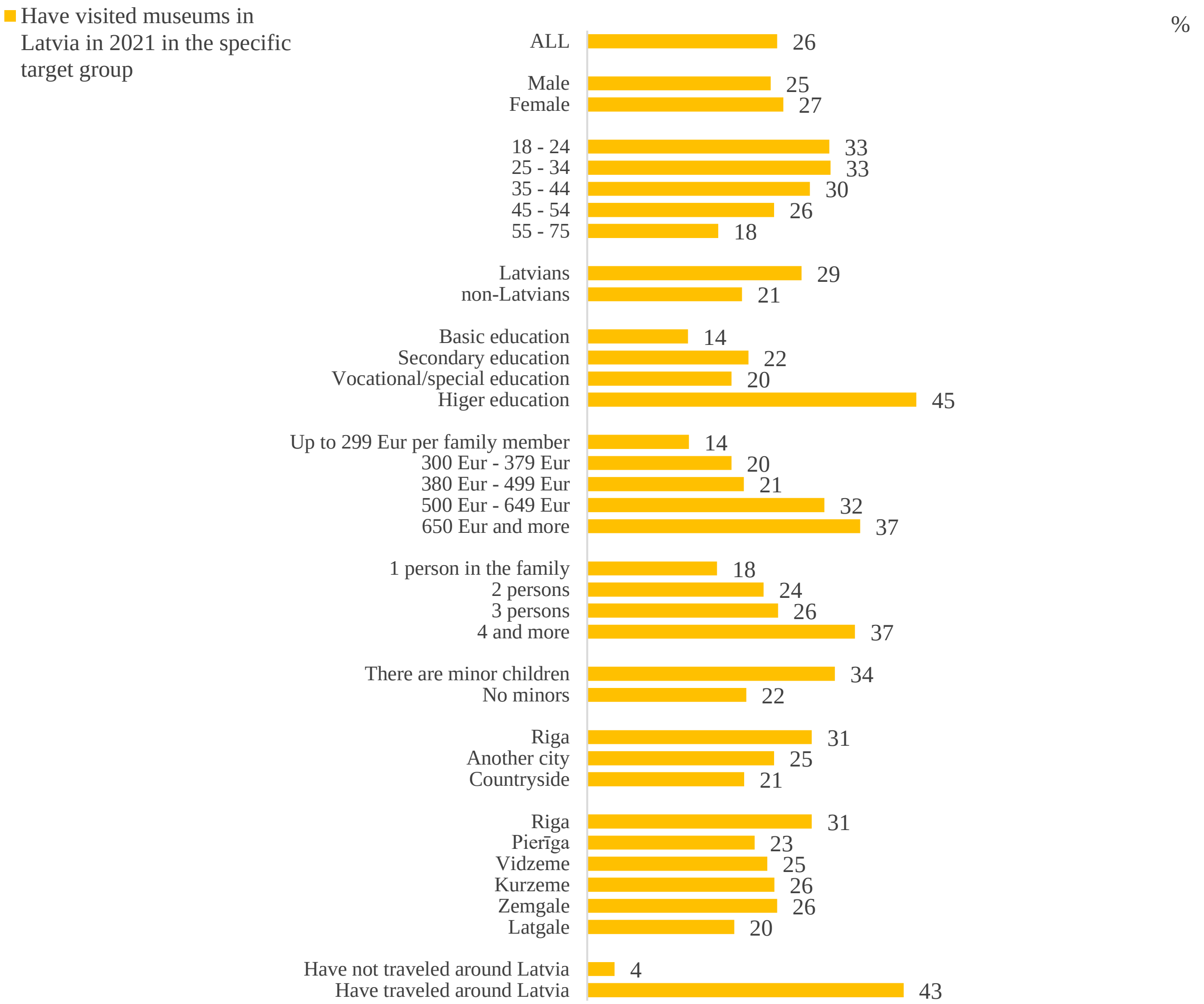
Graph 11. Latvian local travellers' interest in Latvian museums: by age group

Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian population (18-75 age group) was carried out in October 2021.



Graph 12. Share of museum visitors in 2021 by socio-demographic groups of the Latvian population

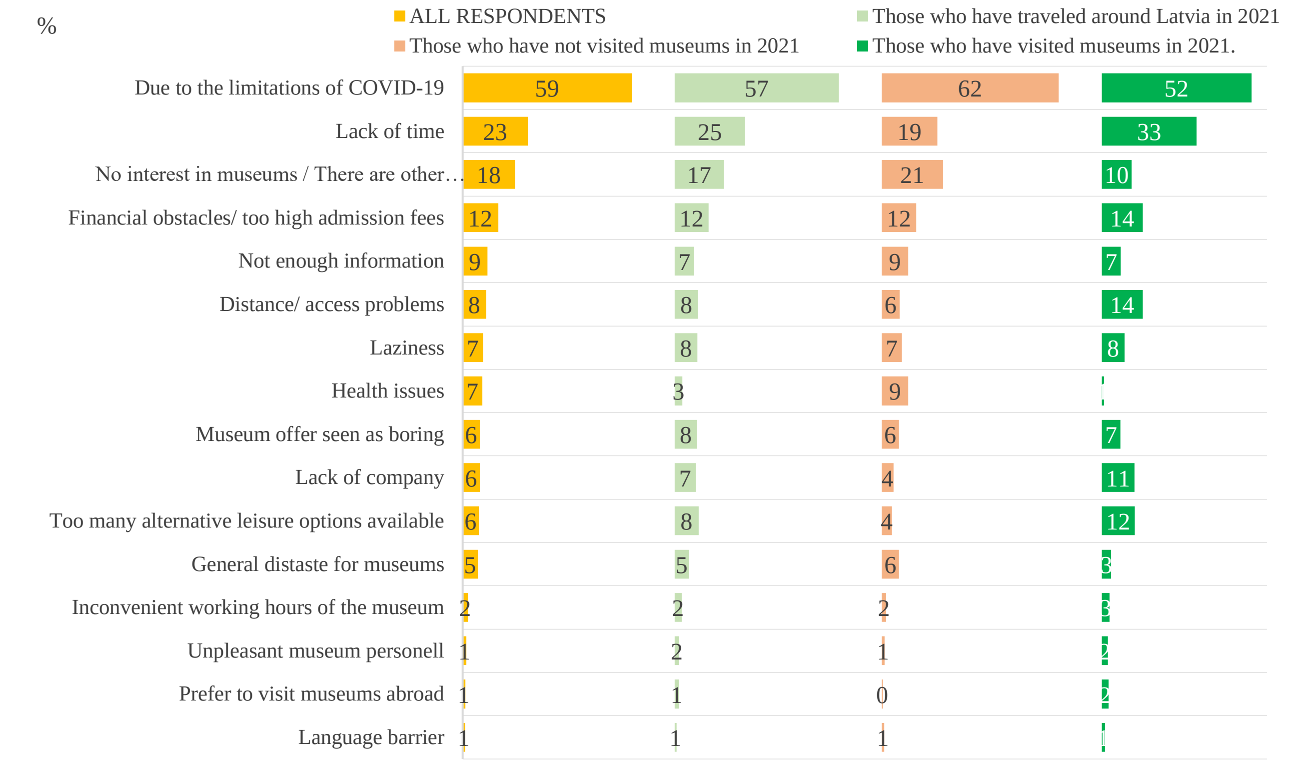
Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian population (18-75 age group) was carried out in October 2021.



The pandemic-related restrictions are the main reason why people are not visiting museums more often now. 59% of the population gave this as the main reason. **Other relatively frequent reasons are: lack of time** (23%), **not interested in museums** (18%), **lack of finances** (12%), **lack of information** (9%). Some interesting differences can be observed in the individual target groups. Those who have taken a trip to Latvia in 2021 are more likely than all respondents to indicate that **the museum offer is boring** (8%) as a reason for not visiting museums. Those who have not visited museums in 2021 are more likely than others to indicate the following reasons: **no interest in museums** (21%), health problems (9%), dislike of museums (6%). However, those who have visited museums in 2021 are more likely than others to indicate: lack of time (33%), distance to museums (14%), lack of company (11%), too many other leisure activities (12%) as reasons for not visiting museums. The last factor shows that **in tourism, museums are not in competition with each other, but rather museums as a leisure option are in competition with a diverse range of other options.**

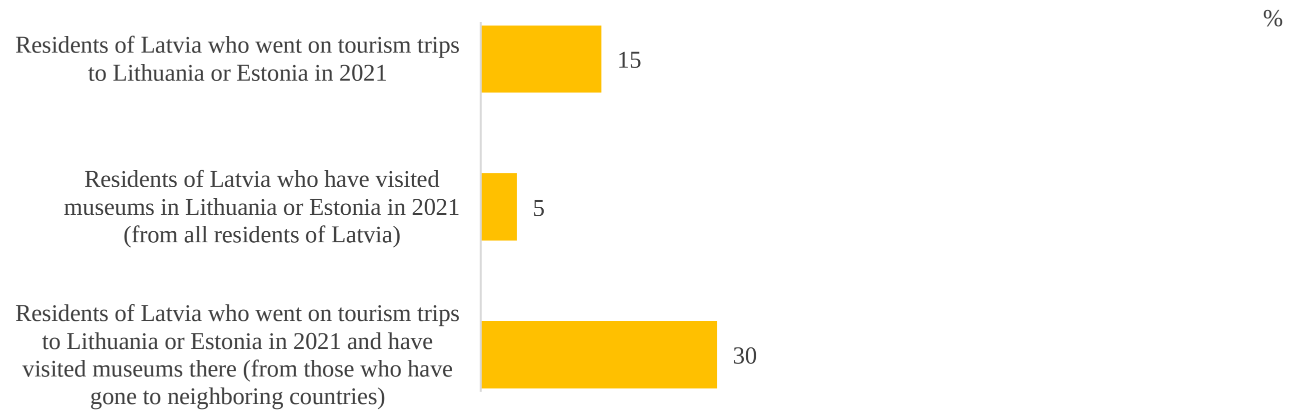
Graph 13. Reasons for not visiting museums more often

Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian population (18-75 age group) was carried out in October 2021.

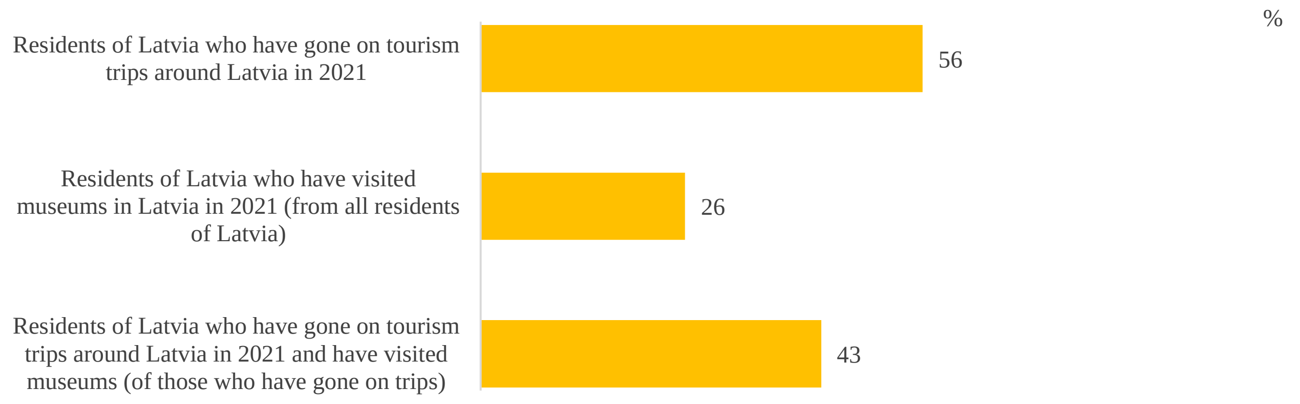


In the last year, 15% of the Latvian population has travelled to Lithuania or Estonia, but only 30% of them have visited museums in these countries. So **a museum is not the main attraction for Latvian travellers in neighbouring countries. For Latvian domestic travellers, museums have been an important tourist attraction** – 43% of those who had travelled around Latvia had also visited museums. This is a very high indicator of interest in museums. It should be noted, however, that this is most likely an indication of interest in specific individual museums, rather than in any museum as a whole.

Graph 14. Latvian residents who have gone on tourism trips to neighbouring countries and have visited museums there
Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian population (18-75 age group) was carried out in October 2021.

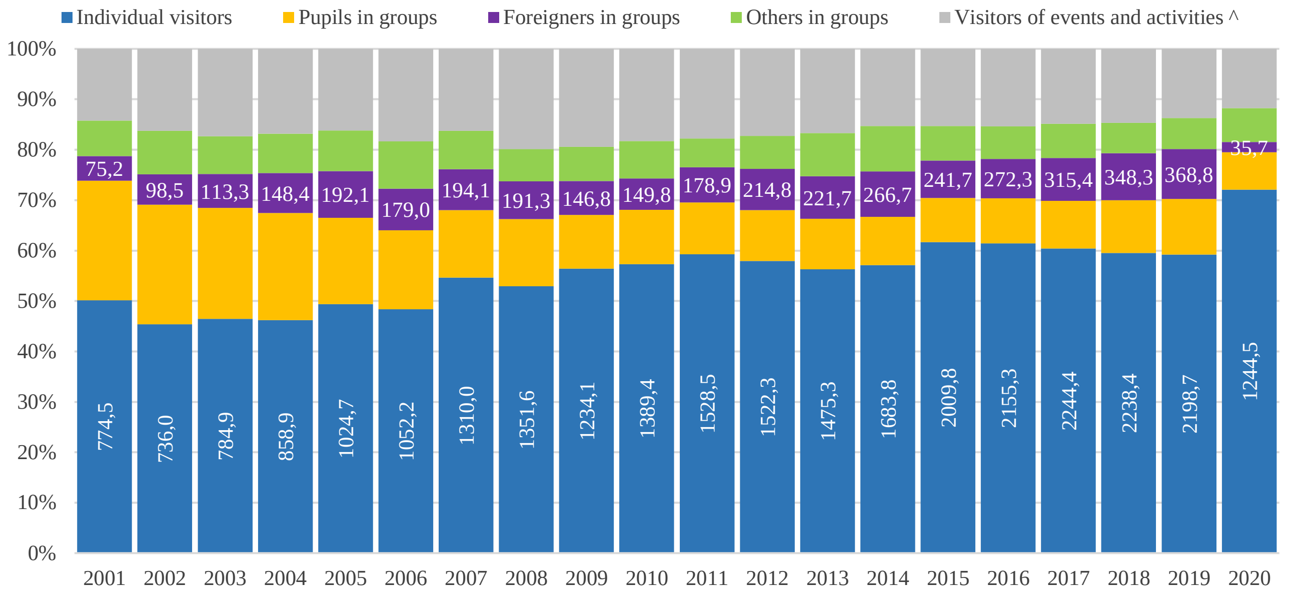


Graph 15. Latvian residents who have gone on tourism trips around Latvia and have visited museums
Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian population (18-75 age group) was carried out in October 2021.



Until the pandemic, Latvian museums were increasing the number of tourists they attracted each year and their share of the total number of visitors. If in 2001-2002, Latvian museums were visited by 75-98 thousand foreign travellers in groups, then in 2019, it was already 394 thousand. At the same time, the share of foreign travellers in the total number of museum visitors also increased significantly – from 5% in 2001 to 10% in 2019. So, **until the pandemic, museums were very successful in dealing with foreign tourist groups** (as their share of the total number of visitors has increased significantly). It should be stressed, however, that this statistic is largely based on the figures of a few specific museums (Rundāle Palace Museum (33% of all visitors in 2019 were foreigners in groups), Museum of the Occupation of Latvia (32%), Turaida Museum Reserve (25%), Ethnographic Open-Air Museum of Latvia (25%), Museum of the History of Riga and Navigation (20%)). **In most municipal museums, foreigners do not make up more than 2% of the total number of visitors.** It should be noted, however, that the official statistics do not distinguish individual foreign travellers, but only visits by groups of foreigners. Therefore, this data only partially describes foreign tourists as visitors of Latvian museums.

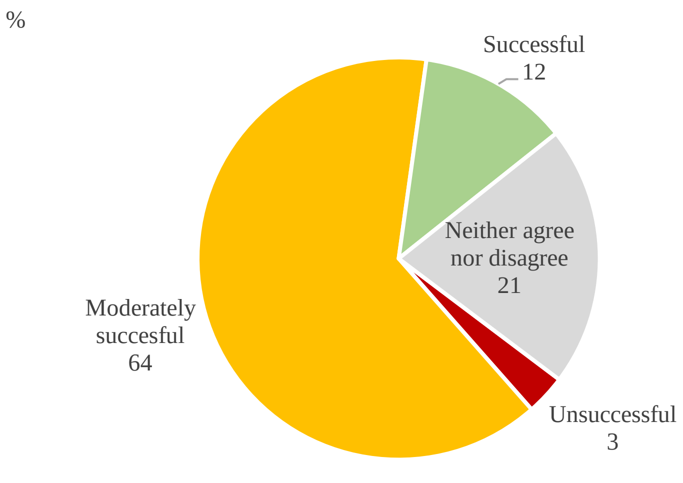
Graph 16. Visitor statistics 2001-2020 by target group share for accredited museums in Latvia
Data source: Ministry of Culture data summary, research authors' calculations. Visitors to museum events, activities, excluding visitors to museum educational events and programmes.



4.3. Museums' Work to Attract Tourists

Latvian museums themselves are cautious in evaluating their success in attracting tourists from neighbouring countries — only 12% of museum representatives in the survey rate this work as successful, while **64% rate it as moderately successful,** and 21% could not give a specific rating overall.

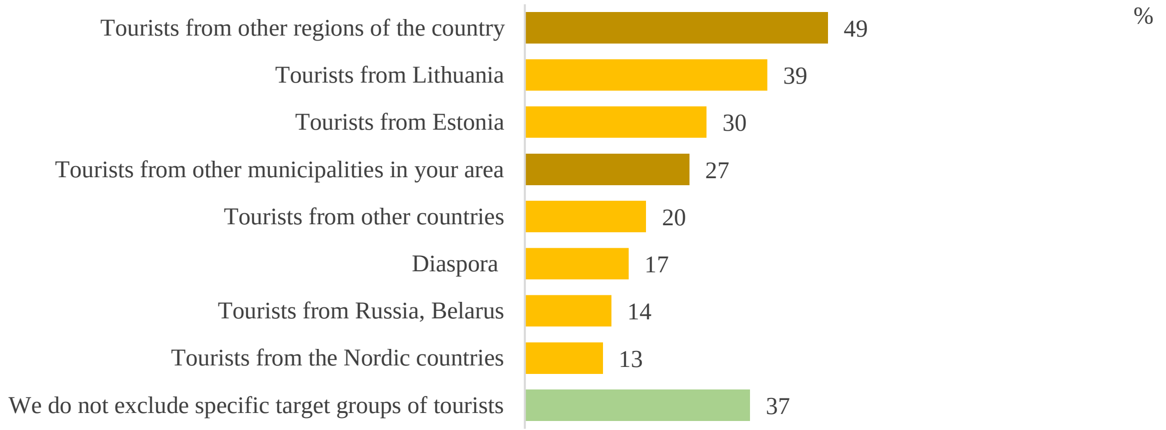
Graph 17. Museum representatives' assessment of the overall success of Latvian museums in attracting tourists from Latvia's neighbouring countries
Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian museum representatives was carried out in October-November 2021.



Latvian museums identify local Latvian travellers from their own or other regions as important target groups of tourists, but less often — tourists from neighbouring countries. 49% of museums name travellers from other regions of Latvia as an important target group for tourism, and 27% — travellers from their own region. 39% of museums identify tourists from Lithuania as their key target group, and 30% — tourists from Estonia. Although, as mentioned above, around 25% of the Latvian diaspora like to visit museums in Latvia, only 17% of museums themselves identify this target group as important to them. It should also be stressed that **a total of 37% of museums indicated that they do not distinguish specific target groups of tourists at all.**

Graph 18. Target groups for which Latvian museums have implemented specific activities

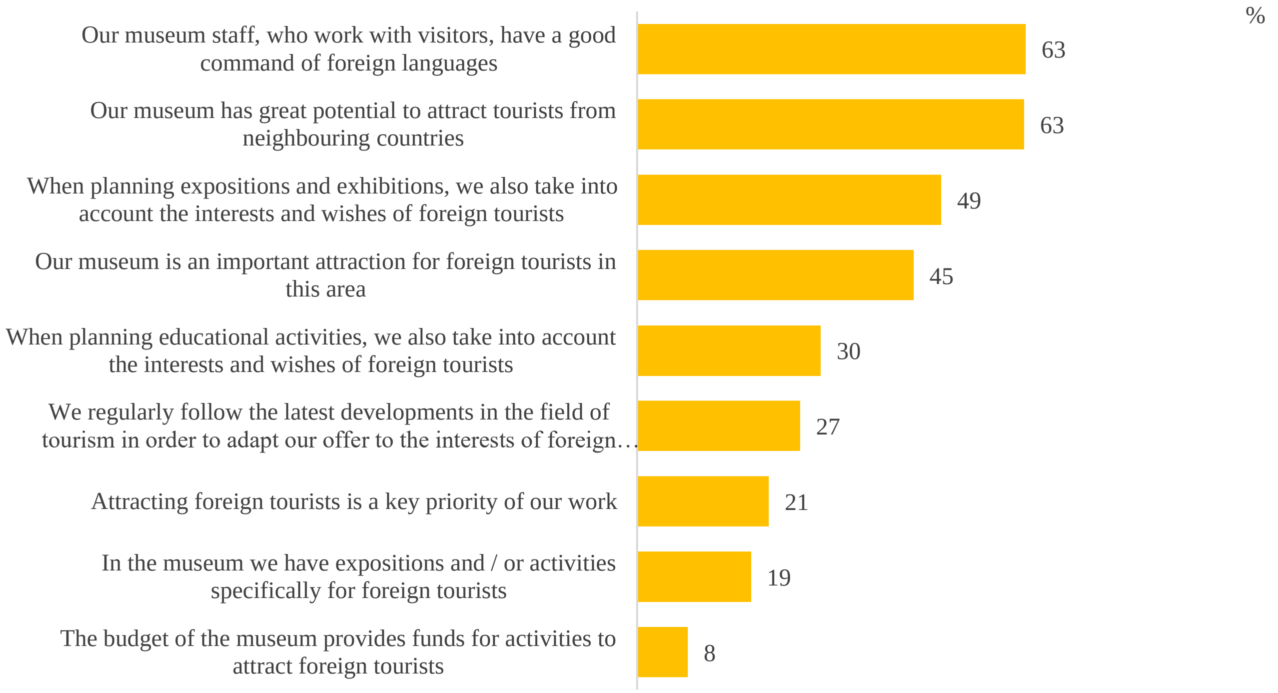
Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian museum representatives was carried out in October-November 2021.



The survey data shows – a majority (63%) of museums believe they have great potential to attract tourists from neighbouring countries. Just as often (63%), museums said that staff working with visitors had a good command of foreign languages. Only 49% of museums take into account the interests and wishes of foreign tourists when planning exhibitions and displays. Interestingly, **while 63% of museums rate their potential to attract tourists from neighbouring countries as high, only 45% consider the specific museum to be an important attraction for foreign tourists in the area.** So **the existing potential has not been fully realised.** The fact that **foreign tourists are currently not a priority target group in Latvian museums** is also confirmed by several other museum evaluations: only 30% of museums take into account tourists' interests and preferences when planning museum educational activities; only 27% of museums regularly follow tourism trends in order to adapt their offer; only 21% of museums claim that tourists are an important priority in their work; only 19% of museums have exhibitions or activities aimed specifically at foreign tourists. **In particular, only 8% of museum budgets is allocated for attracting foreign tourists.** The data shows that **while a large number of museums have the potential to attract tourists, their current capacity to implement this potential is very limited.**

Graph 19. Latvian museums' practice in attracting tourists

Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian museum representatives was carried out in October-November 2021.



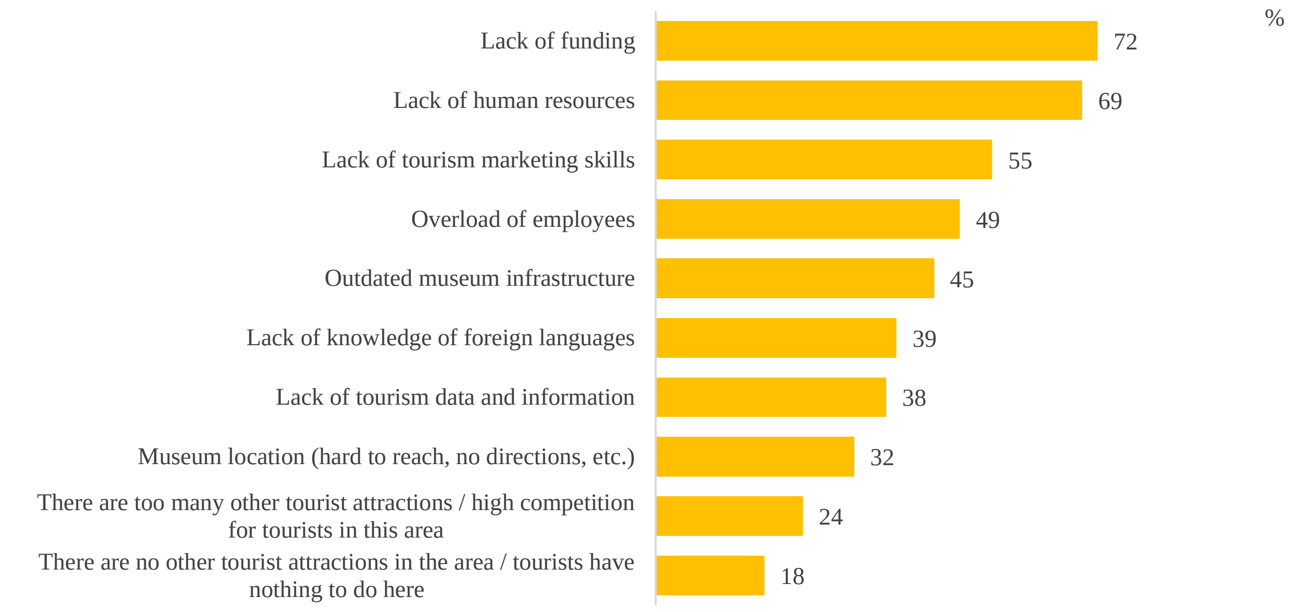
The most frequent tourism activity in museums is the transfer of information to Tourist Information Centres (TICs) and the translation of museum information into foreign languages (about half of museums do this). 43% of museums cooperate with tourist guides, and 34% – with tour operators and companies. One in three museums also cooperates with other tourist attractions in the area. **A small proportion of museums are more active in tourism:** 30% actively use social media advertising, 17% advertise in neighbouring countries, 15% participate in tourism conferences or other events, only 15% of museums post information in foreign languages on social media. Generally, this data shows that **Latvian museums are currently rather passive in the field of tourism** — information is being prepared and disseminated through more easily accessible information and communication channels, but only a few museums are more active and proactive in attracting tourists.

Graph 20. Activities of Latvian museums to attract tourists

Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian museum representatives was carried out in October-November 2021.

In line with the above – **the majority of museums point to a lack of funding (72%) as the most significant obstacle to more active work in attracting tourists. Lack of human resources** is almost as common (62%) (and an additional 49% point to overworking of employees). Some museums also reported **a lack of skills and knowledge** — 55% said **they lacked tourism marketing skills**, 39% — **foreign language skills**, 32% — **tourism data and information.** It is worth noting that 45% of museums consider their **infrastructure too outdated** to attract tourists. **It should be stressed that the case of each museum is different and this data cannot be applied in the same way to all museums.** In some museums, the most important constraints are related to skills and knowledge, in others — to infrastructure, and in others — to location or other leisure opportunities in the area. At the same time, almost all museums are constrained by a lack of funding and human resources.

Graph 21. Obstacles for Latvian museums to attract tourists from neighbouring countries
Data source: As part of this research, a survey of the Latvian museum representatives was carried out in October-November 2021.



5. Attracting Tourists to Museums: Current Situation and Potential

In the context of the pandemic, museums not only faced various restrictions on their activities, but also changes that affected the existing audience segments: group visitors were replaced by individual and family visitors; the museum industry assumed that tourist habits would change and that tourists from bordering countries and Latvian domestic travellers would choose to travel around Latvia, including museums in their routes. Were and are museums ready for such changes? To what extent do museums see themselves as tourist attractions? What is the role of museums in the context of tourism in Latvia? How successful are museums in creating an offer for tourists? And what factors and conditions help or hinder attracting tourists? Who are the main tourism partners of museums? This chapter analyses the information we gathered during interviews with representatives of (accredited and non-accredited) museums, as well as representatives of the tourism industry (TICs, tourism experts).

5.1. The Museum in the Context of the Overall Tourism Offer

The museum in the context of the overall tourism offer (museum as a tourist attraction). The research of the topic revealed that in order to facilitate the work with tourists, it is necessary to change the point of view – from the museum itself and the museum sector as a strong, integrated internal development of the cultural sector to the museum as one of the creators of the tourism offer (the museum as a tourist object, not as a provider of cultural services). It is important to think about the museum's offer, work with visitors, choice of cooperation partners and communication in the context of the overall Latvian tourism offer, where the museum is one of many leisure options on a tourist's trip. In addition, the tourist as a museum visitor needs to be addressed in terms of the tourist's specificities of seeking information, planning a visit, creating an experience. The data presented in Chapter 4.3 shows that Latvian museums are currently only beginning to explore their tourism potential, and often have limited resources to expand their activities in a tourism context.

In the context of tourism, museums do not compete with each other, but with other leisure activities. Besides the museum as a potential tourist destination, there are many other leisure activities with which a museum has to compete. In the summer season, although the number of tourists increases, the tourist offer is particularly wide as well. Important competitors to museums in summer are various outdoor leisure activities, active recreation, leisure and amusement parks, etc. In bad weather and winter, the number of competitors decreases. The context of other tourism offers is very important for museums to better plan their offer, seasonality, to create a complex offer in cooperation with other organisations, to choose the right communication channels and the right way of communication.

Cooperation as an opportunity. Only few Latvian museums are strong enough tourist "magnets" on their own in the context of tourism (museums that tourists choose as destinations or special stopping points), while for most museums the tourism potential lies in their ability to integrate into the wider tourism offer. In order to maximise the tourism potential of your museum, it is essential to see and find points of contact and cooperation with many stakeholders – other tourism service providers, tour operators and guides, state and municipal institutions, as well as with other organisations in the cultural sector, including other museums. For more on the role of individual partners, see the subsection "Museum Partners and Establishing Collaborations".

5.2. Museum Offer and Opportunities for Improvement

The experience that the museum offers the visitor is the decisive factor. The research shows that the geographical location of a museum, the extent and diversity of its exhibitions, whether it is located in an outstanding cultural and historical monument, etc. are not decisive for tourists' interest in a museum. While these individual aspects may attract the attention of tourists, any museum can become a tourist attraction — even a small one or one that is further off the usual tourist routes. The overall experience of the visit and the story of the exhibition are key success factors.

Link to the Tourist's Country of Origin. Museum representatives believe that one of the main things that interests tourists in an exhibition is finding a connection to their country or region of origin. Many of the museums have such evidence, or individual exhibits, architectural elements, etc., that help tourists from different countries identify with the story the museum offers. At the same time, this link, which may be of interest to tourists in a particular country, is not always clearly communicated – this applies to visitors who decide to visit a museum when they are already in town, as well as to those who plan their route well in advance and seek information before starting their trip. When communicating their offer, museums can highlight details related to the history or people of a particular country to different target groups, including specific communication, for example in response to the national festivals of neighbouring countries.

Thematic Interests. Visitors, especially those who plan their route before arriving in Latvia, also choose museums and exhibitions according to their thematic interests. It is therefore important to plan the museum's international communication accordingly – "to be known" in thematic groups, media and cooperation networks. Examples of individual museums show that an effective communication tool is a visit by an expert in the field and a journalist and/or an article about the museum in a specific, sector-dedicated publication.

The surrounding area is an attractive factor for museum visitors. The surrounding area – a garden, park or castle ruins – is often mentioned as a particularly attractive aspect of the tourist experience. It is essential that a museum with this opportunity makes full use of this potential to extend the museum visit – as a place for walking, relaxation or additional activities. Walking guides are one of the most frequent museum offers in the city, especially during the pandemic.

The history of the building as an additional factor to stimulate tourist interest. If the museum is located in a cultural heritage site or has a special history, this is cited as an additional factor in attracting tourists. When thinking about communicating the museum's offer to the tourist audience, the history of the museum building or its location can be used as a specific story.

Adaptation or development of the offer for individual tourists. Interviews with museum representatives show that museums have developed their offer for groups of different audiences well. This applies both to work with tourist groups (and their representatives – tour companies, guides, etc.) and to specific offers for schoolchildren through museum education programmes. In some cases, this offer could be adapted and offered to individual visitors, families or groups of friends (orienteering games, offers to find certain objects or similar in the exhibition, educational material, etc.). In particular, it is important to communicate this offer to the target groups – the research observation shows that sometimes museums have a specific offer, but it is not communicated specifically on museum websites or social networks, nor on site.

The museum as part of a complex tourism offer. A tourist's leisure or recreation plan is made up of different aspects. It is easier to decide to visit a museum if it is part of a complex tourism offer. It is important for museums to maintain their mission and core tasks – tourism is usually only a small part of a museum's spectrum of activities. Some museums are therefore reluctant to plan their offer as part of a tourism service, fearing that this may lower the museum's status or degrade its educational and cultural function. However, from the perspective of a tourist visit, it is easier to fit a museum offer into their agenda if it is presented as part of their leisure time – alongside other leisure and entertainment activities. To achieve this, museums should work more closely with tourism service providers and better understand tourists' decision-making patterns.

A variety of additional services and facilities make for a pleasant visit. Experts most often mention souvenir shops or cafés as additional services that enhance the visitor experience. It should be noted that visitors also appreciate simpler additional services that do not require a lot of resources on the part of the museum – a nearby coffee machine, an accessible table with chairs for a short rest, the possibility of sending a postcard home, the offer of goods from local producers, etc.

Routes are restricted at certain times. It is important to offer visitors the possibility to spend a shorter or longer time in the museum – informing them in advance of the visit about the different routes or offers and the time needed to explore the museum. Visiting museums is sometimes seen as time-consuming by tourists, and museum communication should take this into account.

Free offer and various discounts. The information gathered within the study shows that a free visit makes the decision easier. Other incentives (if clearly communicated) can also help the decision – family tickets, discounts for certain categories of visitors, the possibility to use a ticket during the entire day (leaving and returning to the museum), etc.

Comprehensibility of exhibitions. The availability of information in a language that tourists understand (or ideally in their mother tongue) is considered by museum experts to be one of the most important factors that encourage tourists to visit: signs in the exhibition, a catalogue, a description of the exhibition, the availability of audio guides or apps in different languages. However, the findings also show that the availability of a translation is not always the deciding factor. Other aspects of intelligibility – the overall emotional story of the exhibition, clear navigation through the museum, staff responsiveness and the ability to communicate in a foreign language – also shape the visitor experience. More importantly, the museum needs to assess the investment of resources and their return before translating different materials into several languages.

Flexibility in working hours. Some tourism service providers point out that museum opening hours do not match tourists' habits and daily schedules. Each museum can assess the benefits and costs of changing or maintaining existing opening hours, as well as the habits of potential visitors – by analysing the largest target groups likely to visit the museum and the habits or agendas of these target groups.

Museum staff matters. Research shows that staff capacity is often crucial – both "technical" capacity – what time and human resources the museum can devote to working with tourists – and skills capacity – what language skills they have, whether they know how to work with the target audience, etc. At the same time, experts note that it is often human qualities, responsiveness and willingness to respond to a visitor's (including a tourist's) questions and needs that make the difference, not knowledge.

5.3. Communication and Information

Precise information. Accurate and up-to-date information about what the museum has to offer (opening hours, prices, exhibitions, additional services) is always crucial, both for planning a visit and for creating a positive visitor experience. The pandemic has led to changes in museum work, which is why it is important to re-emphasise the importance of information. The information search channels may differ for each visitor or tourism service provider, therefore correct and up-to-date information on the museum and municipality websites, tourist information centre website, *Facebook* page, various sources used by tourists to plan their visit (*Google Maps*, *Tripadvisor*, etc.), as well as other information channels is a prerequisite.

Visitors want to know more. This is especially true for families with children, but often also for other museum visitors who have arrived in an unfamiliar city or area. How does one find the museum? Does it have parking? Where can one eat nearby? Is there anything else interesting to see nearby? These and many more questions can be researched before visiting a museum, and asked of museum staff, in different languages as well. Timely information on the website, informative leaflets, friendly staff, a nearby tourist information centre — there are many ways to make the overall visitor experience a positive one. Information about the museum's location should be available both digitally and in the urban environment, and the tourist information centre should have clear instructions on what information to provide to visitors.

Maintaining regular information and communication with tourism service providers directly (TICs, guides, tour operators, etc.) **and visitors** indirectly through press releases, social media publications. It is difficult for museums to regularly remind people of their activities, as new exhibitions are not so frequent and the permanent collection does not change for years. It is therefore necessary to think about how to maintain interest in the museum's activities on a regular basis, for example, by promoting various new developments in the museum's work — the purchase or restoration of new items, the day-to-day work of the museum, etc., which kind of works like a "remote museum visit".

Comprehensive information about the museum's offer for tourism service providers. In order for tourism service providers (including tourist information centres) to include the museum's offer in their communication and offer, they need information about the museum's offer, additional services, accessibility aspects, target groups, estimated time to be spent in the exhibition, etc., written in a language (both Latvian and a foreign language) that is understandable to a wider audience, as well as high-quality photos or other audiovisual material that they can use in communication with their business partners.

Exploiting the potential of social networks and visitor-generated communication. Not all museums fully exploit the potential of informal, visitor-generated communication. Nowadays, people like to record and share their activities on social media, so we need to encourage this kind of publicity — encouraging visitors to share their experiences while they are still on site. This can be promoted by setting up a special place (with a clearly legible museum identity) to take photos, by offering to send postcards, by creating a specific museum identity on social media — with special visualisations, hashtags, etc. Visitors also like to take some souvenirs with them. Visitor engagement can be strengthened through membership of a friends club, volunteering, issuing a museum membership or friend card, etc.

Communication to target countries should be done in cooperation with other museums. Museums agree that their resources prevent them from carrying out targeted advertising or communication campaigns in other countries. Communication with target countries and potential audiences should therefore be developed in cooperation with other players in the sector — national and local authorities, tourism associations and service providers. This is also very much an industry-wide issue.

5.4. Audience Studies

Museums must assess and understand their audience. In order to develop and communicate the museum offer to specific target groups, including tourists from specific countries, it is first necessary to understand the existing and potential audience of the museum. Tourists and the way they travel are very different. By country of origin, interests, time spent in the museum, age, travelling companions, other travel plans (work trip, leisure, visiting relatives and friends), travel season of the year, etc. Tourism data can be studied (perhaps a collaborative project should be developed between museum institutions to monitor tourism data on a regular basis), and data collection and research on the audience of each museum should be improved. If this cannot be done on a regular basis, then staff can randomly count and analyse the audience in a given month. From a statistical point of view, it would be highly recommended to distinguish between domestic visitors and foreign tourists in the official museum statistics for individual visitors. Although this would be a challenging task at first (it is not always possible to identify the status of a visitor), in the long term such data would have an important role in analysing and demonstrating the synergies between the cultural and tourism sectors.

Suitability of the offer for the target group. Visitors represent different segments with different interests. It is important for a museum to assess the largest segments of its potential audience and not only create an appropriate offer, but also provide sufficient information about the existing offer so that visitors can make an informed decision about their visit.

Families with children are one of the key visitor segments that museums could better target. And it does not always mean redesigning or creating a new museum offer. There is often a lack of adequate communication so that families can find out the information they need to know about the visit — what ages are suitable, what activities children of a certain age can take part in. If the exhibition or certain parts of it will not be suitable, it should be determined whether there are alternative ways to spend part of the family's time. For families with very young children, information on the availability of facilities is important.

5.5. Museum Partners and Establishing Collaborations

Developing cooperation with tourism service providers. Tourism service providers and various tourism institutions (associations, TICs, etc.) are among the most important partners of museums in working with the tourist audience, also in the museums' own view (in the survey conducted as part of this study, museum representatives self-assessed that TICs are among the most important museum partners in this work), but it is important to think bigger, developing cooperation with various players in the tourism sector — starting with the municipal level, but also thinking about partners at the national and international level.

Guides are an important mediator between the museum and the tourist. Many museums work closely with guides, both through special training programmes and regular updates on new developments. There are museums that only allow certified guides, which is viewed ambiguously by tour operators and is also a limiting factor in attracting tourists. The cooperation between guides and museums was not analysed in detail within the framework of this study, but it emerges as one of the problem areas and potential opportunities for tourism in the interviews conducted.

Municipalities are one of the most important partners of museums in developing the tourism offer and reaching target groups of tourists. This is especially important for municipal museums in smaller municipalities. Most often, it is the offer of a city or region as a whole that is developed and promoted as a tourist destination, rather than the activities of an individual cultural organisation (including a museum). Close cooperation and integrated cultural and tourism policies are therefore essential for a museum's successful inclusion in tourist routes. The municipality is also an important partner for museums in terms of raising the profile and visibility of the museum in the urban environment (signs, advertising banners, etc.).

6. Key Challenges for Developing Tourism Potential in Museums

Tourism as a separate function of museums. Museums have different defined functions — working with tourist audiences is just one of their tasks. Moreover, Latvia's museums are very diverse — the same solution for developing tourism potential does not fit all of them. Each museum should articulate, as part of its development strategy, the extent to which it is positioned (or more accurately, can be positioned) as part of the tourism industry.` Accordingly, by adapting and applying the tools necessary for their specificity — audience research, more active work on social networks, expanding the museum's offer and translating various materials into neighbouring languages, targeted communication activities in one of the target countries, etc. Perhaps, in this respect, museums may need external help from tourism and communication sector professionals.

The museum as a player in tourism. One of the biggest challenges is to be able to see the museum as a player in the tourism industry — competing with other leisure activities offered to tourists. Consequently, museum staff would need strategic knowledge of the tourism sector, a better understanding of tourist behaviour patterns and the tourism supply chain. Again, it is important to be aware that not all museums have the same potential to boost tourism, and the role of each museum in the overall tourism offer may even be very different (one museum may be the main tourism magnet in a certain area, while another museum may be a small additional stop in the context of a wider route).

The contribution of museums to the development of the Latvian tourism industry. Can museums help the challenges of the tourism industry — for example, to extend the length of stay of tourists, to increase tourist flows in the winter season, or to achieve repeat visits to Latvia? These are the aspects where tourism experts see the unrealised potential of Latvian museums. But they require much more cooperation and synergy between museums and the tourism industry than there has been so far. It should also be stressed that this is a challenge for the whole sector, not for individual museums. For example, the inclusion of museums in international marketing campaigns is possible through the development of inter-ministerial cooperation — between the Ministry of Culture (and/or other ministries in charge of museums) and the Ministry of Economics, which is responsible for the strategic development of the tourism sector.

Capacity building for museums. The data and evaluations obtained within the framework of this research show that currently the capacity of museums to cultivate tourism is very limited (in terms of human resources, time resources, financial resources). The question of available support to strengthen tourism activities in museums is therefore relevant. The following factor should also be highlighted: museums consider the lack of funding and resources to be the most important constraint to successful work with tourists, while representatives of the tourism sector are more likely to say that the most important constraint is museums' incomplete understanding of the specifics of the tourism industry and the specifics of attracting the target audience of tourists. Therefore, a targeted funding (e.g., the SCCF target programme) for tourism promotion activities in museums — data collection, research, familiarisation with the tourism sector, training — could also be a capacity-building solution for museums.

Adapting museums to epidemiologically safe operation is one of the most important challenges facing the museum sector in the future, both in terms of attracting tourists and everyday visitors. Ensuring that museums are safe environments without compromising the quality of museum exhibitions or overburdening staff is an important national challenge. An epidemiologically safe environment requires regular ventilation or air purification, remote contactless solutions for screens, and other solutions. Implementing these solutions also requires additional resources. This also applies to the need to make changes to ongoing projects supported by national or international funding instruments.

7. Recommendations for Activating the Tourism Potential of Museums

The data and information gathered in the study allow to define a number of recommendations for the identification and implementation of tourism potential in Latvian museums. Taking into account the fact that tourism is a relatively new aspect in the context of the Latvian museum sector, as well as the fact that this research is the first thematic assessment of this kind, we define the recommendations as those that would encourage, firstly, the sector to agree on the role of museums in tourism in general, as well as to take the first steps towards realising the potential of tourism. In particular, it should be stressed that much of the realisation of tourism potential is not only about the activities of specific museums, but also about shared opportunities and initiatives across the sector.

(1) **To raise and discuss the topic of tourism in the museum sector in general.** The overall potential of tourism depends to a large extent on joint decisions and actions by the sector, so a common sector opinion on the role of museums in tourism development would facilitate both the coordination of activities and greater synergies between the cultural sector and the tourism sector.

(2) **To centrally collect and communicate the most up-to-date tourism information in the sector.** It is impossible to work effectively in the tourism sector without knowledge of tourism tendencies and analysis of the flows of specific target groups. This would certainly not be a task for each individual museum, but should be implemented jointly and centrally in the sector (e.g., as an annual overview of the latest data and information, seminars with tourism experts, etc.).

(3) **It is necessary to provide training for museum staff.** The information from this study shows that there are several aspects of training needs: (a) foreign language skills for staff working directly or indirectly with tourists or coordinating the tourism aspect of the museum, (b) tourism-specific competences and skills (both in terms of data acquisition and analysis and adaptation of the museum offer), (c) museum-specific external communication and marketing skills (both nationally and internationally). Some of these needs can also be addressed through outsourcing (e.g. by using tourism marketing specialists as service providers), but this is seen as rather unsustainable, as knowledge and skills would not be accumulated within museums and the sector as a whole.

(4) **It is necessary to provide financial support for specific tourism activities in museums.** In addition to the availability of human and time resources, the availability of funding is also a crucial factor in promoting tourism. According to this research, only one in ten museums has at least a minimum budget for tourism activities. Given the limited financial capacity of museums, it can be argued that additional external funding is possibly the only way to significantly strengthen museums' tourism activities. It should also be stressed that the specific needs of each museum for tourism activities may even vary considerably, so a funding mechanism that takes these specific museum needs into account would be more effective (rather than, for example, funding available to all museums for the translation of content or development of audio guides only).

(5) **To promote cooperation between museums and other institutions and organisations.** It is difficult to define specific recommendations for cooperation mechanisms, but the study shows that developing cooperation is one of the factors for realising the tourism potential of museums. Cooperation can be discussed in several aspects: a) cooperation between museums in developing joint tourism offers, b) cooperation between museums and tourist information centres for successful information circulation, including information updating, c) cooperation between museums and tour operators and guides, d) possible cooperation between museums and diaspora organisations to provide more information to diaspora members who travel to Latvia more or less regularly.

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