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CULTURE STATISTICS

Theatre-goers - Some Indicators

The Culture Statistics section of the National Statistics Office is currently carrying out a survey on theatre attendance in Malta and Gozo. The survey was commenced in December 2003 and is still underway. It is being carried out by means of telephone interviewing. The year under review is 2003.

To date, a total of 591 persons have been contacted. Of these, 446 – or 75.5 per cent – accepted to answer the survey. Following are some indicators that give a brief overview of the situation until now.

Of the respondents, only 108 – or 24.2 per cent – have attended a performance at a theatre in the year under review. Over 75 per cent of these said that the reason they attended is because they find the theatre interesting. The majority of individuals have attended between 1 to 3 plays in the year 2003.

On the other hand, 35 per cent of persons who did not attend a performance said that they were either not interested or found the theatre to be boring. Almost 30 per cent of the individuals in this category said that they simply did not find the time to go to the theatre.

Maltese was by far the most preferred language for performances – with 54.7 per cent of respondents saying they would rather attend a performance in this language. 21.5 per cent said that the language makes no difference to them. With regards to production, local productions were again the favourite – 54.2 per cent of persons interviewed said they would prefer to see a local production rather than a foreign one.

When asked whether they thought the theatre was expensive, over half of the respondents replied that they did not know. If price was not an issue, 19.5 per cent of the persons interviewed said that opera would be their preferred type of performance, followed by dramas with 11.2 per cent and musicals with 9.6 per cent. Just fewer than 50 per cent said that the price did not make any difference to them – even if prices were cheaper they would still not be interested in attending a performance.

The monthly calendar of NSO News Releases may be consulted on the Office's website at www.nso.gov.mt

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Table 1. Number of persons attending a performance at the theatre: 2003

	Number	%
Yes	108	24.22
No	338	75.78
Total	446	100.00

Table 2. Reasons for attending a performance at the theatre: 2003

	Number	%
I find it interesting	82	75.93
To see family members taking part	7	6.48
To meet people	5	4.63
Other	14	12.96
Total	108	100.00

Table 3. Number of performances attended by individuals: 2003

	Number	%
1 - 3	66	61.11
4 - 6	21	19.44
7 - 9	3	2.78
10 - 12	6	5.55
Over 12	1	0.93
Don't remember	11	10.19
Total	108	100.00

Table 4. Reasons for choosing a particular theatre: 2003

	Number	%
The plays that are being shown there	73	67.59
It is close to where I live	9	8.33
How accessible it is	7	6.48
The price of the play showing	6	5.56
How comfortable it is	5	4.63
The type of people who attend	3	2.78
Other	5	4.63
Total	108	100.00

Table 5. Reasons for not attending a performance at the theatre: 2003

	Number	%
I have no time	92	27.22
I find it boring	61	18.04
I am not interested	58	17.16
I am sick / I feel I am too old	32	9.47
I have no one to go with	19	5.62
I feel it is a waste of time	19	5.62
It's too expensive	9	2.66
I do not like to go out	7	2.07
Problems with transport / parking	7	2.07
I have small children	6	1.78
I have not had the opportunity	6	1.78
I prefer to go somewhere else	6	1.78
Other	16	4.73
Total	338	100.00

Table 6. Preferred language for performances

	Number	%
Maltese	244	54.71
English	50	11.21
Italian	10	2.24
It doesn't make any difference	96	21.53
Don't know	46	10.31
Total	446	100.00

Table 7. Preferred type of production

	Number	%
Local	242	54.26
Foreign	27	6.06
It doesn't make any difference	129	28.92
Don't know	48	10.76
Total	446	100.00

Table 8. Theatres attended in the past

	Number	%
Catholic Institute	248	33.74
Manoel Theatre	224	30.48
St. James Cavalier	91	12.38
Other	172	23.40
Total	735	100.00

Table 9. Number of persons who believe theatres are expensive

	Number	%
Yes	67	15.02
No	150	33.63
Don't know	229	51.35
Total	446	100.00

Table 10. Number of persons who would attend more often if theatres were cheaper

	Number	%
Yes	95	21.30
No	129	28.92
Don't know	222	49.78
Total	446	100.00

Table 11. Preferred type of performance regardless of price

	Number	%
Comedy	87	19.51
Serious drama	50	11.21
Musical	43	9.64
Opera	26	5.83
Concert	6	1.34
Dance	5	1.12
Other	8	1.79
I am not interested in attending	221	49.56
Total	446	100.00

Table 12. Price considered reasonable to attend theatre

	Number	%
Under Lm2	78	17.49
Over Lm2 but under Lm4	84	18.83
Over Lm4 but under Lm6	56	12.56
Over Lm6 but under Lm8	11	2.47
Over Lm8 but under Lm10	10	2.24
Over Lm10	11	2.47
I am not interested in attending	196	43.94
Total	446	100.00