



Department
for Culture
Media & Sport

Sponsored Museums Performance Indicators 2015/16

Statistical Release

January 2017

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Code of Practice for Official Statistics

The Sponsored Museums Performance Indicators are Official Statistics, and have been produced to the standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Key Findings

Introduction

Released: 25 January 2017

Period covered: April 2015 – March 2016, referred to as 2015/16 throughout

Geographic coverage: DCMS Sponsored Museums (England)

Next release: Autumn 2017

During 2015/16, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) sponsored 15 museums (13 nationals, and 2 non-nationals) which provided free entry to their permanent collections. These museums were:

- British Museum
- Geffrye Museum
- Horniman Museum
- Imperial War Museums
- National Gallery
- National Museums Liverpool
- National Portrait Gallery
- Natural History Museum
- Royal Armouries
- Royal Museums Greenwich
- Science Museum Group
- Sir John Soane's Museum
- Tate Gallery Group
- Victoria and Albert Museum
- Wallace Collection

The data are collected by the museums through sample surveys, with the exception of the information on educational visits and total visits, which are based on actual counts. Additional information explaining how the data should be collected is available [here](#).

Key Findings¹

- In 2015/16 there were 47.6 million visits to DCMS-sponsored Museums. This was a decline of 6.2 per cent on 2014/15, and a decline of 2.8 per cent when Tyne and Wear Museums are excluded from 2014/15.
- In 2015/16, there were 7.9 million child visits² to DCMS-sponsored Museums. This was a 14.4 per cent decrease on 2014/15, and a decline of 1.8 per cent when Tyne and Wear Museums and the Horniman Museum are excluded from 2014/15.

¹ In 2014/15, DCMS also sponsored the Tyne and Wear Museums, however they were no longer sponsored in 2015/16. As a result of this, comparisons have been made both including and excluding the Tyne and Wear Museums.

² Figures for the Horniman museum are unavailable for 2015/16, due to concerns of the robustness of data.

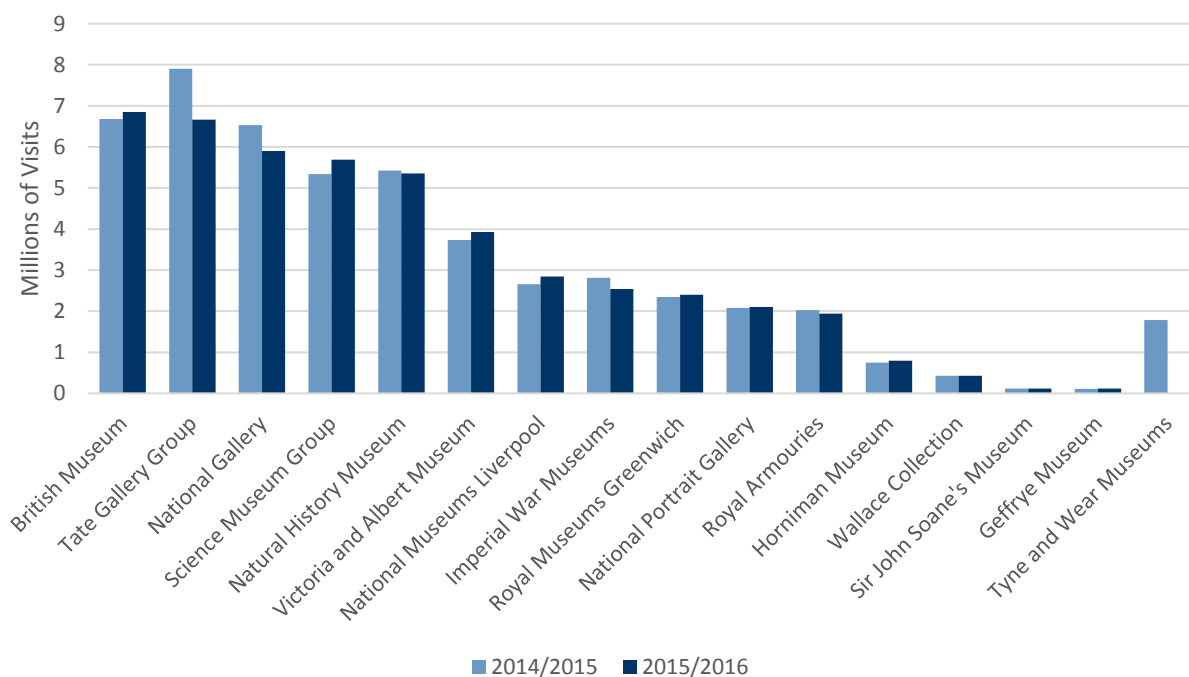
Chapter 2: Visits to DCMS' Sponsored Museums

Total visits to sponsored museums

Total visits to all sponsored museums decreased by 6.2 per cent, from 50.7 million in 2014/15 to 47.6 million in 2015/16. When excluding the Tyne and Wear Museums from 2014/15, this decline was 2.8 per cent³.

The most visited museum was the British Museum, with 6.9 million visits, followed by the Tate Gallery Group (comprising of four branches) with 6.7 million visits (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Total visits by DCMS-sponsored museum, 2014/15 to 2015/16



Website visits

In 2015/16 there were a total of 101.3 million unique visits to the websites of the DCMS sponsored museums. Due to changes in the software used to measure website visits by many of the museums at several points over time, these figures are not directly comparable between years.

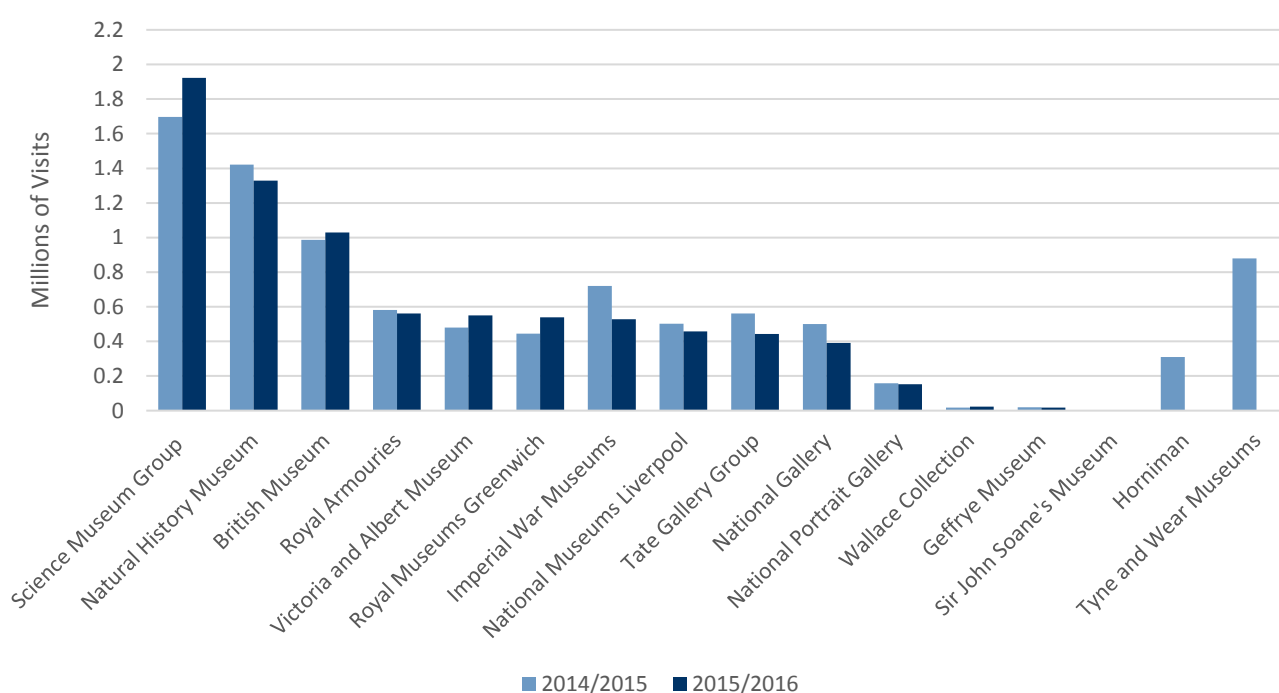
³ In 2014/15, DCMS also sponsored the Tyne and Wear Museums, however they were no longer sponsored in 2015/16. As a result of this, comparisons have been made both including and excluding the Tyne and Wear Museums.

Child visits⁴

There were 7.9 million visits by children aged 15 and under in 2015/16. This was a decrease of 14.4 per cent since 2014/15 (9.3 million). When excluding the Tyne and Wear Museums and the Horniman Museum from 2014/15, there was a 1.8 per cent decrease.

The Science Museum Group (comprising of five branches) had the greatest number of child visits at 1.9 million, followed by the Natural History Museum (comprising of two branches) with 1.3 million child visits (Figure 2).

Figure 2: The number of visits to DCMS-sponsored museums by children aged 15 and under by museum visited, 2014/15 to 2015/16



Educational visits and onsite activities

In 2015/16, across all sponsored museums, there were an estimated 2.5 million instances where visitors under the age of 18 participated in on site events, an 11.5 per cent decrease on 2014/15. When excluding Tyne and Wear museum from 2014/15, there was a 6.9 per cent decline.

The Science Museum Group (comprising of five branches) had the largest amount (830,000 visits), followed by the Tate Gallery Group (comprising of four branches) with 254,000 visits.

⁴ Figures for the Horniman museum are unavailable for 2015/16, due to concerns of the robustness of data.

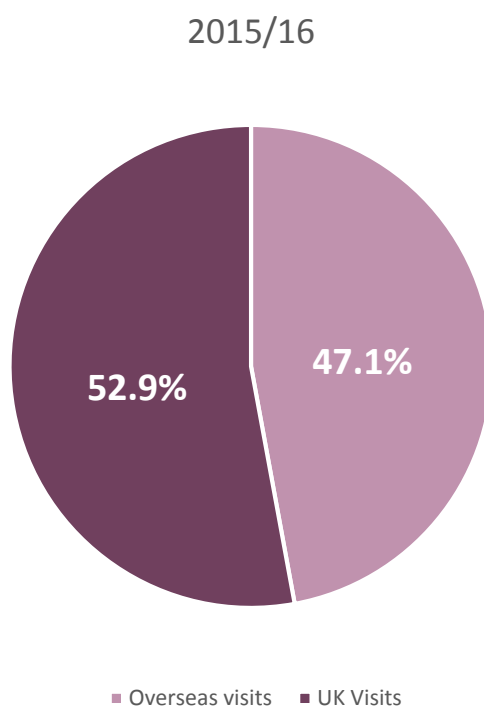
In 2015/16 there were an estimated 2.0 million facilitated and self-directed visits by people under 18 in formal education, a 6.7 per cent decrease on 2014/15. When excluding Tyne and Wear museum from 2014/15, there was a 3.1 per cent decrease on 2014/15.

The Science Museum Group (comprising of five branches) had the most educational visits with 486,000 in 2015/16, followed by the British Museum with 259,000 facilitated and self-directed visits over the same period.

Overseas visits⁵

There were an estimated 22.4 million visits to sponsored museums in 2015/16 by overseas visitors, accounting for 47.1 per cent of all visits (Figure 3). This was consistent with 2014/15, when overseas visitors accounted for 47.0 per cent of all visits⁶.

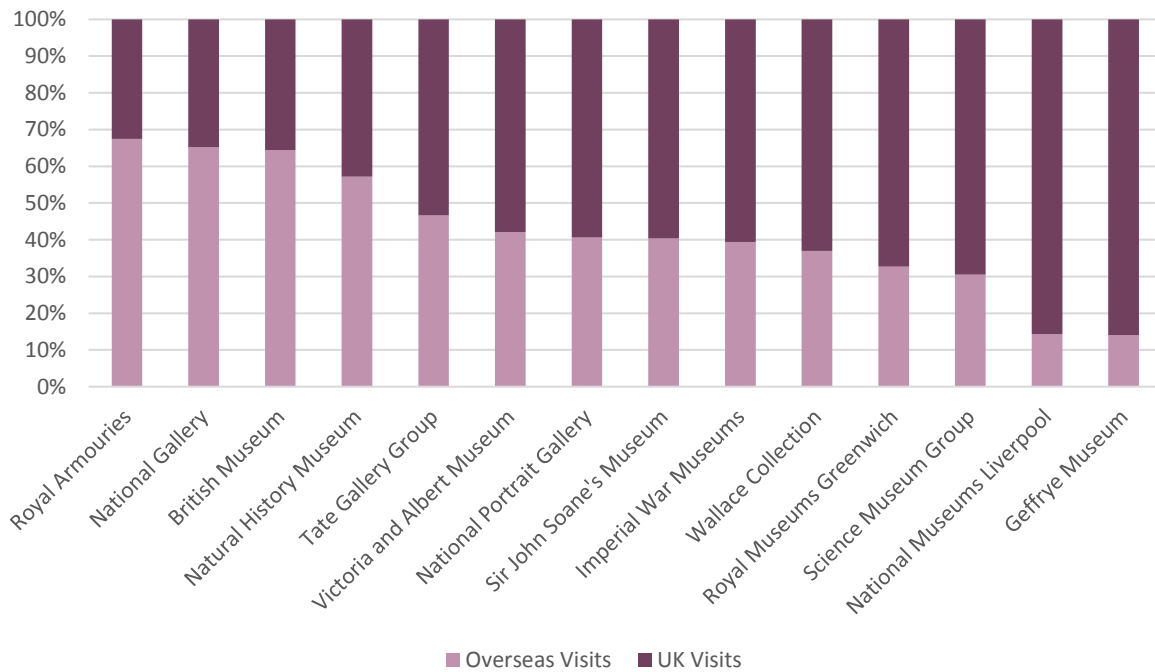
Figure 3: Percentage of overseas and UK visits to DCMS-sponsored museums in 2015/16



The Royal Armouries museum had the largest proportion of overseas visitors in 2015/16, with 67.5 per cent of visitors from overseas (Figure 4). This was a similar proportion to 2014/15, when the Royal Armouries also had the highest proportion of overseas visits.

⁵ Figures for the Horniman museum are unavailable for 2015/16, due to concerns of the robustness of data.

Figure 4: Proportion of overseas and UK visits to DCMS-sponsored museums in 2015/16



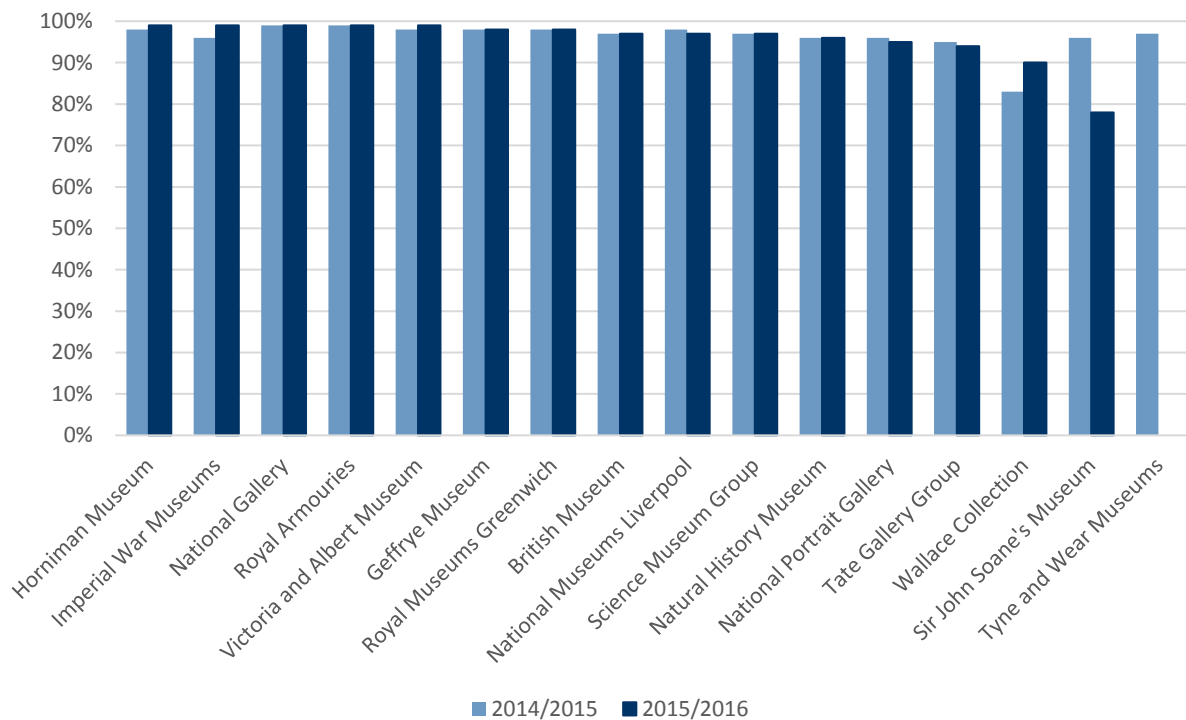
Chapter 3: DCMS-sponsored Museums Visitor Satisfaction

Proportion of visitors who would recommend a visit

The proportion of visitors who would recommend a visit is defined as those who answered 'How likely are you to recommend a visit to your friends or family' with 'definitely will' or 'probably will'.

In 2015/16, across DCMS sponsored museums and galleries, the average percentage of adults who would recommend a visit was 95.7 per cent. This is a similar proportion to 2014/15, when the figure was 96.3 per cent (Figure 5). This average was the same when the Tyne and Wear museums were removed from 2014/15.

Figure 5: Proportion of visitors who would recommend a visit, 2014/15 to 2015/16



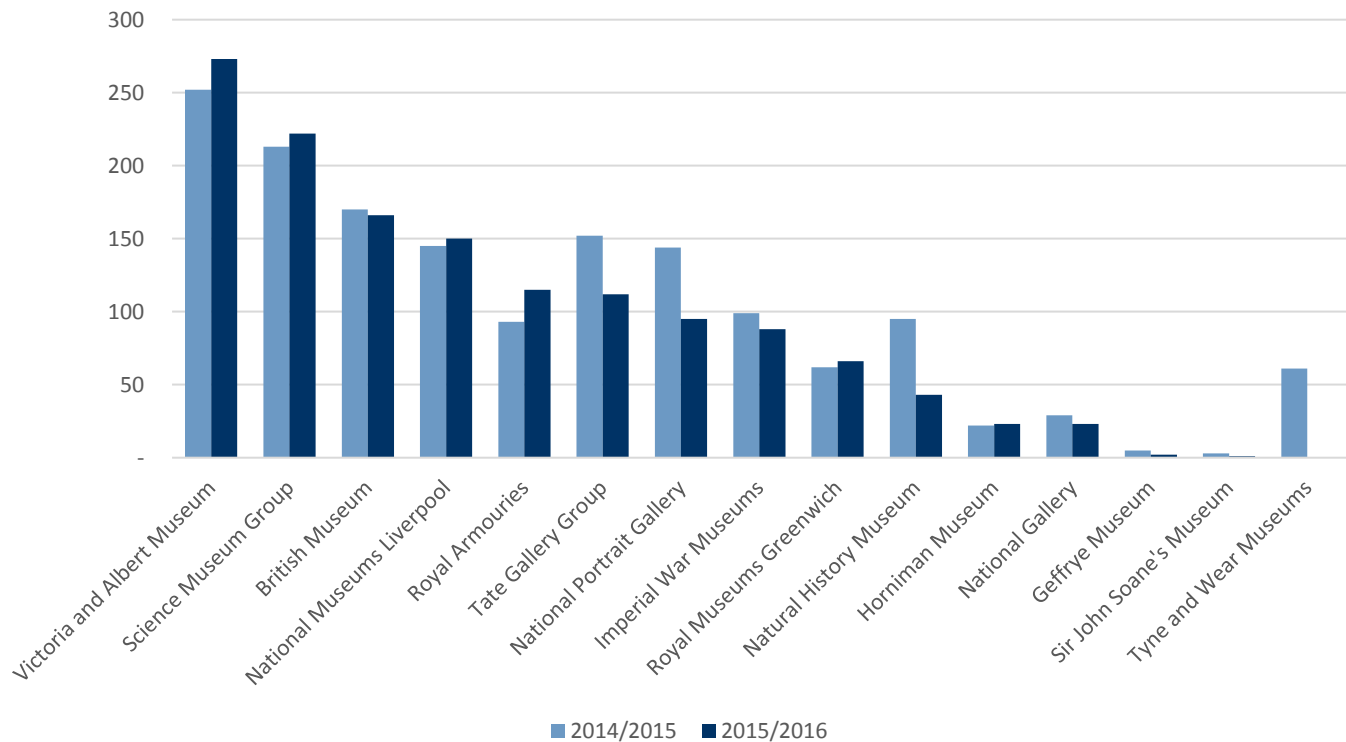
Chapter 4: DCMS-sponsored Museums Regional Engagement

Number of UK loan venues

A loan venue is defined as any approved borrowing institution, organisation, exhibition facility, or individual researcher who have been loaned an item from one of the DCMS sponsored museums and galleries. In 2015/16, there were 1,379 UK loan venues.

This is 10.7 per cent lower than in 2014/15, when there were 1,545 loan venues. When excluding the Tyne and Wear museums from this figure, there was a 7.1 per cent decrease. The Victoria and Albert Museum (comprising of four branches) had the highest number of loan venues, lending pieces to 273 venues in the United Kingdom (Figure 6).

Figure 6: The number of UK loan venues, 2014/15 to 2015/16



Annex A: Background note

1. Sponsored Museums: Performance Indicators is an Official Statistic and has been produced to the standards set out in the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Additional information is available [here](#).
2. Due to data issues discovered during the production of this release, data relating to the self-generated income of DCMS sponsored museums have not been included in this release, and will be added at a later date.
3. Sponsored Museums Performance Indicator publications previously included data on:
 - Adult visits by NS-SEC group, ethnicity and whether visitors considered themselves to have a long term illness, disability or infirmity.
 - The number of instances of children participating in outreach activities outside the gallery
 - The number of instances of adults aged 16 and over participating in organised activities at the museum/gallery
 - The number of instances of adults aged 16 and over participating in outreach activities outside the museum/gallery.
4. Following consultation with the sponsored Museums and Galleries, the data outlined above were no longer collected from 2012/13 onwards to reduce the burden of data collection on the Museums and Galleries. If you have a continued user need for these data, or additional comments on this statistical release, please contact evidence@culture.gov.uk.
5. This report has been produced by Becky Woods and Chris Marnoch. The responsible statistician for this release is Becky Woods. For enquiries on this release, please contact evidence@culture.gov.uk.
6. The next release is scheduled for Autumn 2017.
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