

PRESS RELEASE

1,322,611 people visited the Museum in 2017

The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao experiences the best year in its history on its 20th Anniversary

The year 2017 has been exceptional for the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao thanks to the public's avid support during the year it commemorated its 20th Anniversary. Both the number of visitors who came to see the exhibitions and the massive attendance at the events to celebrate the Anniversary with citizens, coupled with the strong public participation in the TopARTE cultural activity program and the recognitions it received this year, all point to the Museum's robust health and the appeal it still holds after two decades of history.

The number of visitors beat the historical record with a figure that even surpasses the total amount of visitors in 1998, the first whole year the Museum was operating, when it was constantly in the media spotlight. This figure shows the sustainability of its success and its ability to draw visitors to the region.

Likewise, more than 300,000 people enjoyed the live show *Reflections*, which for four nights turned Frank Gehry's building into the canvas for a sensorial journey through the history of the Museum and the city. In addition to the audience who watched in firsthand and then spread it virally around the social media, millions of people from all over the world were able to see it via the media. This was the crowning moment of a year packed with activities around the Anniversary. Not only did citizens pour their efforts into it, so did local agents from different fields (art, culture, retail, media).

With regard to recognitions, last December the Bilbao City Hall named the Museum an "Ambassador of the Town of Bilbao"; in November the Museum was awarded in Berlin the distinction of being the "European Cultural Brand of the Year" by the Cultural Brands and also the "Cambio 16 Arts Award"; in September it was recognized for the third year in a row as the "Most Transparent Museum in the Country" by the Fundación Compromiso y Transparencia; and in June it received two Laus Design Awards, one of them for the 20th Anniversary website.

Visitors to the Museum

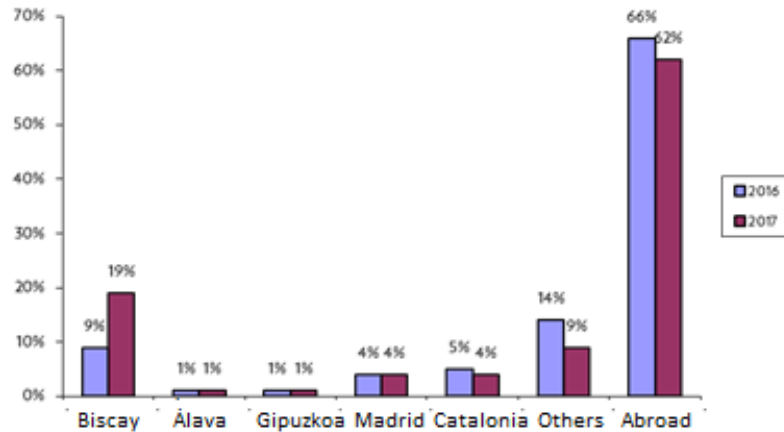
1,322,611 people visited the Museum in 2017, 13% more than in 2016—which, in turn, was the second-best year in its history—meaning a total of 153,207 more visitors. This year the Museum has overtaken the record figure of 1998, with 15,411 more visitors.

Bearing in mind their **place of origin**, just as in previous years there was a high percentage of visitors from abroad (62% of the total), primarily from France (16%), Great Britain (7%), Germany (5%), the United States (5%), and Italy (4%). Local visitors from the Basque Country accounted for 21% of the total, 10% more than the previous year, while the number of visitors from the rest of Spain was 17%.

Here we should highlight the "Opening to the Region" initiative promoted by the Provincial Government of Biscay, in which local adults received an invitation to visit the Museum free of charge during the month

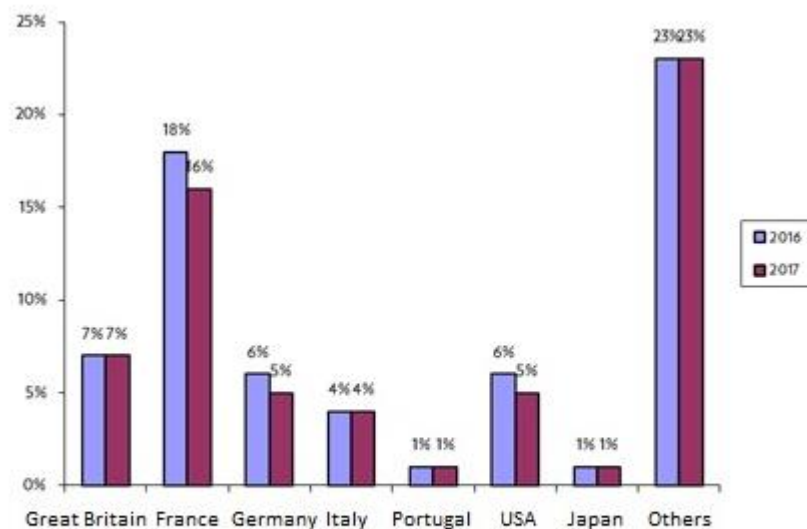
of October. A total of 113,966 took advantage of this invitation and visited the Museum.

Distribution of visitors by place of origin:



Distribution of foreign visitors by geographic origin:

The main draw in 2017 was program for its 20th



Museum's for visitors the **artistic** designed

Anniversary. *Bill Viola: A Retrospective* had 710,995 visitors between July and October and the second-highest average number of daily visitors in the history of the Museum, only surpassed by *China: 5,000 Years* in 1998. Likewise, the exhibition *Paris Fin de Siècle: Signac, Redon, Toulouse-Lautrec, and their Contemporaries* was enjoyed by 569,673 people between May and September, and *George Baselitz: The Heroes*, which was on at the same time as the Bill Viola retrospective, was visited by 534,221 people between mid-July and October. Also, worth noting was attendance at the exhibition *Abstract Expressionism*, which attracted 356,641 people between February and May, a high figure for that time of year.

If we consider the Digital Realm, in 2017 the website **guggenheim-bilbao.eus** recorded a total of 2,693,178 visits (18% more than the previous year), with 8,858,365 page views, and the Museum continues to broaden its community and influence in the social media, with 274,000 followers on Facebook, 355,000 on Twitter, and 241,000 on Instagram.

In terms of its **educational programs**, in 2017 a total of 257,506 people participated in the different in-person and online activities offered by the Museum, 1,012,000 used the didactic spaces that complement the artistic programming, and around 630,000 used the audio guides. The main success last year was the TopARTE initiative, which opened up the Museum's spaces to other cultural agents and entities from the Basque Country as part of the 20th Anniversary, providing well-rounded programs in a variety of different disciplines (music, film, video, dance, performance, theater and food) in which 17,450 people participated.

A large community

In terms of **individual members** of the Museum, 27,551 people are part of the Community, the official name of the community around art and culture created by the Museum in 2017. Broken down by groups, this includes 16,646 Museum Members, a figure higher than the previous year, which confirms its broad local support base, as well as 8,764 Followers, a new way to connect with the Museum free-of-charge, and 2,141 beneficiaries of the **Erdu** Program, which provides free admission to the Museum for unemployed persons.

Likewise, the **business community's involvement** in the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao in 2017 was 124 Corporate Members (4 more than in 2016). They are also members of the Community, and their support remains an essential pillar of the museum's funding scheme.

Economic engine

Finally, the **2017 figures** on the economic impact **of the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao's activities** on the local economy were higher than those of the previous year:

- The total **demand generated** in the Basque Country as a result of the Museum's activity was 495.5 million euros.
- Its contribution to the GDP was 433.7 million euros.
- These figures generated an **additional** 67.2 million euros in **revenue** for the **Basque treasury and tax authorities**.
- The Museum's activity helped to maintain 9,282 **jobs**.

Yet another year, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao continues to top the ranking of European cultural institutions in terms of its degree of self-financing, which stood at around 70% in 2017.

Bilbao, January 2, 2018