

DOCUMENTA FIFTEEN

SEPTEMBER 25, 2022

Kassel

JUNE 18

Press Release
Kassel, September 26, 2022

DOCUMENTA FIFTEEN CLOSES WITH VERY GOOD ATTENDANCE FIGURES



documenta fifteen: Fridericianum, Kassel, 2022, photo: Nicolas Wefers

A total of over 738,000 visitors—sustainability and accessibility as central concerns

After 100 exhibition days, a third Meydan weekend, and several activations by the artists, documenta fifteen came to a successful close yesterday (Sunday). At 738,000 the number of visitors exceeded organizers' expectations. In line with current developments in the tourism and events industry, the number of group bookings marginally fell short of original expectations, but a slight increase in the number of season ticket holders was posted.

On exhibition space totaling more than 25,000 square meters, over 1,500 artists at 32 exhibition venues invited visitors to immerse themselves in lumbung practice. Events and activations were an integral part of documenta fifteen. Thus, over 1,700 events by the participating artists and their invited actors took place during the runtime. The opening weekend along with the packed Meydan program, concentrated over three weekends, was attended by a total of some 38,000 people.

Following the lumbung practice, two urgent current topics loomed large in the way documenta fifteen sees itself:

Sustainability was taken seriously with regard to socio-economic and ecological concerns: Through the so-called “sustainability euro,” which was included in the ticket, 375,000 euros in donations were generated for the reforestation of the Reinhardswald forest near to the City of Kassel and for ecological enrichment on Sumatra in Indonesia. Recycled materials dominated the infrastructure and exhibition design. Merchandise and print products focused on sustainable and regional products. For the first time, the ticket included travel on public transport. In the ongoing process, standards of responsible use of resources were consistently considered.

Accessibility was another central concern. Based on lumbung values such as generosity and solidarity, documenta fifteen offered the so-called Soli-Ticket, which was intended to give as many people as possible access to the exhibition: By purchasing it at the regular ticket price, visitors gave another person free access to the exhibition. This ticket format, designed to increase accessibility, was well received; the Soli-Ticket was purchased a total of over 3,500 times and redeemed just as often. Accessibility has been seriously pursued by documenta fifteen as a continuous optimization process. Additional barriers were reduced and standards set via the website, Walks & Stories, and the exhibition accompanying booklet in easy language.

For the Artistic Direction, ruangrupa, the documenta fifteen exhibition in Kassel is a stage on their lumbung journey: “In the spirit of a sustainable process of learning from and with each other, we asked all the invited actors of documenta fifteen to continue their local practice and find a translation of it to Kassel. The results of this process formed the documenta fifteen exhibition. *lumbung #1*—as we also call the exhibition internally—is now closed, but the lumbung practice will live on after the 100 exhibition days. With independent self-organized platforms such as the lumbung.space website, the lumbung Gallery and lumbung Kios, we have created structures that will continue to be at the disposal of the lumbung network. We would like to take the opportunity to thank all those involved: the artists and collectives, the Kassel Ekosistem, the team of documenta fifteen and documenta g GmbH as well as the sobat-sobat and guards and all the others who have supported the project documenta fifteen with their heart and soul.”

Managing Director Alexander Farenholtz sees the number of visitors as a success: “In view of the antisemitism debate that accompanied it, this documenta did not have an easy time placing its actual artistic concerns. I wish that when we look back at the exhibition we could also see it through the eyes of the many visitors: namely, as an artistic endeavor that addresses key issues of our time. To my mind, reaching visitor numbers only about 17 percent below those of documenta 14 in 2017 should be considered a success given the event was

planned and executed under pandemic conditions with the associated drop in long-distance and group travel.”

Digitally, documenta fifteen was also highly attended. The website was visited by a total of almost 700,000 unique visitors from 115 countries. The social media channel with the widest reach, Instagram, reached around 65,000 followers, and the Newsletter at its last count recorded around 29,500 subscribers.

Those wishing to immerse themselves once again in impressions of the lumbung process in the exhibition retrospective can continue to follow a good 30 specially produced videos on central themes of documenta fifteen and artistic contributions, as well as the archived livestream events, in the documenta fifteen media library: documenta-fifteen.de/en/media-library

Further figures in detail and demographic data

Over 15,150 season tickets (d 14 = 14,500) were sold. A total of around 5,250 Walks & Stories were offered, attended by around 78,700 participants. 33,000 schoolchildren in group tours visited documenta fifteen and around 4,600 representatives of the press were accredited.

Around one-third (31.7 percent) of the public came from abroad and representing 86 countries around the world. Over 40 percent of visitors were aged between 15 and 40. The age group between 20 and 40 was most strongly represented.

According to initial survey results, the majority of visitors rated their visit to documenta fifteen as good to very good. Thus, 57.4 percent of respondents gave documenta fifteen an overall rating of 1 or 2 (on a scale of 1 – very good to 5 – very poor). A further 30.1 percent gave it a 3. The representative visitor survey, which is expected in October, will provide information on further demographic data and visitor satisfaction.

The days posting the most visitors continued to be Saturday, followed by Friday, Tuesday, and Sunday; the most popular exhibition venues were the Fridericianum and documenta Halle, followed by Hallenbad Ost, Hübner-Areal, Grimmwelt, and St. Kunigundis Church.

The publications developed together with Hatje Cantz, including the 320-page *Handbook* and the family guide *Walking, finding, sharing*, will remain available as e-books in the future, even after physical copies have sold out.

Yesterday, Sunday, September 25, 2022, the dates for documenta 16 were announced in line with tradition by Christian Geselle, Chairman of the Supervisory Board and Lord Mayor of the City of Kassel. documenta 16 will run from June 12 to September 19, 2027.

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