

Bayreuth Festival Ticketing Charges Dropped By Rebecca Schmid

dapd, KIZ, MA.com

February 17, 2012BERLIN -- A federal investigation into the Bayreuth Festival's ticketing practices has determined that, speculation to the contrary, no laws have been broken. "The distribution of free tickets to representatives of media, art and culture in particular does not violate penal law," the department of public prosecution said in a statement. Authorities had placed [charges against the festival](#) last year when it was revealed that less than half of tickets were available for public sale. Investigations have determined that only the allocation of free and service tickets are of potential relevance. The fact that only 70% of tickets were distributed privately is not grounds for prosecution, and charges will be dismissed.

Festival spokesperson Friedrich Emmerich told the dapd news agency he was relieved that no more time and energy would have to be invested, adding that the verdict "was to be expected." He also revealed that several policy changes have been installed, increasing the number of tickets now available for public sale. The Green Hill's preferential treatment of company sponsors, Wagner Societies, and touring companies has received heightened attention from the media in recent months. In December, Bayreuth's administration sent a letter to all 139 Wagner Societies explaining that investigations by the Bavarian General Accounting Office and the German Federal Court of Auditors would no longer make it possible to grant members special access to tickets. However, the festival had not been issued a legal penalty.