

BACKGROUND FOR ASSESSING THE OBJECTIVES OF CULTURAL POLICY AT REGIONAL LEVEL

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This article builds on the research project VEGA no. 1/0291/08: Analysis of the functioning of environmental policy instruments in the context of socio-economic regional disparities in Slovakia.

Abstract: The aim of the article is a theoretical definition of the background for the evaluation of cultural policy at the regional level. Based on the analysis of scientific resources cultural policy and recommended objectives of cultural policy have been theoretically defined. Subsequently indicators to evaluate the objectives of cultural policy have been set. These indicators were the basis for analysis of selected concepts of cultural development of higher territorial units in Slovakia.

Keywords: cultural policy, objectives of cultural policy, concept of cultural development.

1 Introduction

The aim of the article is a theoretical definition of the background for the evaluation of cultural policy at the regional level. Cultural policy is a purposeful action on the conditions of the culture and through these conditions on the culture. It is perceived as a continuous care of the state of cultural development of the country and population. The main aim of cultural policy is to set objectives, create structures and secure sufficient resources to create a favorable environment for human fulfillment. States are recommended to take five basic policy objectives. These objectives were the basis for analysis of selected concepts of cultural development of higher territorial units in Slovakia.

Material, needed for processing this article, was obtained in secondary research, where we analysed existing and available literary sources, which deal with these issues and the concepts of cultural development of higher territorial units. During processing the article we apply methods of analysis, synthesis, abstraction, induction and deduction. This article builds on the research project VEGA no. 1/0291/08: Analysis of the functioning of environmental policy instruments in the context of socio-economic regional disparities in Slovakia.

2 Cultural policy and the objectives of cultural policy

According to The Proposal Concept of Development of Local and Regional Culture (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2007) in the European space cultural policy is understood as a state created environment in which the processes of creation, preservation and dissemination of cultural values are carrying out. The main tools used by the state are:

- legislative measures aiming at developing a culture,
- public financing of culture and arrangements for multi-resource financing of culture,
- ensure the availability of informations about culture, how they are spread, as well as citizens' access to the culture.

In Slovakia cultural policy is defined in The draft national strategy for cultural policy (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2002) and it is a purposeful action on the conditions of the culture and through these conditions on the culture. It is a set of policies for each sub-cultures. Cultural policy is perceived as a continuous care of the state of cultural development of the country and population (Slovakia - Cultural Profile, 2010). It is implemented at international, national, regional and local level.

Thorsby (2001, p. 144) in his publication, indicated as a fundamental objective of cultural policy to set objectives, create structures and secure sufficient resources to create a favorable

environment for human fulfillment. Thorsby recommends that states adopt five policy objectives:

1. to make cultural policy one of the key components of development strategy,
2. to promote creativity and participation in cultural life,
3. to reinforce policy and practice to promote the cultural industries and to safeguard and enhance the cultural heritage,
4. to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information society,
5. to make more human and financial resources available for cultural development.

General government creates frameworks and conditions for the development of culture, provides a basic network of cultural institutions and cultural infrastructure in the area. It also supports other agencies participating in the cultural life of society, regions and settlements. At the regional level concepts of cultural development are developed, which are concerned with creating better conditions from public administration for developing culture, which should contribute to the overall improvement of conditions for the development of culture in the broadest sense. Concept of cultural development touches all areas of culture (educational activities, museum and gallery activities, drama activities, activities in the audiovisual sector, protection of monuments, library activities and other cultural activities). In the evaluation of cultural policies at the regional level, we just analyze the concepts of cultural development. The above-mentioned objectives are relevant to us and they became the basis for the analysis and theoretical basis for the evaluation of selected concepts for cultural development of higher territorial units.

3 Set indicators to evaluate implementation of the objectives of cultural policy

Following establishment of cultural policy objectives indicators to evaluate implementation of the objectives of cultural policy were set (table 1). These indicators serve for analysis of selected concepts of cultural development of higher territorial units in terms of meeting the objectives of cultural policy.

Table 1 Set indicators to evaluate implementation of the objectives of cultural policy

	Objective	Indicator
1	to promote creativity and participation in cultural life	organizations for support of the culture (centers of edification)
2	to reinforce policy and practice to promote the cultural industries and to safeguard and enhance the cultural heritage	number of cultural institutions
		planned implementation of CEMUZ and CEDVU
3	to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information society	number of international projects of cultural organizations
		contribution to the financing of minority cultures
		promotion and presentation of theatrical productions in minority languages
4	to make more human and financial resources available for cultural development	library collections in minority languages
		number of employees of cultural institutions
		financial resources for cultural services per capita (Sk per capita)

Source: Own proposal

We describe the various objectives as well as set indicators for the need of analysis in the next chapter:

First objective – to make cultural policy one of the key components of development strategy. This objective is regarded as fulfilled for all of higher territorial units, since they all have elaborated the concept of cultural development.

Second objective – to promote creativity and participation in cultural life. To achieve this objective it is important to promote participation in cultural life, which is not only the spread of consumption, but also to promote active participation to develop their own skills. Supporting the participation in the cultural life of society is connected with creating conditions for creative contribution to development of culture. Public interest in the field of culture is regarding to The concept of developing local and regional culture (2008) ensuring citizens' access to culture, by promoting cultural activities and cultural projects of organizations and individuals, supporting initiatives and engagement of citizens in the field of culture, the use of cultural infrastructure of the territory and ensuring its availability in the territory, effective and creative activity of cultural institutions and promoting freedom of artistic creation.

The activity of centers of edification is very important to support creativity and skills development of the population. Their mission is to promote and develop local cultural values and traditions, to promote interest and artistic activities, ensuring the leisure, cultural and educational activities of the population, find, protect, preserve and make available folk traditions with an emphasis on traditional and folk culture, creatively develop and use them, enable people to fill their leisure time with cultural activities. Due to the important mission we have set the number of centers of edification as an indicator.

Third objective – to reinforce policy and practice to promote the cultural industries and to safeguard and enhance the cultural heritage. According to The Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2005) cultural industry refers to industries producing and distributing cultural goods and services when assessing the quality, use or purpose, embody or convey cultural expressions, irrespective of the commercial value they may have. O'Connor (2000) argues that cultural industries are those activities which deal primarily in symbolic goods – goods whose primary economic value is derived from their cultural value. This definition then includes what have been called the 'classical' cultural industries – broadcast media, film, publishing, recorded music, design, architecture, new media – and the 'traditional arts' – visual art, crafts, theatre, music theatre, concerts and performance, literature, museums and galleries. Cultural goods are distributed by the cultural infrastructure, which represents a particular cultural institutions (museums, galleries, theaters, libraries, etc.) providing a background for the realization of cultural activities. For the dissemination of cultural goods it is important the accessibility of cultural infrastructure and therefore, we have set number of cultural institutions as an indicator for monitoring the implementation of this objective.

According to the Law of National council of Slovakia NR SR. 49/2002 Z.z. about the protection of monuments (2002) protection of cultural heritage is a summary of activities and measures to identify, research, register, conserve, restore, use and presentate cultural monuments and historic sites. One possibility is the development of digitization projects of movable cultural heritage in museum and gallery collections. In the field of museums and galleries, there are two basic database systems. Central registry of museum collections (CEMUZ) is a database of information about collections in museums of the Slovak Republic and Central registry of works of art (CEDVU) is a database of information about works of art in the collections of galleries and museums of the Slovak Republic. The objective of the digitization of collections is a preservation and accessing of knowledge about museum collections as well as the preservation and accessing of visualization objects. The set indicator is planned implementation of CEMUZ and CEDVU.

Fourth objective – to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information society. Slovakia, like other European countries, is not and has never been ethnically homogeneous. Around 86% of citizens of Slovak nationality and 14% of national minorities and ethnic groups live in the territory of Slovak Republic. The rights to overall development are guaranteed to citizens belonging to eleven national minorities and ethnic groups. As the main key to peaceful coexistence of different cultures it is needed tolerance, intercultural understanding and cooperation. As indicators of this objective we set the number of international projects of cultural organizations and contribution to the financing of minority cultures.

According to The concept of care for the state language of the Slovak Republic (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2001) language policy is closely linked with ethnic and cultural policy. State has the right to modify the language and situations on their territory, thus guaranteeing the position of civil language to ensure effective execution of state administration and a single information flow, but also to confer rights on persons using the minority language. The objective in the area of the linguistic diversity should be to create a favorable background in which all languages can free express and develop. Indicators of this objective is the promotion and presentation of theatrical productions in minority languages and the library collections in minority languages.

Fifth objective – to make more human and financial resources available for cultural development. The existence of financial and human resources is also essential for cultural development. Human resources are the most valuable and are a driving force, an engine that gives the movement of material and financial resources. We set the number of employees of cultural institutions and financial resources for cultural services per capita as indicators of this objective.

4 Analyse of concepts of cultural development

Slovakia is administratively divided into eight higher territorial units (HTU). Concepts of cultural development of six higher territorial units – Trnava, Banská Bystrica, Bratislava, Košice, Nitra and Žilina were available after an initial analysis made on the websites of HTU. The concepts of HTU of Prešov and Trenčín are not accessible on websites. From six available concepts three have been excluded – the concept of HTU of Košice due to insufficient content for analysis and concepts of HTU of Bratislava and Žilina because of out of date. The concepts of cultural development of three selected higher territorial units – Banská Bystrica (BB HTU), Nitra (NI HTU) and Trnava (TT HTU) have been analyzed (table 2).

Table 2 Analyse of concepts of cultural development according to set indicators

Objective	Indicator	BB HTU	TT HTU	NI HTU
to promote creativity and participation in cultural life	organizations for support of the culture (centers of edification)	6	4	5
to reinforce policy and practice to promote the cultural industries and to safeguard and enhance the cultural heritage	number of cultural institutions	22	18	21
	planned implementation of CEMUZ and CEDVU	yes	yes	yes
to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information	number of international projects of cultural organizations	8	-	6
	contribution to the financing of minority cultures	-	26121 Sk	-

society	promotion and presentation of theatrical productions in minority languages	yes	yes	yes
	library collections in minority languages	yes	yes	yes
to make more human and financial resources available for cultural development	number of employees of cultural institutions	437	326	569
	financial resources for cultural services per capita (Sk per capita)	227	253	318

Source: Own working out

To fulfill the objective – to promote creativity and participation in cultural life, it is important to promote participation in cultural life and promote active participation to develop own abilities. The activity of centers of edification, which occurrence we observed in the analysis, is important to support creativity and skills development of inhabitants. The centers of edification operate in all three studied HTU. The highest number is located in HTU of Banská Bystrica. Network of these centers is sufficient due to their activity and territorial scope in the region.

The second follow-up objective is objective – to reinforce policy and practice to promote the cultural industries and to safeguard and enhance the cultural heritage. Cultural industries produce cultural goods and those are spread through cultural infrastructure, which represents a particular cultural institutions (museums, galleries, theaters, libraries, etc.) providing an background for the realization of cultural activities. Accessibility of cultural infrastructure is very important for the dissemination of cultural goods and, therefore, we watched the number of cultural institutions under the local government as an indicator. Their number in each HTU is approximately the same, most cultural institutions are in HTU of Banská Bystrica – 22 cultural institutions. One way of protecting and strengthening cultural heritage is its digitalization. All HTU are planning implementation of a central registration of museum collections (CEMUZ) and Central Register of works of art (CEDVU).

For monitoring the objective – to promote cultural and linguistic diversity in and for the information society, we set more indicators. Slovakia is not a homogenous country and the key to peaceful coexistence of different cultures is a cross-cultural understanding and cooperation. As indicators of this objective we set the number of international projects of cultural organizations and contribution to the financing of minority cultures. International projects are an appropriate form of cooperation, as well as presentations and can significantly increase the international prestige of the region. In international projects is involved HTU of Banská Bystrica and HTU of Nitra, more projects are in HTU of Banská Bystrica. HTU of Trnava is not mentioning involvement in international projects. All three HTU are mentioning in their concepts of development of culture that they support minority cultures, in what the term minority culture means culture of those groups that require special attention and treatment as their social and cultural characteristics are different from the dominant group. The rate of contribution to the financing of minority cultures is mentioned only by HTU of Trnava and it is 26 121 Sk.

To create a favorable background, in which all languages can free express and develop, should be a priority in the field of linguistic diversity. Indicators of this objective is the promotion and presentation of theatrical productions in minority languages and the library collections in minority languages.. All observed HTU meet this goal. Regional libraries build and maintain library collections in minority languages. They are actively involved in cross-border cooperation, particularly with libraries in Hungary. Also a library collections in Czech language are rather extensive in all the regional libraries, which reflects the common historical development, as well as the general knowledge of Czech language in Slovakia. Theatres for decades successfully collaborate with several theaters in Czech Republic and Hungary, in the form of reciprocal hosting or regular

attendance at theater festivals and shows. They expand their activity also through tours and performances.

To watch the last objective – to make more human and financial resources available for cultural development, two indicators have been set – the number of employees of cultural institutions and financial resources for cultural services per capita. Numerical values of these indicators can be found in all three concepts. The highest number of employees of cultural facilities has HTU of Nitra – 569 employees, the lowest number HTU of Trnava – 326 employees. Regarding the indicator resources for cultural services per capita, the highest amount is in HTU of Nitra – 318 Sk per capita. Since funding the implementation of various cultural activities are a fundamental prerequisite for the maintenance and development of cultural values in the region, one of the priorities must be to make the cultural development the utmost element of socio-economic development of the region.

All recommended objectives of cultural policy are represented in watched concepts of cultural development of selected HTU. After making the analysis, it can be said, that their level of working-out is roughly the same. Concepts are concerned with creating better conditions for developing a culture from the side of public administration, which should contribute to the overall improvement of conditions for the cultural development. Most cultural institutions and most cultural activities are carried out at a regional level. Therefore it is important and essential for the future of culture in Slovakia that exactly to these levels will be implemented the systemic measures and solutions, which would then create a mutually coordinated system of cultural policy in Slovak Republic. Made analysis could be an inspiration for working-out similar concepts of cultural development in all higher territorial units of Slovakia.

5 Conclusion

In the European space cultural policy is understood as a state created environment in which the processes of creation, preservation and dissemination of cultural values are carrying out. Cultural policy is perceived as a continuous care of the state of cultural development of the country and population. The fundamental objective of cultural policy is to set objectives, create structures and secure sufficient resources to create a favorable environment for human fulfillment.

Public administration creates frameworks and conditions for the development of culture, provides a basic network of cultural institutions and cultural infrastructure in the area. At the regional level concepts of cultural development are developed, which are concerned with creating better conditions from public administration for developing culture, which should contribute to the overall improvement of conditions for the development of culture in the broadest sense. Concept of cultural development touches all areas of culture (educational activities, museum and gallery activities, drama activities, activities in the audiovisual sector, protection of monuments, library activities and other cultural activities).

It is recommended that states adopt five policy objectives. The main objective is to make cultural policy one of the key components of development strategy. The other objectives touch all key areas of the culture as cultural heritage and cultural industry, support of cultural diversity, participation on cultural life and also issue of financial resources. These objectives became the basis for the analysis and theoretical basis for the evaluation of selected concepts for cultural development of higher territorial units. Made analysis could be an inspiration for working-out similar concepts of cultural development in all higher territorial units of Slovakia, which can help to create mutually co-ordinated system of cultural policy in the Slovak Republic.

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