

Slovak Republic

Introduction - Key Issues

In Slovakia, like in many other countries, collecting as the forerunner of museology was practised in individual cases already in the Renaissance period. The idea of collecting and its actual realisation began to develop on a larger scale under the influence of the Enlightenment in the 18th century. Apart from exhibiting, the first museums also had an educational role.

A specific feature of collecting in Slovakia was its connection with the process of national independence. The representatives of the Slovak nation regarded the collecting of antiquities as an evidence of cultural advancement of our predecessors and an acknowledgement of the historicity of the nation and its right of national independence. After the first Czechoslovak Republic had been established in 1918, Slovak museology developed under the influence of a more advanced Czech museology, thanks to which the first professional museum organisations formed (Czechoslovak Union of Museums).

Many museums in Slovakia and their professional staff are members of the Slovak Committee of the International Council of Museum – SK ICOM.

Definition of Museum

The definition of the museum in the Slovak Republic used by members of the museum profession is identical with that defined by ICOM. Moreover, the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 206/2009 of the Code defines the museum in Article 2, Section 5 as follows:

„The museum is a specialised corporate entity or an organisational body of the corporate entity, which based on its exploration and scientific research, acquires objects of cultural value, which it professionally manages as a collection items. These items are scientifically researched and made available to the public especially for the purposes of study, cognition, education and aesthetic experience through specific means of museum communication.“

Other articles of the Act define the goals of museums, particularly as regards the specialist care of objects – e. g. the recording and documenting of collections, classification, presentation.

Existence of Museum - related Laws

The questions of establishing, operating and defining museums were first regulated in the Slovak Republic by the Act of the Slovak National Council No. 109/1961 on museums and galleries.

At present the care of the cultural heritage is regulated by the following legislation:

1. Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 206/2009 of the Code;
2. Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 207/2009 of the Code;
3. Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 49/2002 of the Code;
4. Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 543/2002 of the Code;
5. Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 126/2015 of the Code;
6. Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 395/2002 of the Code;
7. Resolution No. 91/2001 to Declaration of the National Council of the Slovak Republic on the preservation of the cultural heritage;
8. Regulation of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic No. MK-2544/2015-110/11648;
9. Regulation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Republic No. 94/1958 of the Code About covenant of the preservation of the cultural heritage in war conflict and the subsequent protocols (The Hague Protocol);
10. Regulation of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czechoslovak Socialist Republic No. 15/1980 of the Code About agreement on the safeguards against illicit import, export and the transfer of ownership of the cultural heritage;

11. Agreement on the preservation of the world cultural and natural heritage legal notice No. 159/1991 of the Code.

Categories used regarding Type of Collection

The classification of collection items was regulated by the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 115/1998 of the Code (Article 6, Section 2) and the Regulation of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic No. 342/1998 of the Code in Article 14.

“The classification committee determines the classification of objects into categories.

The classification of the collection items into categories can be re-appraised in accordance with the current knowledge of the cultural, historical, artistic or scientific significance.”

At present, this Act and Regulation no longer apply, but the museum is supposed to have a list of top collection items which protect if needed first.

Categories used regarding Type of Ownership

In accordance with the Act of the National Council of the Slovak Republic No. 206/2009 of the Code museums can be established by

- bodies of the State administration
- regional administration
- communities
- other corporate entities

The museum founder determines the classification of the ownership of the collections – the objects are the property of the State, of the regional administration, of communities and other corporate entities. Over 90 % of the collection items in the museums of the Slovak Republic are the property of the State or the regional or local administration.

Existing Data - Basic Figures and Diagrams

A systematic processing of statistical data on the activities of museums began in the 1960s. In 1967, the Slovak National Museum processed the first complex statistics on the museum activities in Slovakia. Since then, museums annually forward statistics on their activities to the specialist centre of the Slovak National Museum.

Currently, museums are obliged to produce two types of statistics. The KULT record is processed for the need of the Statistic Bureau of the Slovak Republic. It is a summary of the basic quantification data, such as the number of collection items, visitors, operational costs for museums, number of displays and exhibitions, employment and its structure. This is an official indicator of the data concerning the activities of museums processed for the needs of the State administration.

Since 1967, the special department of the Slovak National Museum – the National Museum Centre has elaborated the Annual Report on Activities of the Museums in Slovakia. Besides the quantification data contained in the KULT record, it also provides a written description of the state, activities and problems of museums in the Slovak Republic. Since 1996, these statistics have been processed by special software – Automated Museum Statistics Information System (AM SIS).

After processing, comprehensive statistics are posted on the Slovak National Museum website and the summary of data is also published in the press – in the journal MÚZEUM.

List of References

The current statistics is based on the knowledge of museum practice, taking into account the needs of museums as well as official statistics. In accordance with the changes of the founders of museums during the transformation processes in the Slovak Republic after 1989, the new founders accepted the current method of processing statistical data in the museums.

The Statistic Bureau of the Slovak Republic accepted specific proposals of the Slovak National Museum – the National Museum Centre (at present the Museological Kabinet) in processing the KULT report – for the official statistics form of the Slovak Republic for the operation of museums.