

PRIORITISATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES AND THEIR ACHIEVEMENT IN MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES IN SLOVAKIA

Kristína Pančíková^{a*}, Ján Veselovský^a, Viktória Gergelyová^a

^aDepartment of Tourism, Faculty of Central European Studies, University of Constantine the Philosopher, Nitra, Slovakia

* corresponding author: kpancikova@ukf.sk

Cite this article: Pančíková, K., Veselovský, J., Gergelyová, V. (2026). Prioritisation of Sustainable Development Objectives and their Achievement in Museums and Galleries in Slovakia. *Deturope*, 18(1), 181-210.

Abstract

Sustainable development represents an important framework for the functioning of cultural institutions, including museums and galleries. The aim of the study is to empirically analyse the prioritisation of social, environmental and economic objectives related to sustainable development in selected museums and galleries in Slovakia and the ways in which these objectives are achieved in the context of tourism. The study is based on primary data obtained from 36 museums and 14 galleries in Slovakia between May and September 2024. The data were analysed using non-parametric statistical methods, including the Friedman, Wilcoxon and McNemar tests. The results indicate that museums and galleries prioritise social objectives over environmental and economic objectives. In achieving social objectives, they are primarily oriented towards approaches focused on making content accessible and interpretable for visitors. In achieving environmental objectives, they tend to focus more on operational measures than on developmental environmental initiatives. In achieving economic objectives, the findings reveal a stronger orientation towards revenue-generating activities than towards cost-reduction measures. The study contributes to a better understanding of how museums and galleries approach sustainable development objectives in practice, with a focus on Slovakia and its relevance for the Central European context.

Keywords: gallery, museum, social, environmental and economic objectives, sustainability, tourism

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable development has become an increasingly important aspect of the management of cultural institutions, reflecting global challenges related to environmental protection, economic efficiency, and social responsibility. Considering these mounting threats and challenges, museums and galleries, while maintaining their core mission of acquiring, preserving, and researching collections, have decided to allocate greater resources towards the implementation of diverse management strategies. These strategies encompass a wide range of approaches, including marketing and branding initiatives, as well as fundraising efforts. The primary objective of this strategic shift is to harness the potential of culture to act in an anti-cyclical manner (Esposito et al., 2019). In a similar vein, Cerquetti, Sardanelli, and

Ferrata (2024) have identified sustainability as one of the most pressing needs of museums worldwide in the last decade.

These institutions are now expected not only to preserve and present cultural heritage, but also to actively contribute to shaping social awareness and promoting the development of sustainable practices. For museums and galleries, this means not only implementing environmental and economic measures, but also taking into account social aspects such as inclusion, accessibility, and education, creating a comprehensive framework for their sustainable management in the 21st century. This approach is consistent with the recent definition of a museum adopted by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 2022. Cognizant of the imperative to address contemporary environmental and social challenges, ICOM underscores that museums are not merely non-profit institutions dedicated to research, conservation, and the presentation of heritage, but also accessible, inclusive, and promote diversity and sustainability in all their dimensions. The notion of sustainability, intrinsic to the museum's mission, is deeply intertwined with its long-standing nature as a permanent institution and its responsibility to serve current and future generations (Cerquetti, Montella, 2021). Consequently, museums and galleries bear not only the responsibility for the preservation of cultural heritage, but also the obligation to actively contribute to the formulation of ethical, environmental, and social strategies that ensure their long-term relevance and sustainability within a dynamic and constantly evolving social environment.

This trend, predicated on global sustainability challenges, is particularly salient in the context of small museums and galleries, which often confront specific conditions such as limited financial and material resources, a paucity of professional staff, and infrastructural constraints. An exploration of the manner in which these smaller institutions implement sustainable principles is imperative to comprehending their capacity to contribute to the sustainable development of tourism products. Notably, even museums and galleries with limited commercial recognition can play pivotal roles within their local communities by offering distinctive and authentic experiences to visitors. These contributions can be substantial in fostering diversification and advancement in the realm of sustainable tourism.

In this context, the rationale for sustainability studies in the management of small museums and galleries is twofold: it is both essential and a priority for understanding their potential for use in tourism. In Slovakia, where small museums and galleries form an integral part of local culture and heritage, this issue remains under-researched. If these institutions are able to respond to sustainability trends and systematically apply environmental, economic and social

approaches in their activities, they can play an important role in the development of regional tourism.

Despite the growing number of studies focusing on sustainability in museums and galleries, existing research predominantly addresses individual aspects of sustainability (social, environmental or economic) separately (e.g. Loach et al., 2016; Cole et al., 2020; Vanni, 2023), while less attention is paid to their interrelationships and their prioritisation in managerial practice. At the same time, only limited research has examined how these approaches are implemented through specific managerial activities, particularly in tourism-related settings (Vareiro et al., 2021; Torabi Farsani et al., 2023).

In the context of Central and Eastern Europe, and especially in Slovakia, empirical research remains underdeveloped, particularly with regard to the prioritisation of sustainability objectives and the ways of achieving them in museums and galleries in the context of tourism. This study addresses this research gap by examining these aspects in selected museums and galleries in Slovakia.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDIED ISSUE

The relationship between museums, galleries, and sustainability is a dynamic and ambivalent one, which can be understood on two levels, as posited by Baki Nalcioglu (2021) and Cerquetti, Sardanelli, and Ferrata (2024). On the one hand, social, economic, and environmental sustainability are key tools that can contribute to the development and stability of museums and galleries. A substantial body of research has examined sustainability in museums and galleries, with a focus on social and cultural dimensions (Loach, Rowley, & Griffiths, 2016; Taurino, 2023), and environmental dimensions (Perzolla, Carr, & Westland, 2018; Cole, Lindsay, & Akturk, 2020; Dwyer, 2021) and economic dimensions (Vanni, 2023). Such an approach, focused on individual dimensions of sustainability separately, does not allow for a comprehensive understanding of how museums and galleries balance these objectives in practice and which of them are prioritised.

Conversely, museums and galleries play a pivotal role in promoting sustainable development, particularly in the tourism sector. The role of museums in sustainability has been examined by several authors (Gustafsson, Ijla, 2017; Brown, 2019; Garthe, 2022), who underscore the significance of museums in promoting sustainable development, particularly in local and regional contexts. This contribution is particularly pronounced in the context of tourism (Vareiro, Sousa, & Silva, 2021; Torabi Farsani, Moazzen Jamshidi, & Hekmat, 2023).

According to Maryimova (2021), museum tourism is a distinct form of cultural tourism that encompasses the creation of exhibitions, the organization of internal and external exhibitions, educational seminars, lectures, public events, training, the provision of access to museum shops, and the production and sale of museum merchandise (Maryimova, 2021).

Pop and Borza's study (2015), which was based on a qualitative survey of expert opinion in Romania, identified two opposing approaches to the sustainable management of museums and galleries. The first approach associates sustainable management primarily with the high production of cultural resources, but also with the efficient consumption of natural resources and the finding of appropriate solutions to raise additional funds. The second approach is based on the fact that the aim of a museum or gallery should not be the raising of money or the adaptation to the needs of visitors. A museum or gallery is said to be sustainably managed when a specific entity (e.g., the state, a municipality, or a private donor) provides all the necessary resources to enable it to carry out its traditional functions of collecting, preserving, and researching cultural heritage.

In order for museum and gallery management to be sustainable, it is essential that sustainability principles be incorporated into the planning and design of objectives. According to Kesner (2005), sustainability should be an integral part of all phases of activities. The management of museums and galleries should ensure the management and optimization of conditions and resources to achieve the set objectives. In the context of comprehensiveness and sustainability, the objectives should be social, environmental, and economic in nature.

Social objectives: Meeting the needs of visitors (Martíšková et al., 2022) is an integral component of the mission of museums and galleries, which is not only the preservation but also the dissemination of cultural values. Therefore, Olejárová (2015) states that cultural attractions acquire their significance only in the context of tourism. Uzell (1998) justifies the importance of cultural attractions by the fact that they enable people to understand themselves. Timothy (2011) underscores the role of cultural institutions in facilitating communication, offering individuals a means to find equilibrium in today's fast-paced world by drawing upon their understanding of the past. Oriška (2001) further emphasizes the societal benefits of tourism, asserting that museum and gallery visits contribute to the enhancement of the social, cultural, professional, and educational levels of the population. They serve as conduits for visitors, reminding them of national traditions and conveying historical narratives, thereby reinforcing national awareness (Palmer, 2005). In this regard, sustainability offers novel opportunities for museums and galleries. It suggests not only appealing methods of interpreting and communicating heritage and reaching broader

audiences but also providing innovative and effective solutions for managing collections and relationships with local stakeholders (Merriman, 2008). Taurino (2023) explores the integration of AI in museum institutions, considering its potential benefits and challenges in conjunction with conventional curatorial practices within the context of sustainability in the museum sector.

Europa Nostra (2006) identifies cultural tourism as a conduit for both knowledge and joy, underscoring its potential role in the dissemination of information and the cultivation of human intellect. The expansion of the museum and gallery sector, a fundamental prerequisite for the successful implementation of cultural tourism, serves to broaden the intellectual landscape and stimulate critical thinking. Furthermore, these institutions contribute to the psychological well-being of visitors, thereby facilitating opportunities for leisure that are conducive to personal growth and development. Furthermore, the enhancement of the aesthetic appeal of the environment through cultural institutions has been demonstrated to foster a sense of pride and cohesion among local communities (Kesner, 2005; Anthony, 2015).

Social objectives are therefore achieved in practice through specific activities such as content interpretation, accessibility of exhibitions, and visitor-oriented services.

Environmental objectives: As the world continues to experience rapidly changing climatic conditions, institutions from all sectors are undergoing a process to become more sustainable, seeking to reduce or eliminate their harmful impacts on the ecosystem. Museums have a key role to play in this process, as they take on the responsibility of being community leaders and change makers (Dwyer, 2021). Their environmental objectives are to ensure the protection of both tangible and intangible cultural assets, while also maintaining respect for the environment. However, the demands of these activities, such as maintaining proper standards of light, temperature, humidity, and other factors, impose significant demands on energy consumption (Pencarelli, Cerquetti, & Splendiani, 2016). Consequently, museums and galleries should consider the environmental impacts of their activities and the materials they utilize. A study by Cole, Lindsay, and Akturk (2020) identified five key themes in the green building sector as it pertains to museums: recycling, water management, energy efficiency, the use of eco-friendly materials, and environmentally sustainable landscaping.

Museums and galleries have the potential to contribute to environmental improvement if they are preserved. Their restoration and reconstruction often leads to their use in tourism, which also requires a satisfactory structural and technical condition (Veľasová, 2001; Kesner, 2005). However, given the vulnerability of culture and the negative effects of tourism, the

willingness of management to use cultural attractions in tourism can vary considerably. Fyall and Garrod (1998) identify the determination of the optimal level of exploitation in tourism as a dilemma for cultural attraction management, while Kerr (1994) explains this phenomenon by noting that what is beneficial for cultural preservation does not necessarily promote tourism, and conversely, what is beneficial for tourism is rarely detrimental to cultural preservation. According to Podušelová (2001), cultural attractions thus often encounter inappropriate management approaches that either prioritize the success of the tourism market over the protection of cultural values or make tourism market activities inaccessible due to potential negative effects. Du Cros and McKercher (2015) therefore call for the sustainable use of cultural attractions in tourism based on a balance of conservation and tourism industry principles. In the context of environmental objectives, Olejárová (2015) underscores the significance of control, emphasizing the maintenance and care of these objects, which should persist even when they are made available to the tourism market. This is a prerequisite for the effective guidance and distribution of visitor flows. The prevailing conservatism in the administration of cultural attractions, as indicated by Bramley (2001) and Young (2006), results in deficiencies within the tourism market. Hughes and Carslen (2010) propose a more pronounced commercialization approach to enhance the alignment with tourism demand. Garrod, Fyall, and Leask (2002) characterized the management of cultural tourism attractions as one that aims to minimize the negative effects arising from tourism uses that could cause a loss of authenticity and cultural values on the one hand, and to maximize the benefits to visitors on the other.

Environmental objectives are therefore achieved in practice through specific activities such as building maintenance, waste management, and the use of energy-efficient technologies.

Non-economic objectives involving the sustainable use of cultural attractions in tourism have also been highlighted by other authors (e.g., Du Cros & McKercher, 2002; Kesner, 2005; Ivanovic, 2008; Leask, 2010; Boniface, 2013; Loach, Rowley, & Griffiths, 2016; Taurino, 2023). These objectives include ensuring the sustainable use of cultural attractions in tourism, which is related to the protection and preservation of culture for future generations and meeting demand through the dissemination of cultural values. The prioritization of the social and environmental objectives of cultural tourism attractions aligns with the principles of tourism development. Non-economic objectives of tourism are prioritized over economic objectives by Gúčik et al. (2010). This approach is further elaborated by Coman (2018), who contends that while monetary gains assume greater significance, social cohesion and

museums' commitment to communities should prevail, as museums serve as creators of cultural capital, individual and collective meaning.

Economic objectives. Economic sustainability constitutes a fundamental dimension of culture-producing institutions, which must demonstrate their ability to deliver on their promises, fulfil their public service function, and pursue objectives of general interest (the common good). Achieving economically sustainable management, in conjunction with high-quality research and scholarly production (e.g., exhibitions and publications), and the enhanced enjoyment associated with the 'new' functions of the museum, must be essential objectives to ensure all levels of sustainability and to cultivate public loyalty (Vanni, 2023). Given the various forms of ownership, organization, and legal structure characteristic of museums and galleries, their economic objectives may vary significantly. The well-documented challenge of culture's self-financing capacity, initially highlighted by UNESCO in the late 20th century (1997), persists into the present era (Association of Museums in Slovakia, 2011). This persistent issue often results in the private sector, driven predominantly by profit motives, demonstrating limited interest in managing these cultural institutions. Kesner (2005) attributes this to the absence of adequate legislative norms and tax policies that would facilitate the private sector's contribution to supplementing public budgets' limited resources and stimulate economic growth. Many museums and galleries in Slovakia function as contributory and budgetary organizations, as regulated by Act No. 523/2004 Coll. on the Budget Rules of Public Administration and on Amendments and Additions to Certain Acts. Alternatively, they may operate as non-profit organizations, governed by Act No. 213/1997 Coll. on Non-profit Organizations Providing Services of General Benefit, as amended. The economic objectives of their management are therefore usually efficient cost spending or profit generation for self-financing of the main activity.

In regard to the economic objectives and market activities of cultural attractions, Timothy (2011) identifies admission revenue, donations, grants, sponsorships, event revenues, and commercial revenues (e.g., sales of souvenirs, additional performance aids, provision of hospitality or accommodation services) as common sources of funding for cultural attractions. In instances where cultural attractions are established by the state, they are directly linked to the state budget, and state departments are responsible for their full funding. The management of these institutions is subject to budgetary constraints, which may be adjusted during the fiscal year if necessary. In addition to the above, the State may allocate subsidies or grants to the operations of other cultural institutions. In Slovakia, the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (MK SR) is responsible for providing subsidies to cultural institutions. The

programs ‘Renew Your House’ [Obnovme si svoj dom], ‘Culture of Disadvantaged Groups’ [Kultúra znevýhodnených skupín obyvateľstva] (MK SR, 2025) are utilized for this purpose.

According to Kesner (2005), Hughes, Carlsen (2010), Timothy (2011) Vareiro, Sousa and Silva (2021) and Vanni (2023) the tourism market is regarded as a potential catalyst for enhancing the performance and economic value of cultural attractions. The augmentation of visitors to these attractions is associated with an increase in admissions, thereby creating opportunities to diversify revenue sources for museums and galleries (Museum Strategy Consultancy, 2025). However, for tourism to make a more substantial contribution to the financial sustainability of cultural attractions, it is essential to engage in a diverse array of activities in the marketplace that extend beyond the scope of their primary business. According to Veľasová (2001), the utilization of cultural attractions in tourism contributes to the generation of funds for their ongoing maintenance and further preservation. Consequently, Vanni (2023) asserts that museums and galleries should adopt management guided by innovative strategies, economic plans, and business models capable of generating revenues that complement the resources provided by public administration. Bernardi (2005) acknowledges the contribution of the tourism market to improving the economic situation of cultural attractions; however, he also points out that it does not address the long-term problem of cultural financing.

As Trimarchi (1993) noted during the 1990s, despite the value people place on culture, they are not willing to pay adequately for it in the tourism industry. This may be due to the fact that culture is generally regarded as a public good (Throsby, 1982). In this regard, John (2008) identified a key objective of cultural attractions to instill a financial support for culture and the arts among individuals and organizations. The utilization of museums and galleries in tourism, which is expected to enhance economic conditions, is contingent upon a fundamental shift in perspective regarding culture and its economic nexus, as posited by Kesner (2005).

Based on the above, economic objectives are achieved in practice through specific activities such as securing subsidies and grants, setting appropriate admission fees, and developing revenue-generating activities related to tourism.

Overall, sustainability in museums and galleries is reflected in the integration of social, environmental and economic objectives, which together shape their role in the tourism sector and their long-term development. However, there is still limited knowledge about how museums and galleries balance these objectives in practice and which specific ways they prioritise when achieving them, particularly in the context of tourism.

METHODS

The aim of the study is to empirically analyse the prioritisation of social, environmental and economic objectives related to sustainable development in selected museums and galleries in Slovakia and the ways in which these objectives are achieved in the context of tourism. Based on the aim of the study, four hypotheses were formulated:

H1: Museums and galleries prioritise social objectives over environmental and economic objectives.

H2: Museums and galleries are more oriented towards ways of achieving social objectives that focus on making content accessible and interpretable for visitors than towards other ways.

H3: Museums and galleries are more oriented towards operational measures than towards developmental environmental initiatives when achieving environmental objectives.

H4: Museums and galleries are more oriented towards ways of increasing revenues than towards ways of reducing costs when achieving economic objectives.

Primary data collection was carried out using the method of sociological questioning and the technique of structured questionnaire. The questionnaire survey was carried out between May and September of 2024. The survey was disseminated electronically to the managers of the entire core set of museums and galleries. The Register of Museums and Galleries, maintained by the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, currently records 110 museums (including 18 separate organizational units or specialized museums of the Slovak National Museum) and 29 galleries (including 4 separate organizational units of the Slovak National Gallery). Twenty-two museum managers and eight gallery managers responded to the first survey. Following a repeated call, the number of questionnaires increased to 50, of which 36 were completed by museum managers and 14 by gallery managers. The resulting sample is representative of 36% of the base population.

The prioritisation of social, environmental and economic objectives was determined based on their ranking according to importance. The ways of achieving these objectives were examined through the selection of specific activities included in the questionnaire, which were grouped according to individual categories of objectives. Respondents indicated the activities that are part of their institutional practice.

Hypothesis H1 was tested using the Friedman and Wilcoxon tests. The Friedman test is a nonparametric analogue of two-factor analysis of variance with one observation in a subclass, while the Wilcoxon test is used to test hypotheses about the agreement of two means (Elliott and Woodward, 2014). The utilization of these selected tests will facilitate the identification

of significant discrepancies in the prioritization of objectives and enable the generalization of the prioritization of objectives across the museums and galleries under study.

Hypotheses H2–H4 were tested using the Friedman and McNemar tests. The McNemar test was used to determine statistically significant differences in the order of responses in multiple-choice questions (i.e., no scale). Verification of the results was carried out at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.1$.

RESULTS

The oldest museum association, the Museums Association (2008), considers sustainability to be a fundamental concept for the functioning of museums and galleries. The optimal use of all resources and social responsibility are the basis for this concept. According to Pencarelli, Cerquetti, and Splendiani (2016), the provision of sustainability in museums and galleries is contingent on the fulfilment of relevant social, environmental, and economic objectives. The prioritization of these objectives in their managerial practices serves as the foundation for their endeavors within the tourism market.

Friedman's ordinal test revealed that the primary objectives of Slovak museums and galleries are social in nature, encompassing the presentation of collection objects and the fulfillment of visitors' diverse spiritual needs. The results of the primary survey indicate that these objectives are integral to the management of nearly all (96%) of the museums and galleries surveyed. The prioritization of these objectives is congruent with the mission of cultural institutions and is indicative of the managers' cognizance of the prevailing imperative to disseminate cultural knowledge and educate the populace. A secondary group of non-economic objectives is also pursued by museums and galleries. These objectives encompass environmental objectives aimed at safeguarding cultural values while adhering to environmental principles. However, these objectives are not addressed in the management of 10% of the museums and galleries surveyed. The third category of objectives, economic objectives aimed at cost-effectiveness and profit generation to support self-financing, is not taken into account in the management of 6% of the institutions.

Despite the frequent discourse on the challenging implementation of these measures within Slovakian contexts, the underlying causes may not solely reside in the perceived lack of managerial efforts to enhance the economic viability of museums and galleries. Rather, the prevailing unreformed cultural environment in Slovakia, characterized by a predominant public sector, appears to exert a determinative influence on the financial sustainability of

these cultural institutions. Consequently, this environment may impose substantial constraints on the proactive management performance aimed at economic optimization. However, the successful and long-term fulfillment of non-economic objectives is also contingent on properly structured financing, underscoring the significance of the economic principle of sustainability.

The results of the Wilcoxon test confirm hypothesis H1, as they show a statistically significant difference between social and other groups of objectives ($p\text{-value} < \alpha = 0.1$), with environmental and economic objectives at approximately the same level of importance ($p\text{-value} > \alpha$) (Tab. 1).

Table 1 Hierarchy of objectives of the surveyed museums and galleries in Slovakia

Objectives	Friedman test (Average ranking; 1 = most important, 3 = least important)	Wilcoxon test	
		Ranking	P-value
Social	1.82	1.	-
Environmental	2.39	2.	0.056
Economic	2.51	2.	0.652

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

Museums and galleries pursue a variety of social, environmental, and economic objectives, which the Friedman test organizes according to the intensity of use.

According to managers, the application of diverse interpretation techniques, the provision of animation services for visitors, and the implementation of appropriate operating hours are the most effective strategies for achieving the social objectives of museums and galleries. These measures have the potential to significantly enhance visitor experience and satisfaction by offering interesting interpretation and original animation adapted to the age of visitors. Examples of commendable practices in the implementation of interactive solutions, virtual and augmented reality in the environment of Slovak museums include the Museum of Gemersko-Malohont, the Museum of Liptov, the Museum of Červený kláštor, and the Museum of Spiš. Notably, the Slovak Olympic and Sports Museum in Spišská Nová Ves and the East Slovak Museum in Košice have also adopted interactive solutions, underscoring the broader adoption of these technologies within the cultural sector (Gemersko-Malohontské Museum, 2023; UTAI, 2024).

The assertion regarding the adequate operating hours of museums and galleries in Slovakia may be, to some extent, declarative in nature. A review of the websites of these institutions reveals that many are open only until the afternoon, typically until 4:00 pm or 5:00 pm. Visitors arriving in cities later in the evening often find these establishments to be closed.

Additionally, these institutions are prone to closing during staff lunch breaks, weekends, and holidays, a practice that aligns with the seasonal fluctuations of short-term tourism. Consequently, the current opening hours of Slovak museums and galleries may not align with the demands of the tourism market, potentially due to constraints related to staffing and funding.

One of the less frequently employed methods of achieving the social objectives of museums and galleries is the periodic replacement of exhibited objects (exhibits). Less than 50% of the museums and galleries in the sample pay attention to it.

A significant proportion of museums and galleries – 46%, to be precise – employ feedback collection as a means of assessing visitor satisfaction rates, thereby aligning their social objectives with the overarching mission of the institution. The significance of this practice lies in its potential to inform crucial decisions, including the enhancement of services, the refinement of training programs, the evaluation of staff performance, and the adjustment of organizational structures within museums and galleries. Consequently, this information source, which is frequently underutilized, warrants greater recognition and consideration for its invaluable contributions to the field.

A total of 4% of the sample respondents identified alternative methods for achieving social objectives, including the publication of relevant materials and the implementation of educational programs within museums.

The results of the McNemar test demonstrate that, from the perspective of the surveyed Slovak museum and gallery managers, the most prevalent methods for achieving their social objectives include the utilization of diverse interpretive techniques, the provision of animation services, and the availability of exhibitions and displays during designated operating hours. There are no statistically significant differences ($p\text{-value} > \alpha$) between the ranking of these methods aimed at disseminating cultural values and meeting visitor needs. In contrast, museums and galleries expressed less concern with changing exhibits and gauging visitor satisfaction ($p\text{-value} < \alpha$). These findings confirm H2, as they indicate that museums and galleries are more oriented towards ways of achieving social objectives focused on making content accessible and interpretable for visitors compared to other ways of achieving social objectives (Tab. 2). This result also indicates that museums and galleries face increasing demands for modern forms of interpretation and content accessibility, particularly from younger generations, which may represent an organizational and financial challenge.

Table 2 Ranking of ways of meeting the social objectives of museums and galleries

Ways of meeting the objectives	Friedman test (Average ranking)	McNemar test	
		Ranking	P-value
Use of diverse interpretive techniques	3.43	1.	-
Offering animation services (activities)	3.28	1.	0.607
Public accessibility through appropriately designated operating hours	3.14	1.	0.678
Frequent renewal of exhibits	2.60	2.	0.043
Survey of visitor satisfaction	2.55	2.	1.000

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

The results allow the identification of the main ways used by museums and galleries to achieve environmental objectives. This should result in the protection and enhancement of cultural and natural heritage, as well as the environment in general. According to museum and gallery managers, the most common contributions of these institutions to this objective are regular maintenance of the buildings in which they are housed and waste sorting. As these institutions are often designated as national cultural monuments, interventions in the structural and technical condition of these buildings must take into account the protection of heritage values. The efforts of museums and galleries to prevent the often controversial and costly reconstruction or restoration of inadequate buildings by regular care of the buildings can be assessed positively. In practice, however, there are a number of cases in which reconstruction is not carried out for financial reasons, despite the fact that it would make better use of the buildings for the benefit of tourism, create more suitable conditions for storing collections, and ensure savings in operating costs.

From an environmental perspective, museums and galleries demonstrate a comparable level of commitment to waste sorting. While this practice is not inherently associated with the conservation and presentation of collections, museums and galleries, in their capacity as educational and training institutions, serve to enhance public awareness regarding the imperative for environmental sustainability. Simultaneously, they cultivate their reputation as entities that are socially responsible in the context of tourism.

Museums and galleries have been shown to achieve environmental objectives through the implementation of energy-efficient equipment and renewable energy sources. Given the substantial energy consumption necessitated for the preservation of collections and the maintenance of optimal conditions for light, temperature, and humidity, the integration of these technologies into museum and gallery operations is imperative. A survey of museums and galleries reveals that approximately 25% currently utilize these systems. The lack of interest among the majority can be attributed primarily to the initial financial costs associated with their acquisition. The use of recycled materials can be considered economically

advantageous. Their application is well-suited for products created by workshop participants. Moreover, numerous galleries are presently organizing exhibitions that concentrate on the fabrication of artworks from recycled materials, representing a novel artistic genre.

The findings of the McNemar test suggest that museums and galleries prioritize regular maintenance of their facilities and waste sorting in their efforts to meet environmental objectives. Other environmentally oriented activities are undertaken less frequently. These findings confirm H3, indicating that museums and galleries are more oriented towards operational measures than towards developmental environmental initiatives when achieving environmental objectives (Tab. 3). This result indicates that the environmental dimension of sustainability in museums and galleries is influenced by structural constraints, particularly financial resources and the heritage protection of buildings, which leads to a preference for operational measures over developmental initiatives.

Table 3 Ranking of ways of meeting the environmental objectives of museums and galleries

Ways of meeting the objectives	Friedman test (Average ranking)	McNemar test	
		Ranking	P-value
Regular maintenance of the building	2.79	1.	-
Waste sorting	2.69	1.	0.832
Use of energy-saving equipment and renewable energy sources	2.29	2.	0.052
Use of recycled materials	2.25	2.	0.100

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

As with environmental objectives, the economic objectives of museums and galleries are secondary to social objectives, and the ways of achieving these objectives are diverse and primarily related to increasing revenues. Museums and galleries typically seek to secure sufficient financial resources by obtaining domestic subsidies and grants. However, museums under the jurisdiction of ministries other than the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic face considerable disadvantages. This is due to the fact that, according to the Act of the National Assembly of the Slovak Republic No. 434/2010 Coll. on the provision of subsidies within the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, as amended, these museums are not eligible for subsidies from the Ministry of Culture's subsidy system. Presently, a total of 14 museums fall under the jurisdiction of other ministries.

Another way by which museums and galleries attempt to achieve their economic objectives, or ensure their economic needs, is by establishing an appropriate admission fee. The transition from no or minimum admission price, which was common in the past, to an adequately set price is particularly timely due to the urgent need to supplement public funds

with additional resources. This is also linked to another method of achieving economic objectives, which is the implementation of tourism support activities. While the development of internal resources is not the primary financial objective of museums and galleries, the augmentation of public resources through tourism-related activities is a rational strategy, given the current financial constraints and the escalating costs associated with enhancing storage and protection conditions for collections, enhancing exhibition and tour quality, and adequately compensating staff.

A mere 34% of the sample received sponsorship contributions, a figure that assumes particular significance when considered within the context of financing cultural attractions, particularly those related to foreign literature. This observation suggests that the sponsorship of museums and galleries in Slovakia is, as a general rule, underdeveloped.

Contrary to conventional economic objectives, which prioritize revenue augmentation, the utilization of volunteering and temporary employment seeks to curtail expenditures. This approach, which is especially pertinent during peak seasons, is employed by approximately one-third of the museums and galleries surveyed.

During the off-season, museums and galleries typically organize events to obtain supplementary resources. This strategy enables them to regulate visitor numbers in a manner that aligns with the capacity of exhibitions and displays.

A relatively underutilized strategy for achieving the economic objectives of museums and galleries is the pursuit of foreign grants. The intermittent acquisition of supplementary funding from foreign grant programs, predominantly from the European Structural Funds and the Kingdom of Norway, which museums and galleries in Slovakia scarcely acknowledge, could signify, on the one hand, the necessity for consultancy assistance in the formulation of applications. projects and, on the other hand, may be related to the purposefulness of their provision, which does not cover the operating costs of museums and galleries, but mainly to support projects related to the improvement of the structural and technical conditions of the buildings in which they are housed.

The McNemar test indicates that the predominant strategy employed by museums and galleries to attain their economic objectives is through the application for domestic subsidies and grants, the judicious pricing of admissions, and the undertaking of outreach initiatives within the tourism market. These findings confirm H4, indicating that museums and galleries are more oriented towards ways of increasing revenues than towards ways of reducing costs when achieving economic objectives (Tab. 4).

Table 4 Ranking of ways of meeting the economic objectives of museums and galleries

Ways of meeting the objectives	Friedman test (Average ranking)	McNemar test	
		Ranking	P-value
Applying for domestic subsidies and grants	5.45	1.	-
Adequately priced admission	5.45	1.	1.000
Implementation of tourism promotion activities	5.37	1.	1.000
Organised events in the off-season	4.35	2.	0.007
Use of temporary work	4.12	2.	0.648
Applying for foreign grants	4.04	2.	1.000
Use of sponsorship	3.80	2.	0.678
Use of volunteering	3.41	2.	0.359

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

In the Slovak context, museums and galleries reduce costs where possible; however, due to their long-term underfunding and predominantly public character, these savings remain limited and do not significantly improve their financial situation, which reinforces their focus on increasing revenues. This also helps explain why the less frequently used approaches—such as volunteering, sponsorship, or foreign grants—do not differ significantly from each other, as they represent supplementary rather than structurally decisive sources of financial support (Tab. 4).

Willingness of managers to enter the tourism market given the sustainable principles promoted. The propensity of museum and gallery managers to participate in the tourism market is contingent upon the promotion of sustainable principles, which have become an integral component of cultural tourism development strategies. The survey results indicate that 50% of respondents regard the utilization of museums and galleries in tourism to be of considerable importance, 44% consider it to be important, 6% find it to be neither important nor unimportant, and 2% regard it as being absolutely unimportant. These results suggest that museum and gallery managers are progressively recognizing their role in sustainable tourism, with cultural institutions being regarded as an integral component of the tourism sector, encompassing environmental, social, and cultural dimensions. The inclination of managers to engage with the tourism market is, in turn, closely associated with their comprehension of the significance and potential advantages that tourism can offer, not only in terms of economic growth, but also in terms of preserving and promoting cultural heritage.

The present study sought to ascertain the perceived importance of museums and galleries in the tourism sector, as well as the benefits associated with their utilization. To this end, a systematic review of the extant literature was conducted, with the results organized by the Friedman ordinal test. The analysis revealed that the most commonly perceived benefit is the opportunity to disseminate cultural values to the public. Other benefits that were considered

by managers of Slovak museums and galleries include the opportunity to become more visible and to cooperate with other entities. The potential positive impact of tourism on the economy of museums and galleries, a notion that has been underscored by several authors (e.g., Piekkola, Soujanen, and Vainio, 2014; Vainio, 2023), is perceived by a smaller proportion of the managers surveyed (62%). The ranking of benefits generated by the McNemar test reveals that for the surveyed museum and gallery managers, tourism is a means to achieve social objectives (e.g., making the collection accessible to the public) rather than an opportunity to improve their economic situation (Tab. 5).

Table 5 Benefits of tourism for museums and galleries

Benefits	Friedman test (Average ranking)	McNemar test	
		Ranking	P-value
Opportunity to disseminate cultural values to the public	3.13	1.	-
Opportunity to make oneself visible	2.57	2.	0.001
Involvement in cooperation with other entities	2.49	2.	0.804
Contribution to funding	1.81	3.	0.004

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

The potential benefits associated with increased use of museums and galleries in tourism should motivate managers to seek optimal levels of utilization. According to the survey results, 44% of museum and gallery managers assessed their current level of tourism engagement as inadequate. The management of these institutions identified two predominant perceptions of tourism use: adequate use (48.0%) and overuse (4.0%). However, in the remaining 4.0% of museums and galleries, managers were unable to assess the extent of their use in tourism in a relevant way.

Meanwhile, the majority (86.0%) of managers indicated a keen interest in increasing visitor numbers. A moderate relationship ($p\text{-value} < \alpha$) was confirmed between the existing level of use of museums and galleries in tourism from the managers' perspective and guiding the number of visitors according to the Spearman's correlation coefficient value (Tab. 6).

Table 6 Relationship between existing levels of museum and gallery use in tourism from the perspective of managers and visitor guidance

Statistics	Value
Spearman correlation coefficient	0.615
P-value	0.073
Number of responses	50

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

Cooperation of museums and galleries with other entities in tourism. In order to promote their activities in tourism, Slovak museums and galleries primarily engage in mutual cooperation, as indicated by the findings of Friedman's sequential test. This cooperation is predominantly associated with exhibition activities and the organization of the transnational event known as the 'Night of Museums and Galleries'. The legal framework for international collaboration among museums and galleries is primarily established through international agreements between states in the cultural sphere. Specifically, cross-border declarations of cooperation have been established between non-profit professional organizations of museums and galleries, with the objective of enhancing mutual information exchange and participation in partner activities, as well as promoting joint projects aligned with current needs. Representing museums and galleries in Slovakia are the Association of Museums in Slovakia, the Council of Galleries of the Slovak Republic, and the Slovak Committee of ICOM. They have concluded a Memorandum of Cooperation with museums and galleries in the Czech Republic, represented by the Association of Museums and Galleries of the Czech Republic, the Council of Galleries of the Czech Republic, and the Czech Committee of ICOM. However, as early as the 1990s, Silberberg (1994) had already concluded that mutual cooperation between museums and galleries would be inadequate.

In order to promote museums and galleries more effectively and to create more comprehensive tourism products for visitors, museums and galleries also cooperate with other tourism attractions, tourism management organizations operating in the region, local residents, intermediaries, and tourism facilities. According to Guyette (2013), it is the cooperation with other actors at the regional level that brings the most obvious effects to museums and galleries, and at the same time contributes to better economic results of tourism destination cities.

However, the results of the McNemar test indicate that, despite the potential positive benefits, the collaboration between museums and galleries and tourism establishments, tour operators and travel agencies is less intense (Tab. 7).

Table 7 Cooperation of museums and galleries in tourism

Cooperating entities	Friedman test (Average ranking)	McNemar test	
		Ranking	P-value
Other museums and galleries	4.30	1.	-
Other tourist attractions	4.18	1.	0.804
Tourism Management Organisation	3.86	1.	0.332
Local residents	3.18	2.	0.043
Tourism facilities	2.80	2.	0.238
Travel agents and travel agencies	2.68	2.	0.815

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

Barriers to the use of museums and galleries in tourism. According to museum and gallery managers, a significant barrier to the promotion of cultural activities in Slovakia is the lack of population interest in culture. This subjectivity is eliminated by the results of the European Commission's Special Barometer (2017), which aims to measure the value of cultural heritage. According to the Special Barometer, this problem is relevant for the European population in general. This phenomenon may be attributed to the substantial shifts in lifestyle that characterize the current generation, as posited by Čukan (2013). These changes in lifestyle, he contends, have led to a divergence in the course of childhood and socialization compared to previous generations. Consequently, many young people lack a comprehensive understanding of their own nation's history and culture. Museums and galleries, in this context, present a valuable opportunity to address these knowledge gaps and serve as a platform for personal realization.

The utilization of museums and galleries in tourism is impeded by several factors. Among these are the underdeveloped cooperation between relevant stakeholders, problematic financing of tourism activities, pricing policies, and managers' concerns about the negative effects of commercialization.

In light of the underdeveloped cooperation with entities interested in tourism development, several managers perceive reserves, particularly in establishing and developing relations with travel agencies and tour operators. These managers justify their perception of reserves by citing their passive approach to the promotion of domestic cultural tourism.

The problematic financing of museum and gallery activities in the tourism market, as well as the subsequent understaffing, are the result of their long-term unfavorable financial situation. This issue has been addressed in several analytical and strategic documents of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. However, the persisting problems only serve to confirm the declarative nature of these documents.

The pressure on the growth of revenues from own activities, engendered by the challenging economic circumstances confronting museums and galleries, renders the judicious establishment of pricing policies increasingly imperative in the present context. This challenge is further compounded in the case of museums and galleries, given the prevailing conception of culture as a public good. The persistent conservative approach to the determination of admission prices for permanent exhibitions and displays is evident in the revenues of Slovak museums and galleries.

The managers' concerns regarding the adverse effects of commercialization are partially substantiated by the substandard conditions under which collection objects are stored and

protected, as outlined in the Comprehensive Report of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic on the analysis of the current state of registration, protection, and access to collections and expositions of museums and galleries in the Slovak Republic (2007) and the Strategy for the Development of Museums and Galleries in the Slovak Republic until 2018. However, examples of effective commercial activities in foreign museums and galleries demonstrate that such practices can be sustainable. According to Podušelová (2001), it is therefore important to avoid extremes in behavior. On the one hand, the apathy of managers to follow current trends can result in the isolation of museums and galleries and the loss of public interest. On the other hand, inappropriate commercialization can lead to their transformation into pseudo-cultural establishments. Kesner (2005) posits that these concerns can be addressed by augmenting the competencies of museum and gallery managers from cultural disciplines with qualifications from economic disciplines.

The results of McNemar's test indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between the first three barriers, thus confirming their status as the most substantial barriers to successful museum and gallery tourism activities (see Tab. 8).

Table 8 Ranking of barriers to successful museum and gallery tourism activities

Barriers	Friedman test (Average ranking)	McNemar test	
		Ranking	P-value
Lack of interest of the population in culture	3.56	1.	-
Insufficiently developed cooperation of entities interested in tourism development	3.46	1.	0.839
Problematic financing of activities on the tourism market	3.21	1.	0.441
Pricing policy	2.56	2.	0.004
Concerns about the negative effects of commercialisation	2.21	3.	0.065

Source: own elaboration, 2025.

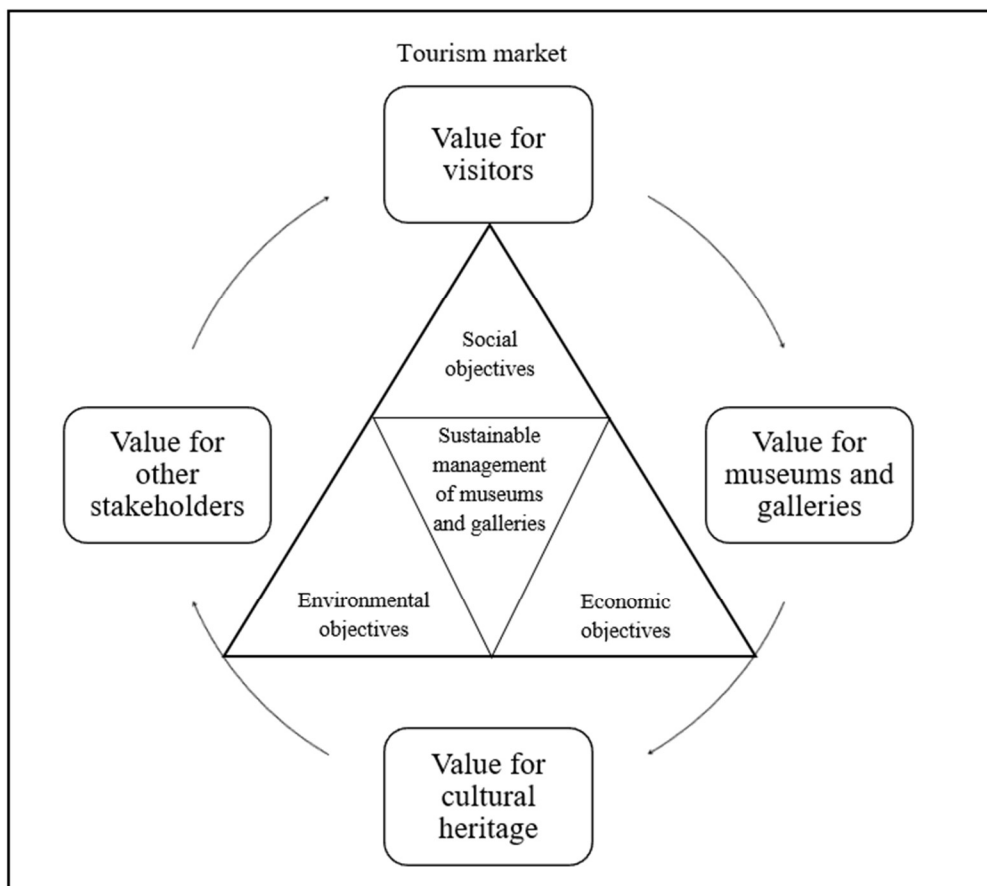
The elimination of the aforementioned barriers, apart from the efforts of museum and gallery managers, requires, above all, a more active approach and interventions from the responsible public administration authorities.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study suggest that the integration of museums and galleries into the tourism sector represents an important tool for their sustainable management, particularly in the Slovak context, where institutions face limitations in achieving environmental and economic objectives. The coordinated development of museum and gallery activities in tourism is therefore justified, as it can support not only the fulfilment of social objectives but

also contribute to the strengthening of environmental and economic sustainability. This approach promises multifaceted benefits, encompassing the creation of value for cultural heritage, museums and galleries, visitors, and other stakeholders (e.g., local residents, neighboring facilities and attractions in the destination, collaborating organizations, etc.). Pencarelli, Cerquetti, and Splendiani (2016) posit that a museum or gallery that effectively generates socio-cultural value for tourism visitors concurrently fosters economic value for itself, provided it possesses sufficient resources to safeguard tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the long term. Consequently, it can perpetually innovate its offerings, cater to the diverse needs of various target groups, and generate benefits for local communities (e.g., social cohesion, enhanced quality of life, and the development of economic and professional opportunities) (Fig. 1).

Figure 1 Value creation from the use of museums and galleries in tourism



Source: Pencarelli, Cerquetti, Splendiani, 2016 and own elaboration, 2025.

The identified hierarchy of objectives of museums and galleries in Slovakia, with a clear prioritisation of social objectives, reflects not only their core mission but also their limited capacity to equally develop environmental and economic dimensions in practice. Similar

conclusions were reached by Pencarelli, Cerquetti, and Splendiani (2016), who examined the management of 61 museums in Italy in the context of sustainability, confirming that social objectives tend to dominate over environmental and economic ones. This alignment suggests that the prioritisation of social objectives is not specific to Slovakia but reflects a broader pattern in museum management.

A study by Vikmanem and Lake (2021) reveals considerable diversity in how the most popular museums in Latvia approach the Sustainable Development Objectives. The study's findings indicate that the aforementioned museums prioritize the following: (1) the preservation of heritage, efforts to strengthen national identity, and ICT sustainability within the context of cultural sustainability, (2) financial sustainability, as well as the multiplication of tourism and the development of an image in the context of economic sustainability, and (3) eco-cultural resilience and infrastructure improvement for enhanced energy efficiency, as well as the degree of progress towards environmental sustainability, emotional accessibility, and a focus on strengthening social capital in the context of social sustainability. This suggests that the balance between individual dimensions of sustainability may vary depending on institutional and national contexts.

Several of the ways in which museums and galleries are striving to achieve their objectives are linked to their use in tourism. The findings suggest that, in the Slovak context, tourism is predominantly perceived as a tool for fulfilling social objectives, while its role in achieving economic objectives remains less pronounced. This indicates that museums and galleries tend to prioritise their cultural and educational functions over revenue-generating activities.

The contributions of tourism to the sustainable management of museums and galleries are also examined by Culley (2010). Through her examination of 59 museums and galleries in Ontario, Culley concluded that tourism use does not harm their core functions, but rather contributes to their meaningfulness. This supports the findings of this study, as it confirms that tourism can strengthen the social role of museums and galleries without compromising their primary mission.

At the same time, the survey results indicate that museum and gallery managers with a broader range of complementary services generally concur that tourism marketing does not impose a financial burden on their budgets, thereby freeing up resources for their primary objectives. This suggests that the development of complementary services may represent an underutilised opportunity for improving the financial sustainability of museums and galleries in Slovakia.

The provision of complementary services is not regarded as controversial; rather, it is perceived as a pragmatic approach to ensuring the financial stability of their programs and

initiatives, as well as to supporting the infrastructure necessary for further tourism development at the destination. Consequently, the implementation of business strategies grounded in the paradigm of social entrepreneurship in tourism, with the objective of enhancing the value offered to visitors, as articulated by numerous scholars (e.g., Rentschler, 2001; Coman & Pop, 2012; Eid, 2016), holds particular pertinence within the context of Slovak museum and gallery management.

The findings of the study indicate the primary barriers to the utilization of museums and galleries in Slovakia's tourism sector, namely: (1) the population's inadequate interest in culture, (2) underdeveloped collaboration among stakeholders, and (3) the problematic financing of museums and galleries. These barriers suggest that the challenges faced by museums and galleries are not only internal but are also shaped by broader societal and systemic factors.

The absence of adequate public interest in cultural affairs is regarded by museum and gallery administrators in Slovakia as one of the most significant impediments to their activities in tourism. This finding is consistent with the European Commission's Special Barometer (2017), which indicates that this issue extends beyond the national context. This phenomenon, stemming from the contemporary consumerist way of life, is therefore not specific to Slovakia but also characterises the European population as a whole. The proportion of the population that does not visit cultural attractions due to a lack of interest in culture is approximately the same (29% in Slovakia and 31% in Europe).

However, although cultural tourism accounts for approximately 40% of global tourism (UNWTO), the findings suggest a mismatch between its potential and the actual use of museums and galleries in practice. From the perspective of John (2008), while the population shows interest in certain forms of culture, it rarely visits specific museums or galleries. This trend is further confirmed by the European Commission (2017), according to which up to 56% of the Slovak population did not visit a museum or gallery within a twelve-month period, and an additional 33% visited only once or twice.

According to Lin (2006), the most common reasons for the underrepresentation of museums and galleries include a lack of public interest, lack of time, unattractive exhibitions, a dull atmosphere, and problematic transport accessibility. These findings point to the need for a more proactive approach by museums and galleries towards visitors, particularly through enhancing the attractiveness of their offerings and improving communication. In this regard, the Association of Museums in Slovakia (2011) emphasises the need to strengthen promotion, increase visibility, and clearly define the role of museums and galleries within the cultural and educational space. John (2008) further highlights the importance of innovative marketing

strategies in addressing specific target groups, while Khalife (2007) recommends the systematic development of marketing departments and the active management of public relations.

The findings of the study indicate a necessity for enhanced collaboration among museum and gallery managers, tourism facility managers, and intermediaries in Slovakia. This suggests that the current level of cooperation remains insufficiently developed and may represent a structural weakness in the integration of museums and galleries into the tourism sector. These partnerships should therefore be purposefully cultivated through the active initiative of all involved actors, rather than arising spontaneously.

This situation may be explained by the traditionally fragmented nature of the cultural and tourism sectors in Slovakia, where cooperation between institutions is often limited and not systematically managed. In this regard, several countries (e.g., Croatia, Canada, South Korea) can serve as a source of inspiration, as Du Cros and McKercher (2015) argue that effective cooperation significantly contributes to the development of cultural tourism.

To enhance the utilization of museums and galleries in tourism, it is therefore necessary to place greater emphasis not only on cooperation within the tourism sector but also on collaboration with the creative industries, local communities, and municipalities. This is particularly important in the Slovak context, where museums and galleries often operate in isolation and do not fully exploit the potential of network-based approaches.

This argument is supported by the findings of the NEMO (2015) survey, which highlight the importance of collaboration with professionals from the creative industries, particularly in areas such as the preparation of permanent exhibitions, organisation of events, provision of animation services, production of souvenirs, development of mobile applications, use of museum spaces for filming, and the integration of museum content into advertising. These activities not only enhance the attractiveness of museums and galleries but also strengthen their position within the tourism market.

Another factor that limits the activities of museums and galleries in tourism in Slovakia is their problematic financing, which can be considered unsustainable in the long term. This finding suggests that the economic dimension of sustainability remains insufficiently developed in practice and represents one of the key constraints on their further development.

In contrast to the way Slovak museums and galleries are financed, which primarily depend on public funds, Bell (2012) presents a multi-source model of museum financing in the United States. Based on secondary data from the American Association of Museums, Bell (2012) argues that although most museums operate as non-profit institutions, public sources (federal, state, and local) account for only 24.4% of their revenues. The private and non-profit sectors

dominate, contributing 36.5% through donations from individuals, charitable organizations, philanthropic institutions, and corporate sponsors. A further 27.6% of income is generated from museums' own activities, such as exhibitions, events, retail sales (e.g., souvenirs, bookshops), hospitality services, and rentals. Admission fees, accounting for approximately 5% of total revenue, play a relatively minor role. The remaining 11.5% is derived from investments in financial instruments.

Compared to this model, Slovak museums and galleries are characterised by a high level of dependence on public funding, which limits their flexibility, innovation capacity, and ability to respond to changing conditions in the tourism market. This financing structure also reduces the pressure to diversify revenue sources and may lead to a more passive approach to exploiting market opportunities.

At the same time, it is important to emphasise that the possibilities for cost reduction in Slovak museums and galleries are highly limited, as these institutions already operate under constrained budgets and staffing capacities. This implies that further improvements in their economic sustainability cannot be achieved primarily through cost-cutting, but rather through the active development of new revenue streams and a more intensive integration into the tourism market.

Although Bell (2012) points out potential risks associated with multi-source financing, his conclusions align with those of Kesner (2005), who highlights the risks of excessive dependence on public funding, a pattern typical not only for Slovakia but also for most European countries. In this context, there is a clear need for a gradual transformation of the financial models of museums and galleries towards greater diversification of funding sources and enhanced economic autonomy.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study confirm all four formulated hypotheses (H1–H4) and indicate that museums and galleries in Slovakia continue to prioritise social objectives, while environmental and economic dimensions remain less developed in practice. This imbalance reflects both the core mission of these institutions and the structural conditions under which they operate.

The findings highlight the need for a shift from predominantly mission-driven management towards more balanced and strategically oriented approaches that integrate social, environmental, and economic objectives. In practice, this implies strengthening the role of

tourism not only as a tool for fulfilling social functions, but also as a mechanism for improving economic sustainability.

Given the limited possibilities for further cost reduction, museums and galleries should focus primarily on the diversification of revenue sources, particularly through the development of complementary services, more active visitor engagement, and stronger integration into the tourism market. At the same time, greater emphasis should be placed on building partnerships with tourism stakeholders, the creative industries, and local communities in order to overcome the current fragmentation of the sector.

The findings also suggest that achieving environmental objectives requires a transition from predominantly operational measures towards more strategic and long-term initiatives, which are currently constrained by financial and organisational limitations.

In the Slovak context, the effective implementation of sustainability will depend not only on the internal efforts of museums and galleries, but also on external support mechanisms, particularly from public authorities. This includes the development of more flexible funding schemes, support for cross-sectoral cooperation, and the creation of policies that promote greater financial autonomy and innovation.

Overall, museums and galleries in Slovakia demonstrate a growing awareness of sustainability; however, their long-term development will depend on their ability to adapt to changing conditions in the tourism market and to adopt more proactive and economically resilient management approaches.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be taken into account when interpreting the results. The research is based on a sample of Slovak museums and galleries, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to other national contexts. In addition, the data are based on self-reported responses of managers, which may reflect subjective perceptions rather than objective practices. Future research could focus on comparative studies across countries or include qualitative approaches to gain deeper insights into managerial decision-making.

Acknowledgement

The article is a part of solution of the project UGA X/5/2024 Museums and galleries as cultural attractions of tourism in Slovakia.

REFERENCES

Act No. 213/1997 Coll. of the National Assembly of the Slovak Republic on non-profit organisations providing generally beneficial services [Zákon NR SR č. 213/1997 Z. z. o neziskových organizáciách poskytujúcich všeobecne prospešné služby]. Available online: [http:// www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/1997-213 >](http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/1997-213)

- Act No. 434/2010 Coll. on the provision of subsidies within the competence of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, as amended [Zákon NR SR č. 434/2010 Z. z. o poskytovaní dotácií v pôsobnosti Ministerstva kultúry Slovenskej republiky v znení neskorších predpisov]. Available online: <http://www.epi.sk/zz/2010-434>
- Act of the National Assembly of the Slovak Republic No. 523/2004 Coll. on Budget Rules of Public Administration and on Amendments and Additions to Certain Acts. Available online: <http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2004-523> [Zákon NR SR č. 523/2004 Z. z. o rozpočtových pravidlách verejnej správy a o zmene a doplnení niektorých zákonov]. Available online: <http://www.zakonypreludi.sk/zz/2004-523>
- Anthony, J. 2015. *The best NYC tourist attractions that locals love*. Available online: <http://www.timeout.com/newyork/attractions/the-best-new-york-city-tourist-attractions-that-locals-love> Accessed on 18 January 2025
- Association of Museums in Slovakia [Zväz múzeí na Slovensku] (2011). Background to the ZMS Concept for the Promotion and Popularization of Museums [Podklady ku Konceptii ZMS k propagácii a popularizácii múzeí]. Available online: <http://www.zms.sk/> Accessed on 7 February 2025
- Baki Nalcioğlu, U. Z. S., (2021). The Cultural Aspect of Sustainability in Museums. *MILLI FOLKLOR*, no.129, 124-135
- Bell, W. F. 2013. *How Are Museums Supported Financially in the U. S.?* Available online: https://photos.state.gov/libraries/amgov/133183/english/P_You_Asked_How_Are_Museums_Supported_Financially.pdf
- Bernardi, C. (2005). *The Strategic Development of Museums: A System Dynamics Approach*. [online]. [cit. 2025-02-18], 22 s. Available online: http://neumann.hec.ca/aimac2005/PDF_Text/Bernardi_Chiera.pdf
- Bramley, R. (2001). So you want to built a „Hall of Fame“? *CAUTCHE 2001: Capitalising on Research, Proceedings of the 11th Australian Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference*. Canberra : University of Canberra, 2001. ISBN 0858898322, pp. 17-27
- Brown, K. (2019). Museums and Local Development: An Introduction to Museums, Sustainability and Well-being. *Museum International*, 71(3-4), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13500775.2019.1702257>
- Cerquetti, M., & Montella, M. M. (2021). Meeting sustainable developmentgoals (SDGs) in museum evaluation systems. The case of the ItalianNational Museum System (NMS). *Sinergie*, 39(1), 125-147. <https://doi.org/10.7433/s114.2021.082272>
- Cerquetti, M., Sardanelli, D., & Ferrara, C. (2024). Measuring museum sustainability within the framework of institutional theory: A dictionary-based content analysis of French and British National Museums' annual reports. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 31(3), 2260-2276. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.2689>
- Cole, L. B., Lindsay, G., & Akturk, A. (2020). Green building education in the green museum: design strategies in eight case study museums. *International Journal of Science Education, Part B*, 10(2), 149-165. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21548455.2020.1723182>
- Coman, A. (2018). The Economics of Cultural Heritage: The Case of Museums. *Manager (University of Bucharest, Faculty of Business & Administration)*, 28, 63. ISSN 1453-0503
- Culley, S. (2010). *Museums and Tourists: A Quantitative Look at Curator Perceptions of Tourism*. Available online: www.uwaterloo.ca Accessed on 2 February 2025
- Čukan, M. (2013). Traditional viticulture in the Tribeč microregion and the possibilities of its transformation into cultural capital [Tradičné vinohradníctvo v mikroregión Tribečsko a možnosti jeho premeny na kultúrny kapitál]. *Contexts of Culture and Tourism*

- [*Kontexty kultúry a turizmu*]. Nitra : Forpress Nitrianske tlačiarne, 6(1), 2013. ISSN 1337-7760, p. 8-13.
- Du Cros, H., & McKercher, B. (2015). *Cultural tourism*. London : Routledge, 2015. 269 p. ISBN 978-0-415-83397-4.
- Dwyer, A. timitttiM. (2021), "Museums & Environmental Sustainability: Are They Doing Enough?" *Museum Studies Theses*. 35. Available online: https://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/museumstudies_theses/35
- Eid, H. (2016). *The Museum Innovation Model: A museum perspective on innovation*. Available online: <https://www.museweb.net/bibliography/?bib=3973> Accessed on 18 February 2025
- Elliot, C. A., & Woodward, A. W. (2014). *IBM SPSS by Example: A Practical Guide to Statistical Data Analysis*. Thousand Oaks : Sage Publications, Inc., 2014. 368 p. ISBN 978-14-833-1904-9.
- Esposito A., Besana A., Vannini C., & Fisichella C. (2019). "Museum branding: challenges and strategies beyond works of art. A pilot study in Italy", *Proceedings of the Sinergie Sima Management Conference*, Rome, June 20-21, 2019.
- EUROPA NOSTRA (2006). *Position paper on the encouragement of cultural tourism and the mitigation on of its effects*. 25 p. Available online: www.europanostra.org
- Fyall, A., & Garrod, B. (1998). Heritage Tourism: At What Price? *Managing Leisure: an International Journal*, 3(4), 213-228. <https://doi.org/10.1080/136067198375996>
- Garrod, B., Fyall, A., & Leask, A. (2002). Scottish visitor attractions: managing visitor impacts. *Tourism Management*, 23(3), 265-279. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(01\)00077-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(01)00077-2)
- Garthe, C.J. (2022). *The Sustainable Museum: How Museums Contribute to the Great Transformation* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003195207>
- Gemer-Malohontan Museum, (2023). A return to the past. New generation experiential exhibition (virtual reality) [Návrat do minulosti. Zážitková expozícia novej generácie (virtuálna realita)]. Available online: <https://gmmuzeum.sk/podujatie/navrat-dominulosti-2/> Accessed on 18 February 2025
- Gúčik, M. et al. (2010). *Tourism Management [Manažment cestovného ruchu]*. Banská Bystrica : DALI-BB, 2010. 152 p.
- Gustafsson, C., & Ijla, A. (2017). Museums – A Catalyst for Sustainable Economic Development in Sweden. *International Journal of Innovative Development, Policy Studies* 5(2), 1–14. Available online: <https://urn.kb.se/resolve?urn=urn:nbn:se:uu:diva-322245>
- Guyette, M. S. (2013). *Sustainable Cultural Tourism: Small-Scale Solutions*. Santa Fe : Bear Path Press, 2013. 377 p.
- Hughes, M., Carlsen, J. (2010). The business of cultural heritage tourism: critical success factors. *Journal of Heritage Tourism*, 59(1), 17-32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17438730903469805>
- ICOM (2022). *Museum definition*. Available online: <https://icom.museum/en/resources/standards-guidelines/museum-definition/> Accessed on 18 January 2025
- Ivanovic, M. (2008). *Cultural Tourism*. Wetton : Juta and Company, Ltd., 2008. 340 p. ISBN 978-07-02171-857
- Johnová, R. (2008). *Marketing of cultural heritage and art [Marketing kultúrního dedičství a umění]*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 2008. 288 p.
- Kerr, A. (1994). *Strange bedfellows: an uneasy alliance between cultural conservation and tourism*. Available online: http://archive.canada.icomos.org/bulletin/vol3_no3_kerr_e.html

- Kesner, L. (2005). *Marketing and management of museums and monuments [Marketing a management múzeí a památek]*. Praha : Grada Publishing, 304 p.
- Khalife, K. (2007). "What is Marketing?: Is your museum's marketing definition inside-out?" Available online: www.museummarketingtips.com Accessed on 1 February 2025
- Lin, N. Y. (2006). Leisure - a function of museums? The Taiwan perspective. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 21(4), 302-316. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09647770600602104>
- Loach, K., Rowley, J., & Griffiths, J. (2016). Cultural sustainability as a strategy for the survival of museums and libraries. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 23(2), 186–198. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2016.1184657>
- Marayimova, K. I. Q. (2021) The role of museums in the development of tourism. *ACADEMICIA: An International Multidisciplinary Research Journal*, 11(2), 121 – 124. ISSN : 2249 – 7137. <https://doi.org/10.5958/2249-7137.2021.00309.8>
- Martíškova, P., Waldhauserová, T., & Skibiński, A. (2022). Corporate social responsibility activities as a way of creating value for consumers. *Polish Journal of Management Studies*, 26(1), 189-201. <https://doi.org/10.17512/pjms.2022.26.1.12>
- Merriman, N. (2008). Museum collections and sustainability. *Cultural Trends*, 17(1), 3–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09548960801920278>
- MK SR (2007). Report on the analysis of the current state of registration, protection and access to collections and exhibitions of museums and galleries in the Slovak Republic (2004 - 2006). [Súborná správa o analýze súčasného stavu evidencie, ochrany a sprístupňovania zbierkových fondov a expozícií múzeí a galérií v Slovenskej republike (za roky 2004 – 2006)]. Available online: <http://www.culture.gov.sk>
- MK SR (2013). Strategy for the development of museums and galleries until 2018 [Stratégia rozvoja múzeí a galérií do roku 2018]. Available online: Retrieved from: <http://www.culture.gov.sk>
- MK SR (2025). *Grant system of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic for the year 2025. [Dotačný systém Ministerstva kultúry Slovenskej republiky na rok 2025]*. Available online: <https://www.culture.gov.sk/ministerstvo/dotacie-mk-sr/dotacie-2025/> Accessed on 3 February 2025
- NEMO (2015). *Museums and Creative Industries. Mapping cooperation*. Available online: www.ne-mo.org Accessed on 1 February 2025
- Olejárová, M. (2015). Trends in the development of cultural tourism. [Trendy v rozvoji kultúrneho cestovného ruchu]. *Economic Review of Tourism [Ekonomická revue cestovného ruchu]*, 48(3), 184-190.
- Palmer, C. A. (2005). An ethnography of Englishness: Experiencing identity through tourism. In *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(1), 7-27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2004.04.006>
- Perzolla, V., Carr, C.M., & Westland, S. (2018), "Proactive Collaborative Conservation: Museums and companies working towards sustainability", *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 8(3), 321-341. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCHMSD-01-2017-0002>
- Piekkola, H., Soujanen, O., Vainio, A. (2014). *Economic impact of museums. Vaasa* : University of Vaasa, Lévon Institute, 2014. 60 p.
- Podušelová, G. (2001). The Museum as a Tourism p=Phenomenon. Culture and Tourism. Proceedings of the Scientific Conference [Múzeum ako fenomén cestovného ruchu. *Kultúra a cestovný ruch. Zborník z vedeckej konferencie*]. Banská Bystrica : Ekonomická fakulta Univerzity Mateja Bela, 2001. ISBN 80-8055-507-9, p. 23-36.
- Pop, L. I., & Borza, A. (2015). Sustainable museums for sustainable development. *Advances in Business-Related Scientific Research Journal*, 6(2), 119-131.

- Rentschler, R. (2001). *Entrepreneurship: From denial to Discovery in Nonprofit Art Museums?* Brisbane : Queensland University of Technology, 2001, 13 p. Available online: <https://eprints.qut.edu.au/50517/1/98.Rentschler.pdf> Accessed on 15 February 2025
- Silberberg, T. (1994). *Cultural tourism and business opportunities for museums and heritage sites.* 11 p. Available online: http://www.lord.ca/Media/Artcl_Ted_CultTourismBusOpps.pdf Accessed on 2 February 2025
- Taurino, G. (2023). Algorithmic Art and Cultural Sustainability in the Museum Sector. In: Mazzi, F., Floridi, L. (eds) *The Ethics of Artificial Intelligence for the Sustainable Development Goals*. Philosophical Studies Series, vol 152. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-21147-8_18
- Throsby, D. (1982). Social and Economic Benefits from Regional Investment in Arts Facilities: Theory and Application. *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 6(1), 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00162290>
- Timothy J. D. (2011). *Cultural Heritage and Tourism*. Bristol : Channel View Publications, 2011. 509 p. <https://doi.org/10.2307/jj.30945662>
- Torabi Farsani, N., Moazzen Jamshidi, H., & Hekmat, M. (2023). Mine museums: a creative economics approach towards sustainable tourism. *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09647775.2023.2209852>
- Trimarchi, M. (1993). *Economia e cultura: organizzazione e funzionamento delle istituzioni culturali*. Milano: Franco Angeli 1993. 182 s. ISBN 9788820476700.
- UNESCO (1997). *Financing culture: Preservation and Development of cultural life in countries of Central and Eastern Europe*. Available online: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000113778> Accessed on 7 February 2025
- UNWTO (2018). *Tourism and culture synergies*. Madrid : UNWTO, 2018. 156 p. ISBN 978-92-844-1896-1.
- UTAI (2024). Portfólio. Available online: <https://utai.sk/sk/> Accessed on 18 February 2025
- Uzzell, D. (1998). Interpreting our Heritage: A Theotetical Interpretation. In *Contemporary Issues Heritage and Environmental Interpretatio*. (Ed. D. Uzzell, R. Ballantyne) London : Stationary Office, s. 11-25.
- Vanni, M. (2023). The economic sustainability of museums: sustainable growth starts with numbers. Available online: <https://www.finestresullarte.info/en/news-focus/the-economic-sustainability-of-museums-sustainable-growth-starts-with-numbers> Accessed on 16 February 2025
- Vareiro, L., Sousa, B.B., & Silva, S.S. (2021), "The importance of museums in the tourist development and the motivations of their visitors: an analysis of the Costume Museum in Viana do Castelo", *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 11(1), 39-57. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JCHMSD-05-2020-0065>
- Veľasová, Ľ. (2001). The Use of Manor Houses and Chateaus in Tourism [Využitie kaštieľov a kúrií v cestovnom ruchu]. *Culture and tourism [Kultúra a cestovný ruch]*. Proceedings of a scientific conference [Zborník z vedeckej konferencie]. Banská Bystrica : Faculty of Economics, Matej Bel University. pp. 41-45.
- Vikmane, E., Lake, A. (2021) Critical Review of Sustainability Priorities in the Heritage Sector: Evidence from Latvia's Most Visited Museums. *European Integration Studies*, 15(1), 95-109. <https://doi.org/10.5755/j01.eis.1.15.28886>
- Young, L. (2006). Villages the never were: the museum village as heritage genre. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 12(4), 321-338. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13527250600727059>