

Cultural and Creative Industry from the Perspective of the Municipalities and Cities

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Abstract: Cultural and creative industries (CCI) represent an important sector that combines economic, social and cultural contribution to the development of regions. As part of this article, a questionnaire survey was conducted among municipalities with more than 2,500 inhabitants in the South Bohemian Region, the aim of which was to determine the state and potential of cultural activities and facilities in these municipalities. The questionnaires focused on the availability of cultural events, the availability of cultural facilities, the involvement of different target groups, cross-border cooperation and further education opportunities. The results showed that most municipalities are trying to support cultural life but are struggling with a lack of funds and qualified personnel. Further education of cultural workers is perceived by the municipalities as a key factor for increasing the quality of the services provided. The study emphasizes the need for greater support of cultural infrastructure from regional and state institutions. The results provide important data for planning the development of the cultural and creative sector in the region. The questionnaire survey is thus a valuable source of information for future strategic decisions in the field of culture and creativity.

Keywords: Cultural and creative industry, South Bohemia region, cultural activities, cultural and creative background.

JEL Classification: G32, G33, C35

1 Introduction

The term "cultural industry" was first introduced in 1944 by philosophers Theodor W. Adorno and Max Horkheimer in their book *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Zuidervart, 2015). They originally viewed industry and culture as two distinct concepts; however, today these terms have been merged into one (Němec, 2013; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). In the 1980s, the term "cultural industries" was also adopted by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), following the rise of cultural industries after the economic crisis of the 1970s (Power & Scott, 2004).

The cultural sector began to be seen as a potential driver for economic development. The first articles discussing the connection between culture and urban development were published in the U.S. in 1979, analyzing the role of art in Los Angeles (Markusen et al., 2008). Following this, the cultural industry gained more attention in Europe. By the late 1980s, European scholars and politicians started to advocate for the development of cultural spaces and activities as a means to revitalize neglected post-industrial cities (Markusen et al., 2008).

Cultural industries encompass a range of sectors, including film, television, music, literature, design, advertising, and other creative areas with economic significance. This sector is vibrant and involves the production, distribution, and commercialization of cultural and creative goods (DeBeukelaer, 2021; Pratt, 2004). On the other hand, the creative economy takes a broader perspective, focusing on jobs tied to creativity. In the UK, the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport defines the creative economy as including not only those employed within the creative industries but also creative professionals working in other sectors (Bakhshi et al., 2013). These industries drive job creation, open up new business prospects, generate value, and contribute significantly to overall economic progress (Hotho & Champion, 2011).

The term "cultural and creative industries" (CCI) is still relatively new in the context of the Czech Republic, even among professionals. However, we are now in a period where regions, cities, and municipalities are starting to recognize the significant role that CCI entities play. As a result, various studies and analyses are being conducted to map these entities. The CCI encompasses a wide range of activities, all of which are closely interconnected and rely on each other (Návrát & Dubová, 2014).

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In the Czech Republic, cultural and creative industries are characterized as "economic activities that build on creativity and talent. Unlike other cultural areas, CCI are not dependent on public funding, which means that they are more than 50% financially self-sufficient and form a significant part of the modern creative economy" (Vláda ČR, 2023). According to the definition, CCIs include "cultural and creative companies that have a predominantly commercial focus and are engaged in the creation, production, distribution or media dissemination of cultural and creative products and services" (Söndermann, Backes & Arndt, 2009).

Supporting cultural and creative industries in municipalities often requires cooperation between the public and private sectors. While large urban areas may have larger budgets for cultural events, in smaller municipalities funding for CCI can be more difficult. However, even here there are possibilities to support this area, for example through grants, subsidies from European funds or partnerships with non-profit organizations and private entities. The willingness of the local government to invest in the development of cultural infrastructure is also key (Bednář, a kol., 2013).

Řehák (2014) says that the cultural and creative industry represents an opportunity for economic and social development for municipalities in the Czech Republic. CCI brings new opportunities for creating jobs, supporting tourism and strengthening the local community. However, for its effective development, cooperation between local residents, the public sector and private investors is necessary, as well as a long-term strategy that takes into account the specific needs and potential of individual municipalities. If these challenges are overcome, CCI can become one of the pillars of sustainable development and the strengthening of local identity in municipalities throughout the Czech Republic.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the state and development possibilities of the cultural and creative industry in the municipalities of the South Bohemian Region with more than 2,500 inhabitants based on a questionnaire survey. The contribution focuses on the availability of cultural events and facilities, the involvement of target groups, the potential of cross-border cooperation and the possibilities of further education in the field of culture. The results of the survey will serve as a basis for strategic planning and support of the cultural sector in the region, with an emphasis on identifying challenges and opportunities for improving the cultural infrastructure and offer.

2 Methods

In the period from May to June 2024, a questionnaire survey was conducted aimed at ascertaining the state and development possibilities of the culturally creative sectors (CCI) in the municipalities of the South Bohemian Region with more than 2,500 inhabitants. Data collection was done electronically through Google Forms, which allowed for efficient distribution and collection of responses. A total of 41 municipalities and towns from the entire South Bohemian Region were approached, including all districts - České Budějovice, Český Krumlov, Jindřichův Hradec, Písek, Prácheň, Strakonice and Tábor. 22 respondents filled in the questionnaire, which represents more than half of the municipalities addressed (53,7 %).

Data collection

The questionnaire survey was designed to provide data on various aspects of CCI, such as the availability of cultural events and facilities, target groups, opportunities for cross-border cooperation and further education of cultural workers. The questionnaire contained both closed questions (dichotomous, multiple choice, Likert scale) and open questions allowing respondents to express their opinions and specific suggestions.

Structure of the questionnaire:

- Basic information about the municipality: size of the municipality, number of inhabitants, geographical location.
- Cultural facilities and events: questions focused on the number and types of cultural facilities (theatres, libraries, galleries, etc.) and the frequency of organized events.
- Target groups and their involvement: questions determining which population groups participate most in cultural life (youth, seniors, families, etc.).
- Cross-border cooperation: mapping the possibilities and current state of cross-border cultural cooperation, especially with Austrian regions.
- Educational opportunities: finding interest in further education and improving the qualifications of cultural workers.
- Funding and support: questions about the availability of finance for culture and forms of support from regional, state and European funds.

Data analysis

Data evaluation and analysis took place between July and August 2024. The data were first cleaned of incomplete and irrelevant responses and then analysed based on descriptive statistics. The first step of the analysis included calculations of mean values, medians and percentages of responses for individual questions. This step made it possible to identify basic trends, for example the frequency of cultural events in different municipalities, the types of most frequently used cultural facilities or the preferences of target groups.

3 Research results

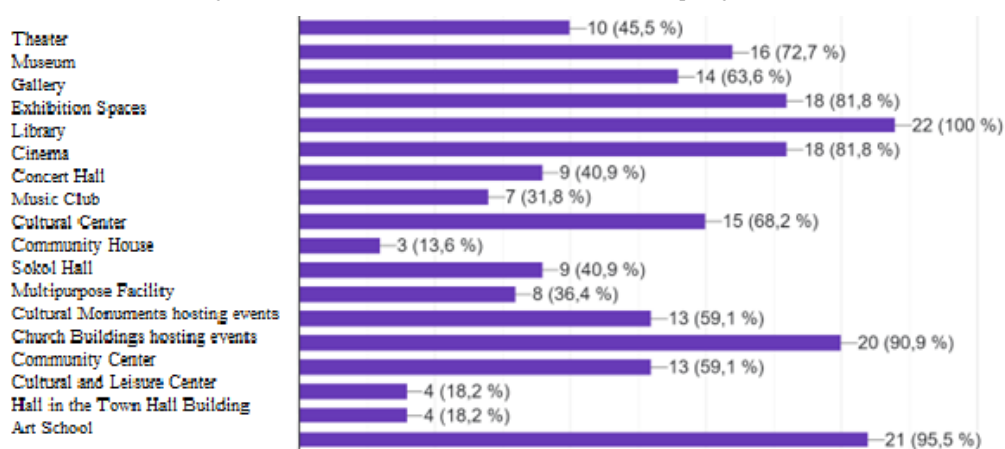
As part of the survey, the respondents were asked a total of 29 questions, while these questions were designed both as open and closed. In this post, the most important of them are selected and evaluated.

In the individual municipalities/cities, 1 to 3 people are most often involved in the cultural agenda at the municipal office, which is reported by 40.9% of respondents. Another significant group are offices, where 4 to 7 people participate in the cultural agenda, which is stated by 31.8% of respondents. At a smaller number of offices, namely 18.2% of respondents, more than 15 people participate in this agenda. Only 9.1% of respondents state that 8 to 15 people participate in the cultural agenda. No respondent stated that no one participated in the cultural agenda (0%). These results indicate that most municipalities and cities have a relatively small number of workers on the cultural agenda, with most authorities having between 1 and 7 people dedicated to this agenda.

First, it was found that the availability of cultural facilities in the municipality. Most municipalities (36.4%) rate accessibility as rather good, while 31.8% rate it as very good. Furthermore, 18.2% of respondents consider accessibility to be sufficient, neither bad nor good, and 9.1% rather bad. Only 4.5% of municipalities stated that accessibility is very bad. Overall, it can be said that most municipalities evaluate the availability of cultural facilities positively.

The question of what cultural, creative, culturally educational and similar facilities are located in the municipality was answered as follows:

Figure 1 Cultural, creative, culturally educational and similar facilities in the municipality



Source: Own processing

According to the graph, the most frequent answers show that the library (100%), elementary art school (95.5%), church buildings where cultural events take place (90.9%), and exhibition spaces (81.8%) are in the municipality with the largest number of respondents. On the other hand, only 3-4 municipalities have an association house, a cultural and leisure centre or a hall in the town hall building. Of the other (added) facilities, the respondents include the city park, the riverbank, the premises of the former rectory, the leisure centre.

As for the equipment and technical condition of cultural facilities, they are evaluated differently. The largest group of respondents (36.4%) consider the situation to be rather good. The same proportion (36.4%) assesses the situation as rather bad. Furthermore, 22.7% of respondents stated that the facilities and condition are sufficient, neither bad nor good. Only a small proportion of respondents (4.5%) rate the situation as very good. At the same time, it should be noted that most of the cultural facilities and infrastructure in municipalities are adapted for disabled people, and this infrastructure is used, as stated by 59.1% of respondents. Another 13.6% of respondents plan to build this infrastructure. On the contrary, 18.2% of respondents state that they do not have such infrastructure, and 9.1% of respondents have infrastructure, but it is not

used. These results indicate that most municipalities and cities strive to be accessible to people with disabilities, even if in some cases the infrastructure is not used or not yet built.

Regarding the number of organized events, the largest share of respondents (45.5%) stated that 16 or more cultural events are organized in their municipality per month. Another group of respondents (18.2%) states that 4 to 6 events are organized per month. The group of respondents with 7 to 10 events and 0 to 3 events per month make up 13.6%. The smallest share of respondents (9.1%) states that 11 to 15 cultural events are organized per month. These results indicate that most municipalities and cities have a rich cultural program with more than 16 events per month.

These events are intended for different target groups of the population. The largest share of respondents (45.5%) states that these activities are aimed at people of working age (31-65 years). Another important group are families with children, which represent 36.4% of the answers. A smaller share of activities is aimed at seniors (13.6%). Activities for young people aged 15-30 have the smallest representation (4.5%). Other groups, such as people at risk of cultural or social exclusion, are not represented in the graph. This result suggests that the greatest attention is paid to people of working age and families with children.

Similarly, attendance at cultural events is evaluated differently. The largest share of respondents (45.5%) states that attendance is medium, neither low nor high. The same proportion of respondents (22.7%) states that attendance is rather low, and likewise 22.7% of respondents rate attendance as rather high. Only 9.1% of respondents state that attendance is very high. No one rates attendance as very low. These results indicate that attendance at cultural events is mostly average, with some variability between individual municipalities and cities.

Regarding the experience of drawing support for culturally creative activities in subsidy programs, the respondents most often answered that they had "rather good" and "very good" experiences to the questions regarding the friendliness of electronic submission and the transparency of decision-making. This indicates that in these areas the respondents have positive experiences with receiving support for culturally creative activities in subsidy programs. On the contrary, the most frequent answers "very bad" and "rather bad" appear for the volume of funds and the thematic spectrum of subsidies. This result shows that respondents have negative experiences in these areas. Other results are evaluated in the following graphic representation.

Figure 2 Experience with drawing support for culturally creative activities in subsidy programs



Source: Own processing

This was followed by a question regarding opportunities for improvement in the area of drawing subsidy support. Out of ten options, the respondents answered as follows:

1. Greater connection of the cultural and creative sector to support programs (31.8%).
2. Simplification of the criteria for evaluating and approving applications (45.5%).
3. Providing training for effective project management (13.6%).
4. Improving the monitoring of results and impacts of financed projects (9.1%).
5. Providing better information about available opportunities (40.9%).
6. Creation of special programs tailored to the needs of specific industries (36.4%).
7. Increase in funds available for support (86.4%).
8. Greater transparency in decision-making processes (31.8%).

9. Providing more professional advice and support to applicants (9.1%).

10. Improvement of the process of applying for subsidies (59.1%).

These results indicate that the greatest need for improvement is in the area of increasing available funds and simplifying the processes of requesting and assessing subsidies, while less emphasis is placed on professional advice and support of applicants, as well as on monitoring the results and impacts of funded projects.

It follows from the above-mentioned questionnaire survey that in the municipalities of the South Bohemian region, the CCI plays an important role in improving the quality of life and developing the local economy. Cultural and creative activities can attract visitors, support local business and create new job opportunities. For example, holding cultural festivals, exhibitions and craft markets can attract tourists and encourage the consumption of local products and services. Municipalities that actively support cultural and creative activities can benefit from their contribution, among other things, in the field of tourism.

In the Czech Republic, there are several examples of municipalities that have successfully integrated cultural and creative industries into their development. For example, in municipalities with a rich historical tradition and heritage value, such as Český Krumlov, cultural heritage is linked with creative activities, which attracts tourists and supports the local economy. Another inspiring example is the restoration of former industrial sites into creative centres where studios, galleries and spaces for artist residencies are created.

4 Conclusions

The cultural and creative industry (CCI) represents a dynamic sector that has been gaining importance in the Czech Republic in recent years. It is an industry that relies on creativity, talent and innovation, covering a wide range of activities from art, design and architecture to digital media, advertising and cultural tourism. In the Czech context, the CCI concept is starting to be applied more not only in urban centres, but also in smaller municipalities, where it can have a major impact on the local economy, social cohesion and the quality of life of the inhabitants.

As it emerged from the questionnaire survey, despite the potential of the cultural and creative industry, municipalities in the Czech Republic face several challenges. Among the main ones are insufficient awareness of the importance of CCI, limited financial resources and the need for education in the field of cultural management. For the effective development of CCI, it is important to create strategic plans that take into account the specifics of individual regions and connect cultural activities with other areas such as tourism, education and local business. In the future, municipalities could focus on greater support for young artists and budding entrepreneurs in the creative industries, as well as the development of creative centres and hubs. Thanks to digitization and new technologies, the cultural and creative industries have a chance to expand into other areas as well.

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