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The offer of museums in Kielce city (Poland)

The study presents the array of seven museums localized in Kielce – the partner city of Winnica. The museums offer six different types of exhibitions – historical, biographical, arts, natural history, martyrology and specialty along with different kinds of additional activities for visitors. Most valuable is the offer of the National Museum in Kielce with the richest and differentiated collection of exhibition articles. The most active in organization of exhibitions are the National Museum and Museum of Toys and Play. The museums of Kielce conduct a broad educational activity for young and adult – museum lessons, lectures and workshops. Moreover they organize scientific readings, artistic evenings, poetical programs, multimedia lectures and in two of them (National Museum and Museum of Stefan Żeromski School Years) music concerts are also held.

Key words: museums of Kielce, exhibitions, museum activities.

Цюпа Т., Суліговський Р., Бернат Т. Музейний простір міста Кельце (Польща). В статті характеризується комплекс музеїв міста-побратима Вінниці – Кельце (Республіка Польща) та їх виставкова діяльність. Музеї пропонують шість різних типів виставок – історичні, біографічний, мистецькі, історії природи, мартирологічні та інші поряд з іншими різноманітними видами додаткових заходів для відвідувачів. Найрізноманітнішою є діяльність Національного музею у м Кельце з науково-обґрунтованою диференціацією багатой експозицією виставкових предметів. Найбільша активність в організації виставок властива також і Музею іграшки та ігор. Підкреслюється широка освітня діяльність кельцьких музеїв для різновікової публіки через її різні форми – музейні уроки, лекції і семінари, а також наукові читання, мистецькі вечори, поетичні програми, мультимедійні лекції, а також літературно-музичні концерти.

Ключові слова: музеї Кельце, виставки, музейні заходи.

Цюпа Т., Суликовский Г., Бернат Т. Музейное пространство города Кельце (Польша). В статье характеризуется комплекс музеев города-побратима Винницы – Кельце (Республика Польша) и их выставочная деятельность. Музеи предлагают шесть различных типов выставок – исторические, биографический, художественные, истории природы, мартирологического и другие наряду с другими разнообразными видами дополнительных мероприятий для посетителей. Разнообразной является деятельность Национального музея в г. Кельце с научно-обоснованной дифференциацией богатой экспозицией выставочных предметов. Наибольшая активность в организации выставок присуща также и Музею игрушки и игр. Подчеркивается широкая образовательная деятельность кельцких музеев для разновозрастной публики через ее различные формы – музейные уроки, лекции и семинары, а также научные чтения, художественные вечера, поэтические программы, мультимедийные лекции, а также литературно-музыкальные концерты.

Ключевые слова: музеи Кельце, выставки, музейные мероприятия.

Introduction. In recent years, a significant increase of Ukrainian visitors have been observed in Kielce. They came here in business, tourist and educational reasons (lecturers and students). At the beginning of 2015 several dozens of students from Ukraine have been living and studying in Kielce. In spare time visitors have a number of opportunities to enjoy many tourist attractions in the city. Among them, important role is played by seven museums, which main role is collecting, popularization and education (Stasiak 2006). Museums collect, store and popularize universal values of natural or cultural character. The collections often have historical, scientific and artistic values. Therefore people visit museums for the learning purposes. Local museums have a very important role in learning about the region. All of the described museums have regional and some of them also super-regional character and reach.

Through the museums visitors learn about the history and the present of the region, they also revise and strengthen their knowledge. According to Burda and Szymczak (2006) museums allow visitors to directly encounter the local environment and shape an affection to traditions. Foreign students and employees working in Kielce are specific groups that could be the most interested in local and regional culture with its monuments. Moreover museums are able to create emotional bond with Poland, particularly for those that have Polish roots.

The aim of the present paper is to show an actual offer of the museums in Kielce, trying to analyze their types, collections and activities. The analysis describes only the national and local museums that create official activity reports.

Kielce, with around 200.000 inhabitants, is a capital city of the świętokrzyskie voivodeship. It is situated in central Poland (fig. 1). The city benefits from its location

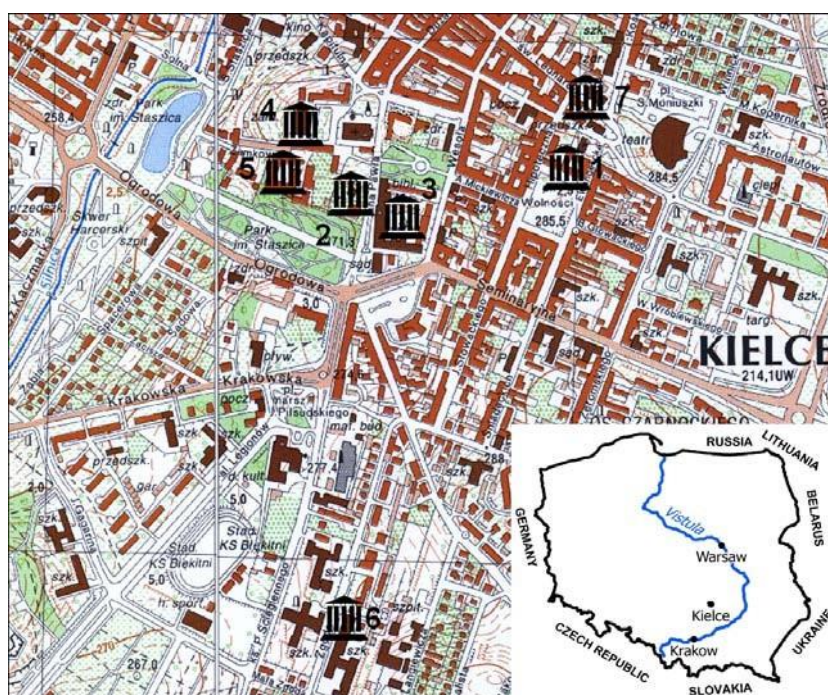


Fig. 1. The museums location in Kielce

1 – Museum of Toys and Play, 2 – Diocesan Museum, 3 – Museum of Stefan Żeromski School Years, 4 – National Museum, 5 – National Remembrance Museum – Kielce’s Prison from 1939-1956, 6 – Geological Museum conducted by the local branch of National Geological Institute, 7 – Museum of Kielce’s History).

because it is surrounded by big agglomerations (Warsaw, Kraków, Łódź and Katowice) and plays a role of the traffic junction between them. In the city’s area there are many valuable tourist attractions of both natural and cultural character (among others: 5 natural reserves, Kielce Cathedral, Palace of the Kraków Bishops). Since 1992 Kielce Trade fairs are being organized in the city, which attracts increasing number of Polish and international guests. Kielce’s museums proposes differentiated and interesting exhibitions and activities, that also raises the attractiveness of the region. Kielce is a partner city of Winnica in Ukraine from 2003, and the history of cooperation dates back to 1958.

Museums of Kielce

Seven museums are functioning in Kielce (tab. 1). Due to the subordination and the character of collections they belong to three groups: district museums, regional

Table 1

Museums of Kielce – main attractions

<i>Nr</i>	<i>Name (year of establishment)</i>	<i>Seat</i>	<i>Type (number of museum collections)</i>	<i>Main attractions</i>
1.	National Museum (1908)	Palace of the Kraków Bishops (17 th century) (phot. 1)	art (31 859)	Polish painting gallery from 17 th to 20 th century; objects of decorative art: furniture, fabrics, gold and silver items, glass and ceramics (Baroque, Classicist, Biedermeier and Art Nouveau styles) and medals; Marshall Józef Piłsudski Sanctuary; bishop and senators suites; Italian Garden
2.	Museum of Stefan Żeromski School Years (1964)	Seminary building (18 th century)	biographical (596)	Writers childhood exposition from Strawczyn and Ciekoty; school years exposition from Kielce; works of the author and some examples of his social activity
3.	Geological Museum (1966)	National Geological Institute building in Kielce	natural	Whale skeleton preserved in Pińczów limestone; rocks and minerals exposition from almost all geological periods in the natural history of Earth; fossils; lapidarium
4.	Museum of Toys and Play (1979)	Building of old trade fairs (19 th century) (phot. 2)	specialized (5 826)	Historical and ethnographic toys
5.	National Remembrance Museum – Kielce's Prison (1995)	Kielce's prison building (1826-1828 r.)	martyrological (114)	Document copies, prisoners messages, photo- graphs, weapons, instruments of torture; solitary confinement cells; place of execution
6.	Diocesan Museum (2004)	Building of old local bishop seat (18 th century)	art	Sacred art relics (fabrics, vestments, liturgical furnishings, sculptures and paintings); docu- ments; interior design
7.	Museum of Kielce's History (2006)	downtown old apartment house (19 th century)	historical	Different kinds of archival documents: city plans, old photographs, ordinances etc. Items associated with the city.

Source: own study

museums and specialized museums. Taking into consideration character of the museum's collections, according to division proposed by Lijewski (2008), described museums were assigned to be: art (2), specialized (1), biographical (1), natural (1), historical (1) and martyrological (1). This diversity raises the advantages of the region in terms of tourist attractiveness. Furthermore significant is the fact that those museums have very diversified staffing and material resources, therefore different possibilities to carry out the museum offer.

The most stately museum in Kielce and the whole świętokrzyskie voivodeship is the Świętokrzyskie Museum, established in 1908. In 1975, for the merits of development of science and Polish culture, it has been ranked the National Museum and since then it has a nationwide character. It is one of the 7 national museums in Poland. From 1971 its seat is the 17th century Palace, formerly owned by the Kraków Bishops (fig. 2). It's an example of residential architecture from the early Baroque. The Palace building has been classified to the highest category of Polish monuments. Against an exposition of the 17th and 18th century interior design there are three permanent exhibitions. One of them is Polish paintings and decorative art from 17th to 20th century gallery situated in 17 halls of the carefully restored northern wing of the Palace. It includes about 250 paintings of 125 artists – for example Pankiewicz, Malczewskim Wyspiański, Boznański, Szermentowski, Siemiradzki and Grottger. The gallery has also more than 500 items of decorative art, most of them ceramics (among others faience,

porcelain from Miśnia and Ćmielów, Chinese and Japanese products) and artistic glass from Baroque, Classicist, Biedermeier and Art Nouveau styles (Śniegulska-Gomuła 2013). The museum features also Marshall Józef Piłsudski Sanctuary with halls showing historical military equipment such as firearms, defense and edged weapons. Since 2003 at the backyard of the Palace an Italian Garden with 17th century quarter structure have been opened for the public (Paprocki 2004, Biernat et al. 2006) (tab. 1).

Museum of Stefan Żeromski School Years in Kielce (a department of the National Museum) have been set up in the 100 anniversary of the writers birth. Stefan Żeromski was one of the most famous Polish writers. The museum is situated in the part of the historical seminary building (founded in 1724-1727) which in 19th century housed men's Government Gymnasium where Stefan Żeromski attended for 13 years (Zapałowa 1996). The museum's collection comprises furniture, photographs, documents and other items that characterize school years of the author, his literary works and chosen examples of social initiatives.

Collection of the Geological Museum – conducted by a branch of National Geological Institute in Kielce, consists of minerals, rocks, and fossils from geological periods in the Earth's history (from Kambrian to Quaternary). The largest and most precious exhibit is a whale skeleton (from Tertiary, about 15 million years ago) and 12 million year old shark teeth. In open air exhibition petrified trees are presented along with lapidarium – an exposition of rocks and boulders (tab. 1).

The Museum of Toys and Play is currently the biggest toy museum in Poland (fig. 3), both in means of area (631 m²) and number of exhibits (about 6000). Since the moment of its creation (1979) it was functioning as a research and development backup for toy manufacturers. Because of the problems of space the exhibition and museum activity were often being restricted (Podsiadło 2003, Biernat et al. 2007). The most valuable part of the museum's collection are historical toys. Besides, a large group of handmade local toys made of natural materials with traditional techniques are represented. In the collections there are also rewarded in competitions children art works and writings.

National Remembrance Museum – Kielce's Prison from 1939 to 1956 is located within the 18th century utility buildings (stables and coach house) of the Kielce County. In 19th century those buildings were transformed into the prison surrounded by a high wall. During the Second World War and the German occupation the prison took a role of a camp for Polish prisoners of war. After the liberation of Kielce from the occupation, the prison have been taken over by former Ministry of Internal Security. It should be noticed that this museum not only represents specific topic and historical time but also, and first of all, it is located exactly in a place where those documented historical events took place. Here the solitary confinement cells, guard tower and execution place located between the prison and the outer wall have been preserved in the original state. In one of the halls an original hook used for hanging executions is preserved too. Furthermore, among the exhibits are: archival documents, prisoners secret messages, written witness relations, photographs and images of partisan captains, firearms, instruments of torture used by Gestapo and communist Internal Security officers. All of them represents the history of the prison and fate of the prisoners in 1939-1956 period.

The Diocesan Museum in Kielce have been established by the Kielce bishop decree in 2004, and opened a year later. The seat of the museum is former Kielce bishops residence. The collection consists of valuable items of sacred art from the



Fig. 2. National Museum – Palace of the Kraków Bishops (17th century)



Fig. 3. Museum of Toys and Play – Building of old trade fairs (19th century)

Diocese of Kielce area.

In 2006 the Museum of Kielce's History have been created (Biernat et al. 2009). It documents the history and stages of the city development. The permanent exhibition shows archeological findings, photographs, documents and other collections connected with the city's cultural and also industrial history.

It should also be noticed that the historical manor house of the Laszczyk family in Kielce seats the head office of Kielce Region Countryside Museum – a museum devoted to present regions ethnological history and heritage. There is a small exposition in the building itself but the main exhibits are situated in locations outside of Kielce – in Tokarnia (Ethnographic Park), Mnichów (Mausoleum of the Polish Countryside Martyrology), Bodzentyn (Czernikiewicz family farmhouse) and Szwarszowice (stone windmill).

Museums activity forms

Exhibitions are a part of the product offered by the museums. Permanent or temporary, own and extraneous, showing collections of the specified topic are a magnet for potential visitors. The vast array of museum exhibitions in Kielce is very diverse due to a need of reaching a broad audience. Some of the present exhibitions have a national value and became a part of the Polish museums history. For example – *25 years of Pope John Paul II pontificate* (National Museum in 2004). The biggest number of exhibitions is organized by the specialized museums (Biernat et al. 2006). The most active in this area are the National Museum and the Museum of Toys and Play. Average number of exhibitions organized in those museums are twenty per year in each.

Museums play an increasingly important role as places gathering tourists who are interested in a broad human culture. Gradually they are transforming into active educational establishments because they are an ideal places for education of children and adult. Research has shown that a number of participants in different forms of educational activity, among the total number of tourist visitors, is getting bigger year after year.

Museum lessons, lectures and workshops are forming the students ability to use a new source of knowledge in form of exhibitions. In museums students have an unique occasion to encounter original relics of human culture or natural environment heritage. There students could pursue the educational curriculum in a way far more interesting than classroom lessons, integrating the knowledge from different areas of humanities or natural and technical sciences. Museum lessons are part of curriculum, which covers the education process in different types of schools. In this respect two museums in Kielce are leading – again the National Museum and the Museum of Toys and Play, which organize about 150 lessons in a year.

Another aspects of the museums activity are scientific lectures, artistic evenings, poetical programs or even multimedia lectures. Attending this types of museums offer one have a great possibility to be in a direct contact with a scientist or artist (writer, poet, singer, sculptor or other). In Kielce there are on average, about 200 activities of this type in a year.

Musical concerts covering historical, classical and popular music are being held in two museums in Kielce – the Museum of Stefan Żeromski School Years and the National Museum. There are mainly chamber music concerts of classical composers. They gather more than 10.000 listeners in a year.

Museum publications provide documentation for exhibitions and different activities of the museums – they give knowledge about the collections and museums

offer. Often, because of their attractive design, they could also be a souvenirs. The amount of published catalogues, albums, handbooks, guides, folders and other publications along with their availability in Kielce's museums is satisfactory. Nowadays, most of the information are also published on the museums websites. Among the different forms of publications in the museums of Kielce posters (39%) and brochures (34%) are the most popular. The widest range, in terms of the amount of publications offered, have the National Museum (Raport... 2012). Furthermore the National Museum publish educational books, which aim is to promote the institution. This publication attract the big interest of school age youth.

A new element of the museums offer are competitions and play activities. The Museum of Toys and Play organizes, for example, *International Olympics of Old and Forgotten Plays*, which is of a very big interest, also for foreign tourists.

Conclusions

- There are 7 museums in Kielce (art – 2, specialty, biographical, martyrological, natural and historical) – all located in the city center.
- Kielce's museums have rich and versatile collections of exhibits. The most valuable items are stored in the National Museum.
- The most active in scope of exhibitions organization are two museums: National Museum and Museum of Toys and Play.
- Described museums perform a broad educational activity for young and adult (museum lessons, lectures, workshops). They organize also scientific lectures, artistic evenings, poetic programs, multimedia lectures. Two museums (National Museum and Museum of Stefan Żeromski School Years) organize also musical concerts.

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