



Title of dissertation

„Strategic management in Polish public museums”

Nowadays, the role and social functions of museums are expanding. Due to their dynamic development observed in recent years, it is necessary to implement organizational changes and improve the quality of management. Unfortunately, still too little attention is paid to contemporary management methods, including strategic management. Therefore, this paper is aimed at filling the research gap and examining the extent to which such museums have strategic management in place. The research area covers selected Polish public museums, i.e. museums operating pursuant to the Polish Act on Museums. The paper subject includes the analysis of the strategic management process conducted from the humanities perspective. The paper subject is presented both in the quantitative (how many museums in Poland have missions and strategies in place?) and qualitative (how do they implement the strategical provisions?) contexts.

The aim of the research was to explore the extent to which the museums apply strategic management tools (missions and strategies) in their daily operations. In her work, the author used the triangulation of research methods, including quantitative (the questionnaire) and qualitative research methods (content analysis, interviews, case study).

During the course of the research, the following research questions were verified:

1. How common is strategic management in Polish museums?
2. What is the specific nature of strategic management in Polish public museums?
3. What are the impediments to the use of strategic management tools by museum managers? Do museum managers consider such missions and strategies indispensable?
4. What is the importance of strategic management from the employee perspective?
5. Does the strategy translate into museum activities, and if so, how? Are employees familiar with the strategy and are they committed to achieving strategic goals?

In Chapter I, the author discusses the theoretical tenets of the paper subject from the perspectives of the humanities and management sciences. She describes strategic management in the public sector and its specific nature, and also the concepts used in the further part of the dissertation: strategy, strategic management, strategic management process, public museum. In doing so, she refers to selected titles of Polish and foreign (English) literature.

In Chapter II, the author presents the formal and legal conditions for the operation of museums in Poland. She presents the status and distinct nature of public museums, and then focuses on discussing the legal regulations that impact museum activities. The author describes the provisions of the Polish act on organizing and running cultural activity, including the procedure for organizing competitions for managerial positions, and the Polish act on museums, i.e. the tasks and functions carried out by museums, which is important in drawing up museum statutes and translates into museums' missions. What is more, she presents executive provisions to the acts and other legal regulations, noticing how vital they are for the operations of public museums. This chapter reflects the legal status at the end of 2019.

In Chapter III, focused on management in Polish public museums, the author presents selected issues in this domain, with particular emphasis on the issues of strategic management. In individual subchapters, she discusses various approaches to strategy mentioned in the literature. The purpose of this overview is to capture the specific nature of strategic management in cultural institutions and to identify and scrutinize the expected components that should be included in the strategy of a public museum.

Further chapters are devoted to the presentation of the objectives, course, and results of the author's own research. In Chapter IV, the author describes the methodological tenets and presents the issues and research in question in the broader context of management sciences. She presents the theoretical background on which her research is based, discussing and justifying the research methods and techniques applied. In Chapter V, the author presents the course and results of her research.

The research consisted of 3 stages carried out throughout the years 2016–2020. The first stage was an electronic survey prepared and conducted in 2016 (the response rate was 18%). This was followed by the analysis of available materials – primarily the missions and visions of museums, and also by the collection of data on strategies in public museums through browsing museum websites, e-mail correspondence with museums and sending inquiries to museum organizers. During this stage, the author managed to identify the missions and visions of 114 public museums in Poland and collected 33 strategic documents, which she further subjected to content analysis. In 2018 and 2019, the author conducted 18 interviews: 15 in 11

museums (with managers and other people involved in the strategic management process), plus 3 with representatives of museum organizers.

The introduction to the research description includes a case study of the Museum of Krakow, with the analysis of how the Museum applied strategic management in the years 2004–2019. The analysis was prepared from the standpoint of the author's own professional experience, because she had been involved in the strategic process from the very outset. In the author's opinion, an opportunity to present her own experience in the strategic management of the Museum of Krakow from the angle of her career-based personal involvement is the reason why this paper is particularly focused on this specific cultural institution. The second premise was constant access to the Museum's in-house data and resources, which allowed for a more detailed analysis of the strategic process than it would have been possible in the case of other museums. Furthermore, bearing in mind that, as indicated by the conducted research, the Museum of Krakow has the longest experience in strategic management among Polish public museums, the importance of this cultural institution could not be ignored.

As part of her research, the author gathered and organized knowledge in an area that had not been explored before – strategic management in Polish public museums. She examined the scale and scope of how selected museums use strategic management tools, and analysed the strategic process along with its course, key stages, and challenges. She formulated general conclusions from the stage of strategy development and implementation, as well as conclusions for management practice.

The paper is the outcome of long-standing observations of how Polish museums are managed and of the author's own research in this field. It also stems from the author's personal managerial interests and professional experience.