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The Potential of the Socio-Demographic Profile of the Visitor in the Museum's Product Strategy

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Abstract

One of the types of cultural sector institutions with a solid potential to use modern management methods are organisations dealing with cultural heritage management, such as castle museums. Today, however, these cathedrals of cultural tourism have to face the pressures of economic and social change to build public authority and recognition, but most importantly, to create interest and an attractive offer for their existing audiences and a hitherto unreached public. The present article aims to develop a systematic review of empirical experiences in the socio-demographic profile of visitors to selected castle museums, to identify untapped potential in the segmentation of museum audiences and to derive propositions for individual solutions aimed at increasing the attendance of selected castle museums. We used a triplet of separated Chi-square tests for each period to identify the socio-demographic profile. Non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was used to test for differences in ordinal variables (age and education of visitors). In addition to the individual results for each single museum partially, we can identify through the most frequent, most represented and periodically repeated responses the typical visitor profile of the Castle Castle Museums as follows: female, 31 – 45 years old, secondary education with a high school diploma, working as an executive secondary educated professional employee. Such findings could be helpful in the future when creating so-called tailor-made products for the visitor.

Keywords: *Museum, Strategy, Socio-Demographic Profile, Marketing, Cultural Heritage.*

Introduction

A significant source of interest in museums' services and products is a specific group of people, which can be referred to as the museum audience. Alcaraz et al. (2009) consider the audience of organisations involved in cultural heritage management to be all physical and digital participants, cultural viewers, visitors, or those considering the purchase of works of art. Czech museologist Beneš (1977, p. 171) refers to museum audiences as "*users of museum services*." Is it possible to assume that to be a museum visitor, one must come to the institution to use its services? Baik et al. (2018) answer this question, which defines a museum audience "*as a public with a relationship to the museum and from there a visitor is later established*." In practical terms, a visitor is a member of the museum audience who makes or has made one or more visits to the museum. In principle, we can assume that any individual can be a museum visitor but must satisfy the primary condition, i.e. n = 1, of visiting the cathedral of cultural tourism, with either a positive or negative resulting experience.

At the same time, a visit to a museum can also be connected with the fact that an individual, a visitor, can satisfy various needs that may have nothing to do with the real purpose or meaning of the institution. For a person exposed to a hectic lifestyle, a museum can become a place of escape from people, and for a loner, it is an opportunity to get into the company of people. Simply put, museums are typical places where visitors can satisfy various needs and interests.

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The present article aims to elaborate a systematic review of empirical experiences in the socio-demographic profile of visitors to selected castle museums, identify the unused potential in the segmentation of the museum audience, and derive propositions for individual solutions aimed at increasing the attendance of selected castle museums.

Literature Review

The successful development of a heritage site primarily depends on the most thorough understanding of actual and potential visitors and their needs (Akash & Aram, 2022). According to the claims of several authors, Frans Schouten (1984), Duperré (2017), Kesner (2005), Rubén et al. (2014), Bačuvčík (2012), Goussous (2022), Lukáč (2016), there are several criteria for organisations involved in cultural heritage management to define different types of visitors. It is the identification of the various segments that can be implemented through STP marketing (Carreira, 2022). The name is based on the abbreviation of segmentation, targeting and positioning (Yang et al., 2019). The purpose of such segmentation is to divide the market into smaller parts, i.e. segments (Voronkova et al., 2021), and to prepare a specific product to their measure (O'Neill & Stapleton, 2022). Bačuvčík (2012, p. 72) defines STP marketing as *"a modern marketing approach that emphasises the orientation of corporate activities towards selected target groups."*

Through STP marketing in the targeting phase, cultural organisations can decide on their chosen strategy (Lee & Lee, 2017). Marketing experts Kotler et al. (2008) give these institutions four options: mass marketing, segmentation marketing, niche marketing and customised marketing. While in non-segmented marketing, the museum's marketing communication is directed to the general public, in targeted marketing, the communication activities are oriented to a few well-known groups (Girchenko & Panchenko, 2020). A more detailed focus is provided by marketing that targets only one or a few highly specialised segments (Donohoe, 2012). In the last type of strategy, activities are focused on thoroughly collecting information about individual visitors, and, according to the data collected, highly specialised programmes are developed for small groups of museum visitors, for example, for cultural consumers with disabilities (Kotler, Kotler & Kotler, 2008). The marketing strategy should focus not only on creating the core product but also on providing its complementary services (Marimin, 2016).

In terms of detailed understanding and more precise definition of individual segments, marketing experts Kotler & Keller (2013), cite four basic sets of characteristics to identify the possible visitor components of a given market. These are geographic, demographic, psychographic, and behavioural considerations. Salvador & Belén (2019) enrich these groups with an additional criterion and state that "the aspect of interest can also define specific audience segments." However, these may overlap with behavioural aspects. Basaraba (2022) adds a sixth segmentation criterion, namely socio-economic. In line with the above, it can be concluded that there are differences in the profile of the typical visitor between different heritage sites (Castillo et al., 2021). Science and technology museums will have a different demographic profile of visitors, and castle museums will have a completely different one.

Methodology

In order to understand the leisure market, of which the Castle Museums are a part, it is crucial to know the opinions of the market players. Visitors to heritage sites are the customers; the castles and chateaux are the carriers of the offer. However, in order not only to satisfy the requirements of both parties but, above all, to segment the visitors more precisely and to determine the optimal targeting of products for the segment, it was necessary to conduct quantitative research on the selected five castles and chateaux. Specifically, these are five specialised castle and chateau museums, but they did not wish to disclose their identity. For this reason, we name them in the research according to the individual letters of the alphabet, namely Museum A - Museum E.

The quantitative research was carried out in the field, directly in the selected castles and chateaux environment, in three periods, namely the years 2006 – 2009, 2011 – 2014, and 2016 – 2019.

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The research aimed to obtain a socio-demographic profile of a typical visitor and, according to the research results, to develop a product mix for specific visitor segments to increase the number of visitors.

Therefore, a pre-survey was conducted before the research to avoid incorrect question formulation. It was based on consultations with the staff of individual castle museums and former long-term employees of several Slovak museums. Thanks to the pre-survey, some questions were reformulated into simpler ones, and in some cases, open questions were changed into semi-open ones.

The data collection itself was continuous throughout the year, in conjunction with the opening hours of the monuments. The individual days of the field research were chosen randomly. The basic set of the study consisted of all visitors to the castle museums. The sample population was represented by those respondents who visited the castle or chateau during the data collection period, i.e., the sample was drawn using a quota sampling of respondents. In selecting research participants, the method of the appropriate occasion was used, i.e., visitors who had either attended one of the museum tours, participated in an exhibition or animation activity or attended a cultural and social programme were exclusively addressed as respondents. A total of 5.840 cultural audiences participated in the research over the three periods studied.

A written questionnaire method was used in the first period (2006 – 2009) to collect primary information, i.e., using a questionnaire handout. Subsequently, during the following two research periods (2011 – 2014, 2016 – 2019), visitors completed the questionnaire using the GoogleForms tool on a prepared tablet with internet access. Our methodology focused on the existence of a psychological barrier for respondents to fill out technologically demanding and content-intensive questionnaires. Therefore, its scope was chosen to be as adequate as possible so that the questionnaire could be completed without major technical problems and time burdens. When constructing the questions, we also considered their symbiosis with each other. These were intended to provide answers with the highest possible meaningfulness so that we could conclude them and make future recommendations. An essential starting point in the development of the methodology was the need to collect information not only for the entire Castle Museum complex but especially for individual monuments. The return rate of the questionnaires in the unique monuments was 100%, as every single visitor handed in the questionnaire when buying a tour ticket.

After collecting the completed questionnaires, the data were checked. Then, all the data were continuously converted into electronic form, i.e., a pre-prepared digital muster that exactly copied the structure and form of the questionnaire. All imported data was thoroughly checked once the detected data had been entered into the required database. Statistical software R was used to process and sort the research material. The so-called sorting criteria included the following variables: day of visit (weekday or weekend day), so-called first-time or repeat visitors with whom they came to the Castle Museum, preferred information sources, socio-demographic data (gender, age range, education, place of residence by municipality, economic activity). Differences for all nominal variables (gender of visitors, residence by municipality, economic activity of visitors) of each museum were tested by three separate Chi-square tests for each period. Non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis one-way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was used to test for differences in ordinal variables (visitor age and education). Subsequently, further statistical analyses were performed using SPSS 25 statistical software.

Results

A key question in exploring the relationship between castle museums and the public is identifying the characteristics of the people visiting these heritage sites. In doing so, we start from the simple assumption that by analysing the typical attributes of museums' cultural consumers, we can identify which segments of the visiting public the heritage sites should target in the future. For this reason, we surveyed the gender, place of residence (the municipality where the visitor comes from), economic activity, age and education of the visitors. The results obtained can be characterised as follows.

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Gender

Figure 1 shows the gender percentages of visitors to heritage sites (Museum A - Museum E) across three periods. The colour scaling represents the standardised residuals from the expected counts; if a bar is intensely red, the representation of that gender is statistically significantly higher than the representation that would be expected under the null hypothesis. The reverse is true for blue, meaning the representation is significantly lower (the more robust the colour, the more pronounced this deviation).

For example, in the **2006 – 2009** period, there was a significant inequality in visitor gender representation between museums, with this difference reaching a moderate effect size, χ^2 (4) = 79.81, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .205. Inspection of standardised residuals showed that the proportion of males was significantly higher in Museum E. The ratio of females was significantly lower ($p < .001$) than the other four museums. In other words, Museums A, B, C, and D were not significantly different regarding male and female visitor participation. However, in Museum E, the proportion of gender of visitors was statistically significantly different from the other heritage sites.

Similarly, for the period **2011 – 2014**, a statistically significant difference in gender representation between museums was observed, with this difference reaching a moderate effect size, χ^2 (4) = 62.64, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .180. Standardised residuals showed that Museum B ($p < .050$) and Museum E ($p < .001$) showed significant differences in the number of males and females, respectively, compared to the other three museums. However, Museum B's columns do not have a very intense colour, and the difference in visitor gender participation compared to the other museums (A, C, D) is not as marked. There is a more pronounced divergence in Museum E, which is confirmed by the percentages.

Similarly, a statistically significant difference in gender representation between museums was observed in **2016 – 2019**. The difference reached a medium effect size, χ^2 (4) = 68.52, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .184. Museum D and Museum E differed significantly in gender representation compared to the other museums (A, B, C).

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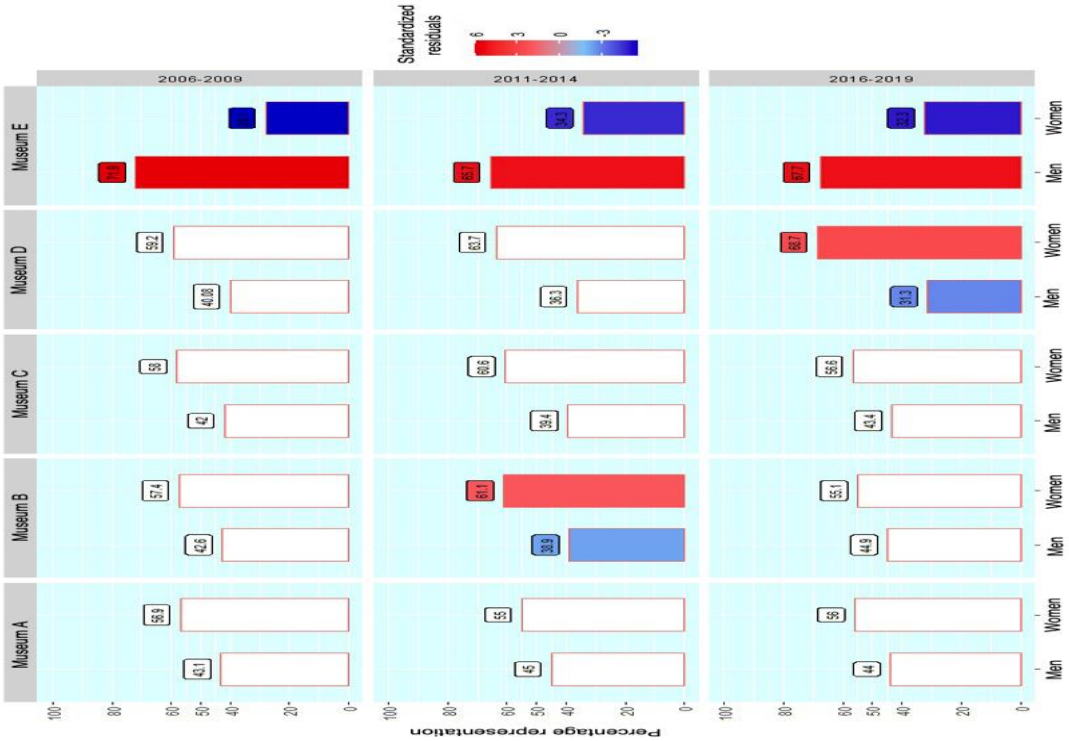

Figure 1: Gender of visitors

Source: own research and processing, 2024.

The Place of Residence or the Municipality from Which the Respondent Comes

These results show the percentage of geographical-regional distribution of the audience of the castle museums, i.e. they provide information on which individual visitors inhabited the region of Slovakia to the monuments during the individual periods of the research. In order to clarify the abbreviations of the regions, we present their full nomenclature, namely:

- BA - Bratislava self-governing region,
- TT - Trnava self-governing region,
- TN - Trenčín Self-Governing Region,
- NR - Nitra Self-Governing Region,
- ZA - Žilina self-governing region,
- BB - Banská Bystrica self-governing region,
- KE - Košice self-governing region,
- PO - Prešov self-governing region.

In **2006 – 2009**, there was a significant and statistically significant difference in the so-called regional origin of visitors between the castle museums, χ^2 (28) = 1784.27, p< .001, Cramer's V = .486. In Museum A,

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the residence of people from the TN county was significantly prevalent (compared to the other museums). Conversely, the BB, KE and PO counties were significantly lagging. In Museum B, visitors from the ZA region significantly outnumbered the public from the regions of BA, TT, NR, TN and KE, and, on the contrary, the public from the regions of BA, TT, NR, TN and KE significantly lagged. In Museum C, the representations of the natives from BA, TT and NR self-governing regions were overrepresented but significantly lagged behind the ZA, BB and PO region residents. In Museum D, origins from NR, BB and KE regions were exponentially over-represented, with significantly low values recorded for origins from BA, TN, ZA and PO regions. Museum E had statistically significant visitor representation from KE, PO and BB counties. ZA, TN and NR regions were identified as significantly underperforming.

The period **2011 – 2014** was characterised by statistically significant differences in the proportions of visitor representation by region of residence (municipality) in the Castle Castle Museum environment, $\chi^2 (28) = 1337.34$, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .416. In Museum A, the TT region was significantly over-represented (compared to the other museums), and the ZA region was marginally over-represented. On the contrary, the municipal regions BA, BB, KE, PO and the region TN were significantly behind. In Museum B, the representation of the PO region was not significantly higher than that of Museum B; on the contrary, the municipal regions of BA, TT, NR, KE, and, to a lesser extent, the regions of BB and ZA were significantly behind. In Museum C, BA and NR region visitors were significantly over-represented. Conversely, a moderately significant under-representation was measured in the origin of the TT region, and significantly low preferences were recorded for visitors from the ZA, BB, KE and PO regions. Museum D had a moderately significant overrepresentation of residents of BA, NR and KE regions.

On the contrary, there was a significant underrepresentation of residents of TT, TN and ZA regions. In Museum E, the origin from the KE region was significantly overrepresented, and the origin from the PO and BB regions was also slightly overrepresented—however, the representation of all other municipalities needed to be more represented.

During the period **2016 – 2019**, there was also a statistically significant and significant difference in the proportions of visitor representation by so-called county of residence among the Castle Castle museums, $\chi^2 (28) = 3099.53$, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .619. In Museum A, the representation of the TN county dominated; conversely, the representation of all the other municipal counties lagged significantly and significantly behind. In Museum B, representation from ZA and PO counties seriously and distinctly outnumbered that of the other museums (relative to the other museums), and origin from the other counties lagged significantly. In Museum C, visitors from BA, TT and NR counties significantly outnumbered visitors from the BA, TT and NR counties and significantly underrepresented visitors from TN, ZA, KE and PO counties. Museum D was strongly characterised by visitors from the BA region and moderately significantly by residents of the TT, NR and KE municipalities. Significantly low values were identified for TN, ZA and PO region residents and moderately for BB region individuals. In the visitor composition of Museum E, the origin from BB and KE regions significantly exceeded that of the E region. On the contrary, the representation of BA, TT, NR, TN, and ZA regions was significantly lagging, and a slight stagnation was also observed for the PO region.

The graphical regional breakdown of the audience attendance at the castle museums yielded several interesting results. According to the illustrated information, monuments are visited mainly by the public from the region where the particular castle or chateau is located. However, this fact is only valid in some periods and 100% identical for some museums. This is demonstrated by the changing regional attendance curve for Museum A and Museum B, particularly between 2011 and 2014. Slighter variations in visitor numbers by place of residence were recorded at Museum D. Conversely, Museum E maintained the same visitor share across the three counties in two consecutive periods.

At the same time, other remarkable findings were found when asked about the so-called regional origin of visitors. Museum C. defended the most balanced geographical attendance for all three periods. From a marketing point of view, the communication activities of this monument are directed almost evenly to the individual municipalities, and its communication infrastructure has a nationwide share.

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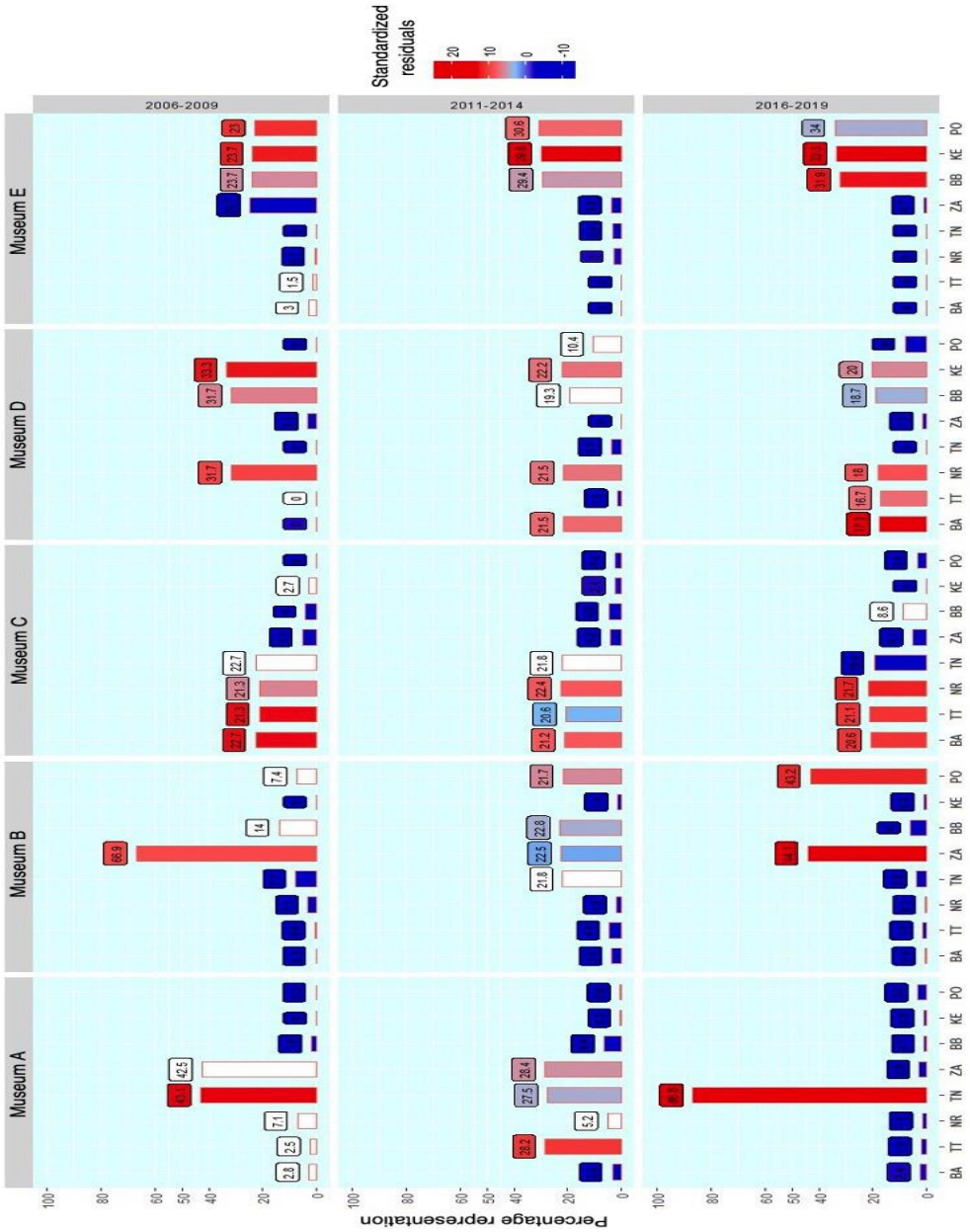

Figure 2: Geographical breakdown of visitors

Source: own research and processing, 2024.

Structure of Visitors by Economic Activity

The economic activity of the respondents was chosen in a broader range of activities to identify the composition of visitors in more detail, also in terms of sociodemographics. Nine possible economic activities were listed in the questionnaire, including unemployed individuals. The results of the visitor

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composition of the five heritage sites in the three time periods by economic activity are presented textually and graphically.

There was a substantial and statistically significant difference in visitor economic activity between museums in the **2006 – 2009** period, χ^2 (32) = 1564.71, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .452. In the visitor composition of Museum A (compared to the other museums), executive high school-educated professional staff significantly outperformed. Conversely, creative college-educated professional staff significantly lagged, e.g., compared to Museum B. The higher education visitor potential was measured at more than 60% at Museum B, i.e. we interpret it as a significant statistical value. However, let us compare the educational background of cultural audiences of Museum B and Museum C. We conclude that in Museum C, skilled manual employees have a slight overrepresentation, and a significant underrepresentation was identified for individuals with a college degree. Significant statistical preferences of young people-students were observed in Museum D, and a clear dominance of skilled manual employees again characterised Museum E.

During **2011 – 2014**, a substantial and statistically significant difference in visitor economic activity was captured between sites, χ^2 (32) = 602.47, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .279. However, the above differences were less pronounced in this period, as reflected in a somewhat lower Cramer's V relative to the previous period. Specifically, the number of high school-educated professional staff at Museum A increased. In Museum B, on the other hand, the college-educated visitor population declined from 60.1% (2006 – 2009 period) to 21.7%, and conversely, the number of high-school-educated people increased statistically significantly. In Museum C, the skilled manual worker position strengthened to 41.8%. The most significant variation in values was recorded in Museum D and E, where the visitor component comprised college-educated (43%) and secondary-educated (52.5%) people.

In **2016 – 2019, the** difference in economic activity could be considered significant, but in terms of effect size, it is even less pronounced than in 2011 – 2014, as χ^2 (32) = 455.23, $p < .001$, Cramer's V = .237. Changes in educational potential occur primarily in Museum C - Museum E, as illustrated in Figure 3.

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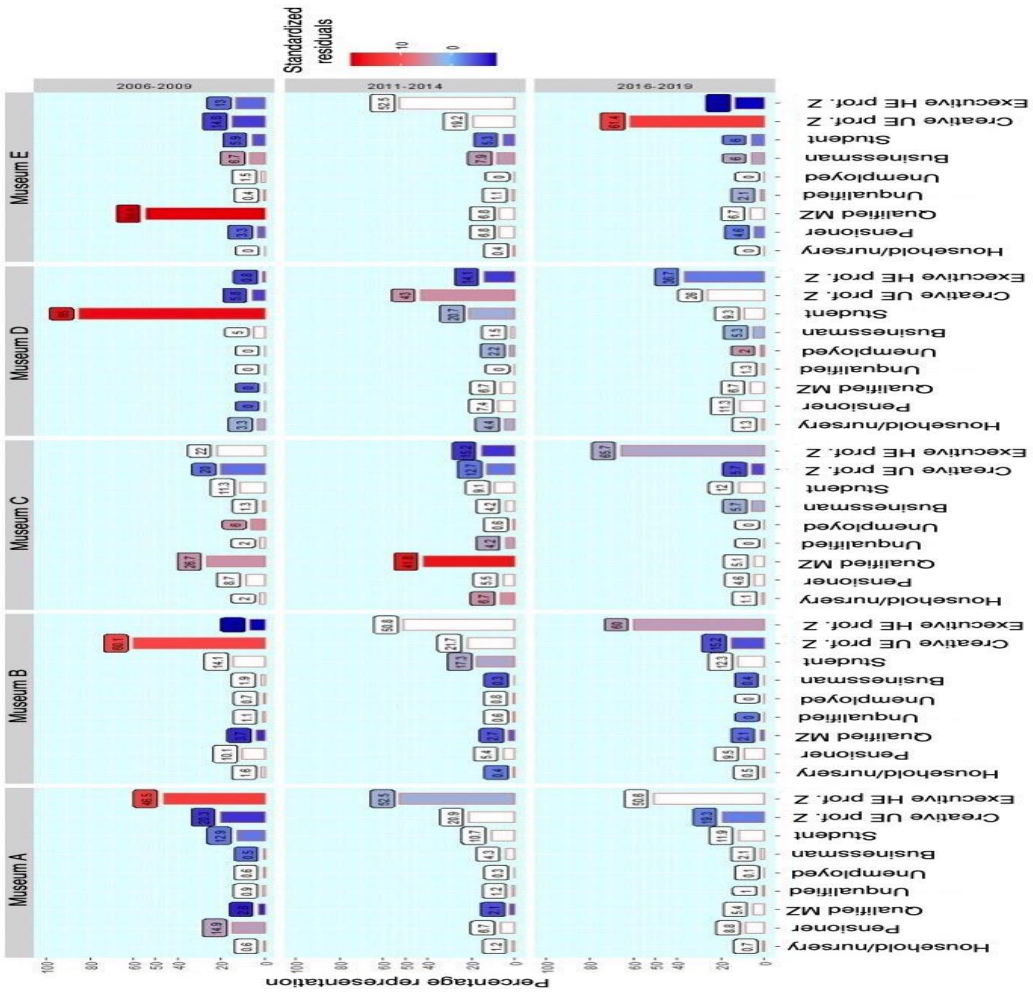

Figure 3: Economic activity of visitors

Source: own research and processing, 2024.

Detailed knowledge of the current structure of visitors to the castle museums presupposes complete identification of the socio-demographic profile of the cultural audience. For this reason, the results of this chapter provide additional information on the age composition of visitors and their educational level.

Age Structure of Visitors

The information in question tells about the demographic aspect of the audience of the castle museums, i.e. about their age composition during the individual periods of the research.

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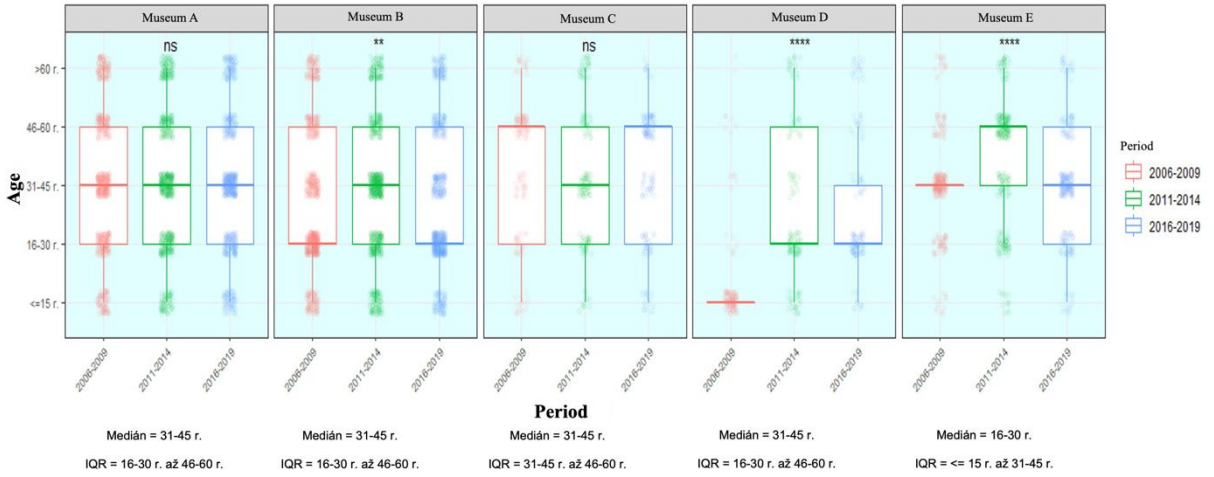

Figure 4: Age of visitors

Source: own research and processing, 2024.

Comparison of Museums

There was a small but statistically significant difference in visitor age between museums, H(4) = 254.33, p < .001, η_H^2 = .043. Visitors to **Museum D** reported statistically significantly lower periods than cultural audiences from all other museums, Z ≥ 8.615, p < .001. A significant difference was also recorded between **Museum B** and **Museums A, C, and E**, where **Museum B** reported lower visitor age, Z ≥ 6.620, p < .001. Finally, the age of visitors was significantly lower in **Museum A** compared to **Museums C** and **E**, Z ≥ 2.826, p ≤ .047.

Comparison of Periods

- **Museum A** → Age of visitors did not change significantly across periods, H(2) = 0.13, p = .939, η_H^2 = .001.
- **Museum B** → A statistically significant but marginal difference was found between periods, H(2) = 12.98, p = .002, η_H^2 = .005. In 2011 – 2014, visitors' age was higher than in the other periods, Z ≥ 2.517, p ≤ .036.
- **Museum C** → Age composition of visitors did not change significantly across periods, H(2) = 3.35, p = .187, η_H^2 = .003.
- **Museum D** → A statistically significant and large difference was identified between periods, H(2) = 124.66, p < .001, η_H^2 = .305. The age of visitors was significantly higher in the 2011 – 2014 and 2016 – 2019 periods than in the 2006 – 2009 period, Z ≥ 9.128, p < .001.
- **Museum E** → Across periods, a small but statistically significant difference was found, H(2) = 35.68, p < .001, η_H^2 = .041.

Graphical representations of the age composition of visitors to individual castle museums show that the monuments have an attractive effect mainly on young people under 30. However, they can also attract the middle generation. However, the group of individuals over 60 years of age was represented by low figures in attendance. The latter represents a distinctly uncovered gap in the leisure market. Indeed, it is evident that the perceived global trend of growing travel and cultural interest among seniors has yet to manifest

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itself in Slovakia fully. Therefore, it would be advisable for heritage sites to target their communication and marketing activities in this public segment.

Education of Visitors

Educational attainment can be considered a significant factor in shaping the socio-demographic profile of visitors to the castle museums. To assess the educational level of the respondents, four standard categories were established: primary education, high school without matriculation, high school with matriculation and university education.

Comparison of Museums

There was a small but statistically significant difference in visitor educational attainment between museums, $H(4) = 137.50$, $p < .001$, $\eta\_H^2 = .023$. **Museum C's** visiting public had statistically significantly the lowest educational attainment compared to all other museums, $Z \geq 3.128$, $p \leq .018$. **Museum D's** visiting public had statistically significantly lower education than the cultural audiences **of Museums A, E, and B**, $Z \geq 3.837$, $p \leq .001$. Finally, visitors to **Museum A** had lower educational attainment than visitors to **Museum B**, $Z = 3.992$, $p = .001$. **Museum B** and **Museum E** showed the highest educational preferences, and the two sites were not significantly different ($p > .90$).

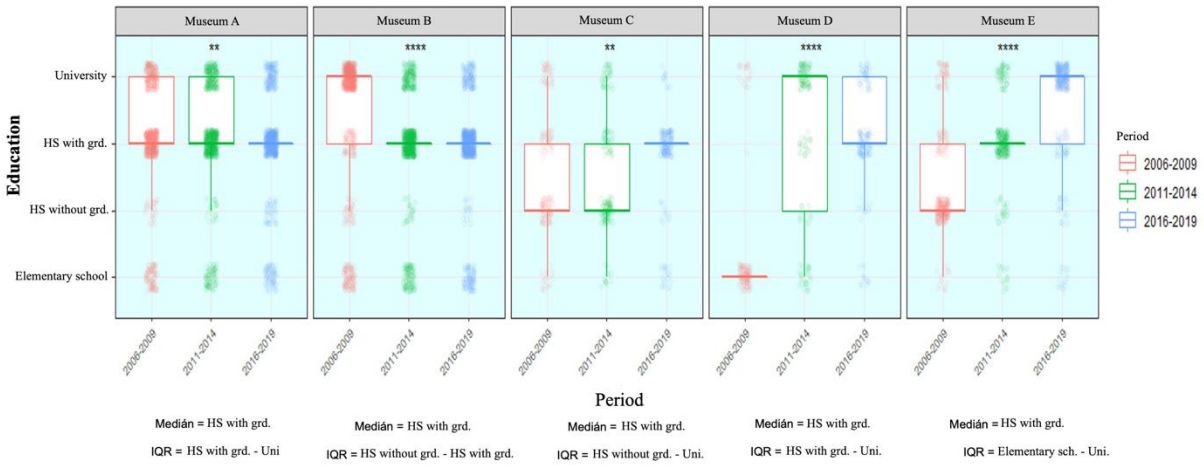

Figure 5: Education of visitors

Source: own research and processing, 2024.

Comparison of Periods

- **Museum A** → Educational structure of cultural audiences varied significantly across periods, $H(2) = 10.76$, $p = .005$, $\eta\_H^2 = .004$. More precisely, educational attainment was significantly decreased from 2011 – 2014 to 2016 – 2019.

- **Museum B** → Visitor education varied significantly between periods, with a medium effect size of $H(2) = 277.19$, $p < .001$, $\eta\_H^2 = .129$. In the 2011 – 2014 and 2016 – 2019 periods, we recorded statistically significantly lower educational attainment than the 2006-2009 period, $Z \geq 13.909$, $p < .001$.

- **Museum C** → Respondents' educational attainment curve varied clearly across periods, but its effect size was small, $H(2) = 11.05$, $p = .004$, $\eta\_H^2 = .019$. In 2016-2019, the highest educational attainment

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was significantly higher than in both previous periods, $Z \geq 2.437$, $p \leq .044$. The first two periods examined, i.e., 2006 – 2009 and 2011 – 2014, were not significantly different.

- **Museum D** → Visitor education varied significantly between periods, where the effect size was large $H(2) = 112.10$, $p < .001$, $\eta\_H^2 = .274$. The lowest educational attainment was statistically significant in 2006-2009, relative to the other two periods, $Z \geq 8.487$, $p < .001$. The 2011-2014 and 2016-2019 periods were different.

- **Museum E** → Educational visitor characteristics varied significantly across years, where the effect size was large $H(2) = 231.29$, $p < .001$, $\eta\_H^2 = .281$. Visitor educational attainment increased steadily, statistically significantly each period, $Z \geq 6.948$, $p < .001$.

After analysing the educational structure of visitors, we can conclude that the castle museums attract more educated people. This fact also confirms the well-known fact that people who have passed the matriculation exam or have achieved a university degree are the ones who travel and explore historical monuments.

After analysing the results of the quantitative research, we proceeded to formulate substantive conclusions and identified findings. At the same time, it should be noted that the results we obtained allow us to compile summaries for each museum partially but also globally for all castle museums.

A typical contemporary visitor to the first Castle Castle Museum A is a woman aged 31 – 45 with a high school diploma from the Trenčín region and working as an executive high school-educated professional employee.

As characteristic socio-demographic features of today's visitors of the second Castle Museum (B), the following data can be given: female, aged 16 – 30, with a secondary school diploma, living in the Žilina self-governing region, employed as an executive secondary school educated professional employee.

In terms of sociodemographics, the dominant position in the current visitation of the third monument (C) is occupied by a secondary school-educated woman aged 46 – 60 years, residing in the West Slovak region (Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Trenčín self-governing regions), employed in a job position corresponding to her education, i.e. an executive secondary school educated professional employee.

Regarding socio-demographic indicators, the current profile composition of visitors to the fourth monument (D) is characterised mainly by women aged 16 – 30, professionally working as professional employees with a high school diploma. It is not possible to determine her exact place of residence in detail, as the results of the last research were evenly distributed among the Bratislava, Trnava, Nitra, Banská Bystrica and Košice self-governing regions in terms of regions. Repeated field research could help to identify this area more accurately.

For the last castle museum examined (E), the profile of the typical visitor of the contemporary period is completely reversed concerning the other monuments. As socio-demographic indicators, the following data were most frequently recorded: a university-educated male, aged 31 – 45, in a job position of a creative university-educated professional employee, permanently living in the Eastern Slovakia region (Košice and Prešov self-governing regions) and part of Central Slovakia (Banská Bystrica self-governing region).

In addition to the individual results for each museum, we can identify the typical profile of a visitor to the castle museums through the most frequent, most represented and periodically repeated answers. Such findings could be helpful in the future for creating so-called tailor-made visitor products.

Table 1: Profile of a typical visitor to the Castle Museums

▪ Woman, ▪ 31 – 45 years old, ▪ secondary education with a high school diploma,

Journal of Ecohumanism
2024
Volume: 3, No: 4, pp. 913 – 928
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https://ecohumanism.co.uk/joe/ecohumanism
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- from the Žilina self-governing region,
- working as an executive secondary school educated professional employee.

Source: own research and processing, 2024.

Discussion

There can be no doubt that the impact of visitors' socio-demographic profiles on leisure time is considerable. This influence has also been noted by several international and global tourism organisations, such as the European Travel Commission European Travel & Tourism Action Group (2006). In their document Tourism Trends in Europe, published and updated several times, they point to socio-demographic characteristics and put their impact automatically at the top of the list. These will influence the tourism and leisure industry in the medium and long term. Foreign cultural institutions and some Slovak heritage sites have become fully aware of the importance of examining socio-demographic visitor profiles. They are, therefore, profiling a range of innovative or new services in response. The castle museums under study should respond to these trends, especially by creating new products for different types of the visiting public.

New events for visitors stabilise and increase the number of visitors to the monument and can also positively impact building a positive image of the institution. In recent years, various events have become very popular with visitors to castles and chateaux, such as staging knightly duels, reconstructions of battles, period fairs and picnics, antique fairs, international ghost and haunted festivals, music and theatre programmes, vintage fairs, wine fairs, gastronomic coffee and chocolate tastings, specialist events, exhibitions of period costumes from well-known fairy tales and films, etc. In the category of non-traditional cultural activities in cultural tourism cathedrals, we can include the creation of animation programmes for specific segments of visitors. Since the product portfolio of the castle museums under study for the female part of the population and the so-called unmotivated individuals need to be better represented, the heritage objects should target this part of the public when building an audience. A communication approach should also be chosen for this specific segment, but one that maintains a link to the overall marketing concept.

Many years of research have shown that women are essential in visiting monuments. This is also related to the demographic composition of the population and the fact that the role of the female part of the population in the leisure market is increasing. However, in the environment of Slovak castles and chateaux, the potential of the female population is untapped. In synergy with the increase in the attendance of this segment, castle and chateau museums should incorporate various non-traditional programmes, benefits of monuments and activities aimed at the fairer sex into their product portfolio. Specifically, these would be staged period shows from the life of aristocratic women or maids, fashion shows of replicas of period dresses with the opportunity to try them on, mystical shows with a black and white lady, discounts on admission fees during International Women's Day and International Mother's Day, etc. In addition to preparing a wide range of attractions and services offered, the castle museums should remember to promote the so-called women's products in various lifestyle magazines, periodicals, fashion magazines and journals, and online portals. Museums should know that the leisure clientele will increasingly comprise women with particular requirements. On the other hand, if the female segment of the population is satisfied with the services provided, this segment may become a repeat visitor, as women tend to be loyal to quality services and products. When creating offers and product packages for the female population, the Castle Museums should focus on four categories:

women who visit museums with their families (husband and children),

women who visit heritage sites with children but without a partner, in a group of several women,

single women who do not indulge in a tour of the castle and chateau as part of a purely ladies' trip or holiday,

Women with specific life changes, e.g. divorced or widowed women.

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For the last two categories, a visit to the Castle Castle Museum may represent a particular opportunity for new social relations or contacts, for example, at the opening of an exhibition, a professional lecture or a creative workshop.

Conclusion

One of the types of cultural sector institutions with a strong potential for using modern management methods are organisations managing cultural heritage in the castle and chateau architecture, the so-called castle-castle museums. Today, however, these cathedrals of cultural tourism have to face the pressure of economic and social change to build public authority and recognition, but above all, to create interest and an attractive offer for their existing audiences and an unmotivated and hitherto unreached public.

In general, it can be stated that Slovak castle museums are popular with the public because of the attractiveness of their expositions and accompanying programmes, but perhaps also because of their exciting location, for which it is possible to combine a tour of the monument with a trip to the countryside or the surroundings of other towns. Therefore, the main objective of castles and chateaux should be to provide such services that the visitor spends as much time as possible in these museums, comes back repeatedly, and recommends the tour or the museum product to his/her friends.

At the same time, however, it is necessary to ask what kind of visitors the individual castle museums want. The unequivocal answer would be - active cultural spectators, i.e. those who determine their discovery routes on sightseeing tours and exhibitions. An active visitor wishes to work with the exhibits, create, discover, explore, learn, educate and not just passively observe during their stay in the monuments. Finding such a visitor is not an easy task, and it will depend only on the skill of the relevant management actors of the individual castle museums, how they will take it on and whether they will be able to capitalise on the non-traditional category of cultural consumers and turn it into positive and increased values of the visitor statistics.

If Slovak castle museums want to be among the most visited monuments and have an initiative audience, they cannot simply rest on their laurels. First, it is necessary to continuously work with existing visitors to identify their typical profile in detail, e.g. through socio-demographic indicators, to know their opinions, needs, and wishes and to translate them to the benefit of the cultural organisation.

Whether Slovak castle museums will be able to survive in this challenging task will be shown by the results of a visitor audit with a link to the product portfolio, which is being carried out on selected five castle museums (Museum A - Museum E) in the next time period, namely in the years 2021 - 2024. The results of the audit itself, also with a focus on the socio-demographic profile of the visitor to the castle museums, will be presented in a forthcoming scientific article.

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