

The objectives of the research project are to explore, describe and explain the externalities generated through activities of castle and palace museums in Poland. Castle and palace museums are elements of cultural heritage and cultural environment. In economics theory the externalities appear when one enterprise's (B) production function is dependent inter alia on another enterprise's (A) production function and this dependency has a non-pecuniary (non-market) character. The influence of enterprise A on enterprise B is unwitting and enterprise B is not able to control the activities of company A. A main hypothesis said that the activities of the castle and palace museums in Poland generate positive externalities in local economic and social dimensions and for local self-government. According to this hypothesis, the activities of some local economic, social and public entities depend inter alia on the activities of these museums and this dependency has a non-market character, it happens without enter into a purchase-sale transactions. This phenomenon has high internal complexity, specific dynamics and there is a close connection with the context. It is not explored and described on scientific grounds.

The study is based on a triangulation of research methods, information sources and data analysis techniques. Triangulation gives a more reliable and detailed proposals. It allows us to capture the different aspects of the phenomenon studied. The methodological triangulation in this research is based on the following methods: content analysis, desk research, case studies, field observations, structured interview, postal survey, financial analysis, formal and contextual analysis. The research is an interdisciplinary project which joins knowledge and methods from economics, sociology, public policy and some elements from art history and history. The externalities of activities of the twenty-one castle and palace museums in Poland will be explored in the research.

Results of the research, firstly, will complement the theory of externalities in terms of knowledge of externalities of entities in the area of the cultural legacy. Secondly, it will develop knowledge of the functioning of the cultural sector. Thirdly it will develop the theory of cultural policy and public management in terms of the impact of cultural heritage on the socio-economic environment and organization of activities in the area of cultural heritage. It will be a contribution to the theory of public policy. Finally the results of the study will contribute to increasing the understanding of the role of cultural heritage in contemporary society, economy and in sustainable development.