CULTURE AS AN ELEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND URBAN ATTRACTION CAPACITY

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Culture in the broadest sense of this notion is a set of the specific spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional characteristics typical for the society or social group and along with art and literature it also includes ways of living and coexisting, value systems, traditions and views. Sustainability of culture includes exploration, preservation and development of cultural-historical heritage and traditions. Evaluating the socio-economic development and attraction of towns’ culture is considered to be one of the criteria of urban attraction. The article summarizes and evaluates the theoretical aspects of culture in the evaluation of sustainable development and urban attraction. The author analyzes the involvement of the towns of Latgale region in cultural activities in 2005–2009. Further evaluation of availability of cultural services will enable to determine the role and impact of the cultural factor on sustainable development and urban attraction.

Keywords: cultural identity, cultural values, cultural heritage, cultural indicators.

Introduction

Culture is the traditions, history of culture, behavior, customs and activities of the humanity which differs from the traditions and way of living in the historical context. Identification of values, practice and identity is a precondition for the development of the humanity, which has a significant role forming relations and establishing a link with the surrounding environment. Nowadays the life of an individual is also determined by cultural heritage and attitude towards environment. Sustainability of culture includes exploration, preservation and development of cultural-historical heritage and traditions. Evaluating the socio-economic development and attraction of towns’ culture is considered to be one of the criteria of urban attraction.

The aim of the article is to summarize and evaluate the theoretical aspects of culture in the evaluation of sustainable development and urban attraction. The article is based on the author’s researches within the ESF funded project “Linguo-Cultural and Socio-Economic Aspects of Territorial Identity in the Development of the Region of Latgale”.

In the research there are used general scientific research methods: information analysis and synthesis, logically constructive method, monographic method, data grouping and graphical depiction.

Research results
The notion “culture” is defined differently in various sources. Culture – lifestyle, way of thinking, action result of individuals in art, literature, religion, science (mental culture); education, upbringing, tact, wisdom (Liela, 2003). Culture is the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of a group or category of people from another. Culture is learned and is manifested through heroes, symbols, rituals and values. It consists of the abstract values, beliefs and perceptions of the world that underlie and are reflected in people’s behavior and is internalized in the form of implicit theories (Malach-Pines, 2005). Culture in the broadest sense is sources of behavioral stereotypes functioning in the society or a narrow circle of individuals, which all the time develop and transferred from generation to generation in a non-hereditary way. It includes values, tolerance towards the members of the society, internal and external value orientation of the society and individuals, interests, etc. being recognized in the society. The grounds of preserving and developing culture is the language, knowledge, folklore, customs, traditions, formal and informal education process, cultural institutions, etc. Diversity of cultures and interest in other cultures facilitate development of cultural tourism. In a narrow sense culture can be defined as expressions of art, music, literature, etc. (Akađemiskā…, 2011). The national culture policy guidelines for 2006–2015 „National State: Standpoints of a Long-term Policy” worked out by the Ministry of Culture (MC) of the Republic of Latvia (LR) determine that “culture in the broadest sense of this notion is a set of the specific spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional characteristics typical for the society or social group and along with art and literature it also includes ways of living and coexisting, value systems, traditions and views” (Valsts, 2006).

Evaluating the definitions of the notion “culture” mentioned above the author of the article concludes that the notion “culture” is the most frequently used in a broad sense understanding it as: individuals’ lifestyle, sources of behavioral stereotypes functioning in the society or a narrow circle of individuals, values prevailing in the society, tolerance towards the members of the society, internal and external value orientation of the society and individuals. The notion “culture” can also be narrowed by referring to, for example, art, music, literature and other expressions; a culture house of some rural parish or town or behavior of an individual.

Cultural identity has always been powerful glue that binds people together. Sometimes religious overtones help forge an identity, at other times it is common traditions but in all cases it involves creating a common set of beliefs and philosophy that guides behavior (Denton, 1997).

Two different ways of thinking about cultural identity: (1) shared culture; (2) uniqueness or difference. The first position defines cultural identity in terms of a shared culture, a collective “one true self”, which people with a shared history or ancestry hold in common. The second related but different view of cultural identity recognises that as well as some points of similarity there are also critical points of
significant difference which constitute “what we really are” or rather – since history has intervened – “what we have become”. This view refers to the discontinuities which constitute the “uniqueness” of identity. Cultural identity, from this perspective, is a matter of “becoming” as well as of “being”. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, it is subject to the continuous “play” of history, culture and power (Dryland, 2011).

Cultural identity can be considered as an essential factor influencing the communication processes. In the intercultural communication cultural identity can have twofold nature – it lets the participants of communication get to know each other better, but it can also cause misunderstandings and even conflicts. Awareness of one’s cultural identity can promote both cooperation and competition, thus facilitating sustainable development.

The strategy “Latvia 2030” explores the global development tendencies and challenges, determines the priorities of the long-term development in Latvia and offers solutions for effective and sustainable usage of the available cultural, natural, economic and social capital, especially emphasizing the fundamental value of Latvia – human capital. The first priority is the development of the cultural space in Latvia because the identity of a strong and creative nation is rooted in unique, ancestral and newly created material and mental values.

In the context of the world and European cultural diversity it is essential for Latvia to preserve and develop its identity, language, national cultural values and lifestyle, which form the cultural space of Latvia at the same time creatively using the fruitful influence of other cultures and enriching the cultural heritage of the humanity. … Under the impact of the global market the diversity of the world culture is endangered, thus there are accepted UNESCO Convention on Protection and Promotion of Cultural Diversity, which along with other EU States Latvia has joined in 2007, and EC General Convention on Protection of National Minorities. The convention emphasizes the obligation of each state to preserve and promote its cultural identity, at the same time facilitating respect to other cultures, interaction of cultures and mutual enrichment. In the future regions and states strengthening and promoting their identity will gain a relevant comparative advantage in the global competition because more and more value will be attributed to the different and unique. In this context it is essential for Latvia to preserve and promote its identity, language, national cultural values and lifestyle typical for its cultural space to strengthen the state competitiveness potential by creatively using the fruitful impact of other cultures and promoting openness (Latvijas..., 2010).

Though each individual has a unique set of values, there are also values that tend to permeate a culture. Cultural values are distinguished from personal values, because they form the foundation on which culture rests. Such cultural values, transmitted by a variety of sources (family, media, school, church, and state), tend to be broad-based, enduring, and relatively stable (Okazaki, 2007).

Cultural heritage is “evidence of human mental activity in a tangible or intangible form. It includes the works of artists, architects, musicians, writers,
scientists as well as anonymous authors, manifestation of the human spirit and value system attributing meaning to the life. Cultural heritage includes cultural-historical landscapes, historical centers of towns, groups of buildings, pieces of art, equipment and articles having a historical, scientific, artistic or other cultural value. Cultural heritage is the heritage of architecture, archeology, monumental, sacral and applied arts, industry and underwater. Cultural heritage is one of most appreciated tourist attractions. The most prominent objects and values of the world cultural heritage are included into the list of UNESCO World Cultural Heritage.” (Akadēmiskā…, 2011).

Cultural and natural heritage is one of the most important factors forming the individual character of the place or its identity. In the future it will be one of the most significant functions of cultural and natural heritage, which under the conditions of global economy will preserve cultural diversity and help regions to avoid merging into homogenous holity, which would an irreversible process (Stūre, 2004).

Cultural heritage has mutual interaction with opportunities for tourism development: cultural monuments reaching the status of a tourism object increase the significance of tourism culture, and tourism as well increase the value of historical heritage culture because more and more people get to know it and become enriched.

Latvia as a tourism destination offers various qualitative tourism services based on natural resources, cultural-historical heritage and traditions, thus one of the most perspective fields attracting tourists still is cultural tourism, which is significant in attraction of sustainability-oriented tourists as well. The objects of cultural tourism are observed both in urban and rural territories, thus promoting regional development. Offering a respective range of cultural events to be offered (specialized routes, niche offers, concerts, festivals, etc.), it provides a significant contribution to the solution of the seasonality problem. LR Ministry of Culture has created an Internet site on culture: http://www.kultura.lv, where there is available information about the offers of the culture branch and opportunities to attend various events, there is also worked out the information system of the Latvian culture digital map (http://kulturaskarte.lv) including all information about the infrastructure of the culture branch.

Application of Internet technologies facilitates access to culture: virtual expansion of the Latvian cultural space, preservation and dissemination of the values of cultural heritage as well as creation of new cultural products and services. For a digital society it is more convenient to provide access to qualitative public services.

Many cultural heritage institutions have started digitizing their resources and making them available on their website. Therefore, measuring the number of physical visits provides an incomplete view of the total amount of use of the institution and its resources. Web statistics form a necessary complement to physical measures, even more so when physical visits are being replaced by web visits (Voorbij, 2010).

It is becoming increasingly important to archive the valuable cultural heritage of history each year and digitisation programmes around the world are making a great deal of fragile and hard-to-find materials available in digital form. It is particularly urgent to archive materials from the ancient era carefully as they are fragile and vulnerable to deterioration. Cultural heritage includes many kinds of art works
including old books and relics. Thanks to technological developments in digital archiving, geographic location will no longer be a major barrier for preserving and accessing cultural heritage collections (Lee, 2010).

Arts and cultural institutions around the world grapple with a complex mix of issues pertaining to attendance, visitation rates and audience development. Most academic and industry studies have focused on arts and cultural participation by locals or tourists, with fewer studies exploring non-participation with cultural institutions. In the context of this study we define cultural participation by activities which commonly include museums and other heritage attractions, art galleries/exhibitions, performances of dance, music, theatre, opera, ballet, musicals, and festivals and is often specific to the destination, institution or venue. (Kay, 2009).

The research “City Monitor for liveable and sustainable Flemish cities” (Block, 2006) has been conducted in cooperation with experts from 13 Flemish towns, municipal administrations, public organizations and academic staff. The research includes 190 indicators having a general vision on the future of the Flemish towns and describing the situation in towns. This research has been conducted as support to the developers of the town strategic policy. It includes 11 sections: culture and spare time, learning and education, companies and work, safety, living conditions, transport and mobility, medicine and social care, social principles, nature and environmental management, physical principles, institutional principles. Each section is subdivided in clusters and clusters, in their turn, include indicators. The cluster of the section on culture and spare time: stimulating creativity and involvement in culture is the following indicators per 10000 inhabitants (amateur enterprises, innovative cultural products (number of performances and exhibitions), per 100000 inhabitants – provision of culture infrastructure, sales of tickets in cultural events (at the cinema (per capita), in cultural centers, museums, libraries (per 1000 inhabitants). A survey has been conducted for the period of last 12 months – involvement in culture (people attending the cinema, sports events, performances, public libraries, museums, exhibitions, historical sites and theatre), satisfaction with cultural provision, membership in clubs and unions.

The project “Linguo-Cultural and Socio-Economic Aspects of Territorial Identity in the Development of the Region of Latgale” is an interdisciplinary research envisaging integrated application of the information, data, methodological instruments and approaches of the humanitarian sciences (linguistics, literary theory, history of culture, folkloristics) and social sciences (economics, geography) to research the territorial identity of Latgale and promote stabilization of territorial quality and effectiveness indicators in the region mentioned above.

In order to evaluate the socio-economic development of town in Latgale region (Balvi, Dagda, Daugavpils, Ilūkste, Kārsava, Krāslava, Līvāni, Ludza, Preiļi, Rēzekne, Subate, Vīlaka, Vīlāni, Zilupe) and find out the aspects of their attraction there have been worked out criteria and indicators to evaluate urban attraction from the point of view of the inhabitants. Availability of cultural services and opportunities for spare time, including sports activities, is considered as one of the criteria. In order
to evaluate the attraction of towns in Latgale region various institutions (LR Central
Statistics Bureau, LR Ministry of Education and Science, LR Ministry of Culture,
etc.) were requested to send statistical data. In addition, the ability of towns in
Latgale to attract is traced by providing questionnaires to the inhabitants of the
respective towns. This questionnaire includes questions about culture
(sufficiency/insufficiency of cultural events for specific groups of people, a request to
name: 3 cultural events worth remembering in the town; 3 cultural events to be
organized in the town and 3 most attractive objects you would offer to see your
friends from other towns/regions), spare time (way of spending spare time,
satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the opportunities to spend spare time in the town) and
sports (frequency of going in for sports, satisfaction with sports activities in the
town).

The involvement of the inhabitants in cultural activities is one of the
indicators of cultural statistics letting evaluate the availability of cultural services.
The author has calculated the number of participants in the artistic collectives/ hobby
groups/ performance groups in the towns of Latgale region per 100 inhabitants in
2005–2009 (see Table 1), and it proves that out of 14 towns of Latgale region more
inhabitants were involved in cultural activities in 2005–2006 in Viļaka, Kārsava and

Table 1. The number of participants in the artistic collectives/ hobby groups/
performance groups in the towns of Latgale region per 100 inhabitants in 2005–2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balvi</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>4.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagda</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>5.51</td>
<td>7.19</td>
<td>7.63</td>
<td>7.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daugavpils</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilūkste</td>
<td>4.26</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>4.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kārsava</td>
<td>7.35</td>
<td>8.34</td>
<td>7.96</td>
<td>7.43</td>
<td>6.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krāslava</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>3.03</td>
<td>3.48</td>
<td>2.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Līvāni</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludza</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>2.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preiļi</td>
<td>3.08</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rēzekne</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subate</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>4.52</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viļaka</td>
<td>9.75</td>
<td>10.73</td>
<td>11.10</td>
<td>12.28</td>
<td>11.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viļāni</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>5.72</td>
<td>5.98</td>
<td>5.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zīlupe</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It must be noted that in 2005–2009 among 14 towns of Latgale region these
towns by the proportion of permanent inhabitants in the total structure on average
comprised a small part: Dagda – 1.26%, Kārsava – 1.2%, Viļaka – 0.79% and Viļāni
– 1.76%. Thus, it can be concluded that larger involvement of inhabitants into
cultural activities is observed in small towns and the cultural environment of small
towns can be described more positively.
Analyzing the number of participants in the artistic collectives/hobby groups/performance groups in the towns of Latgale region mainly the involvement of local inhabitants in the offered cultural activities of the specific town was evaluated. However, analyzing the cultural events and the number of people attending them conclusions can be made not only the ability of towns to attract local inhabitants by cultural activities was evaluated, but also the ability of the respective town to attract the inhabitants of other regions of Latvia and other towns of Latgale as well as foreign tourists. The number of people attending cultural events (national and traditional holidays, informative and educational events, amateur concerts, professional concerts, visiting concerts, amateur performances, professional performances, visiting performances, amateur exhibitions, professional exhibitions, entertainment events, religious events, cinema) in the towns of Latgale region per 100 inhabitants in 2005–2009 calculated by the author (see Table 2) prove that out of 14 towns in Latgale region in 2005–2009 Dagda, Preiļi, Subate and Zilupe had the greatest capacity to attract local inhabitants, as well as the inhabitants of other regions of Latvia and other towns of Latgale and foreign tourists.

Table 2. The number of people attending cultural events in the towns of Latgale region per 100 inhabitants in 2005–2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balvi</td>
<td>257.11</td>
<td>205.48</td>
<td>423.53</td>
<td>295.35</td>
<td>297.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dagda</td>
<td>861.31</td>
<td>1036.12</td>
<td>1056.87</td>
<td>419.14</td>
<td>242.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daugavpils</td>
<td>150.62</td>
<td>147.65</td>
<td>117.98</td>
<td>150.68</td>
<td>60.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilūkste</td>
<td>361.40</td>
<td>461.76</td>
<td>491.73</td>
<td>401.19</td>
<td>388.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kārsava</td>
<td>198.00</td>
<td>169.39</td>
<td>178.37</td>
<td>158.39</td>
<td>352.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Krāslava</td>
<td>185.98</td>
<td>205.90</td>
<td>205.93</td>
<td>105.01</td>
<td>156.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Līvāni</td>
<td>298.71</td>
<td>190.79</td>
<td>103.87</td>
<td>53.79</td>
<td>188.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ludza</td>
<td>441.40</td>
<td>390.99</td>
<td>495.34</td>
<td>428.13</td>
<td>…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preiļi</td>
<td>420.25</td>
<td>554.55</td>
<td>430.57</td>
<td>2131.53</td>
<td>505.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rēzekne</td>
<td>360.34</td>
<td>219.90</td>
<td>192.29</td>
<td>229.73</td>
<td>381.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subate</td>
<td>463.24</td>
<td>322.62</td>
<td>584.17</td>
<td>550.45</td>
<td>234.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vilaka</td>
<td>280.14</td>
<td>381.44</td>
<td>517.78</td>
<td>276.39</td>
<td>447.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vilāni</td>
<td>316.40</td>
<td>292.42</td>
<td>344.22</td>
<td>320.82</td>
<td>240.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zilupe</td>
<td>751.35</td>
<td>873.61</td>
<td>722.30</td>
<td>729.56</td>
<td>578.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culture as a resource of sustainable development can be used to reach economic, social, environmental, educational and other relevant aims. Further evaluation of the availability of cultural services using statistical data (Project…, 2010) as well as the analysis of the quantitative data collected by providing questionnaires to the inhabitants of the towns in Latgale region will enable to determine the role of the cultural factor and its impact on sustainable development and urban attraction capacity.

**Conclusions**
1. The notion “culture” is the most frequently used in a broad sense understanding it as: individuals’ lifestyle, sources of behavioral stereotypes functioning in the society or a narrow circle of individuals, values prevailing in the society, tolerance towards the members of the society, internal and external value orientation of the society and individuals. The notion “culture” can also be narrowed by referring to, for example, art, music, literature and other expressions; a culture house of some rural parish or town/city or behavior of an individual.

2. Cultural identity can be considered an essential factor influencing communication processes. Awareness of cultural identity can promote both cooperation and competition by facilitating sustainable development.

3. Cultural heritage has mutual interaction with opportunities for tourism development: cultural monuments reaching the status of a tourism object increase the significance of tourism culture, and tourism as well increase the value of historical heritage culture because more and more people get to know it and become enriched.

4. In order to evaluate the socio-economic development of town in Latgale region (Balvi, Dagda, Daugavpils, Ilūkste, Kārsava, Krāslava, Līvāni, Ludza, Preiļi, Rēzekne, Subate, Viļaka, Viļāni, Zilupe) and find out the aspects of their attraction there have been worked out criteria and indicators to evaluate urban attraction from the point of view of the inhabitants. Availability of cultural services and opportunities for spare time, including sports activities, is considered as one of the criteria of urban attraction.

5. Analyzing the number of participants in the artistic collectives/hobby groups/performance groups in the towns of Latgale region mainly the involvement of local inhabitants in the offered cultural activities of the specific town was evaluated. However, analyzing the cultural events and the number of people attending them conclusions can be made not only the ability of towns to attract local inhabitants by cultural activities was evaluated, but also the ability of the respective town to attract the inhabitants of other regions of Latvia and other towns of Latgale as well as foreign tourists.

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KULTŪRA KAIP TVARIOSIOS PLĒTROS BEI MIESTU
PATRAUKLUMO ELEMENTAS

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Santrauka

Kultūra plačiausia prasme yra visų ypatingų dvasinių, materialinių, intelektualinių bei
emocinių savybių visuma, būdinga kuriai nors bendruomenei ar socialinei grupei. Be meno ir
literatūros ji turi savyje taip pat ir gyvenimo bei sambūvio būdas, vertiųjų sistemų, tradicijas bei
pažiūras. Kultūros tvarumas pagrįstas kultūrinio-istorinio paveldo bei tradicijų tyrimu, išsaugojo
bei vystymu. Analizuojant miestų socialinį ir ekonominį vystymą bei patrauklumą, kultūra
nagrinėjama kaip vienas iš miesto patraukumo kriterijų. Straipsnyje pateikiamas kultūros teorinių
aspektų apibendrinimas bei įvertinimas tvariosios plėtros bei miestų patraukumo atžvilgiu. Autorė
kultūros paslaugų prieinamumo įvertinimas suteiks galimybę nustatyti kultūros veiksnių
vaidmenį bei įtaką tvarkai plėtrai bei miestų patrauklumui.

Raktiniai žodžiai: kultūros identitetas, kultūrinės vertybės, kultūrinis paveldas, kultūros
indikatoriai.

JEL kodai: R110, Z190.