



THE IMPACT OF NGOS ON HERITAGE OBJECTS AND SPACES

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ABSTRACT: In the context of an increasing social interest in cultural heritage and, consequently, a wide range of increasingly diversified grassroots activities related to the protection of heritage objects and spaces, there is a growing need for identifying the dimensions of social impact on cultural resources. The analysis of this issue in this article is based on the case of a group of public benefit organizations which are engaged in protecting heritage objects and spaces. As a result, the article identifies a group of factors which represent organizations' impact in this area, giving attention to the perspective of target heritage objects and spaces, their surroundings and social and economic environment, public authorities and institutions, indirect beneficiaries, as well as considering the criterion of the time of impact (immediate, deferred and potential effects). The analysis is based on desk research, including a literature review, expert analyses, and with regard to empirical studies – reports prepared by public benefit organizations, the content of their websites and social media.

KEY WORDS: non-governmental organization, cultural heritage, heritage space, local development, social development

1. Introduction

The issue of the social protection of monuments, in the context of the growing interest in this area in the last decades, is the subject of numerous scientific analyses¹ as well as expert reports including those prepared by public institutions (e.g. Narodowy Instytut Dziedzictwa/National Heritage Institute) and NGOs (ICOMOS, Europa Nostra, UNESCO, and Stowarzyszenie Klon/Jawor/Association Klon/Jawor). The need for conducting research in this area results from an increasing social interest in the problem of heritage as well as the identification of new dimensions of social impact on cultural resources and the community of inheritors. Considering these research needs, the article makes an attempt to delimitate the scope of impact of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) on heritage objects and spaces, based on the case of a sample of NGOs having a status of public benefit organizations (PBOs). The analysis assumes that heritage spaces are understood to be those that currently contain (or contained in the past) objects (buildings, structures, complexes of objects) or urban and rural layouts that are significant to the history of a place. The tangible heritage is inextricably linked to elements of intangible heritage, co-creating the complex cultural landscape. Therefore, attention has been also paid to the fact that activities of a temporal nature (e.g., re-enactment or those aimed at preserving the memory of historical events, figures, or processes) are carried out in heritage spaces². The research study is based on desk research, and presents a literature review in the area of NGO functions, and in an empirical dimension – the existing data (PBO reports, websites and social media). The analysed activities present data from the years 2019 and 2020, while the time framework is extended for the purpose of identifying those activities which are relevant from the perspective of the objective of the analysis. The presented research is exploratory in character, opening the way for further studies based on broader empirical evidence.

¹ e.g. Pawłowska K. Swaryczewska M., *Ochrona dziedzictwa kulturowego. Zarządzanie i partycypacja społeczna*, Wyd. Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, Kraków 2002; Legg S., Reviewing geographies of memory/forgetting, [in:] *Environment and Planning*, 39, 2007, pp. 456–466; Goddard S., Heritage partnerships – Promoting public involvement and understanding, [in:] *Heritage and Beyond*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe 2009, pp. 141–148; Howard P., Historic Landscapes and the Recent Past: Whose History?, [in:] L. Gibson, J. Pendlebury (Eds.), *Valuing Historic Environments*, Farnham – Burlington: Ashgate 2009, pp. 51–66; Meyer-Bisch P., On the “right to heritage” – The innovative approach of Articles 1 and 2 of the Faro Convention, [in:] *Heritage and Beyond*, Strasbourg: Council of Europe 2009, pp. 59–66; Murzyn-Kupisz M., Podmioty na rynku dziedzictwa kulturowego, [in:] *Studia Regionalne i Lokalne*, 3(41)/2010, pp. 61–80; Góral A., Dziedzictwo kulturowe jako zasób wspólny. Rola współpracy między interesariuszami w zarządzaniu dziedzictwem kulturowym, [in:] *Zarządzanie w Kulturze*, 15(3)/2014, pp. 277–286; Purchla J., Dziedzictwo kulturowe a kapitał społeczny, [in:] *Dlaczego i jak w nowoczesny sposób chronić dziedzictwo kulturowe*, Polski Komitet ds. UNESCO, Warszawa 2014, pp. 21–30; Häyrynen M., Cultural Heritage and Participatory Governance, [in:] A.-M. Halme, T. Mustonen, J.-P. Taavitsainen, S. Thomas, A. Weij (Eds.), *Heritage is ours. Citizens Participating in Decision Making*, Europa Nostra Finland 2018, pp. 12–17; Kisić V., Tomka G., Citizen engagement & education, [in:] *Learning kit for heritage civil society organisations*, Europa Nostra, Hague 2018.

² Nora P., Between Memory and History, *Les Lieux de mémoire*, [in:] *Representations*, Spring, 26, University of California Press 1989, pp. 7–24; Hoelscher S., Alderman D.H., Memory and place: geographies of a critical relationship, [in:] *Social & Cultural Geography*, 5(3)/2004, pp. 347–355.

As a result of the analysis of reports prepared by PBOs engaged in public benefit activities related to culture, arts and the protection of cultural goods and national heritage, it was concluded that in 2019, 378 of them (35.5%), and in 2020, 389 such entities (38%) carried out activities related to heritage objects and spaces. It should be noted that merely $\frac{1}{4}$ of PBOs defined the protection of a given object, a group of objects or a specific type of heritage objects as their core activity. More than 40% of PBOs defined their statutory goals as other than related to heritage spaces or objects (indicating such goals as fostering and promoting artistic culture, educational activities, social integration, and health care). A large number of PBOs, as their core activity, indicated a specific area (not an object, a type of objects or a specific space), namely: 1) fostering and promoting regional culture – approx. 20% of PBOs; 2) fostering and promoting local culture – approx. 15%; 3) fostering and promoting Polish or European culture – approx. 3% of entities. Approx. 6% of PBOs were engaged in commemorating a historical figure, group or event, and from this perspective they took interest in heritage objects and spaces. Approx. 4% of entities fostered and promoted the culture of specific religious and ethnic communities or other social groups, and, similarly to the previous category, this issue determined the selection of specific objects and spaces. Almost 4% of PBOs represented scientific and research organizations focused on historical issues, and more than 1% of them were tourist and sightseeing organizations³.

This observation leads to the conclusion that an analysis of the impact of NGOs on heritage objects and spaces should also include other entities than those declaring heritage objects and spaces as their core activity. Moreover, the analysis of reports indicates a diverse character of the impact of specific activities, so only multi-criteria analyses can create a more reliable picture of the impact of NGOs on cultural resources. Therefore, the article aims to identify the impact of NGOs on heritage objects and spaces, giving attention to such issues as the targets of NGO activities, the beneficiaries of such activities (not always indicated as direct targets), and the time-related aspects of impacts.

2. NGO functions

Scientific literatures present a number of examples of delimitating NGO functions. The analysis and systematization of these functions allows for identifying seven types of NGOs by their respective functions (Tab. 1). This is a starting point for describing the impact of NGOs on heritage objects and spaces. It should be noted that NGOs usually perform several functions. Also, in the case of one specific activity, they simultaneously perform various inseparable and interdependent functions. Some of these functions, because of their specificity, are sequential in character. Therefore, it is necessary to analyse NGO activities in a specific time frame. For example, watchdog organizations, following the identification of undesirable activities, take advocacy-based measures, make attempts to make necessary improvements (recommend trends of changes), and raise relevant funding. Another form of a social response to identified dysfunctions in the context of watchdog activities is the delivery of goods and/or provision of

³ Hołuj D., Przejście dziedzictwa jako przedmiot zainteresowania organizacji pożytku publicznego, [in:] *Prace i Studia Geograficzne*, 68(1)/2023, pp. 43–63.

services, and, importantly, NGOs carry out such activities regardless of costs and mainly focus on achieving social goals. In such undertakings, NGOs are more responsive than commercial entities (if such entities deliver similar goods/services) because they operate in local environments, close to the “sources” of problems⁴. It should be noted that NGOs often engage in solving niche problems and those faced by minorities, adjusting their activities to specific groups, areas and resources. NGO activities are tailored to individual problems and needs⁵.

Tab. 1 – NGOs by performed functions

NGO functions/roles	Watchdog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watchdogs protecting values and resources including common values • Monitoring of institutional environment (public authorities, economic entities) and social environment • Measure of validity of the above activities in the context of social expectations, sustainable development requirements, and intergenerational equity
	Advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobbying activities, mediations • Interventions • Whistleblowers • Public articulation of interests and values, often with regard to minorities, marginalised communities, and niche problems. • Promoting ideas
	Production and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public benefit and mutual benefit services • Response to deficiencies of the markets, state and third sector. NGO activities aimed to meet so called shallow demand. • Focus on creating use value (social), and not necessarily exchange value (monetary)
	Initiating social or economic changes in the authorities' activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They eliminate dysfunctions, deficiencies, marginalization, exclusion. • They stimulate public discourse • They stimulate action and development of pro-social attitudes • Promoters of changes aimed to create quality, knowledge and methods of organization • They make us aware of values and ideas (often with regard to cultural minorities). • They initiate the use of endogenous factors in development processes

⁴ Mempel-Śnieżyk A., Organizacje pozarządowe i społeczności lokalne a skuteczne działanie dla rozwoju lokalnego, [in:] *Acta Universitatis Lodzensis. Folia Oeconomica*, 289/2013, pp. 89-103.

⁵ Wygnański J. J., Ekonomizacja organizacji pozarządowych, [in:] J. Hausner (Ed.), *Ekonomia społeczna*. Vol. 1, Kraków: MSAP 2007; Andrzejczak A., Organizacje pozarządowe w rozwiązywaniu lokalnych problemów społecznych, [in:] *Przegląd Organizacji*, 2(961)/2020, pp. 20-26.

NGO functions/roles	Establishing inter- and intra-sectoral relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation in performing tasks (joint implementation, choice based on the complementary character of contributed forms of capital) • Participation in legal procedures (e.g., legislative initiatives, social consultations, or citizen budget, open competitions) • Participation in preparing the wording of regulations and content of decisions made by public authorities, stating a position in specific matters • Creating the ability of inter-sectoral cooperation
	Generating and mobilising capital (social, cultural and financial capital)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrating function (creating communities, enhancing interpersonal relations, which translates to creating a sense of responsibility for a community and its achievements), • Bond-forming, affiliating function (satisfying the need of belonging), expressive function (organizations help in demonstrating private areas, making them socially useful) • Creating conditions for personal development through material, psychological and pedagogical support, caring services, also indirectly through experience, knowledge and skills acquired thanks to participation in NGO activities • Acquisition, use and distribution of capital
	Increasing resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional element of so-called crisis management • They counteract and prevent crises • They mitigate their effects • They restore or maintain the state of equilibrium, help in achieving a new state of equilibrium

Source: Own elaboration based on: Kramer R.M., *Voluntary Agencies in the Welfare State*, University of California Press, Berkley-Los Angeles-London 1981; Handy Ch., *Types of Voluntary Organizations*, [in:] J. Batsleer, C. Comforth, R. Payton (Eds.), *Issues in Voluntary and Non-profit Management*, Addison-Wesley Publishing, Wokingham 1992, pp. 13-19; Lasocik Z., *Kilka uwag a roli organizacji pozarządowych w państwie demokratycznym*, Fundusz Współpracy, Warszawa 1994; Turner M., Hulme D., *Governance, Administration and Development, Making the State Work*, Globe Press, London 1997; Clary E.G., Snyder M., *The Motivations to Volunteer: Theoretical and Practical Considerations*, [in:] *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 8(5)/1999, pp. 156-159; McPhee P., Bare J., Introduction, [in:] C. J. De Vita, C. Fleming (Eds.), *Building Capacity in Nonprofit Organizations*. (1-4), The Urban Institute, Washington DC 2001; Salamon L. M., Sokolowski S. W., List R., *Global Civil Society: An Overview*, The John Hopkins University, Baltimore 2003; Kluver J.D., *Disguising Social Change: The Role of Nonprofit Organizations as Protective Masks for Citizen Participation*, [in:] *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 26(3)/2004, pp. 309-324; Gliński P., *Style działań organizacji pozarządowych w Polsce. Grupy interesu czy pożytku publicznego?*, IFiS PAN, Warszawa 2006; Wygnański J. J., *Ekonomizacja organizacji pozarządowych*, [in:] J. Hausner (Ed.), *Ekonomia społeczna*. Vol. 1, MSAP, Kraków 2007; Kietlińska K., *Rola trzeciego sektora w społeczeństwie obywatelskim*, Difin, Warszawa 2010; Huczek M., *Organizacje pozarządowe wspierające lokalną i regionalną przedsiębiorczość*, [in:] *Państwo i Społeczeństwo*, 2(XI)/2011, pp. 31-57; Piechota G., *Organizacje pożytku publicznego - w drodze do społeczeństwa obywatelskiego?*, Śląska Biblioteka Cyfrowa, Katowice 2011; Skrzypiec R., *Analiza doświadczeń polskich i zagranicznych organizacji strażniczych. Raport*, Stowarzyszenie Inicjatyw Społecznych i Oświatowych „CUMULUS” 2011; Grzełowska U., *Rola sektora nonprofit w polskiej gospodarce*, [in:] *Studia ekonomiczne PAN*, 4(71)/2011, pp. 325-344; Nowakowska A., *Regionalny wymiar procesów innowacji*, Uniwersytet Łódzki, Łódź 2011; Murzyn-Kupisz M., *Podmioty na rynku dziedzictwa kulturowego*, [in:] *Studia Regionalne i Lokalne*, 3(41)/2010, pp. 61-80; Żebrowski A., *Zarządzenie kryzysowe elementem bezpieczeństwa Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej*, Uniwersytet Pedagogiczny w Krakowie, Kraków 2012; Herbst K., *Perspektywy ekonomii społecznej*, [in:] *Ekonomia społeczna*, 1/2013 (6), pp. 9-19; Mempel-Snieżyk A., *Organizacje pozarządowe i społeczności lokalne a skuteczne działanie dla rozwoju lokalnego*, [in:] *Acta*

Universitatis Lodzianensis. Folia Oeconomica, 289/2013, pp. 89-103; Rogaczewska K., *Organizacje pozarządowe w polityce międzynarodowej*, Uniwersytet Wrocławski, Wrocław 2015; Bogacz-Wojtanowska E., Istota i podstawowe zasady funkcjonowania organizacji pozarządowych, [in:] E. Bogacz-Wojtanowska, S. Wrona (Eds.), *Zarządzanie organizacjami pozarządowymi*, Instytut Spraw Publicznych UJ, Kraków 2016, pp. 11-30; Hołuj D., Dziedzictwo kulturowe a idea uczenia się przez całe życie. Wybrane doświadczenia krajów europejskich, [in:] *Zeszyty Naukowe UE w Krakowie*, 2(980)/2019, pp. 25-43; Fabbicatti K., Boissenin L., Citoni M., Heritage Community Resilience: towards new approaches for urban resilience and sustainability, [in:] *City, Territory and Architecture*, 7/2020; Andrzejczak A., Organizacje pozarządowe w rozwiązywaniu lokalnych problemów społecznych, [in:] *Przegląd Organizacji*, 2(961)/2020, pp. 20-26; Baker H., Moncaster A., Remřy H.I., Wilkinson S., Retention not demolition: how heritage thinking can inform carbon reduction, [in:] *Journal of Architectural Conservation*, 27(3)/2021, pp. 176-194; Hołuj D., Przestrzeń dziedzictwa jako przedmiot zainteresowania organizacji pożytku publicznego, [in:] *Prace i Studia Geograficzne*, 68(1)/2023, pp. 43-63.

3. The dimensions of NGO impact on heritage objects and spaces

Considering the information on NGO functions, we analysed their activities giving attention to several additional aspects, including the targets of NGO activities, beneficiaries (not always identified with direct targets), and the time frame of impacts (achievement of responses initiated by NGOs) (Diag. 1).

Diag. 1 – Dimensions of NGO impact

		Dimensions of NGO impact defined:		
		from the perspective of direct targets of NGO activities	depending on the time of impact	from the perspective of other than direct NGO targets
Watchdog	NGO functions/roles →	Heritage objects and spaces The vicinity of heritage objects and spaces Social environment Economic environment Public authorities/ public institutions	Immediate Deferred Potential	Possibility of multiplication of action models Impact on passive observers of activities “Relief” effect in entities engaged in similar activities
Advocacy				
Production and/or services				
Initiating social or economic changes in the authorities’ activities				
Creating inter- and intra-sectoral relations				
Generating and mobilising forms of capital (social, cultural, financial)				
Building resilience				

NGO activities directly related to heritage objects and spaces included operations ranging from current maintenance to investment projects, as well as, more rarely, reconstruction projects. Such activities mainly focused on protecting specific resources, but also contributed to public remembrance. Importantly, a number of NGOs dealt with post-industrial heritage or other niche spaces (e.g., lighthouses – the Association of Friends of the Maritime Museum; post-fortress heritage, e.g., Foundation “Pełnia Życia), the heritage of cultures which do not exist in a given territory (NGOs protecting Polish heritage in Eastern Borderlands). It indicates that such activities concerned abandoned resources, to which new function could hardly be assigned and which required intensified efforts aimed to arouse public interest. Many NGOs were successful in such undertakings, which led to other projects aimed to protect threatened objects. Such projects also encouraged local communities to restore traditional local construction techniques. An example is the Association for Protecting the Heritage of “Paper Mill” in Barlinek, which started its operation at the “mill”, and then engaged in protecting a court and park complex in Niepołcko, explored its neighbouring areas and supported a project aimed to construct wooden facilities using traditional carpentry techniques (e.g., the construction of a bus-stop in Żerdno). Presently, the Association is cooperating with the users of historic mills in Pomorze.

Also, NGOs engaged in other activities such as offering financial support (funds disposed of by the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute in Poland), initiating actions aimed to promote appropriate ways of maintaining a given object (e.g., the Association “Paper Mill” notifies users of wooden objects of necessary preparations for winter seasons, and organizes carpentry workshops under the programme of Old Crafts Workshop). Another form of social protection is the monitoring of the state of heritage and interventions undertaken in the case of possible threats (e.g., the activities carried out by the Association “Wizna 1939” in the context of the planned express road running through the battle field of Byczyna).

Another form of NGO activities is bringing back historical figures and events related to a given heritage object. Initiating placing commemorative plaques and monuments or other marks in public spaces arouses, indirectly, social interest in events, people and spaces themselves. NGOs initiate campaigns for acquiring artifacts and discovering objects which are no longer recognizable in communities. They record their activities and their effects in public spaces (e.g., the Association “Borussia” and its project “The Lost Villages of Puszcza Piska Forest”).

Restoring the memory of people and places can build a sense of belongingness and cultural identity, and change attitudes to national heritage. NGOs’ impact on cultural and historical spaces frequently results in bringing objects and spaces into their every-day use. They become safe and friendly as well as useful not only for those concerned about cultural values.

In the course of identifying NGO activities related to heritage objects and spaces it is important to stress the role of such activities in building the knowledge about a given resource as a result of research studies and collecting artifacts and archives, which are made available to interested parties (free access to on-line materials, e.g., a virtual lapidarium of the architectural details of Warsaw’s district of Praga – Hereditas Foundation). Organizations offer educational programmes for people interested in heritage issues, also trying to arouse interest in this problem among others

(e.g., by organising outdoor exhibitions, putting up information signs at objects, or archived photos (Dolnośląskie Towarzystwo Historyczne/Lower Silesia Historical Society, Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nałęczowa/Society of the Friends of Nałęczów, or the Foundation of “Oikonomos”). Such objects, accidentally encountered by onlookers, extend the knowledge about heritage sites among inhabitants as well as visitors (of tourist destinations), who may not be interested in the history of a given place. NGOs make an attempt to get people interested in such issues, for example by offering free sightseeing tours (e.g., Towarzystwo Miłośników Jastrzębiej Góry/Society of the Fans of Jastrzębia Góra). NGOs also try to target those inhabitants who are not, as yet, acquainted with the history of their residence.

Such initiatives also facilitate inter-cultural dialogue, promote mutual acceptance attitudes and encourage current inhabitants to protect “inherited” objects (e.g., the activities of the Foundation Borussia from Olsztyn through “Lessons of Dialogue”, or the Association for the Development of Krzywa Municipality – Lemko heritage). A number of NGOs engage local communities in creating collections of heritage objects (e.g., T. Karpowicz Foundation for Culture and Education – an initiative to map German epigraphs in Wrocław and Jelenia Góra; a project jointly implemented with inhabitants who shared information on the location of inscriptions and contributed photos from private archives, which demonstrated their original appearance). Also, NGOs build social relations established on the basis of common heritage. They organize events for collectors and fans (e.g., Dobrzyńsko-Kujawskie Cultural Society), and create platforms of cooperation for local communities, aimed to promote heritage (e.g., the Society of the Fans of the City of Bydgoszcz, which organizes School Clubs and the “Young Friend of Bydgoszcz” competition). Such network-based initiatives target various social, age and professional groups.

Educational activities promote those knowledge resources in which organizations take special interest (e.g., the Foundation for Recovering Lost Works of Art “Latebra” educates its students in the legal aspects of this process using metal detectors; the Foundation for “Karta” Centre deals with methods for running social archives; the Association for Developing Krzywa Municipality educated culture animators under a project “Local culture. Ideas and inspirations”).

NGOs organize scientific conferences (e.g., the Foundation for Protecting Silesia’s Industrial Heritage) and carry out activities aimed to implement the concept of edutainment. The delivery of exciting offerings encourages people to participate in history live lessons (e.g., Lębork Association Historical Fraternity organizes night “Walks with the Ghosts of Teutonic Knights”), and help people in getting acquainted with local areas on their own (e.g., W. Lutosławski Society offers an online guide to Lutosławski’s Warsaw).

NGOs carry out activities which may have therapeutic significance – creating self-esteem (e.g., volunteer programmes) and a sense of belongingness, or mitigating the effects of social exclusion. This objective is achieved through targeting specific groups (e.g., the Association Olszówka organizes historical walks for people under care of a special local training and educational centre; the Association for Developing Krzywa Municipality, established to assist the youth inhabitants of post-Communist collective farming areas). Participants also include general public representatives. Organizations support the activities of other entities (e.g., the

Foundation “Oikonomos” cooperates with The University of the Third Age in Gdynia; some NGOs offer grants designed for other social entities).

Offering activities requiring physical effort and developing manual skills (workshops, hiking and cycling tours, walks), NGOs mitigate the adverse effects of excessive exposure to electronic devices and the lack of exercise.

NGO activities also affect promoters and volunteers, who share their resources and support NGO undertakings, achieving their personal goals and a sense of self-realization.

The analysis of NGO impact on the economic environment should give attention to the fact that NGO activities relate to their watchdog- and advocacy-related functions, but they also use cultural heritage in development processes, especially with regard to the diffusion of good practices of the sustainable economization of a given resource. NGOs provide inspiration for developing commercial (mainly tourist) heritage-based products and services, showing respect for historical truth and heritage and related values. Such activities frequently mitigate the effects of liberalization or absence of legal regulations, which could guarantee the achievement of goals (e.g., the Bytom Branch of the Polish Tourist and Sightseeing Society/PTTK O/Bytom organizes courses for tourist guides). NGOs share their knowledge with business entities and initiate various undertakings (e.g., the Foundation for Great Histories/Fundacja na Rzecz Wielkich Historii implemented a project aimed to identify the tourist potential of various locations). Also, NGOs support the education of individuals who will be responsible for future spatial planning projects (e.g., study tours for students of architecture, offered by the Foundation “Poniatówka Polska” and the Association “Paper Mill”).

NGOs arouse interest in and promote restoring old crafts and, indirectly, create demand for new products based on old techniques (also creating demand for local traditional building materials). Many of these activities related to wooden architecture (e.g., projects implemented by the Association “Akademia Łucznicza”, the Association for the Fans of Nowy Dwór Gdański, or the Association Podlasie Heritage). NGOs facilitate exhibiting local works during events or using their own premises (e.g., the Association “Żuławy Gdańskie”, Henrykowskie Association in Siemczyn); they offer their facilities and spaces to implement commercial or artistic projects (e.g., the Foundation “Your Heritage”, Piaseczyńsko-Grójeckie Society of Narrow-Gauge Railways, the Foundation for Protecting Silesia’s Industrial Heritage, the Foundation Artis Causae). Photo and film sessions which take place in heritage-related facilities and spaces allow for a sustainable way of commercialising a given object; they are organized using original interiors and outdoor locations, and heritage objects become popular and easily recognizable for the general public.

NGOs organize their own events at protected objects and spaces, reviving these places through historical reconstructions (e.g., the Association of the Fans of Jan Kasprowicz’s Works at the NGO’s location at Harenda) and events organized in public spaces (e.g., Górnośląski Union organizes Silesian festivities in the Ethnographic Park in Chorzów; the historic Shooting Society “Bractwo Kurkowe” in Krakow selects and crowns its King).

NGOs carry out promotional and marketing activities aimed to disseminate the knowledge about heritage as well as to increase income generated by commercial entities, especially in the tourist market. They participate in tourist fairs (e.g., the Association of Municipalities “Polish Gothic Castles”), run information desks and publish related materials (e.g., Lower Silesia Tourist Organization), or mark out tourist routes (e.g., the Association for Developing Wetlina and Its Surroundings – the route “The Discovered Bieszczady Mountains”).

NGOs, as the guardians and advocates of heritage, urge public authorities to take measures in the case of illegal activities or the deficiency of regulations in force which could prevent them (e.g., the Foundation for Protecting Silesia’s Industrial Heritage prevented the blowing up of the historic Pilchowicki Bridge for the needs of a film; it applied for including Szombierki Power and Heat Generating Plant on the list of the most threatened historic sites, published by *Europa Nostra*). NGOs are engaged in public participatory procedures, offering advisory services.

Public authorities, particularly their local entities, enter into cooperation with NGOs, implementing their own or NGO concepts. Joint projects rely on combining resources offered by partners. NGOs cooperate with monument conservation services and cultural institutions. NGOs have representatives in museum councils, competition boards (revitalization projects), they engage in marking out theme-related routes, prepare promotional materials, and perform tasks commissioned by other entities (e.g., the Association “Łucznicza” developed history- and conservation-related documentation for the landscape park of Łucznicza, commissioned by WKZ and WUOZ/Regional Monument Conservation; the Association for Protecting the Heritage of “Paper Mill” developed architectural records of military facilities (commissioned by GDDKiA/Road Board), gave its opinions on the reconstruction of the warehouse and housing facilities of a historic mill, and conducted an analysis of the state of repair of historic sites (both commissioned by WUOZ/conservation services).

The analysis of NGO impact on heritage objects and spaces leads to the conclusion that it shows different levels of intensity in the course of time. Some effects are immediate, especially with regard to the direct recipients of activities. Other effects are visible after a certain period of time. Some of them occur in the future as a result of the currently created potential. NGO impact can be visible in the future in the case of the multiple use of the same resources (e.g., the results of research, collected artifacts, as well as the acquired knowledge, experience and skills), or a result of the multiplication of action models and the diffusion of knowledge. For example, the participants of carpentry workshops acquire the knowledge that can be used in their own projects, they may share that knowledge, and as a result of their future undertakings, arouse the interest of others in traditional techniques. Also, NGO long-term impact results from changes which, as a rule, occur in longer periods of time (e.g., creating a sense of cultural identity). This impact, sometimes hardly visible, can be enhanced by many singular NGO actions whose combined effect leads to future changes in attitudes and people’s approach to the past and present, and their individual and collective identity.

NGO activities also affect their passive observers. It reflects NGOs' inspiring function, and organizations themselves may not be aware of this impact. Similarly, it is hardly possible to measure the actual effects in the form of commercial entities' increased income, local governments' budgets resulting from direct activities, or an entity's improved image. These are the positive external effects of organizations' activities. Those hardly measurable effects include building platforms for inter-sectoral cooperation or implementing solutions which are beneficial for other entities. NGOs themselves make an effective use of their environment's potential to "strengthen communicated messages" and achieved results (e.g., Jerzy Waldorff Capital City's Committee for Protecting Stare Powązki /a cemetery/ engages actors, politicians, other celebrities and institutions in fundraising events – e.g., "Mazowsze" Ensemble). The performance of similar tasks by NGOs and public entities increases the scope and availability of services for the general public. NGO activities assist public authorities in performing their own tasks.

The long-lasting character of NGO activities allows for implementing sustainable development principles. Such activities create the value added of heritage that can be used in the future. Future activities which have a direct and prospective impact on heritage and its beneficiaries include undertakings aimed to increase the resilience of resources – maintenance-related activities and readiness to face potential future crises (e.g., collection of documentation and installation of systems for counteracting destructive effects – both natural and anthropogenic factors). Resilience is also based on the recovery of social heritage – creating the need for heritage protection allows for the current maintenance of resources and increases a chance for their survival during possible future crises.

Concluding remarks

The easiest task was to identify the dimensions of the impact of NGO activities on their direct targets. The other two dimensions, in many cases, relate to possible future effects which may occur depending on the activities of entities not monitored by NGOs. NGOs may not be even aware of the fact that they become a source of inspiration for others.

It should be noted that the dimensions of impact overlap each other – various factors influence the economy and society, the authorities and the owners of objects, leading to immediate or future possible outcomes. The research of this impact is difficult, which is stressed by a number of authors⁶.

⁶ e.g. Dudkiewicz M., W sprawie profesjonalizmu organizacji pozarządowych, [in:] P. Gliński, B. Lewenstein, A. Siciński (Eds.), *Samoorganizacja społeczeństwa polskiego: trzeci sektor*, IFiS PAN, Warszawa 2002, pp. 281-283; Juraszek-Kopacz B., Tyrowicz J., Zmierzyć niemierzalne, czyli o pomiarze oddziaływania społecznego, [in:] *Poradnik dla organizacji pozarządowych i przedsiębiorstw społecznych*, Stowarzyszenie Klon/Jawor, Warszawa 2008; Głowacki J., Wartość w ekonomii społecznej, [in:] *Ekonomia Społeczna*, 2/2015, pp. 60–68; Andrzejczak A., Organizacje pozarządowe w rozwiązywaniu lokalnych problemów społecznych, [in:] *Przegląd Organizacji*, 2(961)/2020, pp. 20-26.

The presented analysis has its limitations resulting from considerable differences between PBO reports in terms of the levels of data detail. Many reports focus on the target of activity, and as mentioned at the beginning of this article, the overwhelming majority of the analysed NGOs do not indicate heritage objects and spaces as the main goal of their activities.

Another difficulty results from general, statistical (quantitative) and limited in time measurements of the results of NGO activities. Some activities, because of their specificity, can be measured only by numerical data and their geographical aspects (on-line activities – www hits, recipients' declared origin – country/town). These observations indicate the need for conducting another analysis based on case studies and qualitative information obtained from NGO members as well as the participants of NGO activities. This approach will allow for drawing additional conclusions related to the intangible effects of NGO activities.

The paper outlines a number of positive dimensions of NGO interactions in heritage spaces. NGOs are not only a necessary, but even essential, player in the struggle for the preservation of cultural heritage. On the other hand, however, it must be recognized that the creation of a social system of heritage protection in Poland is an unfinished process, and that there are sometimes problems in the interactions between social organizations and conservation services. Cases of unintentional harmful actions of NGOs towards the heritage resources were also identified, which is mainly due to lack of sufficient historical, conservation or legal knowledge. Given the growing public interest in heritage, conflicts within the community also become inevitable, due to the emergence of different visions of care or courses of action towards a particular resource, etc. At least several conditions, quite different in their nature and causes, affect the quality of social care of monuments in Poland. These determinants should become the subject of in-depth studies in the future, the results of which are expected to have an impact on increasing the effectiveness of social care and the sustainability of the results achieved.

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