



## CULTURAL DIPLOMACY OF SELECTED COUNTRIES IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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### Abstract

The objective of the present paper is to analyse and compare activities and actors of cultural diplomacy of Slovakia, Austria, China and the US. Since cultural diplomacy is a rather complex phenomenon, we predominantly focus on the targets and activities conducted by official cultural institutes. Besides, we look at the countries' participation in international organisations pursuing common cultural policy. The research is supported by both domestic and foreign scientific sources and official websites of ministries, cultural institutes, statistical offices and similar. The outcome of the research are recommendations for improvement of cultural diplomacy practices of the selected countries. We conclude that the numbers of official entities responsible for cultural diplomacies of respective countries differ considerably. However, their agendas are similar.

### Key words

Cultural diplomacy, cultural institutes, comparison, Austria, Slovakia, USA, China

## INTRODUCTION

Throughout the centuries, the basic concept of diplomacy has evolved into various subfields, depending on the articulated objectives. Both in theory and praxis we distinguish economic diplomacy, sport diplomacy, public diplomacy, environmental diplomacy and other specific kinds. One of the dimensions of diplomacy is cultural diplomacy. According to Pajtinka (2015b), cultural diplomacy, political diplomacy, economic diplomacy and military diplomacy are the basic components of the overall concept. Furthermore, the individual dimensions frequently overlap.

In this paper we firstly focus on the notion of cultural diplomacy, its definitions and relation to other dimensions of diplomacy and related phenomena. Next, we describe activities, aims and main actors of cultural diplomacy of selected European as well as non-European states, namely Slovakia, Austria, China and the US. The selection of the countries was made upon the authors' research interest. There are likely to be differences mainly between cultural diplomacy of China in relation to the other countries, because of distinct political regime. Besides, two

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of the states belong to countries with a relatively small population and area; two other states are among the most populated and the largest countries in the world. Hence, we can suppose, there may be considerable differences for example with regards to the number of cultural institutes.

Scientific literature provides numerous contributions on the topic of cultural diplomacy, studying the concept from diverse points of view. The element of comparison is present for example in the work of Udovič and Podgornik (2016), who analyse cultural diplomacy in Slavic member states of the European Union. Pajtinka (2015a) has contributed to the debate on institutional and organizational models of cultural diplomacy of Austria, Slovakia, Germany and France.

It is fairly difficult to define the concept of cultural diplomacy, as it is in constant development. Cultural diplomacy is frequently considered to be a part of public diplomacy (Rusiňák et al. 2012), which may be due to their orientation on the broad public (Mattoš, 2013). In both cases (as well as when applying the instruments of so-called *soft power*), a state communicates externally (Pánek Jurková, 2018). Apart from public diplomacy and soft power, cultural diplomacy may demonstrate similar characteristics as nation branding. The difference is that nation branding utilizes marketing methods, whilst cultural diplomacy focuses on cultural products (Pánek Jurková, 2018). However, both nation branding and public diplomacy have a common goal and that is place promotion (Matlovicova, Husarova 2017; Matlovicova, Tiraáková, Mocak 2019). As Kim (2017) points out, there is no single definition of cultural diplomacy; the meaning varies based on the context. For the purpose of our research, the definition of the Institute for Cultural Diplomacy (ICD) seems to be appropriate. The ICD defines cultural diplomacy "as a course of actions, which are based on and utilize the exchange of ideas, values, traditions and other aspects of culture or identity, whether to strengthen relationships, enhance socio-cultural cooperation, promote national interests and beyond (Pachura 2018); Cultural diplomacy can be practiced by either the public sector, private sector or civil society." According to the definition, cultural diplomacy may be targeted at diverse objectives and conducted by public entities or individuals. A comprehensive grasp of the concept of cultural diplomacy requires a deeper understanding of its various aspects (Matlovic, Matlovicova 2012, 34). Kurucz (2007) in this respect claims that cultural diplomacy is engaged in an international exchange of information, ideas and cultural values, with fine arts, science, sport and education playing the most significant role.

In order to achieve its objectives, cultural diplomacy applies culture and arts as its means of communication. Besides, the activities are often accommodated to specific needs of a location (Pánek Jurková, 2018). As already emphasised, there is a variety of actors of cultural diplomacy, but activities of cultural diplomacy are most often conducted by diplomatic missions or cultural institutes, whereby cultural institutes may have either diplomatic or non-diplomatic status (Pajtinka,



2015a). Nevertheless, any individual presenting their culture to representatives of another national culture can be considered an indirect actor of cultural diplomacy, even without being aware of doing so (Čiefová, 2018). In any case, in the promotion of national culture, through the disproportionately massive development of tourism, it is necessary to set up a “cautionary platform” that sets certain limits. These should prevent disturbance or undesirable social changes, modification or even the decline of traditional cultures (Matlovicova, Kolesarova, Matlovic 2016.).

## OBJECTIVES, DATA AND METHODS

The main objective of the research is to comparatively analyse activities and institutional structure of cultural diplomacy of four states, namely the Republic of Austria, the Slovak Republic, the United States of America, and the People’s Republic of China. When doing so, we refer to domestic as well as foreign scientific literature sources, and to official websites of ministries, cultural bodies, and statistical offices of the countries in question. The methods used within the paper include qualitative research methods, such as (comparative) analysis, synthesis, description, and discourse analysis. When comparing the numbers of cultural institutes in the respective countries, we calculate them as numbers of cultural institutes per 1 million inhabitants, to make the comparison feasible (as seen by Udovič and Podgornik, 2016). The description of cultural diplomacy of individual states is followed by a comparative analysis resulting in articulation of the countries’ strengths and weaknesses regarding their cultural diplomacy. The research results are suggestions for improvements and optimisation of cultural diplomacy of the analysed countries.

## CULTURAL DIPLOMACY OF AUSTRIA

Austria is well-known for its cultural products all around the globe. Classical music and composers, literature, and architecture are just few elements of Austrian culture attracting people from other countries. An inherent part of Austrian culture is the language.

Cultural diplomacy of Austria is thoroughly discussed by Mattoš (2013), who points out the phenomenon of Austrian neutrality as a significant element of its foreign policy, as well as enormous potential of Austria’s cultural diplomacy with regards to its rich historical experience. Maurer’s research (2016) revealed that Austrian diplomacy as such had been rather adapting to European and global tendencies, instead of actively pursuing change. She also points out the issue of budget cuts in relation to diplomatic activities.

Austrian institutional system of cultural diplomacy is rather developed. The country’s cultural policy is in responsibility of the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs (*Bundesministerium für Europa, Integration und Äußeres*



- BMEIA). Currently, there are 30 Austrian Cultural Fora in 28 countries, that focus on specific needs of a location. From the geographical point of view, most of Austrian Cultural Fora are located in Europe (Belgrade, Berlin, Bern, Bratislava, Brussels, Bucharest, Budapest, Istanbul, Kiev, Ljubljana, London, Madrid, Milan, Moscow, Paris, Prague, Rome, Sarajevo, Warsaw, Zagreb); five in Asia (New Delhi, Peking, Teheran, Tel Aviv, Tokyo); four in Central and Northern America (Mexico, New York, Ottawa and Washington); and one on African continent (Cairo). According to the available data, the Fora cover approximately 6,000 cultural and scientific projects every year. The objective is to build and sustain "*cultural bridges in the world*" (BMEIA, 2019d).

Apart from Austrian Cultural Fora, a network of Austria Libraries has been established. The Austria Libraries are aimed at providing information about Austrian culture and science, and thus both by means of books lending, and event organising. At the moment, there are 65 libraries in 28 countries, which operate in collaboration with institutions (mainly universities or libraries) in host countries. Both sides of the partnership have several responsibilities. The host countries provide necessary infrastructure and human resources; Austria, in concrete BMEIA, oversees providing books, budget for books purchases, and similar tasks. The libraries locations are usually those with no Austrian representation (BMEIA, 2019b). In some cases, there are more libraries in a country. For instance, there are three Austria Libraries in Bulgaria, four in Croatia (including Zagreb), six in Poland (including Warsaw), and even eight in the Czech Republic (but none in Prague). As for the countries studied within this paper, there are currently two Austria Libraries in Slovakia, namely in Bratislava and Košice; however, there is no such establishment in China and the US. All Austria Libraries have been set up either in Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus area or the Balkans. The overall list of the countries with Austria Libraries is as follows: Albany, Armenian, Azerbaijan, Belorussia, Bosnian and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, North Macedonia, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Rumania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Turkey, Ukraine (Österreich-Bibliotheken, 2019).

Next, an important actor of Austrian cultural diplomacy is the network of Austria Institutes (*Österreich Institut GmbH*), engaged in providing German language courses abroad. All of them are located in Europe, specifically in the following cities: Belgrade, Bratislava, Brno, Budapest, Krakow, Moscow, Rome, Sarajevo, Warsaw and Wroclaw. The company is almost exclusively financed from its own financial means. Moreover, seven Austrian schools in non-German speaking countries have been established so far. The Austrian schools are, in contrast to Austria Institutes, located not only in European countries (two in Hungary, Czech Republic, Albany, Turkey), but also in Central America (in Mexico and Guatemala). Of course, Austrian language lecturers can be found in countries all around the globe. Besides, study mobilities are nowadays a trend (BMEIA, 2019c). We believe, Austria may indirectly profit also from



activities of Germany, Goethe Institute and similar German entities, that support and ensure spread of German language knowledge in the world, although there are some differences between Austrian and German language variety.

In the sphere of cultural diplomacy, Austria cooperates with the members of several international organizations, such as Platform Culture Central Europe, which connects six countries - Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia. Platform Culture Central Europe contemporarily focuses its activities mainly on non-EU countries (MZVaEZ SR, 2019). Important is also Austria's membership in the European Union, Council of Europe, UNESCO and EUNIC (European Union National Institutes for Culture) (BMEIA, 2019a).

### **CULTURAL DIPLOMACY OF SLOVAKIA**

Slovakia, compared to China, the US and Austria, is the smallest country in terms of its size as well as population. However, Slovakia is culturally recognized thanks to traditional dance (folklore), clothing (folk costume), folk music and important athletes, thanks to which Slovakia is a well-known country all over the world. (also in Ilies, Wendt, Ilies, et al. 2016). Many Slovak and foreign authors have discussed the topic of Slovak cultural diplomacy in their publications. Erik Pajtinka accentuates that Slovakia cannot be compared with the US in the field of cultural diplomacy, because the US is a superpower. But he also adds that not only the amount of money spent affects the power of cultural diplomacy, but also the attitude of the state to the importance of cultural diplomacy (Pajtinka, 2015a).

Slovak cultural diplomacy is influenced by two ministries: the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic and the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic. The institutional basis of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (MFaEA SR) consists of the Slovak Institutes (SI) which are responsible for the presentation and dissemination of Slovak culture abroad. Their network has been systematically built since 1993. Each Slovak Institute is currently established by the MFaEA SR. Activities in the field of cultural diplomacy fall under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic. In accordance with the legislation of the Slovak Republic, the institutes are budget units of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic, while the costs of individual institutions differ according to local conditions (MZVaEZ SR, 2011).

The first institute was established in 1994 in Vienna, followed by Warsaw in 1995, Prague in 1996, Berlin in 1997, Moscow in 1998, Rome in 2000. The last Slovak institute established by the MFaEA in 2001 was the Slovak Institute in Paris. In the present, eight Slovak institutes operate (MZVaEZ SR, 2019c). As we can see, seven institutes are in Europe and only one is in Russia. None is in America, Asia or Africa.

SIs operate abroad with the Embassy of the Slovak Republic and are an effective instrument of Slovak foreign policy. In addition to dominant cultural activities,



they also mediate information, documentation and promotion activities, thanks to which they help to create favourable conditions not only for mutual political contacts, but also for cooperation in other areas (see also Ilies, Hurley, Ilies, et al. 2017). The role of SI abroad is not only to introduce Slovakia and Slovak culture, but also to disseminate objective information and knowledge about Slovakia and, in the interest of the Slovak economic policy, to inform about business, investment and tourism opportunities. Their activities ensure and realize the presentation of Slovak art and the cultural dimension of diplomacy in practice. Slovak institutes present the best and most up-to-date of Slovak culture to a foreign audience - genre-diverse events such as exhibitions, concerts, discussions, films, presentations of new books and more (MZVaEZ SR, 2019c). SI's general mission is to develop and support Slovak culture and language abroad and to improve international contacts. It is important to note that in countries where Slovakia does not have a cultural representation in the form of the Slovak Institute, the Embassy of the Slovak Republic takes on this role (Pajtinka, 2015a).

Slovakia also uses various ways and means to spread its culture abroad, such as Pro Libris and Portal of culture Slovakiana. Pro Libris is a joint program of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, Slovnaft and the Central European Foundation and it supports the publications of young Slovak artists and their translation. The aim of the program was to support the development of Slovak literature and increase the availability of translations of contemporary European works (Slovnaft, 2013). Slovakiana is a portal and is a part of the European cultural portals network headed by the cultural portal Europeana. The main aim is to digitize Slovak cultural heritage available for the professional and non-professional public (Slovakiana, 2018).

Slovakia, same as Austria, cooperates within multilateral cultural groupings (V4, EUNIC - European Union National Institutes for Culture, ASEE - Asia-Europe, PCCE - Platform Culture Central Europe, Eastern Partnership Platform etc.) (MZVaEZ SR, 2019b). Participation in the UNESCO's World Heritage List is also an important aspect of Slovak cultural diplomacy. The UNESCO list contains 21 various cultural monuments and natural rarities of Slovakia, which include caves, castles, hills, but also the historical centre of the towns of Banská Štiavnica and Bardejov (UNESCO, 2019b).

## **CULTURAL DIPLOMACY OF THE USA**

American cultural diplomacy, and the whole culture in general, is based more on the prevailing private sector support and limited government coordination. The importance of the private sector in US cultural diplomacy is seen particularly in strong position of Hollywood movie industry as a giant in the world, also in the commercial industry, and of course in creative industry. US cultural diplomacy can be also characterized by volatility in terms of intensity of interest and activities, as



well as a short-term horizon of cultural diplomacy that adapts to the current US foreign policy objectives. Also due to these aspects, cultural diplomacy of the US is widespread as a topic debated by many authors.

In the international relations, the United States of America is classified as a large state, which is characterized by a more active foreign policy than in the medium-sized and small states (Druláková, 2008). Druláková advises the economic development of the United States among the factors that make the US more active in cultural diplomacy. Another factor according to Druláková is the geographical location that is associated with the availability of natural resources. The intensity of the active approach of foreign policy is also influenced by national identity and values, which put the nation at the forefront. In the United States, patriotism, belief in hard work and success also contribute to an active approach to foreign policy (Druláková, 2008).

Nakamura and Weed argue that in US cultural diplomacy, the emphasis is on educating the foreign public and providing information about the United States. They also argue that US public diplomacy is characterized by an effort to eliminate negative and stereotyped impressions about American citizens, their attitudes and beliefs, by considering the interests of the foreign public (Nakamura and Weed, 2009).

To the actors of US cultural diplomacy belong individual public diplomacy offices whose roles are divided according to the specific areas of interest. Among the actors of US public diplomacy, we consider the authorities such as Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and Bureau of International and Information Programs (IIP). Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) aims to increase mutual understanding between the US and foreign citizens through educational academic, sports, professional and cultural exchanges in order to develop peaceful relations (ECA, 2019). Bureau of International and Information Programs (IIP) provides information about US foreign policy and about related US foreign policy topics through videos, printed publications, and audio books that reach up to a billion people a year (USACOPD, 2018). IIP supports both physical and virtual places, which can be defined as actors of public diplomacy abroad. The IIP comprises a total of 547 American spaces, including American Centers and American corners around the world. The IIP also manages the content of embassies, and consulates (USACOPD, 2018).

Other actors are NGOs, independent media, think-tanks, American Spaces (American Centers, American Corners) and, last but not least, embassies. American spaces, as places to learn about US culture and the values of American society, use tools such as teaching English, organizing in-house meetings with experts and speakers, or organizing exhibitions.

As a part of cultural diplomacy of the US, different forms of American spaces exist. The best known are the American Centers, which serve as cultural institutes,





have a library and are focused on providing books, films and organizing lectures and other events. Total amount of the American Center is 105 worldwide (USACOPD, 2018). Although the American Centers operate essentially independently, they are headed by an US diplomat who also holds the role of cultural attaché (U.S DEPARTMENT OF STATE, 2019). This gives the embassy an overview of what is happening at the American Center. The American Centers may possibly cooperate with the US Embassy. For example, American Centers will provide their land for events dedicated to the public organized by the US embassy. American Centers aimed at the general public, should not be in the vicinity of the US embassy or consulate. The American Centers' activities include providing information, organizing lectures, exhibitions, or organizing other events in collaboration with local experts or think-tanks and other non-profit organizations (Fialho, 2013).

The American Corners tend to focus on youth who should be given access to literature and internet databases. Access to quality and prestigious publications is one of the main aims of American corners. The American corners are mostly placed in colleges, grammar schools and libraries outside the capital of the recipient country. In order to establish the American Corner, the Department of Public Diplomacy or Cultural Affairs of the Embassy must agree with an institution that would be willing to implement the American Corner on its soil. Total amount of American Corners is 442 worldwide (USACOPD, 2018). The very first physical space, which served for mutual interaction and learning about different cultures and their values was established in 1927 in Argentina (Fialho, 2013). Today, American spaces are located in 169 countries and their total number is over 500 (USACOPD, 2018). Whether the American Corner or rather the American Center is based, it depends not only on the goals and strategy of US public diplomacy in a particular country, but also on the strength of the US Embassy in the country and the importance of the US in bilateral relations. In countries where the US is an important trading partner, there are often American Centers, along with American Corners also outside of the capital (Fialho, 2013).

Another of the main instruments of the US cultural diplomacy is the offer of educational or professional stays in the USA for various periods of time. Stays are aimed at learning about American lifestyle, culture and daily life, creating an environment of mutual understanding. The result of this effort is to draw on long-term relationships, cooperation and understanding differences (Nakamura a Weed, 2009). Teaching the language by US experts and its accessibility to the foreign public is for many countries an important tool of public diplomacy. However, this instrument is not of high importance in US public diplomacy. In comparison with other countries, whose tool is also mother tongue teaching in the host countries, the US is lagging behind (ECAEP, 2019). While the availability of English language teaching by US experts is increasing, demand for it is higher.





## CULTURAL DIPLOMACY OF CHINA

It is obvious that China as the world's most populated country, one of the largest countries by area, and one of the strongest economies needs to strategically present itself to the outside world. As Slobodníková (2014) points out, the country's economic success can be ascribed to its labour and language, what she calls "geocultural factors."

Chinese cultural diplomacy (as well as public diplomacy and soft power) has been receiving extensive coverage in scientific literature. Some works focus on the aspect of space, i.e. the target country (e.g. Hartig, 2012, discussing the case of Confucius Institutes in Australia); other works attempt to synthesise the issue of cultural diplomacy (or soft power) and economic or political aspects such as the Silk Road (e.g. Winter, 2016; Ondriaš, 2018), and international insertion of China (Becard and Filho, 2019); some works focus on public diplomacy, while at the same time taking into consideration cultural aspects (Meričková, 2013). We can say that research on Chinese cultural diplomacy is no new phenomenon, as some works are already several decades old (e.g. Ratliff, 1969, oriented on China's cultural diplomacy in Latin America). In our Central European area, a relevant monography was published by Klimeš et al. (2018), representing a detailed contribution on Chinese cultural diplomacy with regards to different regions in the world.

Contemporary foreign policy of China is influenced by the principles of Confucianism, with multilateral diplomacy being one of its pillars (Cibuľa, 2018). The research of Ondriaš (2018) shows that China's soft power and hard economic power are closely linked. The author concludes, improvement of China's image could be beneficial in the CEE region for economic purposes, as there may be cultural barriers in doing business due to not being familiarised with the cultural aspects of the country. Because of the aforementioned linkage between soft power and hard economic power, we can suppose, there is also a connection between cultural diplomacy and hard economic power, as the terms soft power and cultural diplomacy are sometimes considered synonymous.

Cultural diplomacy in China is coordinated and implemented by several actors, namely the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education, and the Communist Party (Lihua et al, 2015). The official entity presenting Chinese language, culture and values abroad is Confucius Institute. Hartig (2012) looks at Confucius Institute as a kind of engagement of strategic stakeholders. He argues "this collaborative tool of cultural diplomacy depends heavily on the commitment of its local stakeholders." Su-Yan Pan (2013) understands Confucius Institute as a sort of cultural diplomacy sponsored by the state and piloted by universities. Starr (2009) concludes that the reason behind establishing such an entity lies in Chinese national pride, meaning the people "want to see China's contribution to world culture better recognised."



Confucius Institute is a non-profit public organization affiliated with China's Ministry of Education (Dig Mandarin, 2019). The Institute's objective is not only reinforcement of Chinese language and culture education all around the world; it also serves as a platform for cultural exchanges and an advocate of cooperation and friendship between China and other countries. Next to the Institute branches, Confucius Classrooms exist. Both the Institute offices and Classrooms tend to adapt to the needs of a respective location. As it is stated on the Institute's website, Spanish, British, German, and French successful experience served as a model for these activities (HANBAN, 2014a). The tasks of Confucius Institute can be summarized as follows: offer programmes for Chinese teaching; offer training programmes for Chinese teachers; organize tests and qualifications; inform about Chinese culture, economy, and education; develop study programmes about China (HANBAN, 2014b).

Concrete numbers of the Institute's locations are following: 126 in Asia, 59 in Africa, 150 in America, 184 in Europe, and 20 in Oceania. Thus, there are 539 Confucius Institutes worldwide. With regards to the states analysed within the present paper, there are both Confucius Institutes and Classrooms in all of them. In the US itself, there are over 100 Confucius Institute branches and Classrooms (HANBAN, 2014a). The work of the Institute is, however, often criticised (also in the US), as discussed by Becard and Filho (2019) in detail. Usually, a library has been set up next to the Institute, like for example in Bratislava (Konfuciov inštitút, 2019). Regarding the number of the Confucius Institute branches a short remark is to be made. The expansion of the Institute is rather rapid, as also our studies have proved. It is probable the numbers stated here will not be valid for a very long time, let us therefore consider them approximate. In accordance with the Constitution and By-Laws of the Confucius Institutes, "Any corporate entity outside of China capable of facilitating language instruction, conducting educational and cultural exchange activities, and meeting the requirements for application as stated in this Constitution and By-Laws may apply to the Confucius Institute Headquarters for the permission to establish a Confucius Institute" (HANBAN, 2014c). It is therefore likely there will soon be new Institute branches, as Chinese language knowledge is becoming a highly valuable asset.

Although not as spread as Confucius Institute, but also relevant for our research is China Cultural Center. The Center's functions and objectives are organizing various cultural events, such as performances, festivals and exhibitions; teaching and training (Chinese language, culture, but also sports); and providing information about China. The events are meant to strengthen bilateral relationships of the countries (CCC, 2015). The Center is to be found worldwide, however the most of them are located in Asia and Europe. So far, 34 branches have been established by the Chinese government, which are as follows: Belarus (Minsk), Belgium (Brussels), Bulgaria (Sofia), Denmark (Copenhagen), Germany (Berlin), Greece (Athens), France



(Paris), the Netherlands (the Hague), Malta, Russia (Moscow), Spain (Madrid), Sweden (Stockholm); Cambodia (Phnom Penh), Israel (Tel Aviv), Japan (Tokyo), Laos (Vientiane), Mongolia (Ulan Bator), Myanmar (Yangon), Nepal, Pakistan (Islamabad), Singapore, South Korea (Seoul), Sri Lanka, Thailand (Bangkok), Vietnam (Hanoi); Benin (Cotonou City), Egypt (Cairo), Mauritius, Nigeria, Tanzania; Australia (Sydney), Fiji, New Zealand (Wellington); Mexico (CCC, 2018).

China is a member (or an observer) of many international organizations, but these are mostly of economic nature, hence it is difficult to assess China's multi-lateral cultural policy. We conclude, China's cultural diplomacy is only sporadically conducted within international platforms.

According to Meričková (2013), we can expect an increasing tendency in co-operation of European countries and the United States in the sphere of public diplomacy (we believe this can apply to cultural diplomacy as well). The reason is that China is intensively working on its soft power, thus gaining influence, so the countries may try to balance it.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our analysis pointed out several similarities and discrepancies among cultural diplomacy of the countries included into the comparison. Regarding the actors of cultural diplomacy, it is to note that we focused solely on the most significant actors of, as their number is not exhaustive.

First of all, there are significant differences in terms of numbers of official cultural institutes, and, probably also in terms of their influence and power. Due to the fact that two out of four countries compared within this paper are small countries, both in terms of their population and area, and the other two states belong to the largest and most populated states in the world, we operate not only with actual numbers of their establishments responsible for cultural diplomacy. Moreover, we calculate these number per 1 million inhabitants to make the data comparable. It needs to be emphasised again that only official cultural institutes are considered when calculating, not other actors (see line *Official name of cultural institute* in the Table 1 below). Based on our calculations we can conclude that absolute numbers of official cultural institutes and subsequent calculations differ in the ranking. In absolute numbers, China has the highest number of cultural institutes, followed by the US, Austrian, and eventually Slovakia. However, calculations per 1 million inhabitants alter the ranking, resulting in Austria being on the 1<sup>st</sup> place, followed by Slovakia, China and the US. Besides official cultural institutes or centres, there are usually other similar entities in most of the analysed countries.

In all four countries, cultural diplomacy is at least partially regulated by particular ministries or other entities. Certain differences can be observed in the sphere or multilateral cultural policy. In case of Slovakia and Austria, cultural diplomacy



is partially conducted within international organisations, such as the European Union, or the Platform Culture Central Europe. We suppose, this fact may be conditioned by their smaller size, as well as by historical connections. China is a member of the UNESCO; the US usually carries out cultural diplomacy without involvement in international bodies.

**Table 1** Cultural diplomacy of the selected states

Country	Austria	Slovakia	USA	China
<i>Official name of the cultural institute</i>	Austrian Cultural Forum	Slovak institute	American Center	Confucius Institute
<i>Number of cultural institutes</i>	30	8	105	539
<i>Number of countries with a cultural institute</i>	28	8	Unspecified	109
<i>Status of the cultural institute</i>	Diplomatic	Diplomatic	Diplomatic	(Semi-) Diplomatic
<i>Name of the actor No. 2</i>	Austria Institute	Not applicable	American Corner	Confucius Classroom
<i>Number of the actors No. 2</i>	10	Not applicable	422	More than 1,000
<i>Number of countries with the actor No. 2</i>	9	Not applicable	More than 169	Unspecified
<i>Name of the actor No. 3</i>	Austria Libraries	Not applicable	Not applicable	China Cultural Center
<i>Number of the actors No. 3</i>	65	Not applicable	Not applicable	34
<i>Number of countries with the actor No. 3</i>	28	Not applicable	Not applicable	34
<i>Department / entity responsible for cultural diplomacy</i>	Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs	Ministry of foreign affairs and European affairs; Ministry of Culture	Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA); Bureau of International and Information Programs (IIP)	Ministry of Education; Ministry of Culture; Communist Party
<i>Number of inhabitants in millions (rounded)</i>	8.81	5.44	329.66	1,433.67
<i>Number of cultural institutes per 1 million inhabitants (rounded)</i>	3.41	1.47	0.32	0,38
<i>Multilateral cultural policy</i>	Yes	Yes	Not applicable	Partially
<i>Multilateral cultural policy institutions</i>	Platform Culture Central Europe, European Union, Council of Europe, EUNIC, UNESCO	Platform Culture Central Europe, European Union, Council of Europe, EUNIC, UNESCO	Not applicable	UNESCO

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on a variety of sources



## CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this contribution was to analyse cultural diplomacy of selected countries, namely Austria, Slovakia, the US and China. The performed comparative analysis enabled articulation of strengths and weaknesses of the countries' cultural diplomacy.

Austria is well-known for its cultural heritage all around the world. Despite its being a rather small country, various activities of cultural presentation are carried out by Austrian Cultural Fora and Austria Institutes. Apart from that, a network of libraries is a valuable asset. A strength is also the geographical dispersion of these establishments, except for the libraries. In our opinion, Austria can indirectly benefit also from language courses provided by German Goethe Institute, although Austrian and German cultures are not the same.

A sort of weakness of Slovak cultural diplomacy is the low number of cultural institutes (8) and their concentration in Europe and Russia. A certain diversification in terms of geographical locations could be beneficial. On the other hand, our calculations demonstrated a relatively positive results in relation to China and the US in terms of number of cultural institutes per 1 million inhabitants. However, we believe cultural institutes are not the sole factor of cultural representation. For instance, Slovakia could benefit from international exchanges of students and academics, mainly with the direction to the country. Another solution could be an increased involvement in international projects, for instance those research-related.

Cultural diplomacy of the US is influenced by the private sector that is an important factor concerning also the US soft power, and thus despite the existence of official cultural institutes, like the American Centers and American Corners. Companies and internationally established brands such as Coca Cola or McDonald's, or Hollywood movies significantly portray and spread American culture abroad. This can be considered an advantage in contrast to countries which lack such widespread establishments. The US tends to rely on its own cultural organisations when promoting its culture abroad, which can be caused by its being a so called "melting pot."

China's cultural diplomacy can be characterised by its rapid expansion. The country has managed to create an impressively broad network of cultural institutes and classrooms in more than 100 countries all around the globe. On the other hand, cultural diplomacy of China needs to face criticism every now and then, presumably due to the engagement of the Communist Party.

As far as concrete activities of institutes responsible for performance of cultural diplomacy in the analysed countries are concerned, these are similar, and include language courses, lectures, exhibitions, and so forth.

To conclude, diplomacy and its dimensions are influenced by dynamics of the global geo-political developments. Therefore, debate of these phenomena is



justified, and constant involvement of both academics and policy-makers recommended.

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