

# Legal Principles of Interaction between Local Self-Government Bodies and the National Police in the Field of Protecting Cultural Heritage in Terms of Martial Law\*

Principios jurídicos de la interacción entre los órganos de autogobierno local y la Policía Nacional en el ámbito de la protección del patrimonio cultural en condiciones de ley marcial

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## Abstract

The authors of the article have studied the legal principles in the interaction between local self-government bodies

and the National Police in the field of cultural heritage protection, in terms of martial law in Ukraine. The authors have analysed the current legislation regulating the powers of the relevant entities in the field of cultural heritage and objects' preservation, including the Ukrainian laws on the protection of cultural heritage, on the National Police, as well as the relevant by-laws. Practical problems related to the fragmentation and vagueness of normative regulation, in particular the lack of special provisions on involving the police in security measures in emergency situations, have been outlined. The feasibility of amending the relevant laws has been substantiated, particularly by supplementing the law on the protection of cultural heritage with a norm on legal grounds and mechanisms of interacting with the police. Particular attention has been paid to perspectives for harmonizing the national legislation with international legal acts, such as the 1954 Hague Convention and the 2005 Faro Convention. Specific areas for improving the regulatory framework have been suggested, including the inventory of powers of local self-government bodies, modernization of legislation in the field of culture, and the initiative for codification in the form of the Code of Laws on Culture. The article contains analytical generalizations and practical recommendations and is based on an interdisciplinary approach using the methods of legal analysis, comparative law, and elements of public administration.

## Keywords:

cultural heritage, martial law, local self-government bodies, decentralization, National Police, security activities, public administration, state policy in the field of culture.

## Resumen

Los autores del artículo han llevado a cabo un exhaustivo análisis de los principios jurídicos que rigen la interacción entre los organismos de autogobierno local y la Policía Nacional en el ámbito de la protección del patrimonio cultural en el contexto de la ley marcial en Ucrania. Se ha procedido a la revisión exhaustiva de la legislación vigente que regula las competencias de las entidades pertinentes en lo que respecta a la preservación del patrimonio cultural. Este análisis ha abarcado las leyes de Ucrania sobre la protección del patrimonio cultural y sobre la Policía Nacional, así como los reglamentos pertinentes. Se han señalado los problemas prácticos relacionados con la fragmentación y la vaguedad de la normativa, en particular la falta de disposiciones especiales sobre la participación de la policía en las medidas de seguridad en situaciones de emergencia. Se ha

fundamentado la viabilidad de modificar las disposiciones legales pertinentes, en particular, complementando la ley de Ucrania sobre la protección del patrimonio cultural con una norma que establezca los fundamentos jurídicos y los mecanismos de interacción con las fuerzas del orden público. Se ha dedicado una atención meticulosa a las perspectivas de armonización entre la legislación nacional y los instrumentos jurídicos internacionales, tales como el Convenio de La Haya de 1954 y el Convenio de Faro de 2005. Se han propuesto áreas concretas para la optimización del marco regulatorio, tales como el inventario de competencias de los organismos de autogobierno local, la modernización de la legislación en materia de cultura y la iniciativa de codificación mediante el Código de Leyes de Cultura. El artículo contiene generalizaciones analíticas y recomendaciones prácticas, y se fundamenta en un enfoque interdisciplinario que utiliza métodos de análisis jurídico, derecho comparado y elementos de la administración pública.

## Palabras clave:

patrimonio cultural, ley marcial, organismos de autogobierno local, descentralización, Policía Nacional, actividades de seguridad, administración pública, política estatal en el ámbito de la cultura.

## Introduction

The cultural sphere is a broad institutional structure that encompasses a number of important social institutions where cultural needs are realized, cultural activities are carried out, and cultural goods are produced and consumed. Since the beginning of the full-scale military invasion of the Russian Federation into the territory of Ukraine, which began on February 24, 2022, and until now, the main task of the state remains the accumulation of human and material—including military—resources to liberate the occupied territories.

At the same time, an equally important and strategic area of public administration is the protection of cultural heritage from destruction. For example, UNESCO recorded more than 250 cases of damage to cultural heritage sites in Ukraine, including museums, theaters, religious buildings, and libraries in the first year of the full-scale invasion (UNESCO, 2023). Local self-government bodies are responsible for implementing measures to preserve cultural heritage sites. One of the priority areas of this activity is the effective interaction with law enforcement agencies, primarily with the National Police of Ukraine, in order to ensure the proper level of protection of such objects.

In this regard, the issue of effective legal regulation of the forms, means, and mechanisms of interaction between local self-government bodies and the National Police in the field of cultural heritage preservation in terms of martial law, becomes particularly relevant. According to the Prosecutor General's Office, as of December 2023, more than 400 criminal proceedings have been initiated on the facts of destruction, damage, or illegal movement of cultural heritage objects, where more than 50 relate to those territories where the monuments of national importance operate (Office of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, 2023). This fact determines the subject matter of this article's research and indicates the relevance of the chosen topic.

The problem of certain aspects of legal regulation in preserving cultural heritage has been subject of research for various scholars – both in the field of cultural studies and history and among researchers in the field of public administration and jurisprudence.

We should emphasize the dissertations of the following scholars among modern fundamental scientific works that study the issues of legal regulation of public authorities' activities, in particular local self-government bodies in the field of cultural heritage preservation: Yakymets (2012), Shestak (2012), Yurynets (2017), Aksyutina (2020), and Paragaylo (2021). These works present comprehensive theoretical and legal approaches to the administrative and legal framework of cultural policy implementation at local and national levels, and inform an important foundation for the development of the current legal mechanism.

At the same time, the issues of legal regulation of forms, means, and methods of interaction between local self-government bodies and the National Police in the field of cultural heritage preservation in terms of martial law currently remain insufficiently developed and require more thorough research. Thus, to achieve the purpose of the research, we plan to fulfil the following research tasks:

- to clarify the legal principles of interaction between local self-government bodies and the National Police in the context of ensuring the protection of cultural heritage sites;
- to study the forms, means, and methods of interaction between local self-government bodies and the National Police in the field of cultural heritage protection in terms of martial law;
- to identify areas for improvement in the legal regulation of the interaction between the above-mentioned agencies in order to increase the effectiveness of cultural heritage preservation in terms of the armed conflict.

## Methodology

Given the subject matter and purpose of the research, the authors have applied a comprehensive approach to the usage of scientific cognition methods. The dialectical method constitutes the methodological basis of the work and allowed us to comprehensively reveal the essence of legal regulation of cultural heritage preservation as a system of regulatory legal acts aimed at ensuring the effective functioning of public administration mechanisms in the cultural sphere. This approach made it possible to consider the use of forms, means, and methods of influence by subjects of authoritative power as a dynamic and holistic process.

*The formal and legal method* was used to determine the regulatory principles for ensuring the protection of cultural heritage by local self-government bodies. *The formal and logical method* served as a tool for identifying gaps and contradictions in the current legislation, as well as for formulating suggestions for its improvement.

In addition, the authors of the research used the comparative and legal method, which made it possible to compare approaches to legal regulation of cultural heritage protection in terms of martial law with similar norms acting in peacetime. In particular, the authors have accomplished a comparative analysis of Ukrainian legislation with the approaches in the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (UNESCO, 1954) and the Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Council of Europe, 2005), which emphasize inter-institutional cooperation and the priority of protecting cultural objects even in emergency situations.

*The system and structural method* contributed to the identification of key elements of interaction mechanism between local self-government bodies and the National Police, as well as the analysis of their internal logic and interrelationship. The application of *the historical and legal method* made it possible to trace the evolution of normative and legal regulations for the protection of cultural heritage in Ukraine in the context of changes in the security environment.

The comprehensive use of the indicated methods ensured the scientific validity of the research results, which are presented in the following sections of the article.

## Results and Discussion

### Legal principles of interaction between local self-government bodies and the National Police in ensuring the cultural heritage protection

Analysis of the current legislation of Ukraine provides grounds to single out several regulatory legal acts that regulate legal relations in the field of the interaction between local self-government bodies and the National Police in ensuring the protection of cultural heritage. The key ones among them are the following:

The law on the protection of cultural heritage (Law of Ukraine No. 1805-III, 2000) defines the legal, organizational, social, and economic principles for the protection of cultural heritage sites, as well as the procedure for their use in public life. According to Article 6, the powers of the executive authorities of village, settlement, and city councils include organizing the development and approval of programs for the protection of cultural heritage.

The law on the National Police (Law of Ukraine No. 580-VIII, 2015) establishes the legal framework for the organization and functioning of the National Police of Ukraine. Article 23 of the law provides the police with authority to protect state, private, and municipal property, as well as critical infrastructure, on a contractual basis.

The Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine on approving the categories of state-owned objects and spheres of state regulation subject to protection by security police agencies on a contractual basis includes cultural institutions –such as museums, archives, and museum fund storage facilities– among the objects subject to protection (Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine, 2018). The Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine No. 577 of July 7, 2017 on the organization of service activities of the security police on issues of ensuring the physical protection of objects, approves the regulations on the organization of security measures and defines the procedure for police units' interaction in providing physical protection (Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, 2017).

Analysis of current Ukrainian legislation shows a lack of clearly defined legal norms to regulate the direct involvement of police officers in protecting cultural heritage sites, particularly under martial law, when the risk of damage or loss to such sites increases significantly. According to the Ministry of Culture and

Strategic Communications of Ukraine, by July 21, 2025, 1,528 cultural heritage monuments and 2,359 cultural infrastructure facilities had been destroyed or damaged in Ukraine due to Russian aggression. These include clubs, libraries, museums, galleries, theatres, churches, cinemas, philharmonics, parks, zoos, and nature reserves (Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine, 2025). However, local self-government bodies were mostly unable to provide physical protection due to their limited powers and the absence of an appropriate mechanism for interacting with the National Police.

In this regard, it seems appropriate to amend the law on the protection of cultural heritage by introducing a separate provision –such as Article 8-1– that would determine the legal grounds, procedures, forms, and limits of involvement of National Police units in ensuring the protection of cultural heritage sites. This approach would foster clearer coordination between local self-government bodies and the police, enhance the effectiveness of protective measures, and reinforce the institutional foundations of cultural policy in times of crisis (Law of Ukraine No. 1805-III, 2000).

### Implementation of Powers of Local Self-Government Bodies and the National Police Regarding Interaction in the Field of Cultural Heritage Preservation in Terms of Martial Law and Areas for Improving Their Legal Regulation

Local self-government bodies (hereinafter referred to as LSGAs) are the key entities in implementing state policy in the field of cultural heritage protection. Their role as elements of public administration in this sphere is enshrined in the law on local self-government in Ukraine.

Both own and delegated powers of LSGAs in the cultural field are defined in Article 32 of the aforementioned law, Powers in the field of education, healthcare, culture, youth policy, physical education and sports, and the promotion of Ukrainian national and civic identity. Analysis of these provisions allows for the classification of LSGAs' powers in the field of cultural heritage protection into several main groups (Law of Ukraine No. 280/97-VR, 1997).

Organisational powers include management of cultural institutions, organisation of their financial, material, and technical provision, and creation of infrastructure conditions for their effective functioning. Provisional

powers include promoting the development of culture; supporting centres of traditional folk art, national cultural traditions, arts and crafts; and creative unions and public organisations in the field of culture. They also include ensuring the protection of historical and cultural monuments and promoting the affirmation of Ukrainian national and civic identity. Additionally, they include the implementation of the language rights of national minorities, in accordance with legislation (Law of Ukraine No. 280/97-VR, 1997).

At the same time, it should be noted that the current list of powers of local self-government bodies in this area remains fragmentary and does not fully reflect current challenges and needs. It is especially related to the terms of the martial law and ongoing decentralization processes, which, despite military actions, are still relevant. This conclusion is supported by recent interdisciplinary research highlighting the complex interplay between decentralization, financial autonomy, and security responsibilities of local self-government during crises (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2021; Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2024).

Review of approaches to the formation of powers of local self-government bodies based on the principle of bringing cultural services closer to the population according to the formula “funds follow the viewer” is advisable in the context of adaptation to the best European practices, in particular those implemented in EU countries. This involves the implementation of co-financing models from local budgets and investors focused on supporting cultural institutions that implement innovative approaches to the preservation and popularization of cultural heritage.

Such approaches include organization of interactive exhibitions, artistic events involving young people, conducting modern theatrical performances, creating new museum exhibits, etc. Thus, ensuring real interaction between local self-government bodies and the National Police in the field of cultural heritage protection has both regulatory and legal, as well as strategic importance in terms of martial law and the country’s post-war reconstruction. Research on modern police-civil society partnerships highlights the importance of institutional cooperation frameworks that enable effective and coordinated action in crisis situations (Teremetskyi *et al.*, 2024).

It should also be noted that the main problem of legal regulation in the field of cultural heritage protection is the lack of a clear demarcation of powers between state authorities and local self-government bodies. This problem concerns not only the general functioning of the cultural sphere, but also the mechanisms for implementing

state policy in this area. For example, local authorities of Okhtyrka City (Sumy region) initiated a program in March 2023 to restore the historical building of the local history museum, which was damaged as a result of shelling, but local authorities are facing difficulties in its implementation due to uncertainty about the body authorized to coordinate the documentation of the project and conclude a security agreement with the National Police, whether it should be the local council or the regional military administration. This delays the process of conservation of the building and puts the preservation of exhibits at risk.

An analysis of the current legislation shows that the sectoral laws –particularly on culture (Law of Ukraine No. 2778-VI, 2010), on the protection of cultural heritage (Law of Ukraine No. 1805-III, 2000), on museums and museum business (Law of Ukraine No. 249/95-VR, 1995), on libraries and librarianship (Law of Ukraine No. 32/95-VR, 1995), on folk artistic craft (Law of Ukraine No. 2547-III, 2001), and on theaters and theater business (Law of Ukraine No. 2605-IV, 2005)– do not contain sufficiently detailed provisions to determine the scope and boundaries of the competence of the public authorities at each level, including locally.

Thus, the law on culture stipulates that legislative regulation covers activities in such areas of the cultural sphere as fiction, cinematography, theater, music, choreography, sculpture, fine, decorative and applied arts, architecture, photography, design, as well as intangible cultural heritage, including folk culture (folklore, traditions, customs, rituals, dialects, proverbs, folk arts and crafts, historical toponymy, etc.) (Law of Ukraine No. 2778-VI, 2010).

Particular attention is paid to the protection of national cultural heritage, museum work, collecting, archival and library work, book publishing, phonography, art education, and scientific research in the field of culture, international cultural relationships, and the transfer of cultural values across the state border.

However, despite the wide range of regulated cultural activities, the legislation does not strike an adequate balance between levels of public authority. This complicates the effective exercise of local powers, particularly under martial law, when the protection and preservation of cultural heritage sites becomes critical (Law of Ukraine No. 2778-VI, 2010). Regarding the powers of local self-government bodies in the field of culture, it should be noted that they are only partially regulated by specialized legislation. Analysis of the provisions of the law on culture, allows us to systematize certain competencies of local self-government bodies in



implementing the state policy in the field of culture and protection of cultural heritage, which are contained in various articles of this law (Law of Ukraine No. 2778-VI, 2010).

Thus, according to Article. 9 of this law, local self-government bodies are entitled to create cultural institutions to carry out activities in the field of culture, both independently and by using various forms of mediation within the limits specified by law. This provision confirms their participation in the formation of the institutional infrastructure of the cultural sphere at the local level.

Article 14 of the same law stipulates that local self-government bodies shall facilitate the activities of non-profit cultural institutions. In particular, the legislation creates a favorable taxation regime regulated by tax law for such institutions, as well as for educational institutions in the field of culture, individuals, and legal entities that provide charitable assistance to non-profit cultural institutions.

Although the law contains some provisions on the powers of local self-government bodies in the field of culture, the lack of clear systematization within the framework of a single regulatory act reduces the effectiveness of legal regulation of this area, especially in terms of martial law, when the need for prompt adoption of administrative decisions is actualized.

At the same time, the current legislation contains no clearly defined powers not only for local self-government bodies but also for other public authorities responsible for implementing state policy in the field of cultural heritage protection. However, certain attempts to normatively consolidate such powers can be found in the Ukrainian law on the protection of cultural heritage. Thus, under Article 1 of this law, the executive authorities of village, settlement, and city councils are designated as specially authorized agencies for the protection of cultural heritage (Law of Ukraine No. 1805-III, 2000).

The competences of the executive authorities of local self-government are revealed in more detail in Article. 6 of the mentioned law. It, in particular, stipulates their obligations to ensure the implementation of this law on the relevant territory, to submit proposals for including objects in the State Register of Immovable Monuments of Ukraine, to ensure access to the relevant information, to comply with the regime of using monuments, to organize protective measures, to prepare conclusions on urban planning and other projects that may affect cultural heritage sites, to conclude protective contracts, to participate in restoration, conservation and

museumification works, as well as to inform higher-level authorities about threats to cultural heritage objects, etc.

Similar or relevant powers are defined in several sectoral regulatory legal acts in the field of culture, including the laws on museums and museum business (Law of Ukraine No. 249/95-VR, 1995), on libraries and librarianship (Law of Ukraine No. 32/95-VR, 1995), on folk artistic craft (Law of Ukraine No. 2547-III, 2001), and on theaters and theater business (Law of Ukraine No. 2605-IV, 2005).

Analysis of the above legislative acts indicates the presence of a regulatory basis for public administration in the field of culture in general, as well as certain aspects of the activities of local self-government bodies in this area. At the same time, it is quite obvious that it is impossible and there is no practical need to regulate the full list of powers of each authority in detail in one law. A more effective approach seems to be the further formation of the coordinated system of legislation that would ensure the integrity, consistency and practical implementation of the state policy in the field of cultural heritage protection.

Given the above, it can be concluded that there is currently no urgent need for a radical revision of the Ukrainian law on culture. However, there is a clear and objective necessity to establish a coherent system of legislative acts that would comprehensively regulate various aspects of public relations in the sphere of culture and the protection of cultural heritage. It appears reasonable to adopt a new, specialized law on cultural institutions, which would define the legal status, classification, mechanisms of funding, and procedures for interaction with public authorities in the context of ongoing decentralization reform.

This legislative initiative has already received support from representatives of public authorities. In February 2024, the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine officially announced the launch of consultations regarding the development of the draft law on cultural institutions. According to a public statement by Deputy Minister M. Tomy, the current legal framework remains “too fragmented” and fails to provide for the comprehensive implementation of mechanisms related to the financing, protection, and restoration of cultural institutions, especially in war-affected communities (Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine, 2024).

In addition, it is necessary to revise the current Ukrainian law on the protection of cultural heritage (Law of Ukraine No. 1805-III, 2000) in response to contemporary challenges, particularly those arising from

armed aggression, while also considering the prospects for restoring national cultural identity in the post-war period. In this context, the modernization of other sectoral laws governing the provision of cultural services to the population becomes especially relevant. This includes the laws on cinematography (Law No. 9/98-VR, 1998), on theaters and theater business (Law No. 2605-IV, 2005), on museums and museum business (Law No. 249/95-VR, 1995), and on libraries and librarianship (Law No. 32/95-VR, 1995). These legislative acts should be harmonized in line with modern public administration principles, the decentralization reform, and the imperative of ensuring sustainable protection of cultural heritage during martial law and in the course of Ukraine's post-war recovery (Basko, 2024).

At the same time, it should be acknowledged that legislation in the field of culture is evolving dynamically, responding to the needs of society, the challenges of decentralization, and the transformation of the public administration system. Notably, significant amendments were introduced to the law on the protection of cultural heritage in 2023. These changes addressed certain aspects of cultural governance, including the procedures for appointing heads of municipal cultural institutions and establishing a basic network of such institutions (Law of Ukraine No. 1805-III, 2000, as amended in 2023).

Thus, according to the updated provisions, heads of municipal cultural institutions in settlements with a population of up to 5,000 people may be appointed without holding a competition. Their selection is carried out by concluding a contract based on the results of an interview, subject to compliance with the requirements stipulated in part 1 of the Article 21-1 of the aforementioned law. This approach allows local self-government bodies to form management personnel in cultural institutions more quickly, especially in terms of limited resources and the need to ensure the continuity of cultural services.

Besides, it has been established that the exclusion of an institution from the basic network, its reorganization, or liquidation is allowed only upon agreement with the relevant central executive authority that forms the state policy in the field of culture, cinema, or other related sectors. At the same time, it is provided with mandatory information of the central executive authority that implements the state policy in the fields of arts and specialized art education.

An important guarantee mechanism has become the rule, according to which the exclusion of an institution from the basic network is allowed only if the continuity of the provision of cultural services to the population is

ensured by another cultural institution or an educational institution in the field of culture in the territory of the relevant community. However, the accessibility and proper quality of such services must be guaranteed to meet the principles of public administration in the field of culture and the protection of cultural rights of citizens (Law of Ukraine No. 3120-IX, 2023).

Summarizing the above, it should be noted that legislation in the field of culture and the protection of cultural heritage has gained a new impetus for development at the present stage. The challenges related to the full-scale war unleashed by the Russian Federation have become one of the main catalysts of this process, and as a result of which Ukraine is suffering enormous losses, including in the field of culture. The destruction of cultural heritage sites necessitates not only the improvement of legal and organizational mechanisms for their protection, but also the systematic modernization of the regulatory framework that regulates the provision of cultural services.

According to UNESCO, as of the beginning of 2024, more than 340 cultural heritage sites were recorded in Ukraine as damaged as a result of a full-scale invasion, where almost 30 % of them are cultural institutions on the balance sheet of local self-government bodies (UNESCO, 2024). Similar challenges have already presented themselves within international practice, in particular regarding a special law adopted for the reconstruction of cultural infrastructure in Croatia after the war of 1991–1995, which became the basis for the modernization of sectoral legislation. A similar approach, taking into account the Ukrainian context, is also appropriate for the post-war restoration of the cultural heritage protection system of Ukraine.

There is currently an active tendency towards updating sectoral legislation that covers some sectors of culture, from the museum business to the management of cultural institutions. This process, according to the conviction of both the scientific community and representatives of state authorities, should logically end with the codification of legislation in the form of a single regulatory act – the Code of Laws on Culture of Ukraine.

Thus, Deputy Minister of Culture and Information Policy M. Tomyn reasonably emphasizes the need to transition from fragmented legal regulation to the unified code and notes:

The time has come to start the codification in the field of cultural heritage. That is, instead of 16 laws regulating this area, 254 subordinate regulatory legal acts and 102 laws

that in one way or another relate to the field of cultural heritage, it is necessary to create a single code (Tomyn, 2024).

The international expert community also supports the codification initiative. The Joint Report of the Council of Europe and the EU, Cultural heritage governance in crisis situations (2023), emphasizes that consolidated cultural legislation during times of war or humanitarian crisis is critically important for facilitating rapid decision-making, ensuring the protection of cultural rights, and coordinating actions at the local level (Council of Europe, 2023). Similar conclusions were drawn in comparative studies of institutional transformations in security-related agencies, where authors emphasized the significance of clearly defined legal frameworks and inter-institutional coordination mechanisms as tools for increasing organizational effectiveness in crisis contexts (Rumbo Bonfil & Contreras Álvarez, 2021).

This position is based on the understanding that codification will allow synchronizing initiatives of the private and public sectors, optimizing the management model, and creating an effective institutional structure with regional representation.

The scientific basis of this initiative can be found in the work of legal experts. S. Kravchuk (2019) correctly states that the current Ukrainian law on culture is outdated and unable to address modern challenges. As early as 2006, O. Zadykhailo (2006) proposed the concept of a draft code of laws on culture. Despite its relevance, the problem of codification has remained beyond the legislator's attention since then. Today, there is an urgent need to intensify scientific and theoretical discourse around creating such a code, in light of new geopolitical and legal conditions. This would lay the groundwork for effective, coherent, and systematic legal regulation in the cultural sector for the protection of Ukraine's cultural heritage.

The analysis of legislative acts provides grounds for concluding that the powers of local self-government bodies in the field of culture and protection of cultural heritage include the following main areas:

- 1) creation and maintenance of cultural institutions – ensuring the functioning of libraries, museums, theaters, houses of culture, and other municipal cultural institutions;
- 2) financing of cultural initiatives – allocation of funds from local budgets for the organization of festivals, exhibitions, concerts, and other artistic and educational events;
- 3) protection and preservation of cultural heritage sites – participation in activities to preserve historical

and cultural monuments, including through the implementation of restoration and rehabilitation programs. Funds from the State Fund for Regional Development supported more than 130 projects of local cultural heritage preservation programs in 2023, which demonstrates the growing role of local self-government bodies in implementing such initiatives even in terms of the martial law (Ministry for Communities, Territories and Infrastructure Development of Ukraine, 2024);

- 4) support for creative initiatives and cultural process subjects – providing grants, subsidies, and other assistance to creative individuals, groups, and organizations;
- 5) realization of cultural and educational projects – implementation of programs for the cultural development of children, youth, and other categories of the population, popularization of local traditions, customs, and intangible heritage;
- 6) participation in international cultural cooperation – establishing partnerships within intermunicipal, cross-border, and European cultural exchange programs.

## Conclusions

It has been established as the result of the conducted research that the state policy in the field of ensuring the proper functioning of the cultural protection system is a multi-level system of organizational, regulatory, resource, information and analytical, as well as methodological measures aimed at providing the population of Ukraine with high-quality cultural services. The effectiveness of this policy largely depends on the creation of an extensive network of cultural institutions, proper financing of this sector, effective management at the local self-government level, as well as effective intersectoral interaction with central executive authorities and civil society institutions in the field of cultural heritage protection.

The main areas to improve the implementation of state policy in the field of culture should include:

- 1) the creation of an open information platform for collecting, processing, analyzing and storing data on cultural institutions, their financial and technical condition, staffing, activities, and results of activities. It is planned to introduce electronic registers and to launch a single state portal with up-to-date information on cultural events.
- 2) conducting the All-Ukrainian inventory of the financial and technical base of municipal



cultural institutions in order to identify the modernization needs, and for the optimization of the network of institutions (by maintaining profile specialization and simultaneously reducing the excess administrative personnel).

- 3) developing transparent mechanisms for calculating and distributing cultural subventions, which provide clear criteria for financing both state and municipal cultural institutions, including a reverse reporting mechanism to the Ministry of Culture and Strategic Communications of Ukraine. Thus, the report of the Ministry of Finance of Ukraine indicates that only 38 % of local budgets in 2023 allocated funds to renew the infrastructure of cultural institutions, while more than 60 % of expenses were focused on the current maintenance, which indicates a weak strategic orientation and the need for a new model for distributing subventions (Ministry of Finance of Ukraine, 2024).
- 4) updating the classifier of professions in the cultural sphere and developing a new wage grid taking into account the modern conditions of the functioning of the cultural sphere and overcoming disparities between institutions of different forms of subordination.
- 5) promoting the development of private cultural institutions by ensuring access to state and local funding, if they provide socially significant cultural services.
- 6) gradual implementation of financial autonomy of municipal cultural institutions, which should increase their capacity for innovation, attract additional resources, and flexibility in management.
- 7) establishing an effective mechanism for improving the skills of employees of cultural institutions, in particular by creating target-oriented programs for financing the relevant educational initiatives.

In general, the implementation of these areas in terms of decentralization and challenges related to martial law will allow both to preserve and to strengthen the cultural identity of Ukrainian society, to modernize the system of cultural heritage protection, and to increase the availability of cultural services. Similar approaches have proven their effectiveness in countries of Central Europe. For example, the implementation of the Culture-Online digital platform in Poland allowed for the coverage of cultural services to over 80 % of small communities in 2020–2023 that were previously excluded from the main cultural infrastructure (Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of Poland, 2023).

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