

# Diversity of Film Collections in Eastern European Public Libraries



***In this paper we explored the extent of diversity of film collections of Eastern European public libraries in these cities: Krakow, Prague, Budapest, Ljubljana, Cluj, Zagreb. The catalogue records analysis method was used to determine the country of film origin, the year of film production and the type of the film in the sample of 600 films from these libraries. Research results have established that the most common films in libraries are recently made feature films from USA. All analysed libraries have very small number of films from other Eastern European countries. Also, some of these libraries have very small number of domestic films – films that were made in the country in which library is situated. For example, there is only one domestic film in the sample of films from Zagreb and Ljubljana libraries.***

## Introduction

The important mission of public libraries is to provide a culturally diverse content to their users. *UNESCO Public Library Manifesto* lists various tasks of public libraries. Many of them are related to offering collections and services that will help to enhance knowledge of cultural diversity. For example, in this *Manifesto* we can find that important tasks of public libraries are to promote awareness of cultural heritage and to provide access to cultural expressions of all performing arts. Fostering intercultural dialogue and favouring cultural diversity is another important task (UNESCO, 1994). Apart from diverse book collections in libraries, diverse film collections can also greatly contribute to the diffusion of knowledge about different cultures, countries and regions.

Libraries have accepted the principle that users need the same level of service for audio-visual documents as it is provided for other, more "traditional" types of library documents such as books. For example, in *The freedom to view statement*, viewing is proclaimed the same constitutional right as talking, hearing and reading (American Library Association, 1989). However, there is a problem in the development of diverse collections. Important barrier for the development of diverse film collections is the global domination of Hollywood film studios which have a dominant position in global film production, distribution and promotion (Currah, 2007). According to Handman, libraries have difficulties to acquire non-Hollywood films from various countries and time periods. Frequently, these and various „independent films" need to be bought directly from authors and specialised publishers (Handman, 2003).

Important threat for the possibility to develop diverse library collections is consolidation of media companies. Authors of the text *Fostering media diversity in libraries – strategies and actions* provide some suggestions on how to increase collection's diversity. They suggest that libraries need to prepare policy of collection building, which emphasize the importance of diverse collections of library materials. Libraries should educate employees about the importance of inclusion of alternative information sources in library collections and promote the variety of sources, information channels and viewpoints essential for an informed citizenship and strong idea market (American Library Association, 2010). However, the necessary requirement to build diverse collections is that librarians have precise insights of diversity levels of their collections. Focus of this paper is to explore diversity levels of film collections in six Eastern European libraries, in relation to three variables: film type, country of film production, date of film production. There are examples of similar research: research of diversity of library film collections in Croatia (Duić, 2015) and various Eastern and Western European countries (Anđić, Kotarac, Duić, 2016), but this paper is probably the first exploration of diversity of film collections that is focused only on Eastern European libraries. Previous research has indicated that the most frequent films in public libraries are feature films recently made in USA. This research will give an answer if this is also true for the public libraries in six Eastern European countries.

## Research methodology

The following European public libraries have been chosen for this research – public libraries in Krakow<sup>1</sup>, Prague<sup>2</sup>, Budapest<sup>3</sup>, Ljubljana<sup>4</sup>, Cluj<sup>5</sup> and Zagreb<sup>6</sup>. Catalogue records analysis method was used to analyse film records. Focus was on following variables: film type, country of film production, date of film production. Online library catalogues were searched by using the catalogue option to search the holdings by media type: DVD discs. Full list of films in catalogue was sorted alphabetically and

- <sup>1</sup> Wojewódzka Biblioteka Publiczna w Krakowie. City of Krakow, Poland. Retrieved September 1, 2016 from: <http://www.rajska.info/> (total: 3657 films)
- <sup>2</sup> Městská knihovna v Praze. City of Prague, Czech Republic. Retrieved September 1, 2016 from: <https://www.mlp.cz> (total: 2978 films)
- <sup>3</sup> Metropolitan Ervin Szabó Library. City of Budapest, Hungary. Retrieved September 1, 2016 from: <http://www.fszek.hu/> (total: 7100 films)
- <sup>4</sup> Mestna knjižnica Ljubljana. City of Ljubljana, Slovenia. Retrieved September 1, 2016 from: <http://www.mklj.si/> (total: 12422 films)
- <sup>5</sup> Biblioteca Județeană „Octavian Goga”. City of Cluj, Romania. Retrieved September 1, 2016 from: <http://www.bjc.ro/new/> (total: 5290 films)
- <sup>6</sup> Knjižnice grada Zagreba. City of Zagreb, Croatia. Retrieved September 1, 2016 from: [www.kgz.hr/](http://www.kgz.hr/) (total: 10847 films)

first hundred films were analysed in each library, with regard to their type (feature films, animation films and documentary films), country and date of production. The following film types were excluded from the analysis: serials; concert and opera films; films for which were not possible to find required information.

### Research results

Regarding the film type, feature films are convincingly the most dominant type. As it is visible in *Figure 1*. in the sample of 600 films from all six libraries, number of feature films is 468 or 78 %. Number of documentary films is 55 or 9.2 % and number of animation films is 77 or 12.8 %.

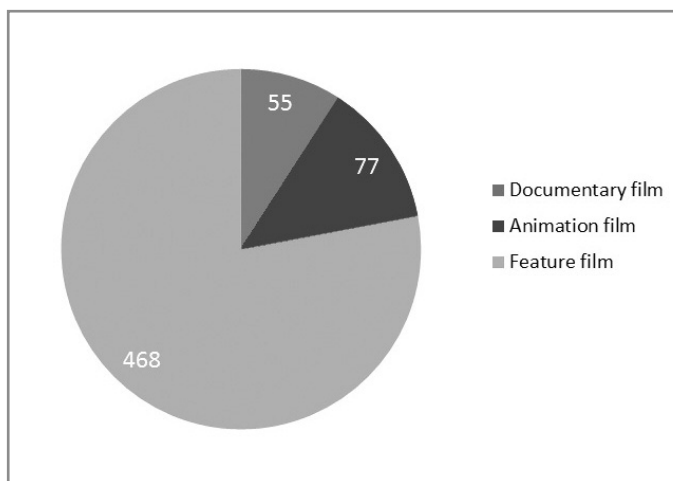


Figure 1. Number of various film types in six public libraries

	Documentary film	Animation film	Feature film
Prague	4	12	84
Zagreb	9	20	71
Krakow	13	8	79
Ljubljana	7	17	76
Budapest	6	9	85
Cluj	16	11	73
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>468</b>

Table 1. Number of various film types in individual public libraries

In Table 1. we can see that the results are similar if we examine the libraries separately – minimal percentage of feature films in specific library is 73 % (Cluj public library), maximum percentage of feature films is 85 % (Budapest public library). Minimal percentage of documentary films in specific library is 4 % (Prague public library), maximum percentage of documentary films in specific library is 16 % (Cluj public library). Minimal percentage of animation films in specific library is 8 % (Krakow public library), maximum percentage of animation films in specific library is 20 % (Zagreb public library).

If we look at the Figure 2. we can see the number of films from various countries in six public libraries. Dominant country of film production is the United States of America: 315 films or 52.5 % of films are from USA; 59 films or 9.8 % of films are from United Kingdom; 46 films or 7.7 % of films are from France; 31 films or 5.2 % of films are from Germany, while the remaining 149 films or 24.8 % of films are from other 31 countries. Among these remaining 31 countries, the Poland has the largest number of films – 19 or 3.2 %; next is Czechoslovakia with 16 films or 2.7 %. If we add to this last category 9 films from Czech Republic than there are total of 25 films or 4.2 % of films from the countries of Czech Republic and Slovakia; next follows Hungary with 15 films or 2.5 %.

In Figure 3. we can see the number of films from six public libraries when these films are aggregated in various world regions. Dominant world region of film production is North America: 327 films or 54.5 % of films are from North America; 174 films or 29 % of films are from Western Europe; 81 films or 13.5 % of films are from Eastern Europe. Only 11 films or 1.8 % of films are from Asia. South America has the very small number of 4 films (0.7 %) and Australia has 3 films (0.5 %) which is not such a small number concerning the small population of that region.

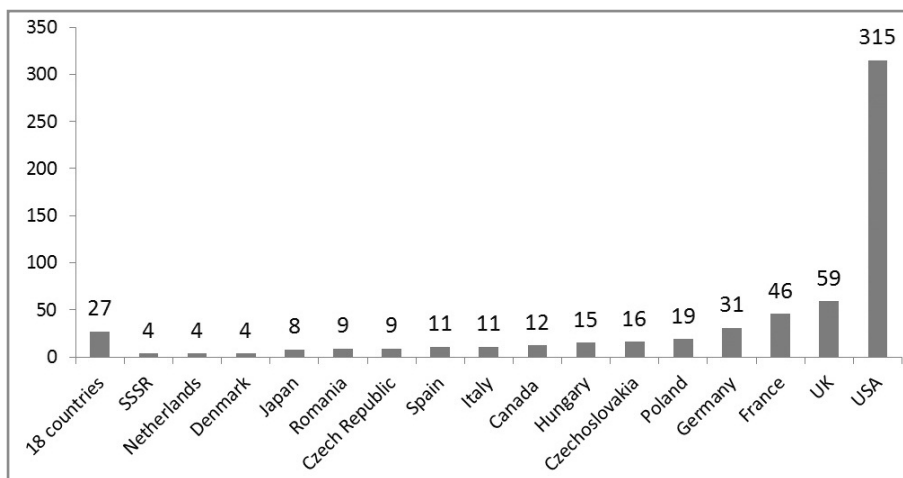


Figure 2. Number of films from various countries in six public libraries

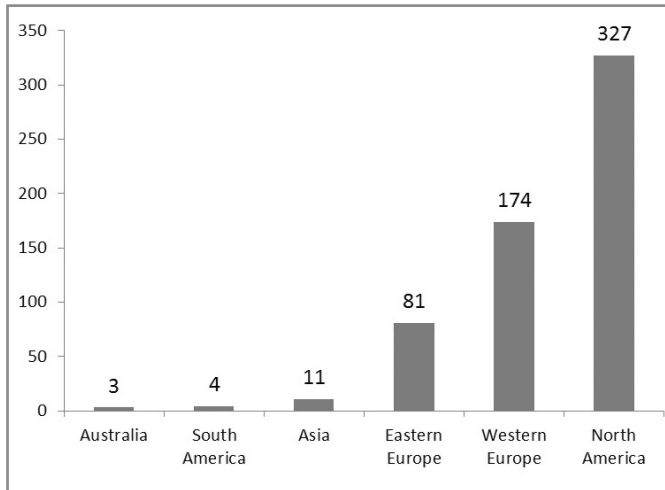


Figure 3. Number of films from various world regions in six public libraries

North America	USA	Canada	
	315	12	
Asia	Japan	Hong Kong	South Korea
	8	2	1
South America	Mexico	Brazil	Argentina
	2	1	1
Australia	Australia		
	3		

Table 2. Number of films from various countries of the world regions in six public libraries

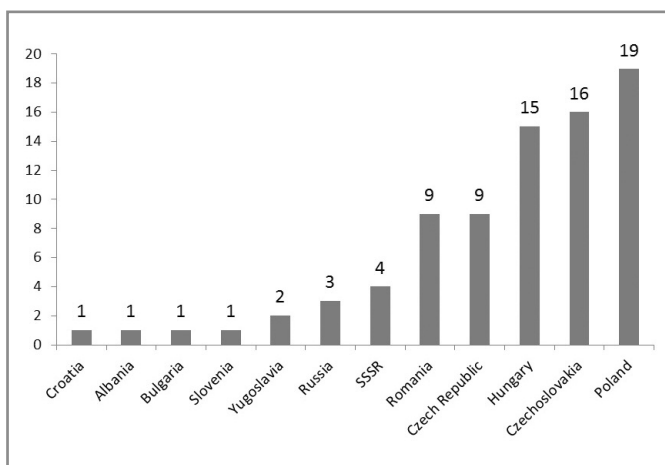


Figure 4. Number of films from Eastern Europe in six public libraries

In Table 2. we can see from which countries are films from the specific world regions. In North America region there are only 12 films from Canada and remaining 315 films are from USA. The largest number of films from Asia are from Japan (8). The largest number of films from South America are from Mexico (2) and the last region – Australia – has 3 films.

Much bigger diversity of countries of film origin is found in Eastern and Western Europe. Figure 4. represents the number of films made in Eastern Europe. As we can see, films produced in Eastern Europe are mostly from Poland (19 films or 3.2 % in relation to the total sample of 600 films); Czechoslovakia – 16 films or 2.7 %; Hungary – 15 films or 2.5 %; Czech Republic – 9 films or 1.5 %; Romania – 9 films or 1.5 %. If we add 4 films from SSSR and 3 films from Russia than there are 7 films or 1.2 % of films from these two historically related countries.

Figure 5. represents the number of films made in Western Europe. These films are mostly from UK (59 films or 9.2 % in relation to the total sample of 600 films); France – 46 films or 7.7 %; Germany – 31 or 5.2 %; Italy – 11 films or 1.8 %; Spain – 11 films or 1.8 %; Denmark – 4 films or 0.7 %; Netherlands – 4 films or 0.7 %. It is important to note that in six Eastern European libraries there are more films from UK and France (105) than there are films from Eastern Europe (81).

In Table 3. we can see how are films from ten countries with the largest number of films distributed in individual public libraries. Ljubljana and Cluj public libraries have the highest percentage of American films (61 %), while Krakow public library has the lowest percentage (39 %). Most libraries have a considerable share of films created in their countries: Krakow public library has 18 % of these films (or 18 films) made in Poland; Prague public library has 13 % of films made in Czechoslovakia and 9 % of films made in Czech Republic; Budapest public library has 13 % of films made in Hungary; Cluj public library has 8 % of films made in Romania. However, there are also public libraries that have only 1 % of films (only one film) created in their countries: Zagreb and Ljubljana public libraries.

In Figure 6. we see the number of films from various time periods in six public libraries. The vast majority of films had been made recently. The majority of films – 339 films or 56.5 % of films – are made in the period from the year 2000 to the year 2016. Generally speaking, the older the year is, less films from those years exist in the library. There are 205 films or 34.2 % of films that are made in the period from the year 1970 to the year 1999. There are only 56 films or 9.3 % of films that are made in the period from the year 1900 to the year 1969.

In Table 4. we can see the number of films from various time periods in individual public libraries. Zagreb and Cluj public libraries have the largest number of films from the most recent time period from the year 2000 to the year 2016. Cluj has 64 % of films from this period (or 64 films) and Zagreb has 63 % of films from this period (or 63 films). Zagreb and Cluj public libraries have the largest number of films from the most recent period from the year 2000 to the year 2016. Prague, Zagreb and Krakow public libraries have the largest number of films from the most distant time period from the year 1900 to the year 1969. Prague has 20 % of films from this period (or 20 films), Zagreb has 9 % of films from this period well as Krakow which also has 9 % of films from this period.

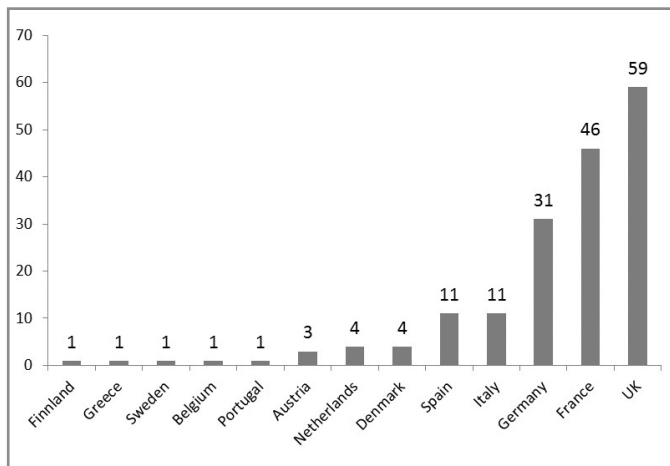


Figure 5. Number of films from Western Europe in six public libraries

### Conclusion

Research results have established that the most common film type in libraries is feature film – 78 %. There are 12.8 % of animation films and there are only 9.2 % of documentary films. If we look libraries separately, the situation is similar because in each library there are at least 71 % of feature films. Budapest public library has the highest share of feature films – 85 %. That means that there is not much space on library shelves for documentary and animation films which comprise a range from 4 % (documentary films, Prague) to 20 % (animation films, Zagreb) of the analysed samples in six public libraries.

Research results have established that USA is most frequently the country of film production. More than half of all the films are from USA (52.5 %). Films from the United Kingdom are on the second place (9.8 %), French films are on the third place (7.7 %) and German films are on the fourth place (5.2 %).

Although we examined film collections in public libraries of Eastern European countries, we found that films from one

	USA	UK	France	Germany	Poland	Hungary	Czechoslovakia	Canada	Italy	Spain
Frequency	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th
Prague	54	7	5	2	1	1	13	0	2	1
Zagreb	50	20	7	7	0	0	0	2	2	1
Krakow	39	8	11	3	18	0	3	3	3	1
Ljubljana	61	14	7	8	0	0	0	2	1	3
Budapest	50	4	9	8	0	13	0	2	2	3
Cluj	61	6	7	3	0	1	0	3	1	2

Table 3. Number of films from ten countries with the largest number of films, in six public libraries

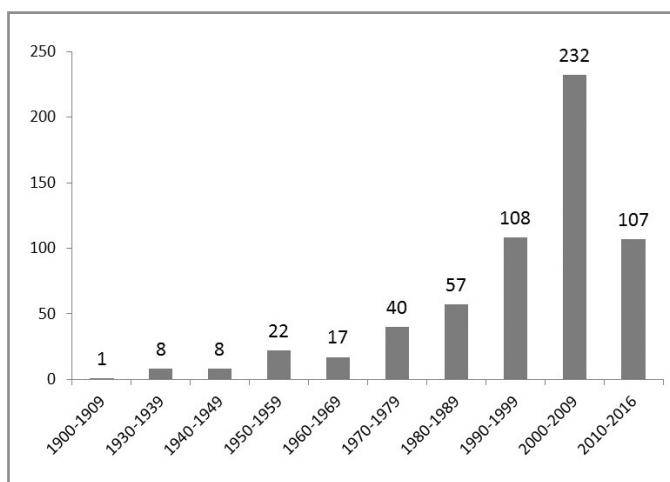


Figure 6. Number of films from various time periods in six public libraries

Eastern European country are merely on the fifth place. These are films from Poland (3.2 %). Films from other Eastern European countries, whose libraries we included in this research are even less present in library collections. There is especially small number of domestic films in Zagreb and Ljubljana city libraries – only one domestic film was found in the sample of each library. It is important to note that even when there was considerable number of domestic films in certain libraries, all analysed libraries have very small number of films of from other Eastern European countries. We also analysed shares of films from various world regions in these six public libraries. There are only 13.5 % of films from Eastern Europe and much more films from Western Europe (29 %) and North America (54.5 %). Therefore, library users can find in these libraries considerably more films from Western Europe and, especially, from USA, than from Eastern Europe. It is also important to note that films from Asia and South America are barely present in the samples.

Research results have also established that the majority of films in the sample were made in the period from the year 2000 to the year 2016 (56.5 %). There are 34.2 % of films

that are made in the period from the year 1970 to the year 1999. However, there are only 9.3 % of films that are made in the period from the year 1900 to the year 1969. These findings support the conclusion that libraries mostly have recently made films.

Finally, we can say that Eastern European public libraries should improve the diversity of their collections regarding all three variables: country of film production, date of film production and film type. First step to ameliorate the problem of the insufficient diversity of film collections should be raising the librarian awareness about diversity levels of film collections. Relevant communities of library users and partners could also be informed and educated about importance of diverse library

	1900- 1909	1930- 1939	1940- 1949	1950- 1959	1960- 1969	1970- 1979	1980- 1989	1990- 1999	2000- 2009	2010- 2016
Prague	1	3	5	5	6	6	8	19	26	22
Zagreb	0	2	2	4	1	4	7	16	50	13
Krakov	0	2	0	5	4	11	10	10	32	26
Ljubljana	0	0	1	3	2	4	9	18	58	5
Budapest	0	1	0	3	3	9	14	27	26	17
Cluj	0	0	0	2	1	6	9	18	40	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>107</b>

Table 4. Number of films from various time periods in individual public libraries

collections. Also, librarians need to develop and promote the arguments for investing more effort and resources in development of diverse film collections so that libraries could fulfil their mission to provide diverse collections to their users.

### Literature

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**Mirko Duić, PhD**

miduic@unizd.hr

**Mihaela Anđić**

mandic@student.unizd.hr

**Matea Kotarac**

mkotarac@student.unizd.hr