

# Social Diplomacy The Case of Poland

*International activity of Polish NGOs  
and their dialogue with government*

edited by Grażyna Czubek

Stefan Batory Foundation  
Polish NGOs Abroad

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# Introduction

Social diplomacy is based on the understanding that international relations are no longer the exclusive domain of governments. Citizens getting together for a common purpose can foster international co-operation effectively. That is why non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play an important role in developing civil societies in countries undergoing democratic transition, promoting education and health care in developing countries and providing humanitarian assistance wherever it is needed.

Since 1989 Polish non-governmental organisations have practised international solidarity by expanding their activities abroad and working together with numerous foreign partners, primarily in Eastern Europe.

Leading Polish NGOs working in the international field moved toward closer co-operation following the *NATO, European Union, Central and Eastern Europe. NGOs in Poland's Foreign Policy* conference organised by the Stefan Batory Foundation in December 1999. They established Polish NGOs Abroad – a working group of Polish NGOs active internationally that since early 2001 has focused on developing standards for NGOs working abroad and preparing a set of proposals for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that is aimed at facilitating co-operation in the field of foreign policy and international aid.

The working group produced *Partnership for Foreign Policy*, a draft document that was the key reference for the discussion at the *Social Diplomacy* conference organised on June 26-27, 2002 in Warsaw. It was an extraordinary meeting between representatives of NGOs involved in international work and the representatives of government agencies responsible for Polish foreign policy. We managed to go beyond the recurring government – NGO pattern of debate: a high official delivering a speech, followed by NGOs venting their frustrations and complaints, most often without the former being present. This time, a true dialogue was held on how to unleash the tremendous potential of government – NGO partnership. Our goals frequently coincide: supporting democratic transition in other countries, providing various types of assistance and building a positive image of Poland.

The proposals contained in the *Partnership for Foreign Policy* draft document were thoroughly discussed in workshops attended both by NGO representatives and government officials. The document was updated and presented to Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, as the position of nearly 70 organisations participating in the conference.

This publication contains a selection of documents previously published in Polish in two volumes: *Międzynarodowa Działalność Polskich Organizacji Pozarządowych (International Activity of Polish NGOs)* and *Partnerstwo dla Polskiej Polityki Zagranicznej (Partnership for Polish Foreign Policy)*. The first part includes the *Social Diplomacy* conference report, the final text of *Partnership for Foreign Policy* and *Guiding Principles of Polish Non-governmental Organisations Working Abroad*, and Minister Cimoszewicz's speech endorsing the bulk of the proposals. The second part includes a brief history of Polish NGOs working abroad, a description of selected organisations with a small directory and summaries of papers on cross-border co-operation and youth exchange.

We are acutely aware that we are at the very beginning of a long process by which a country such as Poland will be able truly to participate in both the European and global aid efforts and before Polish NGOs will reach the level of experience and attract resources comparable to those existing in countries with many years of experience in development aid. For this reason we look forward to feedback, comments, words of encouragement and, when necessary, criticism. We also hope to stimulate discussion and the sharing of experience among our friends in Central Europe who face similar challenges.

JAKUB BORATYŃSKI  
Stefan Batory Foundation

# Polish NGOs Abroad

Polish NGOs Abroad is a working group of Polish NGOs active internationally and includes the following organisations:

Center for Social and Economic Research – CASE (*Centrum Analiz Społeczno-Ekonomicznych – Fundacja Naukowa CASE*);  
Civil Society Development Foundation (*Fundacja Rozwoju Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego*)  
East European Democratic Center – IDEE (*Wschodnioeuropejskie Centrum Demokratyczne IDEE*)  
Education for Democracy Foundation (*Fundacja Edukacja dla Demokracji*);  
Forum for Non-Governmental Initiatives (*Forum Inicjatyw Pozarządowych*)  
Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives (*Fundacja Inicjatyw Społeczno-Ekonomicznych*);  
Foundation in Support of Local Democracy (*Fundacja Rozwoju Demokracji Lokalnej*);  
Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (*Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka*);  
Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe – IDEE (*Instytut na Rzecz Demokracji w Europie Wschodniej*);  
Institute of Public Affairs Foundation (*Fundacja Instytut Spraw Publicznych*);  
Polish-American Freedom Foundation (*Polsko-Amerykańska Fundacja Wolności*);  
Stefan Batory Foundation (*Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego*).

# Part 1



# *Social Diplomacy, Warsaw 26-27 June 2002*

## Report on conference proceedings

The *Social Diplomacy* conference was attended by representatives of more than seventy Polish NGOs, representatives of Dutch, British, Canadian and Czech NGOs, as well as government officials, including the Foreign Ministry. The goal of the conference was to develop mechanisms for co-operation between NGOs implementing international projects and government agencies responsible for Polish foreign policy. Discussions on the subject were initiated by the Stefan Batory Foundation in December 1999 during a meeting of Foreign Ministry representatives and the leaders of NGOs active in the international field (mainly in Eastern Europe). In the spring of 2001 a working group – Polish NGOs Abroad – was established. It developed a draft document, *Partnership for Foreign Policy*, presenting measures and mechanisms of co-operation on foreign policy between the first and third sectors, recommending it as a major point of reference.

Opening the conference, Professor Bronisław Geremek, member of the Board of the Stefan Batory Foundation, pointed out the new international environment in which both governmental and non-governmental organisations operate. The definition of diplomacy as the exclusive domain of the state separated from public life has changed giving way to social diplomacy. The 1945 UN Founding Convention in San Francisco defined human rights as the legal and supra-legal reference for politics, which gave rise to a new understanding of international relations. Additionally, the common law component of international law allows NGOs to get involved in international affairs and make use of the measures that governments are unable or reluctant to apply.

Another speaker, Cornelio Sommaruga, former Chairman of the International Committee of the Red Cross, defined the new situation as the „globalisation of responsibility.” Security has become the key issue in international relations; it is no longer confined to the military, the arms industry and the armed forces. Global security is considered a complex issue and it includes freedom from famine, illnesses and environmental degradation, with such major threats, apart from terrorism, as poverty and social degradation. It has become obvious that conflicts should be prevented at the lowest level possible (i.e. at the local and community level). Prevention, the elimination of tensions and conflict resolution have become areas of direct activity of an organised civil society.

Following this presentation, models of co-operation between the third sector and government institutions in charge of foreign policy were presented and the examples of Canada, the Czech Republic, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom were cited.

Adam Novak (Alternatives, Action and Communication Network for International Development) outlined the principles underlying such co-operation and presented a case study of the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). The co-operation is based on the premise that foreign policy is under the purview of the entire society, with the government acting only as a co-ordinator with exclusive decision making powers only with respect to selected areas. The participation of religious, scientific or trade union organisations in various public platforms gives rise to a system of wider public participation in policy making. Government subsidies to NGOs are an indication of existing co-operation. CIDA originally reported to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs but is currently a separate and autonomous agency pursuing its long-term objectives based on a 5-year budget. In Canada, more than 40% of state aid funds are disbursed abroad through the mediation of NGOs. The Canadian Fund operating via the embassies provides grants to small-scale projects implemented in various countries worldwide. It is an excellent way of promoting the country's image and networking with people having a much better understanding of local social conditions than the so-called official circles usually approached by diplomats.

Šimon Pánek, founder and current director for humanitarian aid operations at the Czech-based *Člověk v Tísni* (People in Need Foundation) emphasised that although the Czech model of co-operation between the first and third sectors still lagged behind that in the West, NGOs did demonstrate large poten-

tial to affect the government's actions due to support from President Václav Havel, who considered humanitarian aid and human rights very important issues. In the early 1990s, the government continually criticised NGOs providing aid to Bosnia for interfering with state foreign policy. However, the mobilisation of public involvement, which subsequently resulted in financial support for this activity, showed NGOs were acting under a public mandate. In the late 1990s, about one third of resources designated for international humanitarian aid were disbursed via NGOs. An institutional framework has been developed whereby NGO representatives have become members of advisory teams to various departments. Although the professionalism of those organisations is still somewhat dubious, there has been a slowly growing acceptance to implementing government foreign policy through non-governmental channels and the understanding that such developments facilitate political pluralism and help promote the country's image abroad. Moreover, NGOs are capable of implementing aid projects more efficiently and effectively and may make their positions plain on issues where governments prefer to remain silent, such as human rights in China or the war in Chechnya.

The Dutch model was presented by Elizabeth Van Der Steenhoven from the Board of the National Committee of the Netherlands Organisation for International Development Co-operation. The organisation provides an umbrella for NGOs, trade unions and religious denominations that operate internationally. Financing originates from the Dutch Ministry of the Foreign Affairs, but the organisation makes autonomous decisions on the distribution of funds to NGOs. The government may not withhold financing to the Board even if the decisions taken provoke its criticism. The funds are allocated to NGOs based on their specialisation – either in a specific region (such as the CIS) or in a given problem area. The Dutch experience shows that the closer the co-operation between the two sectors, the more it is appreciated by the state. Both parties benefit from it. The state receives strong public support for its policy as well as a guarantee for its swift implementation, while the NGOs receive more resources, as well as having a growing influence and capacity for dialogue with the state. However, it is important that the borders of such co-operation be clearly defined to remind the parties of the autonomy of the two sectors and the different objectives they pursue.

The British experience was presented by Trefor G. Williams of the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. In the 1990s measures were taken in the United Kingdom to set up a separate ministry to deal exclusively with international aid. It was believed that state policy as well as strategic priorities and objectives had much in common with the goals of NGOs seeking to combat poverty. It was recognised that some foreign policy goals of the government might be attained through organisations financed by the public sector and operating on the border between the two sectors. In many respects such a situation is safe but not free from risks. It should be considered to what extent NGOs represent public interest and to what extent they are clients of specific sponsors. It is important that agreement be reached on the ultimate goals in order to guarantee openness, transparency and competition for the resources. Another issue relative to the co-operation between the state and NGOs is the question of whether NGOs are not gradually evolving into „extended arms” of the government ministries that finance their operations, and whether their involvement in third countries (especially former colonies) is not latent interference in the internal affairs of those countries or even a new, „soft” form of imperialism.

The discussion on the Polish model of co-operation between the first and the third sectors was initiated by Jacek Michałowski of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation. He informed the audience that the statistics gathered by the Klon/Jawor Association indicated there are some 50,000 NGOs in Poland (other sources give a figure of 30,000). Some 500 of them operate internationally and 90 consider it their core activity. This trend is characteristic of Polish third sector development and it results from the tradition of co-operation between the Polish democratic opposition circles and those from neighbouring countries. In addition, there is a belief that Poland's Eastern neighbours are more willing to accept Polish assistance, given its experience with transformation, than that of Western countries. A sense of responsibility is also important. Poland has received aid for many years and it is time now to pay off the debt. Co-operation between Polish and foreign organisations (from Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and the CIS; the focus on international collaboration with respect to the EU is much weaker) covers such major areas as: civil society, local democracy, enterprise development and system reforms, as well as culture and environmental protection. A large share of those projects is implemented by the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, PAUCI and IDEE (the total value of projects implemented by those foundations is estimated at USD 4 million). It is the scale of the commitment that calls for institutional collaboration between NGOs and the state, as well as defined and harmonised standards applicable to such collaboration.



In the afternoon session, the conference participants split into three groups to discuss the draft *Partnership for Foreign Policy* and agree on its final version. The groups also discussed other issues: 1) youth exchange, 2) foreign co-operation and the introduction of visa requirements for Poland's Eastern neighbours, 3) international project methodology – good and bad practice.

The second day's proceedings began with contributions from representatives of three Polish NGOs: Jacek Wojnarowski (Trust for Civil Society in Eastern Europe), Róża Thun (Polish Robert Schuman Foundation) and Krzysztof Stanowski (Education for Democracy Foundation). The first speaker defined co-operation between the first and third sectors as complementary operations that require recognition of the autonomous positions of the parties involved and the observance of the principle of delegation of tasks to the lowest possible level. At the same time he presented a pessimistic evaluation of the status of Polish NGOs – after ten years the sector suffers from inadequate self-organisation, low financial transparency and lack of sustainability. The number of NGOs keeps declining not only for financial reasons (the large American foundations that have been the source of financing to date have not been replaced with new European or national sources, whether private or public) but also because the first generation of activists have „burnt out” and have not been replaced. The adverse legal environment and unfriendly climate for NGOs are manifested through a lack of public debate on the role of the non-governmental sector. All of these factors contribute to the wasteful use of NGO potential for social diplomacy. Róża Thun pointed out the lack of co-ordination between the government and NGOs with respect to European integration. It is mainly NGOs that bring the issue up for discussion and it is neither properly utilised nor appreciated by state institutions. Likewise, Krzysztof Stanowski called attention to a similar lack of mutual support: the state is reluctant to make use of the achievements of NGOs operating abroad (in Central Asia and the Caucasus) while diplomatic activity should provide exactly the kind of support to the third sector as the state's foreign policy does to big business and vice versa. Following these presentations, representatives of the Polish NGOs Abroad working group, including Jakub Boratyński of the Stefan Batory Foundation, Lidia Kuczmierowska of the Civil Society Development Foundation and Małgorzata Naimska of the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe – IDEE presented the final draft of the *Partnership for Foreign Policy* which incorporated conclusions from the group discussions held on the first day of the conference (the full text of the document is included in this publication).

The recommendations included in the document were presented to Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, the Polish Foreign Minister. In his reply the Minister described existing government initiatives relative to co-operation with NGOs and attempts to fill in legal gaps (the draft law on public benefit organisations and volunteerism). Further, he encouraged on-going discussion of government proposals. He emphasised that a diminishing role of the state in numerous spheres of public life is a typical development in a civil society. There are some spheres of international collaboration such as social aid or community relations where NGO involvement is indispensable. Mr. Cimoszewicz believes that cross-border co-operation and visas are currently the most important issues. He feels that a reasonable interpretation of the Schengen agreements should be applied. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is currently working on a method to facilitate visa application procedures and increase the number of consulates. The Minister welcomes most of the recommendations presented. He believes that the next step should be to implement the specific solutions recommended by the participants of the conference, such as establishing an Advisory Council and scheduling its first session for September. The Minister expressed his willingness to join the meeting to compare and discuss German and French models of co-operation between the state and NGO sector. In his opinion, it would prove worthwhile to set up, in co-operation with a West European partner, a network of Polish volunteers to be deployed in Central and Eastern Europe. Such a move would facilitate the more effective use of Polish NGO know-how and skills that are necessary to operate in the region. The NGO representatives have proposed that the future system of subsidising NGOs with public funds take into account the need to cover some operating costs, which cannot normally be financed with funds designated for specific projects. The Minister also gave his consent to the idea that the representatives of NGOs sit on the inter-ministerial Board for the Promotion of Poland, which is to be set up by the government.

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Stefan Batory Foundation

# Partnership in Foreign Policy

## A proposal for co-operation between public authorities and non-governmental organisations\*

### Introduction

Through participation in the establishment of civil societies in countries transitioning to democracy and provision of humanitarian aid, non-governmental organisations can effectively supplement the activities pursued by states in the international arena. The goals pursued by NGOs frequently parallel those of state foreign policy.

This has certainly been the case of Poland: the support offered by the authorities of the Republic of Poland to democratic changes in the region, as well as the promotion of good relations with eastern neighbours and European integration, have corresponded with the activities pursued by many Polish NGOs.

The active role that NGOs play in the international arena has numerous benefits, of which the following are the most important:

1. NGOs are flexible, able to make rapid decisions and undertake activities that contribute to increasing the effectiveness of efforts taken by the state and ensuring Poland's presence in the social sphere of international relations (such as in cultural and educational activities, support for democratic change and humanitarian aid).
2. By not acting on behalf of the state, non-governmental organisations can be more open and direct in formulating opinions and proposals, which ensures a greater plurality, frequently very useful, in foreign policy.

Whenever there is very close co-operation between foreign policy missions and NGOs, it is very important to ensure the autonomy of both partners. NGOs should not aspire to the functions discharged by the state in foreign policy, and public authorities should resist the temptation to treat NGOs as an instrument or to excessively expand their own agencies and charge them with tasks that could be performed by NGOs. It is advisable that the principle of complementarity be applied when defining tasks. When there is consensus concerning basic foreign policy goals, it will be possible to find areas where the state does not have to play an active role, but where there is, and should be, a place for the involvement of citizens, especially those organised in associations and foundations.

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\* This document reflects the position of NGOs that participated in the *Social Diplomacy* conference held on June 26-27, 2002 and includes changes and supplementary material proposed during the conference while discussing the draft prepared by Polish NGOs Abroad.

In order to ensure that the idea of partnership between state authorities and NGOs in Poland becomes a fact, we put forward the following proposals: \* \*

## **I. Consultations and information exchanges between NGOs and foreign policy bodies**

### **1. Establishment of an NGO Council within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

We welcome the declaration made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs during his meeting with NGOs in March 2002 expressing his support for the idea of a Council to serve as a forum of dialogue and information exchange between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and non-governmental organisations. It is important, however, that the Council has an opportunity to do real work through holding regular meetings (once every 2-3 months) which would be attended not only by representatives of the non-governmental sector, also by an under-secretary of state and the directors of relevant departments (e.g., Eastern Europe, Promotion, the UN Socio-Economic Department) designated by the Minister.

### **2. Goals and objectives of the Council**

- To disseminate information about initiatives launched by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in areas that may concern activities and experiences of NGOs;
- To consult with the ministry on Poland's international aid strategy;
- To consult with NGOs on the premises and instruments of Poland's foreign policy towards the countries in which the NGOs are active;
- To inform Polish NGOs of prospects for their participation in various international projects launched at the international level (such as by the UN);
- To disseminate information concerning the experiences and activities undertaken by Polish NGOs abroad.

### **3. Promotion of the Council's work**

NGOs represented in the Council will appoint a secretariat charged with the task of informing the general public about the work of the Council and proposals put forward by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. They will also consult with interested parties in regard to positions taken by NGOs. The main mechanism of communication will be the discussion group available at the [www.go2east.ngo.pl](http://www.go2east.ngo.pl) web site. The Secretariat will also disseminate information concerning the Council's work among public institutions involved in aid activities.

We expect the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to take appropriate steps in ensuring that important information concerning its co-operation with the NGO sector is conveyed to the appropriate organisational units within the Ministry and, more importantly, to diplomatic missions in countries where Polish NGOs are active.

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\*\* European integration has become a very important area of collaboration between public institutions and the non-governmental sector. Undoubtedly, a lot needs to be changed in order to utilize the potential that exists in this regard fully. This issue will be covered in other meetings and discussions; we deliberately do not want to focus on it in these proposals. Some instruments of cooperation between public institutions and the non-governmental sector available in the area of foreign policy, which are proposed in this document, are of a universal nature and may also pertain to issues of European integration, but specific proposals we have put forward here regard our relations with Eastern Europe and other regions to which Poland's aid may be addressed.

#### **4. Including co-operation with NGOs in the Ministry's training curricula**

The inclusion of the non-governmental sector in training courses for both current and prospective employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs would be an important factor in establishing a culture of co-operation with NGOs. Establishing co-operation in this regard with the recently instituted Diplomatic Academy would be particularly important.

## **II. NGO participation in planning and delivering Poland's foreign assistance**

Poland's membership in the European Union will entail both the co-financing and co-development of Europe's policy regarding international development. Owing to the shortage of funds, it is hard to imagine Poland's full-scale involvement in international aid in the traditional sense – through the development of infrastructure, modernisation of agriculture, etc. However, Poland's primary contribution in this regard can be through sharing its experiences in systemic transformation, which requires much less capital.

### **1. Consultancy in international aid strategies**

NGOs should be invited to participate in discussions in regard to assumptions concerning Poland's international aid policy and preparations for implementing the strategy. In our opinion it is expedient to allow NGOs access to working documents and drafts in order to ensure their greater involvement in the consultation process.

### **2. Concentration of public funding for international aid**

A public debate on the strategy of international aid should result in the concentration and clear identification of public funds available for its implementation. In order to ensure greater transparency of public funding and rational planning of state activities, it would be advisable to stop financing aid from the budget reserve and create a separate budget item for this purpose. Funding earmarked for international aid should not be dispersed through numerous ministries, as is currently the case.

### **3. Support for Polish NGOs within the framework of multilateral aid programs**

Polish diplomacy should actively support the efforts of Polish NGOs that want to participate in international aid programs financed by the UN, EU (e.g. TACIS) and other international organisations and government aid agencies (e.g. USAID programmes). Informing NGOs about the possibility of participating in such programmes would be an important task of the Foreign Ministry. Financial support granted by the government to projects of Polish NGOs increases the credibility of these organisations when seeking funds from international donors.

### **4. Co-operation with NGOs during official visits by Polish government officials**

We suggest that the itineraries of foreign visits paid by the President, Prime Minister and Ministers include meetings with representatives of Polish NGOs conducting programs in the host country. The inclusion of NGO representatives, along with representatives of the business community, in delegations accompanying the President and Prime Minister on their visits is also worth considering.

### **5. Broadening the definition of international aid**

The Polish government and NGOs have a common interest in persuading our foreign partners, which expect Poland to be more involved in international aid (in such organisations as the OECD, EU or UN),

that the definition of international aid should take into account the aid provided by Poland to its Eastern neighbours and other CIS countries.

### **III. Institutional mechanisms of organising and financing international aid**

For the next several years Poland will not be in a position to establish a ministry or a central agency for international aid, based on the example of countries that have conducted aid programmes for decades. However, the same goal could be attained today should (low cost) organisational measures be taken that will ensure the highest possible efficiency and flexibility of aid activities implemented by external entities. Depending on the nature of each project, this role could be played by NGOs, scientific and educational institutions or commercial companies.

#### **1.1. Foundation for International Aid**

The experience of other countries indicates that it is necessary to separate the function of outlining the main directions of international aid (which quite naturally falls within the authority of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) from translating the adopted policy into specific programmes that should be managed by an institution operating outside the structures of the Ministry. A public foundation currently appears to be the best legal form. Such a function could be discharged, after the postulated changes have been introduced, by the Polish Know How Foundation.

#### **1.2. Objectives and areas of the Foundation's activities**

The Foundation would support the following programmes:

- Sharing the experiences of Poland's transformation gained in such areas as macro and micro-economic reform, reform of the legal system as well as local government and state administration reform. Aid could be offered in the form of working visits to Poland, expert consultancy as well as training and publications in foreign languages;
- Research summarising experiences gained during Poland's transition;
- Humanitarian aid in situations of natural and man-made disasters, and small development projects (e.g. reconstruction of schools and furnishing hospitals with equipment) in post-conflict areas;
- Development of civil society through strengthening non-governmental organisations and citizen groups as well as through mobilising local communities;
- Independent media;
- Promotion of human rights and freedom;
- Democratic movements in authoritarian states;
- Democratic institutions and the rule of law;
- Cultural and educational exchange;
- Bilateral programmes aimed at eliminating historically-rooted tensions;
- Internship and scholarship programmes.

An important task of the Foundation would be representing Poland in programmes of international aid by participating both in projects launched within the framework of the UN or EU and in programmes implemented under bilateral government agreements.

#### **1.3. Legal status and organisational structure of the Foundation**

As a public body whose task it is to finance the implementation of state policy from the budget, the Foundation should be accountable to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its activity and for the way the allocated funding is disbursed. Legal and organisational solutions should prevent the Foundation from becoming a political tool and ensure the professional implementation of the long-term strategy of Polish foreign policy.

The Foundation's organisational structure could consist of the following bodies:

### **Foundation Council**

The supervisory function should be discharged by the Foundation Council composed of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other relevant ministries (including the Ministry of Finance), members of Parliament (e.g. members of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Public Finance Committee, Liaison Committee with Polish Communities Abroad), senators, representatives of government agencies involved in foreign affairs and - extremely important from our point of view - individuals designated by non-governmental organisations. This model should ensure ongoing co-operation between NGOs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the realisation of the state's long-term policy and the organisation of intervention measures (e.g. humanitarian campaigns).

The form of public supervision discussed above would ensure the meeting of standards of quality (transparency of adopted priorities, finances, criteria followed when subsidies are granted and contracts are awarded), reliability and dialogue with various entities involved in Poland's foreign policy.

An element improving communications between the Foundation and the NGO sector could be consulting, with respect to its strategy, and presenting reports to the NGO Council operating in conjunction with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

### **Foundation Board**

The adopted legal framework should allow for the establishment of a Foundation Board that would be apolitical and capable of professionally managing the organisation on a long-term basis. Board members should be appointed following a recruitment process open to the general public and based on the candidates' qualifications and experience. The Board would appoint task forces that will facilitate seeking the advice of external experts, including representatives of NGOs, in both technical issues (e.g., developing detailed principles for allocating grants or awarding tenders), and substantive issues (e.g., formulating priorities concerning methods of supporting economic reforms in Ukraine).

### **Foundation Office**

The main duty of the Foundation Office would be to ensure that financing procedures are managed in an efficient manner. A small team of the Foundation's specialists should focus on the management, monitoring and evaluation of grant programmes. Substantial independent potential, on the operating level, is not necessary.

## **1.4. Sources of financing and the mechanism of fund distribution**

The annual budget item defining the expenditures for international aid should be the main source of the Foundation's revenues. Provisions should also be made for the Foundation to receive funding from other domestic and foreign sources. However, these sources should be supplementary in nature as it would be inappropriate for the Foundation to compete for funding with NGOs.

Depending on the nature of the aid, individual tasks could be discharged both by NGOs and business entities. The main mechanism underlying the allocation of funds to projects and programmes would be public competitions for grants (subsidies for specific tasks). In the case of tasks that could be discharged both by a NGO and a business entity, it would be necessary to establish procedures stemming from the Law on Public Procurement. Commissions assessing applications should consist of experts working outside the state administration and the Foundation.

Organisations applying for grants should provide their own financial contribution, but in view of the specificity of activities pursued abroad and their costs, this rule should not be applied automatically. It would be wrong to assume that overhead and administrative costs of projects should not be covered by the grant. It follows from previous experience (e.g. of humanitarian organisations) that organisations are capable of raising in-kind and monetary subsidies from private sponsors to cover direct project costs, but the barrier they are frequently not able to overcome is acquiring the funds needed for remuneration and administrative costs.

Financial reporting procedures should allow for some flexibility, taking into account situations in countries where conflict has just ended or where all services are part of the so-called grey sphere of the national economy. Flexibility cannot justify an absence of transparency or the discretionary use of funds.

## 2. Polish Democracy Fund

A solution worth considering in the future is the establishment of a Democracy Fund with a much narrower area of activity than the Foundation for International Aid. This conception, inspired by such institutions as the National Endowment for Democracy in the United States or the Westminster Foundation for Democracy in Great Britain, would allow a flexible and effective foreign policy to be pursued at relatively low cost. As an entity loosely tied to the state, and benefiting from its resources, the Fund would make it possible also to pursue activities in those areas and regions that are only marginally covered by the more formal activity of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, or in circumstances when direct involvement of state agencies is difficult. The Democracy Fund could be an independent institution, which means that it would not be appointed by the government but only supervised by representatives of the government and parliament by way of their membership in its supervisory bodies.

As an alternative solution, the funding allocated to the Democracy Fund could be entrusted to an existing NGO that is considered reliable and experienced in transparent procedures involving the allocation of grants to other NGOs that collaborate with foreign partners.

## IV. Issues of cross-border co-operation

Cross-border co-operation provides a major opportunity for border regions. It mitigates the negative effects of the distance that divides them from central regions and can stimulate the development of under-developed areas. A study featuring a wide range of initiatives that can be launched in this area is included in the publication *Międzynarodowa Działalność Polskich Organizacji Pozarządowych*\*\*\* (*International Activity of Polish NGOs*) that has been prepared for the conference. Activities that may facilitate the development of cross-border co-operation are listed below:

### 1. Greater access to funding and transparent procedures

Funding available for cross-border co-operation is insufficient. A particular barrier is the lack of funding available to our Eastern partners. Public funding should be released at the national, voivodship and local levels through transparent competitions for grants.

### 2. Partnership with local governments

On both sides of the border there is a need for greater understanding and acceptance of the importance of NGOs and civil initiatives for cross-border co-operation. This co-operation cannot be confined only to official exchanges. There should be wide agreement in each region involving the various players: local governments, businesses, NGOs and media.

### 3. Improved conditions of crossing the border

One of the major barriers that impede mutual co-operation are long lines at border crossing points, the disrespectful treatment of visitors and imprecise regulations concerning border crossing procedures. These issues, the majority of which do not fall within the authority of local governments, should become a serious topic of negotiations conducted at the national level. New threats arise in connection with the introduction of visas, a problem discussed below.

### 4. Access to European funds designated for cross-border co-operation

Polish authorities should undertake efforts to increase EU funds designated for funding cross-border co-operation with the EU's Eastern neighbours and facilitate access to these funds for local governments and NGOs.

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\*\*\* *Międzynarodowa Działalność Polskich Organizacji Pozarządowych*, edited by Grażyna Czubek, Warsaw, 2002.

## V. Introduction of visas for Poland's Eastern neighbours

The introduction of visas should be accompanied by measures that minimise their negative consequences, mainly the declining number of people coming to Poland (detailed solutions are presented in the enclosure: Poland's Visa Policy). Efforts should be made to ensure that people who maintain close relations with Poland, including partners of Polish NGOs, are offered privileges to minimise any hardship involved in applying for a visa. We also believe that it is in the interest of Poland, as well as the entire European Union, that our neighbours do not think that Europe wants to build a wall in order to keep them out. Accordingly, the system of issuing visas should be friendly to all citizens of such states as Russia, Belarus and Ukraine.

The above could be accomplished by the following means:

- Issuing multiple entry visas with long validity periods;
- Low visa prices (at the present level) or issuing visas free of charge;
- Possibility of applying for a visa by mail or through a travel agency;
- Greater number of well-staffed consulates;
- Building new border crossings;
- Recognition of Schengen visas as transit visas;
- Adherence to standards of treating people crossing borders professionally and with dignity;
- Facilitating local border traffic;
- Conducting an information campaign aimed at ordinary people on the Eastern side of the border concerning the introduction of visas.

Polish authorities should also undertake efforts to facilitate the issuance of visas to Polish citizens travelling to countries that will introduce visa requirements to Poland.

## VI. Youth Exchange

Youth Exchange plays a very important role in the development of contacts between neighbours - direct meetings are the best way to overcome prejudice and stereotypes. There is no doubt that large-scale youth exchanges played an important part in improving Polish-German relations. Unfortunately, despite the declared willingness to co-operate with our Eastern neighbours and in spite of bilateral agreements concluded to that effect, there is a striking disparity between exchanges with Germany and exchanges with Ukraine, Belarus or Russia.

Therefore, we propose the following:

1. The establishment of a Polish-Ukrainian institution modelled on the Polish-German Youth Exchange „Jugendwerk” and Polish-Ukrainian „Meeting Houses” (similarly based on a Polish-German model). Achieving this goal could be accomplished through reconsidering the initiative involving the Polish-Ukrainian agreement initially drafted in 1996. Afterwards, we should examine if similar mechanisms could be created to promote Polish-Russian and Polish-Belarusian exchanges.
2. The promotion of the least expensive form of youth exchanges between schools. Schoolchildren are accommodated in the homes of their colleagues, and external financing would mainly cover relatively low travel costs. Small grants, with simplified procedures, could support this type of activity.
3. The modification of procedures of the „Youth” community program, so that the programme could be more useful in generating youth exchanges between Poland and Eastern neighbours.
4. The inclusion of specific instruments promoting youth exchanges in co-operation among Euro-regions.



## **VII. Co-operation between Poland's diplomatic missions and Polish NGOs**

Co-operation between Polish embassies and NGOs should become the rule. As an important element of the Polish presence in a given country, the activities pursued by non-governmental organisations should become a focus of attention of Polish diplomatic missions.

Therefore, we propose the following measures:

1. To provide Polish diplomatic missions with an information package about NGOs, which will be updated on an annual basis.
2. To include brief informational sessions, attended by NGO representatives, in the agenda of annual meetings of representatives of Polish diplomatic missions.
3. To appoint an employee responsible for contacts with NGOs in each Polish diplomatic mission (in smaller missions this task could be discharged by the ambassador).
4. To organise meetings between prospective staff and NGO representatives working in a given country to which the former are assigned.

The organisations that participate in the *Partnership for Foreign Policy* initiative will spare no effort to ensure that the activities they pursue abroad are professional, reflect well on Poland and serve the societies to which they are addressed. As a token of our good will, we hereby sign this Declaration of Guiding Principles of Polish Non-governmental Organisations Working Abroad, which is our commitment to observe the standards of conduct included therein.

## Guiding Principles of Polish Non-governmental Organisations Working Abroad

1. The people, organisations and local communities with which we work in the East are our partners. As partners, they have the right to know and understand the nature of any joint project.
2. We do our utmost to help our partners become sustainable, we do not patronise them or make them dependent on us.
3. We demonstrate by our actions that the ideas of democracy and civil society are not just empty slogans.
4. We are good and reliable managers of all our programmes. We require this from ourselves and from others. We do not shift the burden of programme financing on a less resource-rich partner. We never make rash promises.
5. We do not become involved in programmes that do not pursue important public or community goals.
6. While preparing for an international project we familiarise ourselves with the culture, history, language, customs, the bases of the legal and political systems, the realities of life as well as the religions of the countries and peoples with which we will work. We build our programmes respecting local culture and traditions.
7. We do our utmost to ensure that programmes are conducted in the language of the beneficiary. The use of international languages is limited to a minimum.
8. We are committed to the safety and security of our partners. When working in authoritarian countries we are mindful of the fact that it is the local NGO leaders that take most of the risk.
9. We build understanding across borders. The citizens of Belarus, Lithuania and Ukraine are our hosts and we wish to assist them in building independence, democracy and a strong economy in their countries.
10. While working abroad, we create a good image of Poland. Whenever possible we maintain contacts with Polish diplomatic missions.

Dom Pojednania i Spotkań im. Św. Maksymiliana Kolbego  
(*St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House*), Gdańsk  
Fundacja Edukacja dla Demokracji (*Education for Democracy  
Foundation*), Warsaw

Fundacja Idealna Gmina (*Ideal Municipality Foundation*), Warsaw  
Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego (*Stefan Batory Foundation*), Warsaw  
Fundacja Inicjatyw Społeczno-Ekonomicznych (*Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives*), Warsaw  
Fundacji Instytut na Rzecz Demokracji w Europie Wschodniej – IDEE (*Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe – IDEE*), Warsaw  
Fundacja Rozwoju Demokracji Lokalnej – Ośrodek Samorządu Lokalnego (*Local Government Centre of the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy*), Olsztyn  
Fundacja Rozwoju Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego (*Civil Society Development Foundation*), Warsaw  
Fundacja Solidarność Polsko-Czesko-Słowacka (*Polish-Czech-Slovak Solidarity Foundation*), Warsaw  
Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka (*Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights*), Warsaw  
Instytut Spraw Publicznych (*Institute of Public Affairs*), Warsaw  
Małopolskie Towarzystwo Oświatowe (*Educational Society for Malopolska*), Nowy Sącz  
Nidzicka Fundacja Rozwoju (*Nidzice Development Foundation*), Nidzica  
Stowarzyszenie „Dzielimy się tym co mamy” (*„We Share Whatever We Have” Association*), Łuków  
Stowarzyszenie Młoda Demokracja (*Young Democracy Foundation*), Lublin  
Stowarzyszenie Wschodnioeuropejskie Centrum Demokratyczne IDEE (*Eastern European Democratic Centre Association – IDEE*), Warsaw

# Statement by Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs at the *Social Diplomacy* conference

I do not wish to claim that we in the new cabinet, more than our predecessors, have a stronger sensitivity to and a better understanding of the challenges faced by NGOs. I am under the impression that as years go by and Poland progresses along the path of change everyone seems increasingly to understand that the state ought not to be omnipotent. We also have a better appreciation for the fact that public participation and initiative in a number of areas previously dominated by government agencies and officials are trademarks of a civil society.

The topic of this meeting is social diplomacy. The organisers have rightly pointed out that NGOs are very active in this field. Let me add that local and regional government is also playing an important role as a more effective advocate of local communities than the national government.

Further, the organisers of this meeting have also emphasised that the activities of NGOs are complementary to the activities of government. I would go even further than that and say that they can and should be substitutive in many areas. Whenever public institutions cannot take up certain projects because of protocol or political correctness there is much room for civil initiative. It should be stressed that there are numerous fields where NGOs are irreplaceable and these are areas critical to the public interest (e.g. co-operation between societies). Indeed, there are numerous difficult historical issues between Poland and some of our neighbours, as well as contemporary challenges, that are difficult to solve through traditional official diplomacy. Sensitive issues are more readily sidelined, if only because of opportunism, as it is more convenient to take up often important current affairs. Secondly, accords reached by politicians do not necessarily change the consciousness of people and societies. In fact, who but NGOs and community leaders are going to revise the troubling stereotypes engraved in Polish minds vis-à-vis our neighbours and in our neighbours' stereotypes about Poles. No official diplomacy can be truly effective here. We, politicians and civil servants, can grant interviews and attend meetings, but the general public does not always perceive this as credible. As a matter of fact, a random meeting between a Pole and a Belarusian on a train from Grodno to Warsaw is often more important than listening to a speech by a foreign minister. It is here that NGOs can fill the gap.

Yesterday, I met with a group of Russian journalists visiting Poland at the invitation of the Stefan Batory Foundation. We discussed bilateral relations and I reminded them of a proposal I once made to the Russian government that in building our new relations we should employ forms of dialogue successfully used in Polish-German relations. The Russian side accepted my proposal. I believe, however, that only credible and respected community leaders, and not state leaders, are capable of openly and candidly discussing difficult issues that have to date been avoided for a variety of reasons. They burden our consciousness and result in young people studying different versions of history from official textbooks. This certainly does not facilitate understanding or friendly feelings between neighbours. I am referring to areas where NGOs have a leading role to play, rather than a complementary or substitutive role.

It has been recalled here that I met a number of people involved in organising today's meeting three months ago. We discussed numerous issues. I believe it is easier to talk now thanks to our earlier contacts and my involvement in the dialogue initiated by the NGOs. I also think we will not have any problems agreeing on the issues under discussion.

That brings me to the actual proposals. I endorse nearly everything that has been proposed. I reconfirm my earlier support for the idea of a consultative board advising the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Let's

do it. All I need is a dozen or so names and the board will be appointed. It may meet for its first session as early as September.

I have no problem with the proposal regarding NGO participation and presentation of issues to meetings of diplomats. I invite all of you to the regular meeting of Polish ambassadors on July 3. Time will be allotted for NGOs presentations. I agree that NGO issues should be integrated into staff training programmes of the Foreign Office. The new Diplomatic Academy will open this autumn, which comes as the realisation of my policy to structure personnel policies, recruitment, promotion and career paths in Polish diplomacy. In August, we will hire 50 new Foreign Office staff in a competitive process, who will attend various training courses over a four-semester period. I see no reason why the programmes should not incorporate NGO issues and social diplomacy and why new diplomats should not develop working relationships with NGO leaders. After receiving their assignments these diplomats will have working relationships with social partners as part of their job description.

I fully subscribe to the idea of centralising foreign aid allocated by our government, particularly as these funds are extremely limited. I support the proposal to identify a special institution to be responsible for distributing the funds. Perhaps the Polish Know How Foundation could take on this role. Some changes to the existing operation will, however, first have to be agreed upon. How can I help in this regard? We are just beginning work on next year's budget. I could submit a relevant proposal to the Finance Minister. However, I cannot be sure whether the Council of Ministers can be persuaded to adopt this change.

I do not wish to comment on specific challenges related to the management of such a central foreign aid organisation. Yet, it is indeed appropriate for such an organisation to work primarily on a competitive grant basis. This would essentially involve a non-governmental organisation granting funds to other non-governmental organisations and local governments. Clearly, we must remember about appropriate safeguards for the Foreign Minister to be able to influence policy. Ultimately, it is the Foreign Minister's job to define the types, scope and targets of aid. Therefore, it is essential that such an organisation work in conjunction with Polish foreign policy and the national interests of Poland.

Further, I like the idea of setting up a Polish Democracy Fund. It is in Poland's public interest that as many elements as possible of a civil society, a free and democratic state and the rule of law be established in our immediate and not-so-immediate surroundings. This desire emanates not only from the commitment to certain values but also from the understanding of national interests: security, co-operation and the existence of partners in other countries with whom we share similar goals and objectives. In this context, the involvement of NGOs and organisations like the proposed Polish Democracy Fund clearly harmonises with and logically complements the activities of the government. Please, do not think this is coquetry. Let us just agree the proposal is a first step and let us work from here.

Now, let me respond to cross-border co-operation. The document I have been presented covers a broad range of issues. I wish to discuss only a couple of them. I believe that the issue of people crossing the border with dignity has not been seen as a problem area to date. I have spoken on this matter with the Commander-in-Chief of the Border Guard and the Minister of Internal Affairs and Administration. It is a matter of principle and, to some degree, pragmatism. The way visitors are treated at ports of entry says a lot about a country and its people. Frankly, I see no reason why we should ignore any inappropriate behaviour displayed by some civil servants. This is counter to our national interests. These public officials simply have to change their behaviour. I know it will not be easy – inappropriate conduct is often discrete and difficult to eliminate. But we have to start doing it.

One other word on cross-border co-operation. The Białowieska Forest area is perhaps the most spectacular example of a nonsensical administrative division of what is a homogenous ecosystem. For decades an impermeable fence preventing inherent wildlife migration has divided the Forest. It is highly desirable that we come up with a mutual arrangement to manage such areas jointly. A national park has been established on the Belarusian side, just as on the Polish side. The wood-louse infestation that occurs in patches on the Polish side and requires the removal of several spruces tends to kill the entire forest on the other side. The use of different standards, management concepts and lack of co-operation with regard to the same ecosystem has harmful ramifications. On the initiative of social diplomats (local government), representatives of the local communities concerned in both countries signed a memorandum of understanding to set up a new Białowieska Forest Euro-region last month. This is an initiative that is designed to serve specific social and economic interests, as well as the interests of the local population. Moreover, it also fosters common thinking about this important and magnificent natural heritage site. This is an outstanding example of co-operation that should inspire other cross-border projects.

For me the most critical issue presented in the document is introduction of visas for our eastern neighbours. It is our intention to ensure effective border controls without unnecessarily burdening citizens. We want to do our utmost to facilitate the visa application procedure. We are looking for reliable partners, such as travel agents and various organisations, including non-governmental organisations that could accept visa applications on our behalf. Certainly, no one can replace the consul in making the actual decision. A meeting was recently held among officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Administration in which important decisions were made. We want to charge the lowest possible visa fees in order to cover administrative costs. Furthermore, we are planning to ensure free visas to certain categories of visitors, such as youth and college students.

There is one point in the document where opinions differ. We will apply the principle of reciprocity. While we do not wish to interfere with cross-border traffic we cannot allow a situation to develop in which the interests of foreign nationals take precedence over the interests of our own citizens. This is why I told the Russian journalists, mentioned earlier, that Warsaw wanted visa fees to be as low as possible for Russians. However, the decision on this matter will be made in Moscow rather than in Warsaw. If Russia resolves to lower the visa fees paid by Polish nationals we will do exactly the same. Moreover, we have repeatedly told our neighbours that if they decide not to impose visas on Polish citizens we will reduce our visa fees even further. We hold the view that the government can subsidise the fees, provided Polish citizens are not required to obtain foreign visas and do not have to pay for them. This is how we wish to encourage our neighbours. Ultimately, unlike Poland, they are under no legal obligation to maintain a visa system. Theirs is purely a political decision. We have initiated a consultation process on this issue. If our neighbours adopt a pragmatic approach I am committed to lowering visa fees further, even below the level of administrative costs. In addition, we are willing to apply a system of long-term visas, multiple entry visas, etc. Some legal aspects have to be supported by an appropriate interpretation of the Schengen rules, which is a current topic of our discussions with the European Union.

Today, the EU is keen on finding a solution to the issue of Kaliningrad. Poland is open to flexible arrangements. There are two reservations, however. First, the EU must not propose specific arrangements for Kaliningrad that would extend the period of border controls between Poland and Germany after Poland becomes an EU member state itself. Polish citizens must not pay the price for the flexibility of visa systems for our eastern neighbours. Second, we will not accept anything that would lead to treating the citizens of neighbouring countries differently. We want flexibility for everyone because we do not want any arrangements that could potentially be labelled as discriminatory or reflective of a change in Poland's foreign policy. Neither is true and this must not happen. I believe that the Schengen accords need not be modified, if reasonably interpreted, to provide for the right to issue visas at ports of entry provided these ports of entry are logistically and technologically suited, as consulates are, to ensure reliable checks on the visitor. With good will on the part of the current 15 member states such border controls can be put in place, which would greatly facilitate the necessary checking process for the average visitor from a neighbouring country.

Let's consider these issues very carefully, without leading anyone to believe that Poland is not determined to implement the Schengen system. This comment is not to be interpreted as wavering on the issue of introducing a visa system. It will be introduced. And we will do our utmost to make it work efficiently.

I also want to share my positive reaction to the youth exchange programmes. I met with Igor Ivanov several months ago at the Baltic Council in Svetlogorsk, where we discussed the Kaliningrad issue. I proposed that we place an emphasis on youth exchange programmes. I think youth exchange and enhanced co-operation between schools and universities and student exchange programmes can make a big difference. Among others, I proposed broadening programmes of co-operation between Kaliningrad-based universities and the Agricultural Academy in Olsztyn or the Medical Academy in Białystok. I believe that despite all the budget constraints that we are experiencing in Poland today, we should mobilise greater resources to fund international youth scholarships. I recently hosted the Ambassador of Vietnam who was ending his mission in Poland, a translator of Polish literature and one of 4,500 Vietnamese who have graduated from a Polish university. Their use of Poland's educational system has been beneficial for our country's economic interests. We have many reasons to welcome youth, especially our eastern neighbours. The Polish-American Freedom Foundation has already provided such scholarships to young people from Slovakia, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine. I held talks with Fulbright country directors from all over Europe and Freedom Foundation grantees last week. And I would like to declare our commitment to provide greater support to the Polish Fulbright programme in order to ensure that this

highly effective Polish-American co-operation programme, stretching back more than 50 years, encounters no major obstacles. I will make a point of advocating increased government spending in this area during the upcoming budget talks. However, you must remember that final decisions are largely driven by departmental selfishness. Every member of the cabinet is determined to fight for their interests to the last drop of blood. This is understandable. Yet, the sad point is that there is always too little money for all justified needs. Nonetheless, I will try winning others over to this cause. As a matter of fact, the money at stake is relatively small and the benefits are unquestionably huge.

I can already confirm on behalf of the Foreign Ministry that we are prepared to sit down and discuss youth exchange programmes and to seek the support of other ministries. However, I do not know whether my department is actively developing such contacts. There is ample evidence, though, that such co-operation is an excellent instrument. I vividly recall the case of Wilkanów, a small village near Bystrzyca, where the local school was destroyed by the 1997 flood. The school was rebuilt thanks in part to the support of readers of *Die Zeit* and is currently a meeting place for youth from the Czech Republic, Poland and Germany. This is an approach that is especially close to my heart. It shows that co-operation is worthwhile. Therefore, let's work together for such initiatives.





## Part 2



# History of Co-operation between Polish NGOs and Foreign Partners

Looking back over the last dozen or so years, the history of international activities of Polish NGOs divides into three periods:

**1989 – 1994** – the period of drawing on the experiences of the West as well as establishing initial contacts with partners from Eastern Europe;

**1995 – 1998** – the period when the pioneers of international co-operation paved the way to the East;

Since **1999** – the period of growing interest on the part of Polish NGOs in establishing contacts with other countries.

## Initial Contacts (1989–1994)

In first years after democratic transformation began in Poland NGOs to mushroom on a large scale and relied heavily on the aid and experience of their Western partners. Poland was then frequently visited by representatives of foreign NGOs and trade unions. Many new organisations were established and contacts between organisations that had existed before World War II (Scouts, YMCA) were re-established.

Organisations that had operated earlier either underground or semi-officially, such as the Polish-Czech-Slovak Solidarity, Karta Center Foundation, the Helsinki Committee, or the Pomost Society, began to legalise their activities as associations or foundations and to launch pioneering initiatives in the East. Those were the days of animated activity on the part of the Civic Parliamentary Caucus, the Independent Student Association, and the Polish Scouting Union, which established relations with the scouting movements in Ukraine and Latvia. The roots and motives underlying the foreign activities of Poland's third sector can be found in the traditions of such social movements as the Solidarity Trade Union of the 1980s. The *Message to the Working People of Eastern Europe*, adopted at Solidarity's first congress in the autumn of 1981, was the ideological declaration of those days.

However, for Poland and its NGOs, those were also the days of settling accounts with the past – a time of public discussion about the place of national minorities in the Republic of Poland and about fostering positive attitudes towards national minorities, which was a conscious step towards the restoration of contacts with the people in neighbouring countries. Many initiatives of rapprochement with Ukrainians, Belarusians, Czechs and Slovaks were launched during a time when there was fuzzy distinction between the opposition organisations of the 1980s and the emerging third sector.

Since 1989, an active role has been played by the Stefan Batory Foundation, numerous initiatives addressed to the elites of Central and Eastern Europe through the Central and East European Forum. It was the Forum that sponsored visits to Poland by such distinguished persons as Vytautas Landsbergis, Vaclav Havel and Viacheslav Chornovil. In 1991, the Foundation initiated its East-East Programme to foster contacts between countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

In 1990 the Borderland Foundation of Sejny and the NN Theatre of Lublin began to play a very important role in laying the foundations of neighbourly co-operation by staging meetings between the residents of borderland communities (*Meetings of Cultures*, exhibitions featuring artists from neighbouring countries and sessions devoted to Bruno Schulz and other personalities of a shared history, thus promoting a culture of mutual respect and understanding).

The initial years of the Third Polish Republic were also marked by the discovery of Poles living outside Poland, mainly in the East, and the significant efforts to help them. The Polish Community Association, built on what remained of the state-controlled „Polonia” organisation as well as many local organisations that invoked the traditions of Poland’s pre-war eastern borderlands, began to seek out Polish communities abroad, to establish contacts with them and to support the revival of Polish national identity, education and culture.

## **Paving the Way (1995–1999)**

At the turn of 1993/94 the main players and forms of activities began to change. The distinction between political parties and NGOs became clear-cut. Programmes initiated at this time were not confined to occasional meetings or dialogue between cultures, but involved structured activities designed to help solve specific problems.

It was during this period that a group of organisations made a conscious effort to work outside Poland, which included:

- The **Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights**, which quickly gained the status of the most important training centre with respect to human rights in Central and Eastern Europe;

- The **Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe – IDEE**, established by Irena Lasota. The Centers for Pluralism network that covered the entire region and its *Newsletter*, published since 1992, greatly contributed to the promotion of contacts among organisations of Eastern and Southern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia;

- The **Education for Democracy Foundation**, which systematically continued to develop a network of local trainer teams to support local communities in their efforts to build civil societies through civic education in Eastern Europe and Central Asia;

- The **Polish-Czech-Slovak Solidarity Foundation**, which by organising internships brought the accomplishments of Poland and its NGOs closer to hundreds of local non-governmental activists, printers, publishers of independent newspapers, and journalists;

- Through its **Central- and East European Forum** and the **East-East Programme**, the **Stefan Batory Foundation** became (along with the National Endowment for Democracy, the Polish-German Youth Co-operation and PHARE programmes) the major sponsor of activities conducted abroad by Polish NGOs;

- The **Institute of Eastern Studies Foundation**, which organises the Economic Forum at Krynica (a major event in business and political circles), and **CASE** (the **Centre for Social and Economic Research**), which supports economic, social and political transformations in countries of the former Eastern bloc through its expert services. Both organisations have had an impact on business and political leaders.

In addition to the organisations mentioned above, an important role, particularly within the context of Polish-German dialogue, has been played by Meeting Houses, which were largely established due to the Agreement on Polish-German Youth Co-operation. The majority of these Houses are involved in Polish-German exchanges, while the **Nowy Staw Foundation**, which operates a house in the vicinity of Lublin, and the **St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House** in Gdańsk have been actively involved in programmes addressed to partners in Ukraine and Belarus since their inception.

The **Polish Robert Schuman Foundation** has played a very special role in the history of Polish NGOs. Established in 1991, the foundation’s aim is to prepare Poland and its citizens for voluntary membership in the European Union.

Since the mid-1990s, a growing number of organisations, previously working mainly in Poland, have become active in the East. They include the **Foundation in Support of Local Democracy** and a few of its branches located throughout Poland, the **Civil Society Development Foundation**, **Rural Development Foundation**, the **Polish Humanitarian Organisation**, the **Institute of Public Affairs** and the **Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives**.

In the second half of the 1990s it became clear that Ukraine was the main focus of attention by Poland’s NGOs. Because of the difficult situation in Belarus and the fact that the Soros Foundation had to leave that country, Poland’s NGOs mobilised to offer active support to the democratic opposition in that country. In addition, some Polish NGOs shifted the focus of their attention to regions further east or south. They became increasingly more involved in the Balkans and the most experienced of them launched long-term programmes in the Caucasus, Central Asia, Russia and Mongolia.

## Neighbourly Partnerships (1999– )

A rapid boom in foreign activity conducted by Polish non-governmental organisations occurred at the turn of the century. The road to the East, paved by the pioneering organisations of the 1990s, becomes accessible to a significant number of Polish NGOs. Foreign programmes are no longer carried out by a dozen or several dozen organisations, but by hundreds of organisations, both those that are national in scope and those with a local character. Based on information from the Database of Non-governmental Organisations, it is estimated that, among the 2500 large non-governmental organisations, approximately 550 are engaged in international co-operation. International activity is a priority for 90 organisations.

NGOs are able to conduct international programmes thanks to a growing number of sponsors. In addition to local sponsors and major European and American foundations, in 1998-1999 the Stefan Batory Foundation was joined by the Polish Know How Foundation, established by the Polish state, the inter-governmental Poland-America-Ukraine Cooperation Initiative (PAUCI), and RITA (a programme of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation administered by the Education for Democracy Foundation).

A conference *NATO, European Union, Central and Eastern Europe. NGOs in Poland's Foreign Policy*, held in 1999 at Falenty by the Stefan Batory Foundation in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, initiated a series of meetings involving those Polish NGOs engaged in international co-operation. Meetings of the representatives of those organisations facilitated information exchanges and developed common standards of activity (*Guiding Principles of Polish Non-governmental Organisations Working Abroad*). They further resulted in the launching of the [www.go2east.ngo.pl](http://www.go2east.ngo.pl) web site, highlighting the accomplishments of Polish NGOs in the region and allowing more efficient contacts with partners in other sectors to be established.

KRZYSZTOF STANOWSKI  
Education for Democracy Foundation

# Profiles of Selected Polish NGOs Operating Abroad

This overview concerns Polish non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that conduct projects abroad on a regular, rather than one-off basis. These organisations are primarily active in countries that emerged in Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Central Asia after the collapse of the USSR. All of the NGOs featured below co-operate with Ukrainian partners. Other important partnerships have been established with organisations in Russia (the Kaliningrad Oblast') and Belarus. Another important group of partners comprises organisations in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Lithuania, and Germany as well as in the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The organisations presented below have different areas of interest, ranging from environmental issues, human rights, education, civil education and culture to politics and economic issues. Projects take the form of training courses, internships, workshops and conferences addressed to representatives of other NGOs and local governments, to parliamentary deputies, politicians and to professionals in specific areas (teachers, lawyers and journalists). The purpose of these activities is exchanging experiences and knowledge about the political, economic and societal transformations currently under way in Poland. Polish NGOs are also involved in research and monitoring activity as well as in humanitarian aid. The NGO profiles below focus on activities conducted in 2000.

For many years, projects implemented by Polish NGOs in countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans and Central Asia have been financed solely from foreign government support (USAID, the British Know How Fund, MATRA) or from private sources (the Ford Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the National Endowment for Democracy or the Stefan Batory Foundation). Foreign sponsors appreciate the fact that Polish NGOs are well informed about the needs existing in the East and that, as a result, they are able to utilise available resources in a more efficient way. Polish organisations administer the programmes of major foreign foundations under which grants are allocated. Examples include the Education for Democracy Foundation, which administers the RITA programme of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, and the Environment Partnership Foundation, which administers grants allocated by the Environmental Partnership for Central Europe Consortium.

Over time possibilities arose for funding projects from Polish sources, such as the Polish Know How Foundation and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. However, a considerable portion of activities continues to be financed by foreign sponsors. This has led to a somewhat paradoxical situation in which NGOs, acting as they do – by virtue of their activities – as Poland's ambassadors, do so with money from abroad and, often enough, without any interest on the part of Poland's diplomatic missions.

The overview presented below is the first attempt to summarise the activities conducted by this group of NGOs. It is our intention to modify and update this summary every year, expanding it to include profiles of other organisations.

## **Nature of Co-operation**

### **Sharing Knowledge and Exchanging Information**

The purpose of these activities is sharing experiences gleaned during the economic and political reforms carried out in Poland, supporting the development of local communities, and promoting civic activity. Another important component is demonstrating the progression from conceptualisation to execution, the way solutions are developed – by way of example. Such activities are addressed to representatives of local government, teachers and local government officials. A significant number of initiatives is also addressed to people who have an impact on public opinion (i.e.: politicians, political scientists, sociologists and experts in various fields, local government officials, journalists, columnists, and intellectuals). It is not only the target group of these programmes that benefit from exchanging experiences and information. The Polish partners also benefit through the opportunity of meeting people representing other cultures, by exploring new approaches to familiar problems, and by counteracting intolerance and xenophobia through closer contacts.

Many NGOs extend scholarships to students from the East in order to study at Polish universities. The most active organisations in this regard include the Institute of Eastern Studies Foundation, the Center for Studies on the Classic Tradition in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe, the Center for International Relations and the Stefan Batory Foundation.

Non-governmental organisations also hold high-level meetings, one example of which is the Economic Forum held every year in Krynica, Poland and organised by the Institute of Eastern Studies, bringing together heads of state and politicians from more than a dozen countries across the region.

Communications between NGOs from Poland and other countries are facilitated by the Internet portal known as the Mutual Information Society, containing information concerning organisations seeking partners, support organisations and sponsors.

The *Centers for Pluralism Newsletter* is an example of information exchange concerning programmes conducted by NGOs, their publications, prospects for further co-operation and fundraising as well as available internships and training courses. The newsletter is published by the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe - IDEE in English- and Russian-language versions; its 4 000 copies are mailed to organisations across Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

### **Consulting and International Monitoring**

This type of activity is the focus of CASE – the Center of Social and Economic Research – an organisation offering economic and social consultancy services to countries of the former USSR and the Balkan states. The Center has advised presidents, prime ministers, and governmental institutions in these countries.

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy has advised the government of Kazakhstan on the development of local government.

At the request of the Czech government, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights monitored Czech prisons in 1991. Foundation representatives also monitored the parliamentary election held in Slovakia in 1998 and the presidential election held in Belarus in 2001.

### **Humanitarian Aid**

Other than sharing knowledge, skills and information, Polish NGOs also provide humanitarian aid.

The Polish Humanitarian Organisation (PHO) began its activities by delivering humanitarian aid to victims of armed conflicts and natural disasters in various parts of the world. As it gained experience, PHO began to augment its ad-hoc aid initiatives (e.g. supply convoys) with long-term aid programmes implemented by permanent missions in Kosovo and Ingushetia, among others. The direct objective of these missions is to improve the living standards of the local population and to support the development of local communities.

Due to the fact that NGOs are not affiliated with local governments, their activities are not perceived as a form of interference by other states. This makes it possible to deliver aid to places suffering from armed conflict (e.g. Chechnya) and to extend assistance to all parties involved.

## **Profiles of Selected Organisations**

### **CASE – Centrum Analiz Społeczno-Ekonomicznych – Fundacja Naukowa CASE – Center for Social and Economic Research**

CASE is a private, independent, non-commercial research institution established in 1991. Since its founding, the Center has gained international recognition among leading think tanks. The mission of CASE is to support economic, social and political reforms in Poland as well as in Central and Eastern Europe and countries of the former USSR. The principal forms of activity include:

- Economic research pursued in co-operation with scholars from Poland and abroad;
- Advisory services for governments, international organisations and the NGO sector;
- Publishing and editorial activity;
- Educational activity (seminars, conferences, study internships, consultations).

CASE has been conducting foreign advisory missions since 1991, sending the Center's experts to Belarus, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kirgistan, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia, Romania, Tadjikistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and Yugoslavia. A major success for CASE in 1999-2000 was the establishment of three sister-organisations; modelled on CASE: CASE-Transcaucasus in Georgia, CASE-Ukraine, and CASE-Kirgistan. The mission of each of these institutions is to play an active role in the systemic transformations of their respective countries.

The purpose of the advisory projects conducted in post-communist countries is transferring Polish experiences concerning the planning and implementation of reforms. The execution of these projects involves the close co-operation of CASE experts with local experts and representatives of state organisations. This co-operation includes special meetings, seminars, and conferences with the participation of local as well as Polish experts, the organisation of working visits to Poland as well as the publication and dissemination of jointly prepared materials.

In addition to the intensification of advisory activity, CASE also intends to participate in projects appraising the aid extended to date by international institutions to developing countries. In 2001, two such projects were conducted with CASE participation: Russia – Country Assistance Evaluation and the Public Expenditure Review in the Area of Social Security and Social Protection (conducted jointly with the Leontief Centre in St. Petersburg for the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation). Both ventures were financed by the World Bank.

The Foundation will also continue its activities supporting the development of the non-governmental sector in developing countries, concentrating primarily on providing assistance to independent research centres.

In 2000-2001, the advisory activity conducted by CASE in foreign countries was financed primarily from foreign sources:

1. Government organisations, including USAID and PAUCI;



2. Private organisations, including the Open Society Institute, Freedom House and the East-West Management Institute;
3. International organisations such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme.

Also in 2001, due to co-operation between CASE and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an advisory project was conducted for Yugoslavia, *Influence of Pension System Reform on the Development of the Financial Market and Labour Costs*.

## **Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej Polska-Białoruś Poland-Belarus Centre for Civic Education**

The association, established by a group of Poles and Belarusians in Białystok in 1997, is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation conducting activities without affiliation to any political group or religious denomination, supported by funds received from sponsors and private donors. The goals of the association are fostering democracy in Poland and Belarus, mobilising civic movements and non-governmental institutions in both countries, promoting Belarusian culture in Poland, collecting and disseminating information concerning human rights in Belarus, co-ordinating the activities of Polish NGOs working for democratic change in that country, and disseminating knowledge and experiences relating to freedom of the press and independent media.

- Cultural activity – meetings, concerts, and festivals;
- Educational activity – seminars.

Projects conducted by the Association:

### **From Censorship to Freedom, a journalism project**

The purpose of this project was to transfer the knowledge and experiences necessary for the fourth estate to function properly. At present, the situation in Belarus in this regard is at stark variance with democratic standards; the few independent newspapers that still exist face various forms of harassment and the distribution of titles not affiliated with the government is impeded.

In May 2000, a conference and course was held for journalists from the independent press of the Grodno region, presenting the local press market in Poland's Podlaskie voivodship.

### **Democracy – A Common Issue, a civic project**

The purpose of this long-term project was sharing Polish experiences in transitioning to democracy and in sustaining pro-democracy circles under circumstances of limited civil liberties.

The subsequent stage of this project involved the organisation of a conference entitled *From an Authoritarian to a Democratic State – The Character of Political and Economic Reforms in the Republic of Belarus*, held on May 25-27, 2000 in Białystok and made possible by the financial support of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Warsaw. The lectures and numerous debates held within the framework of the official agenda, as well as outside it, concentrated on issues such as political reform (with special attention devoted to the electoral system and its influence on the system of government), the functioning of legal institutions in a democratic country, the free market in the context of economic independence, the role of the state vis-à-vis society during economic transformation, decentralisation of the administrative system (local self-government reform), and coming to terms with the past.

### **Belarus as a Part of European Culture, a cultural project**

This project was designed to familiarise the Polish public with the most important currents and phenomena in Belarusian culture. One important element comprised presenting the cultural achievements of the Belarusian minority in Poland. The Centre seeks to develop direct contacts between organisations and individuals from the border regions of Białystok, Grodno, and Brest engaged in culture-related activities.

In May 2000, the association published a *Who's Who in Belarus* guide, which contains 450 biographic notes of political, cultural, and non-governmental leaders. This publication is an invaluable source of information for anyone with an interest in the fate of Central and Eastern Europe.

### **The Next Generation – Together to Europe, a youth project**

The purpose of this project was preparing young people in Belarus for civic activity and making it possible for young people from different countries to exchange experiences.

In 1999-2000, the association provided substantive and financial support to the Belarusian Students' Union in organising the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Basovishcha Festivals of Young Belarusian Music in Grodek near Białystok. The events brought together more than 7,000 young people from both countries.

Through a joint effort with the Polish Labour Foundation in Warsaw, young people from Poland and Belarus had the opportunity to participate in summer school programmes held in Międzyzdroje, Poland and Palanga, Lithuania.

Polish-Belarusian workshops devoted to civic activity among young people were organised with funds provided by the British embassy in Warsaw.

The association co-operates with numerous non-governmental organisations, cultural and educational institutions as well as diplomatic missions in Poland, including the Ford Foundation, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe - IDEE, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy in Białystok, the British and American embassies, Orkla Media Press, the Faculty of Belarusian Culture at Białystok University, the Belarusian Union in Poland, and the Belarusian Union of Students.

## **Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych Center for International Relations**

The Center for International Relations is a non-partisan, non-governmental centre focusing on issues related to Poland's foreign policy and to international issues with a bearing on Poland and its citizens. Established in 1995, the Center initially operated as a part of the Institute of Public Affairs, and since 1998, as an independent institution working under the legal form of a foundation. The Center for International Relations provides a forum for discussion concerning foreign policy issues by politicians, state officials at the central and local levels, journalists, academics, students, and representatives of NGOs. The Center conducts publishing activity, issues reports, academic treatises and essays as well as organising conferences and debates. The Center is also engaged in research projects: it has studied attitudes of the Polish public in regard to European integration and the views taken by Polish and German elites relative to the European Union and NATO as well as relations between the two countries.

- Political consulting, monitoring activities of the Polish government in the international arena;
- Publishing activity;
- Educational and academic activity – seminars and conferences.

The Center for International Relations also conducts educational work. In 1998, the School for Civic Education was organised for young Belarusians. The fourth edition of this programme was conducted in 2001, comprising a four-day session organised in conjunction with the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Co-operation with the Faculty of Central and Eastern Europe at Warsaw University also began in 1998.

Since 2001, the Center has been administering a scholarship programme for young government officials from Poland conducted by the Robert Bosch Foundation. In 2001, 25 grant recipients travelled to Germany for internships at a variety of federal offices.

The Center for International Relations co-operates with research centres and foundations based in Germany, Great Britain, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Sweden, Holland, the United States, Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine.

The Center's principal sponsors include the Stefan Batory Foundation, the German Marshall Fund of the United States, the Körber Foundation, the Polish Know How Foundation, the Foundation for Polish-German Co-operation, the Robert Bosch Foundation, the Alfred Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach Foundation, the Haniel Foundation, USIS and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland.

In 2001, the 23 conferences and meetings with independent experts and representatives of NGOs organised by the Centre for International Relations included the participation of representatives of the Polish Ministries of Foreign Affairs, and Defence, the Prime Minister's, the Chancellery of the Sejm, and of the Office of the President of the Republic of Poland.

### **Dom Pojednania i Spotkań im. Św. Maksymiliana Kolbego St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House**

The House was founded in 1992 by the Order of Franciscan Fathers in Gdańsk. Currently the House provides a venue for more than 60 meetings, conferences, seminars, and workshops annually, bringing together people from throughout Europe and beyond its borders. It is no coincidence that all the programmes organised and promoted by the St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House have a distinctly international character: dialogue and reconciliation on the international level rank prominently among its priorities.

The year 2001 was exceptional for the House, as it was the first year in which more young people from Eastern Europe participated in its various events than young people from Western Europe. That year, approximately 1,200 people from Eastern Europe sojourned to the House, more than twice the number of people from the West. In previous years, young people from Eastern and from Western Europe each accounted for approximately 1/3 of all participants. The St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House has also been pursuing a pilot programme to reconstruct youth structures in Belarus, leading to the inauguration of the first international meeting house in Novogrodek.

- Educational and cultural activities – seminars, workshops, and youth meetings.

In 2000, the House conducted a total of 11 programmes (comprising 44 individual projects) involving some 1,700 people from Poland, Lithuania, Germany, Belarus, and Ukraine.

The majority of funding for the House's activity is provided by Polish-German Youth Co-operation, the Stefan Batory Foundation, assorted European Union funds, the Office of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, the Voivodship Office in Gdańsk, and the City of Gdańsk. The St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House contributes between one-third and one-half of its own funds for each project.

The House also organises journalism workshops as well as jazz events and dance workshops for folk and traditional ensembles. Many of the jazz events yield recordings released on compact discs; the dance workshops culminate in concerts, and participants of the journalism workshops generate press reports and ad-hoc newspapers. The St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House is the only Polish NGO to date to have conducted a pilot project for reconstructing youth structures in Belarus. As a result of this initiative, the first international meeting house was established in Novogrodek. In 2001, the St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House organised a series of training events for 75 Belarusian journalists working in local media and in periodicals and bulletins published by NGOs. The training was made possible by a grant from the Polish-American Freedom Foundation within the framework of the RITA programme.

## **Fundacja im. Stefana Batorego Stefan Batory Foundation**

The Foundation was established in 1988 to foster the development of a democratic, open society in Poland and throughout the region. Approximately 90% of foundation's funds originate from the Open Society Institute, with the remaining resources coming from other foreign donors (8%) and Polish sources (2%). The Stefan Batory Foundation's benefactors include the Ford Foundation, the European Foundation Centre, the American Embassy, the European Cultural Foundation, the Bertelsmann Foundation, the National Endowment for Democracy, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the World Bank, Ms Irene Mroz, the German Marshall Fund, Commercial Union Polska S.A., the Polish Know How Foundation, the Leopold Kronenberg Bank Foundation and INCOM S.A.

The Stefan Batory Foundation conducts over a dozen programmes; the majority involves allocating grants and monitoring the methods and effectiveness of their implementation. Grants are awarded on the basis of applications for specific projects and ventures.

Of the various units working within the Stefan Batory Foundation, the following are engaged in international co-operation: the European Programme, the Central and East European Forum, the East-East Programme, the Commission on Alcohol and Drug Education, and the Cultural Programme.

The Central and East European Forum is an operating programme. In 2000, its activities were focused on three priorities:

- Integration processes in Central and Eastern Europe;
- Support of reforms;
- Activities pursued by Polish NGOs in the international area.

A programme of meetings on Poland's integration with the European Union addressed to the communities of various regions in Ukraine was launched in 2000. The programme commenced with working visits by journalists from western, eastern, and southern Ukraine who received an opportunity to explore, first-hand on the central and local levels, Poland's preparations for membership in the European Union. Young journalists from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Poland were invited to participate in workshops devoted to the place of Central and Eastern Europe in the European security system. These events provided a forum to air frequently divergent opinions concerning the reforms underway in Central and Eastern Europe as well as an opportunity to exchange views and discuss various related issues. A separate round of workshops, addressed to columnists, experts, and students from Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, sought to stimulate dialogue within the Vishehrad Group and encourage the formulation of a common position in regard to European integration.

A long-standing feature of the Central and East European Forum's activities is projects addressed to opinion leaders in Ukraine and Belarus. In 2000, young scholars from Belarus were invited for working visits to Polish research institutions. In another development, co-operation was also launched with the Kaliningrad Oblast', which will hopefully further co-operation between NGOs and local self-government bodies in Poland and their Russian counterparts. The Foundation also played host to representatives of local self-government bodies from Bosnia and Herzegovina, NGO activists and politicians from Serbia, and to local media journalists from Kosovo.

In 2000, the Central and East European Forum conducted 38 projects, including fourteen seminars and conferences, ten internships and workshops, and fourteen working visits. In total, 550 participants and 300 audience members attended these various events. Foreign guests included 120 people from Ukraine, 60 from Russia, 58 from Belarus, and 34 from the Balkans.

The East-East Programme (recently renamed the Partnership Beyond Borders Programme) is a grant-providing programme operating since 1991. The programme provides financial support for international projects devoted to the development of a civil society, the alleviation of the detrimental social effects of economic and political reform, the integration of the disabled and of disadvantaged social groups, the promotion of multiculturalism and the acceptance of social and cultural diversity. The majority of projects

involve working visits, workshops, training events and internships. In 2001, the East-East Programme awarded grants to 51 projects and provided travel expenses for Polish participants to attend 65 meetings held by foundations from other countries throughout Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

The regional component of the Academic Programme involves awarding scholarships for university study in Poland and abroad. Approximately 70 students of the humanities and social sciences from Central and Eastern Europe arrive in Poland every year under the Eastern Scholarships programme administered by the Józef Mianowski Fund.

The Commission on Alcohol and Drug Education conducts activities on two levels, a national programme and a regional programme covering Central Europe and Central Asia. The latter component includes training events, internships and seminars for substance abuse therapists and rehabilitation programme instructors specialising in therapy at penal institutions and the maintenance of telephone help-lines. Training events held in Poland during 2000 involved more than 200 participants from twelve countries in the region. Training sessions were also held in Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia. Moreover, the Commission co-operates with Kirgistan, Tadjikistan, Slovakia, Latvia, and Georgia.

The Cultural Link Programme supports programmes involving cultural co-operation among countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Financing is provided for art exhibitions, theatre productions, film reviews festivals, concerts and other events.

## **Fundacja Edukacja dla Demokracji Education for Democracy Foundation**

This institution was established in the late 1980s as a result of joint efforts on the part of educators from Poland and the United States with the objective of disseminating information concerning democracy, free market economy and civic activity. The Foundation provides support to educators, trade union and youth activists as well as NGO and local government employees in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe.

- Educational activity – seminars, conferences, training events, internships.

The Education for Democracy Foundation conducts three international programmes:

Civic Education in Countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, an initiative aimed at assisting local communities in the restoration of social bonds through supporting the development of non-governmental organisations, training educators and local activists, and publishing materials concerning education and civil society. The initial workshops in this regard brought together Poles as well as activists from Polish minority organisations in Ukraine, Belarus, and Lithuania. In 1994, the Foundation began organising training events in the Baltic states. At present, more than 1/3 of its training projects are held abroad, in places ranging from Lithuania, Latvia, Belarus, Ukraine and Russia to Uzbekistan, Kirgistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Mongolia, and Azerbaijan. Approximately 100 workshops and fifteen internships are organised annually in Poland.

Education for Democracy – International Trainers Network. The purpose of this programme is to establish an international network of trainer teams to support local communities through civic education. At the present stage of development, the network comprises 11 trainer teams based in Ukraine, Belarus, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Azerbaijan, and Russia. The programme is conducted in co-operation with several dozen non-governmental organisations in Eastern Europe as well as with the American Federation of Teachers, the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe and the Klanza Polish Association of Educators and Organizers. Some 400 workshops and several dozen seminars for trainers are conducted every year, in which more than 8,000 people participate.

## **Region in Transition – RITA**

RITA is a programme of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, administered by the Education for Democracy Foundation. The purpose of the programme is to support democratic and free market changes in Central and Eastern Europe (including countries of the former USSR) through sharing relevant experiences. The programme is conducted through extending financial support for projects developed by non-governmental organisations, educational institutions and local self-government bodies.

The various programmes of the Education for Democracy Foundation were established with the financial assistance of the Polish-American Freedom Foundation, the Academy for Educational Development, the Phare Programme of the EU, the Polish Know How Foundation, the American Federation of Teachers, the Open Society Institute, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Westminster Foundation for Democracy, the Kronenberg Foundation, the Paterson International Fellowship, the Office of the Committee for European Integration, the Culture Foundation, the Ministry of National Education, the Polish Community Association, the International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children, and others.

## **Fundacja Inicjatyw Społeczno-Ekonomicznych Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives**

The Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives is a non-governmental organisation, established in September 1990 to support the development of civil society at the local level. The foundation promotes and supports entrepreneurship at the local level, extending assistance to small businesses that create new jobs. The Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives also assists in developing and implementing structural solutions for initiating local development and in establishing associations, foundations, and non-governmental organisations.

- Educational activity – training, professional consulting, research, internships;
- Cultural activity – sponsoring events.

In 2000, the Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives established the Academy for Local Development to support local community development in Ukraine through training, professional consulting and joint research programmes. Instruction at the Academy is combined with a programme of internships in local self-government bodies, institutions, and non-governmental organisations. Invitations to participate in the training are extended to local self-government activists, business people and NGO activists from small and medium-sized towns in Ukraine. As of June 2000, the Academy for Local Development had hosted 68 representatives of 18 localities at eight three-week training sessions, during which sixteen projects for local development were drafted. Work is currently underway on transferring the management of the Academy to Ukrainian partners. Activities of the Academy for Local Development are financed by the Canadian Embassy, CCFD, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Mott Foundation, the Ford Foundation and the Polish Know How Foundation.

The other foreign programme conducted by the Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives is Look Out Your Window. The purpose of this programme is to mobilise local communities in the Kosovar towns of Strpc and Kacanik, in which the Polish Humanitarian Organisation is also active. Its first projects were addressed expressly to the young. In September 2000, the Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives organised the A Plus Theatre. Kacanik and Strpc also became the venue for an assortment of other drama workshops, concerts, and exhibitions. An exchange programme for Polish and Kosovar artists was financed by the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Kosovo Foundation for an Open Society, and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## **Fundacja -Instytut „Artes Liberales” Artes Liberales Institute Foundation**

In 1992, the Senate of Warsaw University established an independent Center for Studies on Classic Tradition in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe in order to promote and co-ordinate interdisciplinary research into the cultural heritage of Poland and Central and Eastern Europe, with particular emphasis on Mediterranean elements. The Center has organised a long-term, region-wide educational and research programme, the International Humanities School for Central and Eastern Europe.

- Educational and research activity – conferences, seminars for students and young scholars;
- Publishing activities.

The purpose of training young researchers and students in the final years of their degree courses is to establish research and teaching personnel as well as research teams. The long-term goals of these efforts are to rebuild the humanities community in the region so as to enable it once again to play a part in educating the elites in democratic, civil societies in Central and Eastern Europe. The schools offer courses ranging from one week to nine weeks with much of the programme conducted in co-operation with partners from Ukraine. The faculty of the International Humanities School for Central and Eastern Europe is composed of distinguished specialists from universities and scientific academies in the countries involved in the project, as well as visiting professors from Western Europe and the United States.

Until 1999, the School's activity was primarily financed by the Stefan Batory Foundation and, to a lesser degree, by other Soros foundations operating in the region. Since February 1998, the work of the Center for Studies on Classic Traditions (including the International Humanities School for Central and Eastern Europe) has been financed by the private Artes Liberales Institute Foundation.

Scholars taking part in the School's programmes are reimbursed for their travel and housing expenses. Foreign participants also benefit from per diems and are covered by insurance. Between 1996-1999, the International Humanities School granted more than 300 scholarships for programmes held in Poland to recipients from Ukraine, Belarus, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia and Poland. A total of 616 students attended classes held between 1999 and 2001, including 320 from Ukraine, 175 from Poland, 76 from Belarus, 29 students from Russia, 10 from Lithuania, two from Montenegro, and one student each from Bulgaria, Slovakia, Croatia, and Germany.

## **Fundacja Instytut Spraw Publicznych Institute of Public Affairs Foundation**

The Institute of Public Affairs is a non-governmental, independent research institution established in 1995 with the goal of providing an academic and intellectual framework for the modernisation of Poland and for debates conducted within the public arena.

The specific objectives of the Institute of Public Affairs are:

- The execution of projects relevant to public life;
- Initiation of public debate;
- Identification of potential threats;
- Propagation of new ideas useful in the resolution of present as well as future problems;
- Forging ties among the academic, political, journalistic, and social activist communities, bridging gaps between academic theory and practice.

The Institute of Public Affairs administers a Migration and Eastern Policy Programme devoted to issues associated with countries that emerged after the collapse of the USSR. The Institute has organised two international conferences in Kiev this year devoted to financing of political parties and Polish-Ukrainian migration policies in light of EU experiences relating to the influx of foreign workers. The Institute is also the initiator and co-ordinator of an international project (involving think-tanks from Ukraine, Latvia, Estonia, Moldova, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia) devoted to the political, economic, and social consequences of expanding the Schengen treaty to countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

Given the diverse backgrounds of persons interested in Polish experiences, selected publications of the Institute of Public Affairs are published in a number of languages. The report *Poland – Ukraine: Mutual Image* was published in Polish and Ukrainian, the book *Four Reforms* – was also published in Russian, and *The Second Wave of Polish Reforms* – was published in English, Russian and Azeri (a Ukrainian translation is being prepared).

## **Fundacja Instytut na Rzecz Demokracji w Europie Wschodniej – IDEE Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe Foundation – IDEE**

IDEE has been active in Poland since 1991. The aims of the organisation are strengthening civil society and stimulating contacts among non-governmental organisations in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. In 2000, Jerzy Buzek (at that time, the Prime Minister of Poland) recognised IDEE's work in shaping democratic institutions in Eastern Europe (with special acknowledgement to its competition for independent local press in Poland and the Welcome to Europe programme for Crimean Tatars) with the prestigious Pro Publico Bono award. In 2000, IDEE's Belarusian programme began to function as an autonomous entity - the East European Democratic Centre – IDEE. IDEE conducts the following types of programmes addressed to foreign partners.

- Educational and cultural activity – internships, conferences, seminars, legal and financial advice for private individuals and non-governmental organisations, training, exhibitions;
- Publishing activity;
- Information activity.

The Centers for Pluralism programme, established in 1992, is managed jointly with the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe in Washington, DC. The goals of the programme are fostering the development of independent NGOs in Central and Eastern Europe and countries of the former USSR. At present, Centers for Pluralism operate in 22 countries and their representatives meet once a year. As part of this programme, IDEE organises internships for local community and NGO activists, journalists and teachers as well as publishes the *Centers for Pluralism Newsletter*, a regularly updated source of information on non-governmental organisations in Central, Eastern, and Southern Europe as well as Central Asia. The Foundation is also one of the organisers of the Mutual Information Society, an integrated on-line database of NGOs in the former USSR seeking co-operation with Polish partners.

Cuba Si! Working together with the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe – Washington, IDEE has published sixteen brochures devoted to pro-democracy activities in countries of Eastern Europe. These brochures were then distributed in Cuba. The Foundation for Democracy in Eastern Europe co-operates with the Cuban organisation Directorio Revolucionario Democrático Cubano, assisting it in „minor campaigns” such as the organisation of pickets in defence of political prisoners outside the Cuban embassy in Warsaw.

Support for Local Democracy in Ukraine is a programme incorporating three projects:

Welcome to Europe, an initiative supporting Crimean Tatars returning to their homeland after 50 years in exile, conducted since 1993. IDEE provides this ethnic group, numbering some 260 000 people, with assistance in organising its social and cultural life. The project involves organising internships for journalists from the Tartar local press and for Tartar teachers and social activists. To date, approximately 1,200 people have benefited from initiatives of this type. IDEE also promotes Polish culture and science in Crimea; the foundation organised an exhibition entitled Adam Mickiewicz in Crimea, held in Bakhchisaray, and published the poet's *Crimean Sonnets* in a Crimean-Tatar translation.

Support for the Independent Press and Local Self Government in Ukraine - under this project, conducted since 1998, IDEE transfers Polish experiences to Ukrainians and invites Ukrainian journalists and councilmen from small and medium-sized communities to Poland. In 2000, fifteen Ukrainian journalists attended internships in Poland within the framework of this project.

Land for Farmers !!! is a project conducted since 1999. It is intended to assist in the modernisation of Ukrainian agriculture through transferring experiences in land management by private owners. IDEE is also in the process of organising an Agricultural Consulting Centre in Crimea.



## **Fundacja Instytut Studiów Wschodnich Institute of Eastern Studies Foundation**

The Foundation conducts activity aimed at strengthening bonds among countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Social and political education, conducted since 1993, aimed at building a democratic future for Poland as well as for neighbours to the east and south, is the goal of the foundation's activities. The following activities, conducted on a variety of levels, are intended to foster cultural, academic and economic co-operation among the countries of the region.

- Support of initiatives complementing political contacts on the official level;
- „Investing” in future relations through initiating and facilitating contacts among youth;
- Disseminating information concerning the economies of Poland, Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus.

The Foundation has established a scholarship fund for Ukrainian students. During the 2000-2001 academic year, ten scholarships with a total value of 4,900 USD were disbursed to students of the Kijv-Mohilev Academy.

The largest initiative of the Institute of Eastern Studies Foundation is the Economic Forum, held annually at the Polish resort town of Krynica Górska. The twelfth consecutive Forum was held this year. In 2001, the Forum attracted approximately 1,000 politicians, businessmen, and journalists from nineteen countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, the United States, and Uzbekistan) as well as representatives of various European Union bodies. The presidents of Poland, Lithuania, Moldova, and Slovakia as well as the prime ministers of five countries attended this year's Forum. The Krynica Forum has been steadily expanding in scale, attracting an increasing number of participants each year. Some commentators have begun dubbing it the „Polish Davos.”

The Institute also organises summer internships for students, primarily from Ukraine, but from Belarus and Russia as well. The interns take part in seminars and lectures devoted to various aspects of Polish reforms initiated in the 1990s, the institution of a free market economy and the development of entrepreneurship in Poland. The interns are assigned to work in an area appropriate to their studies. They also meet with their Polish colleagues and take part in the cultural life of their host city. A total of 40 students participated in these internships in 2000. The programme is conducted jointly with the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy, the Polish Know How Foundation, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Bratniak Foundation of Jagiellonian University, the School of Public Administration, the Eastern Europe Studies Faculty at Warsaw University, the National Chamber of Commerce, and with students from Warsaw University, the Warsaw School of Economics, and Jagiellonian University.

In December 2000, the Institute, working with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, organised a working visit to Poland for Russian journalists.

Another project of the Institute of Eastern Studies Foundation involved training local administration officials from Ukraine. The six-day training modules held in Poland's Małopolska voivodship brought together 144 local government officials from Ukraine. In co-operation with the Institute of Social Transformation in Kiev, the Foundation played host to 70 Ukrainian bankers and politicians. The visitors participated in the training seminar entitled *How to Adapt the Banking Systems of Ukraine and Poland to the Requirements and Expectations of the European Union*.

## **Fundacja Ośrodka KARTA Karta Center Foundation**

The Karta Center is a non-governmental organisation engaged in the documentation and dissemination of information concerning the recent history of Poland and Eastern Europe. The Center's origin dates back to 1982 when *Karta* was established as an underground public affairs periodical published in Warsaw. In 1990 the closely affiliated Eastern Archives Foundation and the Karta Foundation were officially registered. The Karta Center Foundation, fusing these two entities within a single structure, was established in late 1991.

- Research activity – documentation concerning the recent history in Poland;
- Educational activity – dissemination of information concerning Poland's recent history;
- Publishing activities.

Common Ground – Eastern Europe is an international programme conducted by the Center in co-operation with foreign partners, with the majority of funding provided by the National Endowment for Democracy and the Ford Foundation. This is a research and opinion-forming programme, conducted since 1993, targeting almost all countries in the region. Currently, the main goal is publication of the *Dictionary of Dissidents (1956-1989)*. The principal partner of the Karta Center, acting as co-ordinator, is the „Memorial” Historical, Educational and Charitable Society, based in Moscow. Independent centres from Ukraine, Belarus, Bulgaria, and other countries from the former Soviet Bloc made their own contributions to the programme as it progressed. In 1998, the Karta Center, working together with Memorial, published *The Gulags. An Encyclopaedic Guide*.

The Karta Center also fosters dialogue between Poland and Ukraine, publishing the series entitled *Poland – Ukraine: Difficult Questions* in which meetings of historians from both countries are documented. Other than seminars, a project of the same name also included the documentation of victims of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict of the 1940s.

The *Index of Persecuted Persons* is a research project conducted since 1988. Between 1997-1999, the project was conducted under the aegis of Poland's Ministry of Justice. The Moscow-based Memorial Association as well as partners in Poland and abroad contributed to this work. The project's results were published by the Ministry of Justice in 2000 in a document summarising the current state of knowledge about the persecution of Polish citizens in the former USSR entitled *Soviet Persecution Against Poles and Polish Citizens*. During 2000-2001, the project was conducted under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Office. In 2002, patronage was transferred to the Institute of National Remembrance.

## **Fundacja Nowy Staw Nowy Staw Foundation**

The name of the Foundation (established in 1993) refers to the location in the Kozłowiecki National Park where the organisation's first projects were conducted. The goal of the Foundation's activity is strengthening basic values, based on Christian teachings, of democracy, developing free market economies, educating young people and encouraging co-operation among young people at the international level.

In 2000, the renovation and enlargement work on the International Young People's Meeting House in Nasutowo near Lublin was completed. This training facility is the site of seminars, workshops, and conferences for young people. Other non-governmental organisations from the Lublin area also benefit from this facility.

- Educational and cultural activity – seminars, workshops and meetings for young people.

The Nowy Staw Foundation conducts three major programmes: 1. The Democracy Academy, 2. The Centre for European Youth Exchange and Co-operation, and 3. The Eco School.

The Centre for European Youth Exchange and Co-operation has conducted a total of 21 international projects to date, twelve of them in Poland, the remainder in Germany. In addition, the Centre's representatives participated in eleven programmes organised by other institutions engaged in working with youth. During these exchanges, the young people participated in activities such as historical workshops, happenings, language courses and journalism workshops.

A total of 601 people participated in the various programmes of the Centre for European Youth Exchange and Co-operation in 2000. Programmes conducted domestically involved 220 Poles, 95 Germans, and 94 Ukrainians and Belarusians, totalling 409 participants. The German programmes involved 115 Poles and 77 Germans (a total of 192 people).

In 2000, the activities of the Nowy Staw Foundation were supported with grants from the Polish-German Youth Exchange, the Phare Programme, the Office of the Committee for European Integration, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Small Grants Programme of the Democracy Commission at the American embassy, the Prime Minister's Office as well as from numerous private donors.

## **Fundacja Partnerstwo dla Środowiska Environmental Partnership Foundation**

The Environmental Partnership Foundation is an independent, self-governing foundation with its registered office located in Cracow. Established in 1997, PEF is the successor of the Environmental Partnership for Central Europe (based in Wrocław), a programme that supported environmental organisations. Between 1991 and 1997, the EPCE programme was administered by the German Marshall Fund of the United States. At present, the Foundation's activities are pursued within the framework of the Environmental Partnership for Central Europe Consortium, assembling similar organisations operating in the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Hungary. The Foundation supports environmental activities conducted with the active involvement of local communities.

- Environmental education;
- Fostering the development of tourism in Central Europe – construction of cycle routes.

The Environmental Partnership Foundation supports environmental initiatives to establish long-term mechanisms for environmental protection as well as initiatives aimed at social and economic development connected to the natural and cultural heritage while making due allowance for its preservation. The Foundation is particularly committed to supporting local communities.

The Environmental Partnership for Central Europe Consortium, the German Marshall Fund and the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt are jointly conducting a two-year programme entitled, The Quality of Rural Life – Rural Livelihoods. The purpose of the programme is to support local initiatives aimed at the balanced development of rural areas through conducting public projects for the responsible utilisation of natural and cultural assets. Eligible local projects involve environmentally friendly forms of agriculture and tourism or the effective utilisation of alternative sources of energy. The programme is being conducted in selected rural micro-regions in Hungary (the Lower Ipola valley, the Boronka and Zselic regions), Slovakia (the Babia Hora and Horna Orava regions, Southern Sitno, the Ramža region), the Czech Republic (the White Carpathians, the Frydlant and Slovacko regions) and in Poland (the Cracow Jura, Central Pomerania and Debrzno, the Babia Góra region and Zawoja). Co-operation among participating micro-regions is promoted in order to encourage the development of a network facilitating the efficient exchange of knowledge and experiences. An important place in this network has been set aside for the eastern länder of unified Germany, which have already demonstrated progress in balanced rural development through relying on environmental projects.

Another project conducted by the Foundation, involving natural and cultural heritage paths, is Greenways, under which bicycle and hiking trails are constructed along „green corridors” such as rivers, historical trading routes and nature corridors. These trails connect regions, tourist attractions, and local social initiatives in order to develop environmentally friendly tourism, stimulate local economies, encourage the entrepreneurial spirit among the population, promote natural and cultural attractions in the regions, stimulate co-operation between the regions and contribute to the maintenance and preservation of the natural and cultural heritage.

The Central European Greenways project is a non-governmental initiative of the Environmental Partnership for Central Europe directed at NGOs, local self-government bodies, businesses operating in the tourism industry, local artists and craftsmen, and naturally at tourists interested in eco-tourism. The greenways network in Poland covers the Amber Route (Poland, Slovakia, and Hungary), the Green Bicycle – Greenway Eastern Carpathians (Lower Carpathians in Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine), the Vienna-Cracow Greenway (Austria, Czech Republic, and the Silesia and Małopolska regions in Poland), the Jura Ring Greenway (Cracow Jura), as well as the Dłubnia Greenway (Małopolska and Cracow). The network in Central Europe also includes the Vienna-Prague Greenway (Austria, Czech Republic), Vienna-Brno Greenway

(Austria, Czech Republic), the Moravian Vineyard Routes (Czech Republic), and the Most-Doksy Greenway (presently confined to the Czech Republic but slated for enlargement into Poland's Lubawka region).

### **Fundacja Pogranicze, Ośrodek Pogranicze Sztuki, Kultury, Narodów Borderlands Foundation, Centre Borderland of Arts, Cultures, Nations**

The Foundation was established in May 1990. In January 1991, the voivode of Suwałki established the Borderland of Arts, Cultures, and Nations Centre with its seat in Sejny.

Sejny is a border town in which the material and spiritual traces of historical heritage evoking the presence of Jews, Protestants, Poles and Lithuanians survive and shape its present-day character. The area also contains traces of other cultures and ethnic groups – Karaims, Russian Old Believers, Tatars, Gypsies, Belarusians and Ukrainians.

Through its activities the Borderlands Foundation seeks to promote tolerance, mutual contacts and co-operation among the different regions of Central and Eastern Europe. The Foundation also disseminates information concerning the rich historical heritage of the region and helps to collect and preserve its artefacts. Borderlands strive to infuse the societies of Central and Eastern Europe with a new openness towards others while retaining a sense of belonging to one's own „small homeland.”

- Publishing activities;
- Educational activities – organisation of conferences, seminars and workshops;
- Cultural activities – theatre, musical ensemble, gallery, film festival.

The Borderlands Foundation conducts considerable publishing activity. It is the publisher of the *Krasnogruda* quarterly and manages the Pogranicze Publishing House (specialising in books by authors from Central and Eastern Europe).

Some of the activities pursued by the Borderlands Foundation are long-term efforts. One notable example is the Borderlands Culture Documentation Centre, which collects and organises materials concerning Central and Eastern Europe. At present, the holdings comprise almost 10,000 volumes, 5,000 periodicals, 2,000 films and other assorted materials.

The goal of the Cultural Heritage Classes programme is educating young people about issues of relevance to the region and cultivating contacts among youth from countries such as Poland, Lithuania, Hungary and Romania. One of the means by which this goal is pursued is the organisation of summer camps. Another venture, the Sejny Theatre, is devoted to the staging of plays by authors from Central and Eastern Europe. The Papuciarnia Gallery exhibits works by artists from the region.

Other initiatives of the Borderlands Foundation include cyclical projects conducted annually or at other regular intervals. These include Memories of the Old Ages, a project conducted with a group of children from Polish, Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Russian Old Believer communities, and the Borderlands European School, a project conducted with the financial support of the PHARE-TACIS, PHARE-CREDO, and PHARE-LEONARDO programmes of the European Union. The programme is conducted annually with participants taking part in three sessions. The project is addressed to NGO leaders, teachers, cultural activists, representatives of non-governmental organisations and ethnic minorities, journalists, ethnographers and historians working on behalf of their regions in borderland areas. The various editions of the project take place in different locations, around Sejny itself, as well as at venues in Belarus, Lithuania, Ukraine, Romania, Hungary, and Serbia.

Open Regions in Central and Eastern Europe is a project involving a comprehensive examination of inter-cultural processes occurring in borderland regions. Initiatives conducted to date within the framework of the project have focused on Transylvania, Bosnia, Bukovina, and Spisz as well as on the multi-cultural cities of Vilnius and Prague. The initiatives pursued by the Borderlands Foundation also include Camera Pro Minoritate, an international film festival, devoted to small ethnic groups and minorities present in Central and Eastern Europe. An international seminar for filmmakers, journalists, and scholars

is held in conjunction with the film festival. Another noteworthy project is Café Europa, a literary cafe for authors from across the region.

The projects of the Borderlands Foundation are financed by the European Union, the Stefan Batory Foundation and the Ford Foundation.

## **Fundacja Rozwoju Demokracji Lokalnej Foundation in Support of Local Democracy**

The mission of the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy, established in 1989, is propagating the idea of civic self-government. True to this objective, the Foundation supports the work of local self-government bodies and non-governmental organisations through educational programmes and training tailored to the specific needs of local government officials, councillors, local community and NGO activists, owners of small and medium-sized businesses and others. Training activities are conducted through a network of four Schools of Public Administration and sixteen smaller centres. The 2,472 individual training sessions organised by the Foundation in 2000 involved approximately 62,300 people. In addition to publishing activity, the Foundation also offers advisory and information services in most areas of local government activity.

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy launched international activities in 1994, the scale of which is consistently increasing. This fact provided the basis for establishing the Polish Institute for Local Democracy in 2001, a specialised organisational entity within the structure of the Foundation. The mission of the Institute is co-ordinating all of the Foundation's work conducted outside of Poland as well as directly managing large programmes supporting the development of local government in other countries.

The international programmes of the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy have been conducted in Ukraine, Belarus, Russia (the Kaliningrad Oblast' and Siberia), Kazakhstan, Albania, Macedonia, the Federal Yugoslav Republic (Serbia and Montenegro), and to Bosnia and Herzegovina. In connection with its permanent co-operation with the Council of Europe, the Foundation has sent experts to Albania, Macedonia and Azerbaijan.

### **European Pact for Stability in the Balkans Programmes**

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy has been continuing the Polish programmes for aid to the Balkans commenced in 1999. The purpose of these initiatives, extended to Albania, Macedonia and the Federal Yugoslav Republic, is sharing Polish experiences in developing local self-government and public administration with administrative officials and NGOs in those countries.

The first stage of the support programmes for local democracy in Yugoslavia and Macedonia, commissioned by Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was conducted in 2000. Measures under the two initiatives: Polish Programme for Support of Local Democracy in the Federal Yugoslav Republic (the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro) and Polish Programme for Support of Local Democracy in Macedonia, were implemented concurrently during November and December of 2000.

The key objective of the two initiatives was transferring Polish experiences relevant to implementing local self-government and public administration mechanisms to 100 local government officials, state administration employees and NGO activists. The longer-term goal is establishing a training centre in Macedonia based on the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy model in Poland.

The Polish programme for supporting local democracy in the Federal Yugoslav Republic was conducted concurrently with the programme for Macedonia. The final stages of each programme included the publication by the Foundation's publishing operation of six textbooks in the Macedonian language and another six in the Serbian language.

### **Albania**

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy continued implementation of the Assistance in Training of Local Government Activists in Albania based on Polish Experiences project, based on an agree-

ment concluded between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Open Society Foundation. The Polish side played host to seven groups (159 people) of Albanian local government officials, representatives of non-governmental organisations as well as politicians, publicists and intellectuals.

### **Belarus**

The Training Centre in Szczecin conducted two concurrent projects for Belarus. The first of these, *Journalists for the Development of a Civil Society in Belarus*, provided training to 60 young journalists from Minsk, Brest, Mohilev, and Grodno. As part of their work within the project, the participants prepared twelve issues of workshop newspapers in the Belarusian language as well as a book, *Daviednik bielaruskaga zhournalista*. Approximately one hundred Belarusians received training in the area of social communication. The *Forming Structures of a Civil Society in Belarus* project, conducted since 1998, was concluded. As a result of the project a 30-member team of well-trained lecturers and trainers was established and a textbook entitled *Da demakratyi praz gramadzianskuu supolnas* was published.

### **Ukraine**

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy has been involved in a number of programmes supporting the development of local government in Ukraine. The most important of these was *Partnership among Communes*, conducted in conjunction with the Center for Russian, Central and East European Studies at Rutgers University and the U.S.-Ukraine Foundation. Under this project, Ukrainian local government officials receive training from Polish instructors in the areas of municipal economy and management, public participation and empowerment, public transport, economic development and local finances. The project is conducted in co-operation with Ukrainian training centres established by USAID and based on the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy network model.

The School of Public Administration in Białystok co-operates extensively with Ukraine. In July and August, the school hosted the Second Summer School of Public Administration for Polish and Ukrainian students, financed by the Open Society Institute in Budapest. The topic of the summer school was *Ethics in Governance: Challenges for Local Officials*. The Białystok-based school also organised internships for Ukrainian students in Polish government offices.

Working within the framework of USAID-funded projects co-ordinated by the Foundation in Support of Local Democracy and the *Partnership among Communes* project, specialists from the Małopolska Institute of Regional Self-Government and Administration (MISTiA) conducted training at the Training Centres in L'viv, Donetsk, Cherkasy and Kherson. This training involved local budgets and finance as well as municipal transportation. The experts also shared their practical knowledge in the areas of strategic planning, management and drafting local development plans. These activities were organised by the West Ukrainian Training Centre in L'viv.

In December 2000, as part of the *Ukraine-Poland: Through Self Government to Democracy* project, the Rzeszów Local Self-Government Centre organised two seminars for local government representatives from various Ukrainian communities.

The Lower Silesian Centre for Self-Government Training hosted a delegation comprising the mayors of fifteen Ukrainian cities (November 2000) under the PAUCI programme *Developing Mechanisms for Regional Co-operation Between Local Government and the Business Community in Ukraine and Poland*. The visit was a joint venture of the Foundation for the Development of Local Democracy and of the Institute of Social Reform in Kiev. Participants attended a conference on *Exchanging Experiences in Developing Mechanisms of Co-operation concerning Administrative Reforms in Ukraine and Poland*.

### **Bulgaria**

In October 2000, MISTiA was host to a delegation of Bulgarian grant-making organisations and NGOs. This visit formed part of the *ISO Grant-making for Bulgarians* programme financed by USAID Sophia.

### **Georgia**

The Foundation in Support of Local Democracy Training Centre in Szczecin organised a working visit for sixteen local government officials from Georgia. The Georgians received an opportunity to

explore and compare the structures and systems of local self-government prevailing in Poland and Sweden.

### **Russia and Siberia**

The DIALOGUE Programme and the St. Petersburg-based Russian Centre for Civic Education have been conducting a two-year project since the beginning of 2000 entitled Our City and Democratic Commune in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Project participants live in the Siberian cities of Abakan, Norilsk and Kamien Uralski.

## **Fundacja Rozwoju Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego Civil Society Development Foundation**

The Foundation was established in 1996 to increase the effectiveness of social activity in Poland and Central and Eastern Europe as well as promote co-operation among the non-governmental, public and private sectors. Most of the Foundation's activities assume the form of training, consultations and advisory services as well as assistance in exchanging information.

The following are the most important foreign initiatives of the Civil Society Development Foundation:

### **Croatia**

The Foundation devoted eight months in 1998 and 1999 to tutoring NGO trainers under the NGO Development Programme financed by USAID. The long-term results of this programme are already visible in the seventeen people who, having undergone the training, are now independently able to train others in the areas of management and advocacy work. Their activities are conducted within the framework of three trainer organisations established following the completion of the project. Moreover, various materials compiled by the Civil Society Development Foundation provided the basis for the preparation of a handbook for NGOs, the first of its type to be published in Croatia (1,000 copies).

### **Kosovo**

Since 1999, the Foundation has conducted training for the leaders of Albanian and Serbian organisations operating in Kosovo. A total of 190 people have participated in the courses organised in Pristina, Decan, Gjakova, Rahovec, Malishev, Kacanik, Strbce and Kamenica. Each course lasts several days. The training materials prepared by the Foundation for the Development of Civil Society in Serbian and Albanian were printed and disseminated among organisations across Kosovo. The Foundation's partners in this project were the East West Management Institute, Médecins du Monde, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the Polish Humanitarian Organisation.

### **Ukraine**

In 2000, working in co-operation with the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Foundation spent six months evaluating thirteen NGO support centres in Ukraine. The final report was utilised to formulate a new strategy for financing infrastructure organisations in that country.

### **Kazakhstan**

In 2000, the Civil Society Development Foundation worked with the Olive organisation of South Africa to evaluate a three-year programme aimed at improving housing conditions in Kazakhstan. The programme for constructing new residential facilities was administered with Dutch funds by the Baspan organisation. The evaluation itself was commissioned by Dutch Interchurch International.

Between 1995-2001, the Foundation conducted a number of individual training courses not incorporated into any larger programmes. These activities were undertaken in Hungary, Ukraine, Croatia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and others.

The foreign activities of the Civil Society Development Foundation were funded by USAID, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the East West Management Institute, Dutch Interchurch International and the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

## **Fundacja Solidarność Polsko-Czesko-Słowacka Polish-Czech-Slovak Solidarity Foundation**

The Foundation, based in Warsaw, was established in 1991 in order to support the work of Polish-Czech-Slovak Solidarity, an organisation striving to improve relations and co-operation among societies of Central and Eastern Europe, disseminate information concerning cultural, social and political issues and achievements in those fields as well as to initiate co-operation among citizens and institutions. The beginnings of the organisation date back to 1987, when representatives of the democratic opposition from Poland and what was then Czechoslovakia established Polish-Czechoslovak Solidarity. Since the political reforms of 1989, the Solidarity organisation has operated legally in co-operation with social and youth institutions and trade unions.

- Educational activity – training;
- Cultural and sports activity – festivals;
- Environmental protection.

### **Technology of the Free Word Educational Programme**

The seventh edition of this programme was conducted in 2001. The goals of this initiative are promoting the values of civil society, international co-operation, democracy and encouraging co-operation among communities and organisations promoting democracy in Central and Eastern Europe.

The programme entails participants receiving instruction in state-of-the-art computer editing and word-processing. The two-week workshops are financed by the National Endowment for Democracy. A total of seven such two-week sessions were held in 1999, eight in 2000 and thirteen in 2001. In 2000, 37 organisations participated in the programme, including newspapers, publishing houses, social and political organisations, youth organisations, educational and academic organisations, human rights organisations, environmental organisations, information centres and foundations. A total of 58 individuals received training: Belarus (32), Ukraine (20), Uzbekistan (2), Georgia (2), Russia (1) and Kirgistan (1). In 2001, a total of 55 representatives from 37 organisations were involved in the programme: Russia (9), Belarus (9), Ukraine (7), Moldova (5), Azerbaijan (2), Kirgistan (2), Kazakhstan (1), Lithuania (1) and Turkmenistan (1).

### **The Independent Media Educational Programme**

The programme, the fourth edition of which was conducted in 2001, is addressed to independent media in countries of the former USSR. During its three-week training cycles, participants attend internships at Warsaw-based newspapers, publishing houses and radio and television stations. In 2000, a total of 25 journalists participated in the internships – fourteen from Ukraine, five from Belarus, three from Lithuania, and one each from Azerbaijan, Moldavia, and Russia.

## **Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights**

The Foundation was established in Warsaw in 1989 by activists of the underground Helsinki Committee. The Helsinki Foundation is widely acclaimed as one of the most experienced and professional non-governmental organisations in Europe. It is a non-profit, independent and non-partisan institution whose foreign activities focus on instructing individuals working in NGOs, state institutions and the media on subjects of human rights, jurisprudence and constitutional law. The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights also works to inculcate the skills necessary to protect and promote human rights effectively. The Foundation is acknowledged as a world-renowned centre teaching human rights to specialists and activists in the former communist block.

The Helsinki Foundation's priority countries are Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, followed by the countries of the southern Caucasus and the post-communist countries of Central Asia. The Foundation is also active, albeit on a lesser scale, in the Baltic countries, Slovakia, Albania, and Serbia.

The Foundation offers training for NGO activists, staffs of ombudsman offices, parliamentary deputies and staff members of international missions working in the region. It also addresses the educational needs of selected professional groups – lawyers, judges, police officers and officials of the prison system.



More than 3,000 people from twenty countries have attended training programmes of the Helsinki Foundation, many of them representing the leading elements of their respective countries.

International activities of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights include:

- Theoretical training in the area of human rights and mechanisms for safeguarding them;
- Practical training in the protection of human rights and upholding the rule of law (e.g. monitoring techniques, public interest advocacy in the legal field, organisation of social campaigns, etc);
- Training for professional groups (lawyers, attorneys, justices, civil rights ombudsmen, politicians and parliamentary experts, journalists, educators) within the scope of human rights education and the means for protecting human rights available to each profession;
- Specialised consulting services with regard to strategic planning and the implementation of individual projects;
- Public education (e.g. through the production and distribution of educational films in different language versions for broadcast on television).

### **Permanent Programmes**

Beginning in 1990 (with the Council of Europe joining in 1991), the Helsinki Foundation has been organising International Human Rights Summer Schools held once every year for human rights activists from throughout the former communist bloc.

In addition to instilling theoretical knowledge, the school provides an opportunity for comparing notes from actual work in the field, networking, and establishing co-operation between NGO activists from various countries. Lecturers at the Summer Schools are recruited from the Human Rights Directorate of the Council of Europe, the European Commission for Human Rights and from universities in Poland and Western Europe. Experts from former communist countries also present lectures.

In response to the considerable interest in the Summer School, an analogous programme of International Human Rights Winter Schools was launched in 1998. Between 1998-2000, these courses were complimentary in nature for persons who had already completed a Summer School course or a comparable programme and, accordingly, addressed more specialised topics (e.g. safeguarding human rights in institutions of confinement, protecting freedom of speech and freedom of association). The curriculum of the Winter School has mirrored that of the Summer School since 2001.

In total the two Schools have turned out approximately 800 graduates from Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Holland, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kirgistan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Tadjikistan, Turkmenistan, and the United States. In addition to NGO activists, alumni include officials from the ministries of justice and foreign affairs of their respective countries, parliamentary deputies, judges, scholars, staff of ombudsman offices, local government officials, police officers and journalists.

The Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights also conducts specialised activity directed to specific target groups from individual countries or regions.

### **Belarus**

The Helsinki Foundation has been operating a special programme for Belarus since 1997. It targets the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, strengthening civil society and raising the professional level of NGO activity aimed at protecting the rights of the individual. Programme beneficiaries include NGO and trade union activists, teachers, lawyers, journalists and others working to safeguard human rights in Belarus. Between 1990 and mid-2001, some 500 people participated in various training programmes offered by the Helsinki Foundation.

### **Ukraine**

The Helsinki Foundation's Ukrainian programme began in April 1999. The purpose of the programme is to facilitate the establishment of a human rights movement in Ukraine through the initiation of projects for co-operation among state institutions (the civil rights ombudsman, local self-government

bodies, parliament, ministries) and assist in their implementation. From 1990 to mid-2001, approximately 200 people have undergone training offered by the Helsinki Foundation.

### **The Russian Federation**

Educational activity addressed to Russian recipients is geared first and foremost to increasing the professionalism of the numerous NGOs working in the area of human rights. The Helsinki Foundation also offers theoretical knowledge and know-how to representatives of state institutions. Beneficiaries include NGO activists, academics, judges and representatives of national control institutions (the civil rights ombudsman, regional human rights commissions and the office overseeing human rights in Chechnya on behalf of the President of the Russian Federation). Between 1990 and mid-2001, some 300 Russian participants have taken advantage of the training provided by the Helsinki Foundation.

### **Southern Caucasus**

The Foundation's activities in this region focus on furnishing information about human rights and European standards for their protection, the skills necessary for effective public interest advocacy and facilitating dialogue among various social groups and between NGOs and state institutions.

Beneficiaries of the Foundation's activities focused on the Caucasus include NGO activists, academics, judges and representatives of national control institutions (the civil rights ombudsmen, presidential commission for human rights).

### **Central Asia**

The educational activity conducted by the Helsinki Foundation in countries of this region is concentrated on furnishing information about democracy, the rule of law and human rights as well as on training people who, in turn, will train others to pursue independent activity to improve the human rights situation in the given country. Beneficiaries of this activity include NGO activists and other persons working to further democracy and human rights in those countries.

### **Central Europe**

While the Helsinki Foundation does not pursue systematic educational activity in this region, it does respond to needs voiced by specific organisations, offering seminars and workshops on effective safeguards for maintaining human rights. Beneficiaries of such measures include NGO activists, representatives of local self-government bodies and members of the legal profession.

The Helsinki Foundation also organises international seminars and conferences as well as specialised programmes. Educational activity is augmented by surveys of the human rights situation in selected areas for which the government is responsible and by international monitoring. An example of this latter type of activity is illustrated by the Helsinki Foundation's work during the presidential elections held in Belarus in 2001. In co-operation with representatives of Belarusian NGOs, the Foundation observed polling in the Grodno district, assembling a unique body of material documenting violations of human rights and electoral laws committed by state authorities.

## **Małopolskie Towarzystwo Oświatowe Educational Society for Małopolska**

Established in Nowy Sącz in 1988, the Society supports independent education, educational innovation, the schooling and rehabilitation of disabled children and non-governmental organisations working in Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

- Educational activity – workshops and internships, teacher exchanges.

The Educational Society for Małopolska's foreign activities have a rich history stretching back to the early 1990s. Between 1991-1995, the Association conducted five two-week workshops for teachers and school administrators from rural areas, working in co-operation with American experts from Educators for Social Responsibility. The goal of these workshops, attended by participants from Poland, Lithuania,

and Hungary, was reviewing the approach to education in keeping with the spirit of democratisation and the concept „think globally, act locally.”

In 1997, the Society transferred experiences to Serbian partners in the area of improving teaching quality through greater community involvement, building new co-operation between parents, teachers, administrators and the pupils themselves. Workshops were held in which 25 educators participated. Almost 60 Albanian teachers and administration workers from Kosovo as well as teachers from Slovakia attended a subsequent round of workshops organised by the Educational Society for Małopolska in 1998. In 1999, fifteen Serbian teachers received instruction on establishing an independent school. In 2000, similar instruction was extended to a group of teachers from Bulgaria. The Society also hosted training for 40 representatives of Polish and Slovak organisations working with the disabled. Other guests in Nowy Sącz included Azeris, Belarusians, Czechs, Chechens, Armenians, Crimean Tartars, Uzbeks, Hungarians, Ukrainians, Americans, Belgians, Swedes and even a delegation from the Ministry of Education of South Africa.

Efforts at building structures through transferring knowledge and skills and through the organisation of internships has resulted in thirteen parent-teacher associations being established in various countries in the Balkans. Sponsors of the Educational Society for Małopolska include the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe, Freedom House, SBASHK and KACI. A portion of project costs is covered by the Educational Society for Małopolska and by partner organisations.

## **Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury International Cultural Centre**

The decision to establish an International Cultural Centre in Cracow was officially announced by Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki at the Paris summit of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe held in November 1990. The basic mission of the Centre lies in active participation in the European dialogue among people of different languages and cultures.

The various forms of activity conducted by the International Cultural Centre, including academic research, education, art promotion as well as all forms of informational activity, are united by a common goal, preserving the cultural heritage of Central Europe.

In addition to the numerous conferences and debates organised by the Centre and the publications documenting them, attention is also merited by its research programmes, many of which address issues relating to the exploration, appraisal, documentation and preservation of culture in Central Europe. Cultural problems are also an item on the agenda of the International Cultural Centre's educational programmes conducted by the College for a New Europe project. Through the College, Cracow has become a regular venue for meetings of young people from across Europe and the Americas. The educational summer programmes of the International Centre of Culture are to be augmented by courses at the Decius Villa, the seat of the European Academy.

The promotional activity of the Centre also includes intensive contacts with numerous partners in Poland and abroad. The ever-increasing contacts with other Central European countries are particularly worthy of note; the Centre frequently assumes the role of an intermediary and information provider as well as an initiator and animator, serving as a link in the European network of cultural institutions. The Centre is striving to take greater advantage of Cracow as a natural site for international efforts within the scope of cultural heritage, thus bolstering the metropolitan character of Poland's erstwhile capital. Since its inception, the International Cultural Centre has devoted an equal amount of attention to cultural heritage on the local, national and international levels, acting on the conviction that culture is a critical and timeless factor and that, as such, it has a significant bearing on the future. In turn, the future should be addressed in terms of the regional and the local.

In this wider context, the International Cultural Centre fosters a model of culture, which is open, universal and conducive to the integration of nations, respecting identity as well as regional and national uniqueness.

The International Cultural Centre co-operates with institutions such as the European Commission, the Council of Europe, UNESCO, the European Cultural Foundation (Amsterdam), the European Foundation Centre (Brussels) and the International Arts Bureau (London). The Centre cultivates regular contacts with its various partners, thus participating in a continuous exchange of information and remaining informed in regard to Europe's cultural calendar.

The International Cultural Centre conducted the following international projects in 2000:

Conferences:

- *Cracow and Prague – Two Capitals of Central Europe;*
- *The Cultural Area of Eastern Galicia and Bukovina;*
- *International Conservators' Conference, Cracow;*

Exhibitions:

- *Jagiellonian University in Documents (14<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Century);*
- *Made in Hungary. Hungarian Photographers, 1919-1956;*
- *Power of the Imagination. Symbolism in Brussels;*
- *Mersad Berber;*
- *Otto Wagner. Vienna – Architecture circa 1900;*
- *Population Movements in Central Europe. Past-Present-Future.*

## **Polska Akcja Humanitarna Polish Humanitarian Organisation**

Polish Humanitarian Organisation is a non-governmental organisation supported by voluntary donations from private individuals and institutions. The main office is located in Warsaw, with regional branches in Łódź, Cracow and Toruń. Polish Humanitarian Organisation began activities in 1992 (under the name EquiLibre Foundation) with the first convoy of humanitarian aid to the besieged city of Sarajevo. The organisation adopted its new name in 1994.

The mission of Polish Humanitarian Organisation is to provide assistance to victims of armed strife and natural disasters in Poland and abroad as well as to aid refugees arriving to Poland. Through its work, Polish Humanitarian Organisation contributes to creating an open, responsible society, one capable of helping itself as well as others.

- Humanitarian and development aid – organisation of convoys, permanent missions;
- Humanitarian education.

### **Afghanistan**

In 1998, Polish Humanitarian Organisation provided 39 tons of medicine, medical and hygiene supplies, food, tents and blankets (with a total value of 83,000 USD) to earthquake victims in Afghanistan.

Polish Humanitarian Organisation's permanent mission in Kabul was inaugurated in June 2002. Plans include rebuilding one of the city's elementary schools.

### **Chechnya**

Between 1995-2000, Polish Humanitarian Organisation delivered 138 tons of relief supplies to Chechnya (the value of which totalled 787,000 PLN). A permanent mission in Ingushetia was opened in August 2000. PHO is currently pursuing two programmes in the city of Grozny, one involving the supply of water (delivery and distribution of 500,000 litres of drinking water per day), the other sanitation (removal of waste from 25 health care facilities). Polish Humanitarian Organisation has also constructed latrines around the city and distributed refuse containers and hygienic supplies among the population.

### **Kosovo**

Polish Humanitarian Organisation launched operations in Kosovo when it established a permanent mission in March 2000. The mission's work, focusing on the Albanian district of Kacanik and the Serb district of Strpce, involves direct assistance in the reconstruction of the communities, primarily through addressing needs in the areas of education, culture and sports. Over the long term, the various measures

undertaken are expected to reduce tensions between the two ethnic groups and to minimise feelings of isolation and neglect.

### **Serbia**

In November 1999, Polish Humanitarian Organisation dispatched a convoy bearing aid, valued at 30,000 PLN, to Serb refugees fleeing Kosovo.

### **Bosnia**

Between 1992-1997, PHO organised a total of sixteen convoys carrying 800 tons of aid, valued at 1.5 million USD. In April 2000, the organisation donated computer equipment, valued at 70,000 PLN, to the Osman Nuri Hadzic school in Sarajevo.

### **Kazakhstan**

PHO directs aid to all ethnic groups present in Kazakhstan. The aid is addressed specifically to health care centres and educational institutions. The successive convoys dispatched to Kazakhstan between 1995-2000 carried medical supplies and rehabilitation equipment, formulated foods, school supplies and furniture as well as office supplies with a total value of approximately 894,000 USD (this figure does not include aid directed specifically to the Polish minority living in the country). All funds used in this programme originated from public donations. Between 1994-2000, PHO also organised trips to Poland during the Christmas holidays for Poles living in Kazakhstan.

### **Lithuania**

Since 1997, Polish Humanitarian Organisation has operated a meal programme for schoolchildren. The programme involves providing meals to pupils from the poorest families who, for one reason or another, do not benefit from state aid. The number of children and schools covered by the project varies from year to year. During the 2001-2002 school year, the programme provided meals for 447 children in fifteen schools located in Lithuania's rural regions. During this period, PHO organised seven convoys to the country with gifts to schools valued at 45,000 USD.

### **Romania**

Between 1999-2001, Polish Humanitarian Organisation conducted a programme in which in-kind and training assistance was provided to the Pro Vita Association, the administrator of an orphanage in Valea Plopului.

### **Ukraine**

Since 1997, Polish Humanitarian Organisation has provided assistance to the Union of Polish Army Veterans in the Zhitomir district, an organisation of 311 former soldiers. Aid was also delivered to victims of the floods in the Trans-Carpathian region.

### **Russia**

Following the severe floods in Siberia in May 2000, Polish Humanitarian Organisation extended assistance to 82 families, purchasing building materials and tools with a total value of 12,000 USD.

The foreign aid activities conducted by Polish Humanitarian Organisation are made possible primarily through individual contributions from businesses and private individuals. Specific programmes also receive funding from the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Kosovo) and other NGOs from Poland and abroad (Chechnya, Kosovo, Romania).

## **Wspólnota Kulturowa Borussia Culture Association Borussia**

The Culture Association Borussia was founded in Olsztyn in December 1990 by a group of local intellectuals, historians, writers and art historians, in order formally to establish an independent circle of activists devoted to the humanities in the region of Warmia and Mazuria. The Association is primarily

known for its publishing activity. Borussia is a social association with approximately 140 members. It maintains an on-going dialogue with associations and state institutions, whether Polish or foreign, which profess an interest in „the lands between the lower Vistula and Neman.” The Culture Association Borussia does not have an endowment or any fixed funds; all projects are conducted with grants provided by donors such as the Ministry of Culture and Art, the Foundation for Polish-German Co-operation, the Polish-German Youth Co-operation, the Stefan Batory Foundation, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, the Polish Robert Schuman Foundation and the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

- Publishing activity – the periodical *Borussia. Culture. History. Literature*, books on related topics;
- Educational activity – seminars, conferences, youth exchanges;
- Volunteer work.

The activities of Borussia focus on ethnic minorities and, on a more general level, on the coexistence of cultures and nations in modern Central and Eastern Europe. The Association plans to develop and continue its initiatives through the Open Regionalism project, an initiative conducted in co-operation with the Thomas Mann Cultural Centre in Nida (Lithuania), the Journalists' Club in Kaliningrad (Russia) and the North-eastern German Cultural Institute in Lüneburg.

Since 1992, Borussia has conducted year-long internships for volunteers of Christian Initiative for Europe. These interns are primarily responsible for co-ordinating youth exchanges. Youth Community for Europe, affiliated with Borussia since 1994, also assists in the organisation of youth exchanges. The association has co-ordinated the volunteer project Building Bridges in Europe since February 1999. This project is addressed to young people aged 18-25 working in social and youth organisations in their home countries. Borussia's partner in this initiative is the Christian Initiative for Europe, located in Dresden. In addition to Poland and Germany, the programme also covers Belgium, Belarus, the Czech Republic, France, Great Britain, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Russia, Romania and Ukraine.

Of the many youth projects organised by Borussia since 1993, the majority was conducted together with partners from Germany, while others included partners from Eastern Europe. Examples of the latter include the Dialogue drama camp for Poles, Germans and Lithuanians, held in July 1999 in Żywe near Giżycko. A similar project entitled Witches, Monsters and Drowners, was held one year later in Cierpięta for participants from Poland, Germany and Belarus. Moreover, the Island of Children camp for Polish, German and Ukrainian children, was held in Napiwoda in August 2000 and a kayak trek along the Czarna Hańcza for Poles, Germans and Ukrainians, was organised in July 2001. In August 2001, the Polish-German-Belarusian environmental camp Youth for Nature was held in Bokiny as was the fifth edition of the Island of Children event (during which the campers performed conservation work on a World War I cemetery). Regular co-organisers of the various summer camps include the Christian Initiative for Europe, the Association of Schools of the United World (Belarus, Lithuania, Latvia, and Russia) and the Lion Association from L'viv.

Borussia also conducts the volunteer project Building Bridges in Europe, the initiator and main organiser of which is the Christian Initiative for Europe. The project is conducted in 20 European countries. CIE also operates the Voluntary Social Year Abroad programme, which brings together NGOs working to assist the most needy: children and youth from chronically dysfunctional families, disabled persons and the homeless. Among these NGOs are social welfare centres, charities and educational institutions working for better understanding, peace and justice in Europe. The volunteer project provides young people with an opportunity to work as volunteers in social, educational and welfare institutions across Europe. The purpose of the project is to enable the participants to play an active role in building democracy, peace and social justice based on respect for the dignity and rights of others.

KATARZYNA GMAJ

GRAŻYNA CZUBEK  
Stefan Batory Foundation

AGNIESZKA KOMOROWSKA  
Stefan Batory Foundation

## Addresses of described organisations

### **Artes Liberales Institute Foundation**

#### **Fundacja – Instytut „Artes Liberales”**

☒ ul. Nowy Świat 4, 00-497 Warsaw, Poland, phone: (00 48 22) 628 79 08, fax: (00 48 22) 628 10 12, e-mail: ial@ial.org.pl, www.ial.org.pl

### **Borderlands Foundation, Centre Borderland of Arts, Cultures, Nations**

#### **Fundacja Pogranicze, Ośrodek Pogranicze Sztuki, Kultury, Narodów**

☒ ul. Piłsudskiego 37, 16-500 Sejny, post box 15, Poland, phone/fax (00 48 87) 516 27 65, Foundation office: ul. Kościuszki 71, 16-400 Suwałki, post box 36, phone/fax (00 48 87) 565 03 69, e-mail: fundacja@pogranicze.sejny.pl, www.pogranicze.sejny.pl

### **CASE – Center for Social and Economic Research**

#### **CASE – Centrum Analiz Społeczno-Ekonomicznych – Fundacja Naukowa**

☒ Sienkiewicza 12, 00-944 Warsaw, Poland, phone: (00 48 22) 622 66 27, 828 61 33, fax: (00 48 22) 828 60 69, e-mail: case@case.com.pl, www.case.com.pl

### **Center for International Relations**

#### **Centrum Stosunków Międzynarodowych**

☒ ul. Flory 9, 00-586 Warsaw, Poland, phone: (00 48 22) 646 52 67, 646 52 68, fax: (00 48 22) 646 52 58, e-mail: info@csm.org.pl, www.csm.org.pl

### **Civil Society Development Foundation**

#### **Fundacja Rozwoju Społeczeństwa Obywatelskiego**

☒ ul. Wiejska 14/8; 00-490 Warsaw, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 22) 622 39 89, 628 86 34, e-mail: csdf@free.ngo.pl, http://free.ngo.pl/csdf

### **Culture Association Borussia**

#### **Wspólnota Kulturowa Borussia**

☒ ul. Wyzwolenia 2/7, 10-106 Olsztyn, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 89) 534 00 26, e-mail: borussia@free.ngo.pl, http://free.ngo.pl/borussia

### **Education for Democracy Foundation**

#### **Fundacja Edukacja dla Demokracji**

☒ ul. Nowolipie 9/11, 00-150 Warsaw, Poland, phone: (00 48 22) 635 72 51, fax: (00 48 22) 635 40 06, e-mail: edudemo@edudemo.org.pl, www.edudemo.org.pl

### **Educational Society for Małopolska**

#### **Małopolskie Towarzystwo Edukacyjne**

☒ ul. Limanowskiego 7, 33-300 Nowy Sącz, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 18) 444 25 57, e-mail: mto\_poland@yahoo.co.uk, www.mto.org.pl

### **Environmental Partnership Foundation**

#### **Fundacja Partnerstwo dla Środowiska**

☒ ul. Bracka 6/6, 31-005 Cracow, Poland, phone: (00 48 12) 422 50 88, fax: (00 48 12) 429 47 25, e-mail: biuro@epce.org.pl, www.epce.org.pl

### **Foundation for Social and Economic Initiatives**

#### **Fundacja Inicjatyw Społeczno-Ekonomicznych**

☒ ul. Jezuicka 1/3, 00-281 Warsaw, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 22) 635 62 77, e-mail: fise@fise.org.pl, www.fise.org.pl

### **Foundation in Support of Local Democracy**

#### **Fundacja Rozwoju Demokracji Lokalnej**

☒ ul. Hauke Bosaka 11, 01-540 Warsaw, Poland, phone: (00 48 22) 869 92 00 07, fax (00 48 22) 839 22 85, e-mail: biuro@frdl.org.pl, www.frdl.org.pl

### **Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights**

#### **Helsińska Fundacja Praw Człowieka**

☒ ul. Bracka 18, apt. 62, 00-028 Warsaw, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 22) 828 10 08, e-mail: hfhr@hfhrpol.waw.pl, www.hfhrpol.waw.pl

**Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe (IDEE) Foundation**

**Instytut na z Demokracji w Europie Wschodniej - IDEE**

☒ ul. Marszałkowska 10/16 m 25, 00-626 Warsaw, Poland, phone/fax: (0048 22) 627 18 46, e-mail: idee@idee.ngo.pl, www.idee.ngo.pl

**Institute of Eastern Studies Foundation**

**Fundacja Instytut Studiów Wschodnich**

☒ ul. Kozia 3/5, apt. 6, 00-070 Warsaw, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 22) 828 52 84, e-mail: inswsch@ikp.atm.com.pl, www.isw.org.pl

**Institute of Public Affairs Foundation (IPA)**

**Fundacja Instytut Spraw Publicznych**

☒ ul. Flory 9, 00-586 Warsaw, Poland, phone: (00 48 22) 845-68-58, fax: (00 48 22) 845 68 62, e-mail: isp@isp.org.pl, www.isp.org.pl

**International Cultural Center**

**Międzynarodowe Centrum Kultury**

☒ Rynek Główny 25, 31-008 Cracow, Poland, phone: (00 48 12) 421 86 01, 421 77 00, fax: (00 48 12) 421 85 71, e-mail: sekret@mck.krakow.pl, www.mck.krakow.pl

**Karta Center Foundation**

**Fundacja Ośrodka Karta**

☒ ul. Narbutta 29, 02-536 Warsaw, Poland, phone: (00 48 22) 848 07 12, fax: (00 48 22) 646 65 11, e-mail: ok@karta.org.pl, www.karta.org.pl

**Nowy Staw Foundation**

**Fundacja Nowy Staw**

☒ ul. 3 Maja 18/3A, 20-078 Lublin, Poland, phone: (00 48 81) 534 61 91, fax: (00 48 81) 534 61 92, e-mail: biuro@nowystaw.lublin.pl, www.nowystaw.lublin.pl

**Polish-American Freedom Foundation (PAFF)**

**Polsko-Amerykańska Fundacja Wolności**

☒ ul. Dobra 72, 00-312 Warsaw, Poland, phone: (00 48 22) 828 43 73, fax: (00 48 22) 828 43 72, e-mail: paff@pafw.pl, www.pafw.pl

**Poland-Belarus Center for Civic Education**

**Centrum Edukacji Obywatelskiej Polska-Białoruś**

☒ ul. Lipowa 25 m 3, 15-424 Białystok, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 85) 744 55 37, polska-bialorus@sitech.pl, http://free.ngo.pl/polska\_bialorus

**Polish-Czech-Slovak Solidarity Foundation**

**Fundacja Solidarność Polsko-Czesko-Słowacka**

☒ ul. Flory 9, 5th floor, 00-586 Warsaw, Poland, phone/fax (00 48 22) 849 49 78, e-mail: spczs@free.ngo.pl, http://free.ngo.pl/spczs/

**Polish Humanitarian Organisation**

**Polska Akcja Humanitarna**

☒ ul. Szpitalna 5, apt. 3, 00-031 Warsaw, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 22) 828 88 82, e-mail: pah@pah.org.pl, www.pah.ngo.pl

**St. Maksymilian Kolbe Reconciliation and Meeting House**

**Dom Pojednania i Spotkań im. Św. Maksymiliana Kolbego**

☒ ul. Św. Trójcy 4, 80-822 Gdańsk, Poland, phone/fax: (00 48 58) 301 57 21, e-mail: biuro@dmk.pl, http://www.dmk.pl

**Stefan Batory Foundation**

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# Polish NGOs and Cross-border Co-operation\*

The objective of cross-border co-operation lies in countering the undesired effects of the existence of the border that impede the development of the regions surrounding it. Polish non-governmental organisations were involved in a significant number of spontaneous cross-border initiatives as early as the beginning of the 1990s. The development of such co-operation was aided by geographic proximity of the regions, a shared cultural and historical heritage, similar experiences and the desire to share them, common problems as well as the emergence of programmes financing international co-operation and a favourable political climate.

However, by the mid-1990s, this process - which got off to such a good start - began to stall, mainly for a lack of funds. Many of the organisations that put cross-border co-operation on the top of their agendas simply ceased to exist. At present, cross-border co-operation is again on the rise; potential partners are busy establishing contacts, defining the scope of co-operation and bringing the substantive aspects of their operation in line with one another. These efforts are being pursued through meetings, conferences, and seminars, training events and working visits. Information exchange points for Polish, Belarusian, Lithuanian, Russian, and Ukrainian NGOs are being established. There is renewed vigour in youth co-operation, joint co-operation concerning welfare and humanitarian issues, cultural exchanges, preservation of cultural heritage, development of contacts between inhabitants of the border regions and environmental protection. Nevertheless, co-operation continues to occur predominantly at the level of individual rather than institutional contacts.

The will for co-operation is certainly there – on both sides of the border. Accordingly, conditions need to be put in place that will allow it to flourish, particularly as Poland must now implement the Schengen requirements and institute visas for those participating in cross-border co-operation from the East.

In preparing this document, information was used about the activities of NGOs operating in the regions of Warmia and Mazuria, Podlasie, Lublin and Podkarpacie addressed to partners from the Kaliningrad Oblast' (the city of Kaliningrad itself and the surrounding region), Lithuania (principally the districts of Vilnius and Trotsk), Belarus (the Grodno and Poltava regions) and Ukraine (the western portion of the country). Thus the activity discussed refers to portions of the Baltic, Neman, Bug, and Carpathian Euro-regions.

## Benefits and Problems

Representatives of NGOs see the main benefits of cross-border co-operation in the possibility of exchanging experiences, ideas and solutions implemented in their home areas. Furthermore, cross-border co-operation can contribute to the development of any given area by promoting it at the international level. International activity also contributes to the prestige and skills of the organisations involved.

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\* This text is a summary of the paper on Cross-border Co-operation prepared for the conference on *Social Diplomacy*, June 26-27, 2002.

## Barriers Impeding Co-operation

1. In the opinion of Polish NGO activists, the major problem is posed by the lack (or insufficiency) of funds for implementing joint projects, difficulties which typically arise in obtaining financing for any given project (especially on the part of the foreign partner). Also mentioned in this context is the change in the character of sponsorship activity recently observed in Poland, with prospective sponsors demanding greater co-financing;
2. Difficulties entailed in travelling across borders, particularly to and from Belarus and Russia. The sheer length of the queues at border crossing points is supplemented by imprecise rules governing travel and the import/export of goods, endemic corruption among officials and, in some cases, by a blatantly disrespectful attitude adopted by officials towards travellers;
3. Differences in the degree of development of non-governmental organisations in Poland and in partner countries (primarily differing levels of substantive preparation and skills). Polish organisations, having more experience, tend to be better prepared to implement joint ventures. Partners often lack financial stability, technical infrastructure and fund-raising skills;
4. Lack of sufficient understanding, acceptance and support on the part of local self government bodies;
5. Lack of information concerning cross-border co-operation initiatives being conducted by other NGOs and by central and local government bodies.

Other obstacles mentioned include legal aspects governing the functioning of NGOs in Poland as well as in the partner countries, the pervasive bureaucracy of organisations and institutions (also in local government administrations), unwelcome interference on the part of the administration and language barriers.

## Conclusions

The development of cross-border co-operation still requires considerable work. There are only a dozen or so active institutions with a long-term interest in activity of this sort. Many institutions seem unable to progress beyond the stage of general declarations and plans. The districts along the borders in question have the lowest levels of economic growth and are struggling with high unemployment, which makes the need for support and co-operation, with central and local administration bodies as well, ever greater. Large-scale co-operation on the part of NGOs with national and local authorities can potentially arouse the interest of local self-government bodies and, if only partially, remedy the problems of financing cross-border projects.

The inclusion of the mass media in promoting the idea of cross-border co-operation and comprehensive information and teaching activity could contribute to a more dynamic development of cross-border initiatives.

In the opinion of NGO representatives, the solution of problems encountered at border crossings is a task for the national governments concerned. The following would constitute priorities in this area: shortening waiting times at border crossing points (e.g. through the introduction of separate lanes for individuals and groups travelling on official business) and the opening of new border crossing points (such as at Rudiszki-Kryłowo). The implementation of Schengen provisions and the introduction of visas for travellers arriving to Poland from the East will further complicate the situation.

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# Youth Exchange between Poland, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus\*

The goal of youth exchanges is overcoming barriers, prejudices and stereotypes ingrained in the mentalities and cultures of assorted nations. Its significance is noted and spoken of by the governments of individual states (as expressed in bilateral agreements), institutions of the European Union, non-governmental organisations and by those concerned themselves – young people seeking to learn about the diversity of cultures and nations.

A point of particular interest is posed in youth exchanges between Poland, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. cursory observation maintained on a current basis suggests that the scale of youth exchange with Poland's neighbours to the east is smaller than with other countries.

Poland has no institution that gathers data on youth exchanges conducted with the country's eastern neighbours. What little information is available is insufficient to provide an accurate basis for quantifying this exchange in any reliable way. Venturing a very cautious estimate, it can be assumed that such exchanges involve between several hundred to several thousand young people annually.

There are countries with which Polish youth could co-operate, having a choice of several different programmes and funds. Co-operation with Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus is more difficult in this respect, if for no other reason than that, by their very nature, most EU funds are intended for use by member and associate states.

The EU programmes YOUTH, SOCRATES and LEONARDO DA VINCI provide for youth exchanges among member states, associate states and CEFTA countries. The partners most frequently chosen for exchange under these programmes are Germany, Great Britain, France and Italy. Of the above-mentioned programmes, only YOUTH provides for exchanges with Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. The actual scale of youth exchanges with these countries, however, appears to be rather small, with only one programme involving eastern partners conducted in 2001.

A model solution demonstrating how a successful exchange programme should operate is the Polish-German Youth Co-operation programme. The primary focus of this programme is on contacts between young people residing in the border regions of the two countries. More than half of the Jugendwerk exchange projects were conducted in the Polish voivodships and German länder neighbouring one another along the Oder river. During the first year of the programme, a total of 46 400 people (23 900 young Germans and 22 500 of their Polish peers) participated in 1 646 different projects. By 2000, this number had grown to 133 323 young people, roughly the same number from both countries, participating in 3 258 initiatives. Of these, more than 40% took part in school exchanges, which is a less expensive form of co-operation. Between 1993 and 2000, 745 106 young people (374 041 from Poland and 371 065 from Germany) participated in 18 989 initiatives.

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\* This text is a summary of the paper on Youth Exchange prepared for the conference on *Social Diplomacy*, June 26-27, 2002.

Polish-German Youth Co-operation also lends its support to innovative ventures involving trilateral exchanges between Poland, Germany and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. However, these are isolated projects and a state of affairs where these remain the only idea implemented as regards co-operation with Poland's neighbours to the east is simply not acceptable. This point becomes even more obvious considering the fact that Polish-German Youth Co-operation does not finance trilateral projects implemented outside Poland and Germany. Support is limited to the travel expenses of Polish and German participants making their way to the third country involved.

Considering the scale of youth exchanges conducted by Polish-German Youth Co-operation as well as the fact that Germany remains the most popular partner in the context of EU programmes, it can be concluded that exchanges with Poland's western neighbour have been the most successful to date.

Resources provided by the European Union could be utilised towards youth exchanges conducted within Euro-regions. The fact remains, however, that this does not eliminate the prevailing disproportion between Euro-region youth exchanges conducted along Poland's eastern border with those conducted by the YOUTH and Jugendwerk programmes. Given the fact that Polish-German Youth Co-operation regards co-operation in the border regions as being of particular importance, almost half the programmes conducted in Poland during 2000 (43.34%) involved the western area of the country. By the same token, some 48% of Polish youth involved in programmes live in the western regions of the country. By way of comparison, another 46% of the participants live in Central Poland and a mere 6% in the eastern regions of Lublin, Podkarpacie and Podlasie. In regard to Germany, one third of the various programmes conducted in that country occur along the border, involving a total of 35% of the young Germans involved in the exchanges<sup>1</sup>. In 2000, 707 such projects were conducted, involving more than 31 000 young people. On the Polish side, 318 such projects were conducted. Again, it should be stressed that youth exchanges taking place between the border areas are less expensive.

No statistics which would define the number of young people involved in exchanges with the countries to the east of Poland are kept in Euro-regions along the eastern border. According to the most optimistic estimates, such exchanges involve a few thousand people at most and this involves three countries, not one.

The Vishehrad Fund, established in 2000, is another source of assistance open to Polish youth wishing to participate in exchanges with peers in other countries. Established as a result of intergovernmental agreements, the programme is addressed to the citizens of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary. No provisions have been made for co-operation with Belarus, Russia and Ukraine.

Some local government entities in eastern Poland have been seeking ways to establish co-operation with partners to the east on their own initiative. In the same spirit, Poland's eastern neighbours are also displaying increasing interest in such contacts. However, local self-government bodies do not have the funds necessary to maintain youth exchanges on a large scale. It must be pointed out that Polish organisers seeking to establish co-operation with partners in the east are not eligible for assistance from European funds designated for Town Twinning, which support meetings of EU citizens and the people of neighbouring countries.

Yet some form of exchange with countries on Poland's eastern borders is being maintained despite the lack of favourable circumstances and systemic solutions. The examples just cited (modest as the absence of a large-scale institutionalised framework for exchanges with the East makes for a lack of information concerning activities conducted) suggest that parties interested in organising such co-operation can look for support to foundations, local self-government bodies, private sponsors, religious organisations and international political associations. The enthusiasm and effort entailed in conducting such an undertaking is difficult to assess. Yet the unquestioned commitment of many talented individuals notwithstanding, there is no way that the scale of these exchanges can match that of Polish-German

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<sup>1</sup> *Statystyka-Przegląd 1993-2000*, statistical data of Polish-German Youth Co-operation, February 12-13, 2001.

Youth Co-operation. It is clear that, as far as the Polish government is concerned, the focus is decidedly on Germany. This is illustrated by statistics measuring expenditures on youth exchanges. In 1999, the Polish government contributed 8 million PLN to Polish-German Youth Co-operation (this being only a portion of the programme's budget, another 14 million PLN is provided by the government of Germany and until the end of 2000 further support was provided by the Polish-German Co-operation Fund)<sup>2</sup>. The same year, the government's Plenipotentiary for Family Affairs allocated a mere 2.25 million PLN for international exchanges.<sup>3</sup>

The pervasive lack of stability in Poland's national administration and the shifting back and forth of responsibility for international youth exchanges are not helpful as far as initiatives addressed to the East are concerned. Until 1997 responsibility for such matters rested with the Ministry of Education, then with the Plenipotentiary for Family Affairs affiliated with the Office of the Prime Minister. Following the most recent upheavals in Poland's central administration, this portfolio passed to the Ministry of Education and Sports, specifically to the General Education and Prevention Department.<sup>4</sup> Persons involved in international exchanges have consistently complained about the lack of transparency in the rules governing the allocation of subsidies and about the difficulty of obtaining information at the central level.

In addition, soliciting a dependable partner in the East can be more difficult than in the case of the analogous task pursued in the West. For example, while the non-governmental sector in Ukraine is comparatively well developed, it has experienced difficulty in instituting fully independently operating models. Rather unwieldy tax regulations and the absence of any cohesive body of laws regulating the establishment and functioning of NGOs hinder the development of the Ukrainian third sector. These difficulties are compounded by formidable limitations (also of an administrative nature) on access to funding, whether governmental or from private donors abroad.<sup>5</sup> The situation is even more difficult in the case of Belarus.

In closing, it would be worthwhile to take just a moment to look at results of surveys. Since the early 1990s, the Polish opinion research institute CBOS has been taking regular surveys gauging the attitudes of Poles toward other nations. Comparing results from ten years ago, changes in attitudes can clearly be seen. Most noteworthy is the fact that there has been an across-the-board warming in the attitude of Poles to all of Poland's neighbours and to all nations in the region. According to the surveys, Poles are most favourably inclined towards Czechs and Slovaks. Ukrainians and Russians continue to be the least popular among Poland's neighbours, with those who don't like them still outnumbering those who do. However, this situation is much more positive than eight years ago as the hard view taken of these nations is softening. Also worth mentioning is an analogous improvement in Polish attitudes towards Germans. In 1993, more than 50% of Poles declared a dislike of Germans, with only 23% stating a positive attitude. In 2001, these two figures were almost identical.

The atmosphere of contacts with representatives of different nationalities is shaped to some extent by historic stereotypes and the media. Over the past decade, Poles travelled abroad more frequently, a trend that was coupled with an increasing number of foreigners visiting Poland. In the process, experiences and observations arising from such direct interaction ceased to be something extraordinary, and they came to affect Polish perceptions on a par with other factors. Youth exchange is also a factor in these direct contacts and, although it is difficult at this point to determine what it can do in regard to changing attitudes towards other nations, it is safe to assume that its impact will be a positive one. International exchange and other initiatives addressed to youth are also worthy of support as, in the future, the young people benefiting from them will have the deciding voice in how Poland gets along with its neighbours.

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<sup>2</sup> *Info* no 2(6), Polish-German Youth Co-operation 2001, pp 8-9; *Practical Guidelines for Organisers of Polish-German Youth Exchanges*, p 16, Polish-German Youth Co-operation (Warsaw-Potsdam, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> See [http://www.rzad.samorzad.ngo.pl/html/kprm\\_rodz.html](http://www.rzad.samorzad.ngo.pl/html/kprm_rodz.html)

<sup>4</sup> At the time this report was completed (March 29, 2002), this Department had not received the pertinent documents kept to date at the office of the Plenipotentiary for Family Affairs and, accordingly, was unable to provide information for the present paper.

<sup>5</sup> Information from [www.free.ngo.pl/parlament](http://www.free.ngo.pl/parlament)

## Recommendations

1. Under the most optimistic scenario, one might expect the practical implementation of the provisions of bilateral agreements signed by Poland with Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine with respect to supporting and initiating youth co-operation and exchange. The existing Polish-German Youth Co-operation provides a fitting source of experiences and guiding principals;
2. The introduction of order and stability at the central level of Poland's government as regards responsibility for international youth exchanges would be welcome. Transferring responsibility for these issues to a new government unit every few years is detrimental; such practices tend to compromise effectiveness. The rules governing funding should be clear, and information easily accessible. The establishment of a dedicated government office responsible for international youth exchange should be considered;
3. Establishing a database of information about organisations on either side of the border that are interested in international youth exchanges is necessary. A similar instrument assembling information about resources available in this respect is also needed;
4. Implementing rules that facilitate cross-border movement of young people, travelling individually or in groups, from Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia (visas, fees for invitation forms) would be a positive step;
5. Co-operation among border regions should meet with interest (based on the experiences of Polish-German Youth Co-operation);
6. Given financial constraints, school exchanges should receive priority. Schools already have experience in this area as well as available resources (i.e. staff, office infrastructure, etc). Given the fact that young people are generally hosted in private homes, costs of such projects are lower.

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